

Academy rally round Jahirul

SPORTS REPORTER

Jahirul Islam was just four runs short of a well-deserved hundred as the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) National Academy scored 230 for six in the first innings on the opening day of the first four-day match against Pakistan Cricket Academy at the TMC ground in Karachi yesterday.

The game began 30 minutes late due to wet outfield because of overnight rain.

The young right-hander also known as Omi, was not out on 96 when the umpires pulled the stumps for the day at the end of the 85th over. He was partnered by Mosharrarf Rubel, who was unbeaten on six.

Apart from Jahirul, Nadif Chowdhury scored 55.

The National Academy team, led by batsman Mehrab Hossain, is on their first tour to Pakistan and will play one more four-day match and three one-day matches against their Pakistani counterparts.

ICC may fine SA

PTI, Colombo

International Cricket Council (ICC) on Thursday said that a failure to replay the abandoned tri-series matches between South Africa and Sri Lanka could lead to the African team being penalised.

The ICC said the tri-series matches held under the Future Tours Programme and as per its regulations they have to be replayed if called off.

"If they (South Africa and Sri Lanka) don't reach an agreement on the dates, it could go to the ICC Disputes Resolution Committee where there is a potential of a decision of fines going against South Africa," ICC Media Manager Brian Murgatroyd told PTI over phone.

Murgatroyd, however, said the ICC would step in if the two boards could not arrive at a consensus on their own.

"For now, it is between the CSA and the SLC. It is upto them to make arrangement for the matches to be replayed. These matches are part of the FTP," he said.

South Africa pulled out of a tri-series that was to be played from August 14 to 29 against Sri Lanka and India following a fatal bomb explosion on the opening day of the series.

India were to stay back and play a three-match series against the hosts.

CHAMPS TROPHY

Random dope testing on

CRICINFO, undated

In order to implement strict anti-doping measures for the ICC Champions Trophy in India, the International Cricket Council has requested for an isolated room at each of the four venues -- Mumbai, Ahmedabad, Jaipur and Mohali. The ICC is expected to conduct tests on random urine samples of the players participating in the tournament in October and November.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) confirmed this request, and stated that the dope testing will come under the responsibility of the ICC. "The ICC has asked us to keep one isolated room at all four venues for collecting samples", Ratnakar Shetty, the BCCI executive secretary told Indo Asian News Service.

"But dope testing will not be the BCCI's responsibility. The ICC has a contract with the WADA (World Anti-Doping Agency) and they will take care of this."

According to the rules of the anti-doping programme in ICC-organised tournaments, the host country is expected to have a WADA accredited laboratory for testing the samples. However, India does not have such a facility and a similar lab, at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in New Delhi, is reportedly not adequately equipped. Therefore, the samples will be tested outside India.

"We are thinking on those lines", Niranjan Shah, the BCCI secretary, told PTI. "We will take the samples of all those chosen for the tournament and send them to Malaysia or Bangkok (Thailand) for dope testing. Why take any chances."

Shah added that the Indian squad for the Champions Trophy and the tri-series in Malaysia, scheduled for mid-September, will be picked on the same day. "We have to submit the Champions Trophy squad of 14 to the ICC by September 7 and it makes sense in selecting both the squads on the same day. It will be done either on September 5 or 6."



Ayesha Rahman Rima (R) receives the first prize of the 'Kool-Shaptahik 2000 World Cup Quiz 2006' from Managing Director of Square Toiletries Anjan Chowdhury (L), former footballer Sheikh Mohammad Aslam (C) and the Acting Editor of Shaptahik 2000 Golam Mortuza at the Bishwa Sahitya Kendro auditorium yesterday.

Stars pop out of Toronto

Tennis

INTERNET, undated

On Saturday, the Rogers Cup lost the chance to have fourth-ranked Maria Sharapova on display. Less than two sets into her first match of the tournament, another top-five player bowed out.

Top seed and second-ranked Kim Clijsters retired in the second set of her match with Canadian Stephanie Dubois on Wednesday in the featured night match at the \$1.34 million event.

The reigning US Open champion began the defence of her title here with a 6-1 win in the first set. However, while trailing 3-2 in the second set, Clijsters fell while chasing a passing shot and injured her left wrist, forcing her to withdraw.

"I'm really sorry about her injury," Dubois said. "It's not the same winning a match like this (without) earning the last point. It was a privilege to be on the same court as her -- she's a real champion. In the first set, I discovered that Clijsters hits harder and more precisely than anyone I've ever played."

Also in the bottom half of the draw, fourth seed and 2004 US Open champion Svetlana Kuznetsova of Russia routed Polish qualifier Marta Domachowska, 6-1, 6-3. She awaits Ai Sugiyama of Japan, who beat No. 17 Anabel Medina Garrigues of Spain, 6-4, 6-2.

Daniela Hantuchova, the 11th seed from Slovakia, defeated American qualifier Jamea Jackson, 7-6, 6-2, to establish a third-round meeting with No. 7 Martina Hingis.

In the same quarter, Jelena Jankovic of Serbia and Montenegro bounced No. 8 Francesca Schiavone of Italy, 6-1, 6-4. She awaits 13th-seeded compatriot Ana Ivanovic, who defeated Jie Zheng of China, 6-4, 6-7, 6-2.

Also in the top half, No. 9 Dinara Safina of Russia routed qualifier Cara Black of Zimbabwe, 6-2, 6-2. Her next opponent will be American qualifier Shenay Perry, who upset No. 10 Anna-Lena Groenefeld of Germany, 7-6, 6-2.

Australian qualifier Nicole Pratt set up a third-round meeting with No. 5 Nicole Pietrangeli by rallying past Canadian wild card Marie-Eve Pelletier, 3-6, 6-4, 6-4. Pelletier had upset No. 16 Na Li on Tuesday.

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Asif brings Pak luck back

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having laboured nearly an hour for six, saw an edged drive off Umar Gul caught in the gully by Mohammad Hafeez.

England had the comfort of being an unbeatable 2-0 up in the series -- their first Test campaign win anywhere since the Ashes and their first at home against Pakistan since 1982.

They were unchanged from the team that won by 167 runs at Headingley but Pakistan, as well as leading in Asif, went in with their fourth opening batting partnership in as many Tests.

Hafeez, playing his first Test since September 2003 when he made the last of three appearances against Bangladesh, and Imran

Earlier in the match, the Belgian needed a trainer to put a wrap around the wrist.

"I hope it's not that type of aggravation," Clijsters said, referring to a previous wrist injury. "I'll have some tests done here to see if it's a tear, which would be the worst-case scenario. I don't usually retire, but the pain was too intense."

A wild card, Dubois beat Italian Tathiana Garbin, 6-4, 6-4, on Tuesday to set up the meeting with Clijsters, who was one of eight seeds to receive a first-round bye. The 19-year-old becomes the first Quebec native to advance to the third round of the Rogers Cup, where she will face 14th-seeded Katarina Srebotnik. The Slovenian topped Italian qualifier Alberta Brianti, 6-3, 6-4.

Following a straight-sets loss to fellow Russian Elena Dementieva in the semifinals of the JPMorgan Chase Open on Saturday, Sharapova announced she was suffering from fatigue and would not participate here.

Meanwhile, Nadia Petrova still has not won a match since May after the third-seeded Russian lost to countrywoman Anna

Petrova had won three consecutive tournaments entering the French Open in late May before being stunned by Akiko Morigami, 6-2, 6-2, in the first round.

Petrova missed the next two months with a groin injury, then lost in the second round -- her first match -- to Chakvetadze at San Diego two weeks ago and was stunned by Spanish doubles specialist Virginia Ruano Pascual, 6-3, 6-2, in a second-round match last week in Los Angeles.

"I'm not in pain anymore, but I think I need some more matches to get myself back into game shape," Petrova said.

Chakvetadze will play Nathalie Dechy in the third round Thursday after the Frenchwoman upset 15th-seeded Russian Maria Kirilenko, 6-4, 6-4.

"(Chakvetadze) just beat her two weeks ago and Petrova still hasn't regained her form after injuries," Dechy said.

In the same quarter, Frenchwoman Marion Bartoli held a 7-5, 2-1 lead over Flavia Pennetta when the 12th-seeded Italian retired with left wrist inflammation. Bartoli next will face Israeli Shahar Peer, who stunned sixth-seeded Russian and 2004 French Open champion Anastasia Myskina, 7-6, 5-7, 6-4.

Sweden were also missing key stars such as Zlatan Ibrahimovic and Freddie Ljungberg and it showed.

With a 3-0 half-time lead Germany chief Loew handed international debuts to Hertha Berlin left back Malik Fathi, the son of a German mother and Turkish father, and Mainz 05 defender Manuel Friedrich.

As was to be expected the second half tailed off with Germany reducing the pace of their game and Sweden going through the motions.

A male pitch invader then lived the fans up in the 80th minute as Germany coasted to victory.

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"You have to make sure that in the dressing room, you've been through it and you've worked hard -- that's what we did."

However Faubert was to show no such profligacy and give the France post-Zidane era a winning start.

Aussies above Eng: Troy

AFP, Sydney

Australia fast bowling coach Troy Cooley predicts his side's pacemen will be stronger than England's in the upcoming Ashes series, with reverse swing added to their armoury.

Cooley mentored the attack of Andrew Flintoff, Steve Harmison, Simon Jones and Matthew Hoggard that last year helped England claim its first Ashes victory in 18 years but returned to his homeland last year to work with the Australian bowlers.

Asked who he thought had the stronger attack, Cooley told Australian Associated Press: "I think we have."

Cooley trained England's quicks in the art of reverse swing to devastating effect in the last Ashes series and said he was now teaching the Australians the same skills.

"You want to try and have all the deliveries underneath your belt. Reverse swing is one of them, and if the conditions suit, you really want the bowler to be able to use that ball."

"We'll be trying those sort of things. If conditions suit, we'll definitely try to take advantage of it."

But Cooley said England would still have a strong attack, even if injury keeps leading reverse-swing exponent Jones from making the tour.

"They have a very good, formidable attack, and on our day when they're all firing, it'll be a good shootout," he said.

"I'm sure they'll be getting themselves organised. They're very good at looking after themselves, and it will be good to see them over here firing, ready to go."

Shooting

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arrived here. There is a nice beach where the squad ran and stretched. We also did some training in the rooms. I think two day's practice at the range will be enough to cope up with the conditions," said Foyaz.

Bangladesh's best bet in the discipline would be the men's and women's 10m air rifle teams. The men's team features 2002 Commonwealth Games gold medalist Anif Hossain Khan and his partner Anjan Kumar Singh, who paired to win the 2006 Commonwealth Games silver medal in the team event while Saraiya Akhter and Sharmin Akhter make the women's team.

Meanwhile, the boxing, kabaddi, swimming, table tennis and weight lifting teams have arrived in Colombo in the early hours of yesterday.

Loew starts

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along with captain Michael Ballack, who missed the game through an injury he sustained for Chelsea in Sunday's 2-1 Community Shield defeat to Liverpool.

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McClaren

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half we had a little look at 4-5-1 and then went back to 4-4-2 towards the end and the players adapted to different systems. Not always will we come across a system like the Greeks. There might be another system that we need to nullify in another way, so flexibility is the key."

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Andy stops Roger run

Tennis

AFP, Cincinnati

Scottish teenager Andy Murray stunned Swiss powerhouse Roger Federer 7-5, 6-4 here Wednesday in the second round of the Cincinnati Masters Series.

Murray, 19, joined Spain's world No. 2 Rafael Nadal as the only men to get past the Swiss master this year, with Nadal beating his rival four times in finals during 2006.

World No. 1 Federer saw his run of consecutive finals ended at 17, one short of the record set by Ivan Lendl in 1981-82.

The Swiss, winner of his last 55 North American hardcourt events dating to a first-round loss to Dominik Hrbaty here two years ago, lost his serve seven times, a personal low point in a three-set match.

"That is what I regret, I couldn't hit one," he said of his performance on serve. "It's disturbing and disappointing. I'm sorry the match didn't end the way I wanted."

"He played pretty well, and I have to give him credit," Federer added. "He was able to close it out when he had to."

Murray held his nerve to serve out the stunning triumph on his first opportunity, nailing a backhand pass down the line to finish it off in just over 90 minutes.

But the optimistic Swiss with eight Grand Slam titles is considering the big picture.

And his US Open defence starting a week from Monday now looms large in his mind.

"We'll see what I've got to do now the next few days, I'm really excited about the Open now," he said. "I want to try and defend my title there."

Federer rushed to Cincinnati on Monday after winning the Toronto

trophy at the weekend over Richard Gasquet.

He said that putting big events so close was a huge drain on players and confessed that he had toyed with the idea of skipping Cincinnati.

"I'm already very happy that I could win one of the two Masters Series and that I actually was able to play here," he said.

"I considered from the start if I did well in Toronto, I might not play here. But I still came, I feel like it still was the right decision."

Murray, coached for just weeks by US guru Brad Gilbert, felt that his tennis stars were lined up on the momentous day.

"I just felt today it was my time to win against him," said the 19-year-old who is set to advance past his current 21st ranking. "I hadn't served out a match in five, six matches."

"I didn't feel nervous, I didn't get nervous at all. I just kind of went with it. That's what happens when it's meant to be."

Murray broke Federer four times in the first set, earning the decisive break in the 11th game.

Murray, who will now gain a foothold inside the top 20, held his head in his hands in disbelief in victory.

He had come into the contest saying that he had no chance against the current king of the game.

"I don't think Roger played his best, but I give myself credit also," Murray said. "It's not enough just to play against Roger. You have to remain solid."

Murray, who won the title in San Jose in February, had reached the final in Washington earlier this month and the semifinals of the Toronto Masters Series last week, his first two tournaments under Gilbert.

Against Federer, the Scot lost

his own serve five times, but stayed calm under the biggest pressure situation of his career outside of the grounds of the All England club.

Federer, 25, suffered his first defeat since losing in the final of the French Open to Nadal. Since then, he had captured titles at Halle, Wimbledon and Toronto.

The last time Federer failed to reach a final was at Roland Garros in 2005, when he lost to Nadal in the semifinals.

World No. 2 Nadal advanced with relative ease, posting a 6-4, 6-3 victory over Hyung-taik Lee a week after ousting the South Korean by the same score in the second round in Toronto.

"I didn't play a bad match today. After I got used to conditions, I improved my return," Nadal said. "My goal is to improve on every surface, my goal is to improve my game. Not only on hard court, but on every surface."

Nadal next faces Germany's Tommy Haas.

Haas, seeded 14th and winner of the title in Los Angeles in July, defeated Gilles Simon of France 6-3, 4-6, 6-4.

Another Frenchman was bundled out as Australian Open finalist Marcos Baghdatis of Cyprus beat Gael Monfils 7-6, 2-6, 6-1.

Former world No. 1 Juan Carlos Ferrero of Spain found some life in his game with an upset of sixth seed James Blake 6-2, 6-4.

Blake, the highest-ranked American, went down in 64 minutes without even obtaining a break point against the 31st-ranked Spaniard, whom he also lost to here four years ago.

Ninth-seeded American Andy Roddick, a 2005 finalist here, dispatched Belgian Kristof Vliegen 6-4, 6-4 to set up a clash with Argentina's Juan Ignacio Chela.

Rahul admits satisfaction

BBC ONLINE, undated

India captain Rahul Dravid says his team has no problem about staying in Sri Lanka and playing a one-day series.

A fatal bomb blast in the capital Colombo on Monday resulted in South Africa pulling out of the triangular series because of security concerns.

India have stayed and Dravid said: "We are totally satisfied with the security arrangements. The Indian High Commission is in constant touch."

"The intelligence branch is also giving us full support."

Following the cancellation of the tri-series, India will now play three one-day internationals against Sri Lanka on Friday, Sunday and Tuesday.

Dravid dismissed claims team-mates were uneasy about staying in Sri Lanka adding: "Nobody has come to me to voice their concerns on the issue."

"We have no problem. We are not worried, rather we want to play."

South Africa withdrew after an independent security review said the risk to the team was at "an unacceptable level".

Sri Lanka Cricket has criticised South Africa's decision.

Chief executive Duleep Mendis said: "South Africa are pulling out of the tournament on the basis of a security company based in Dubai."

"How can a Dubai-based company assess the situation in Colombo when they had not sent anyone to the island to get first-hand information on the current situation?"

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down words.

Cryptoquip puzzle grid with letters and numbers.

CRYPTOQUIP V O H M V M C H V S E Q K M X S X E V B M V E O H V P C A I M V M E D V P V M B A K I J V B G Q E H A Q G H Q E H D P K E H V Z J K E H V Z. Yesterday's Cryptquip: SINCE I MISPLACED MY ONLY STEAM IRON THE OTHER DAY, I SEEM TO BE A BIT DE-PRESSED. Today's Cryptquip Clue: V equals I