

Hadi stands alone for Tarun

Sports Reporter

Despite a fighting 101 by opener Nurul Hadi, Surjo Tarun weren't too comfortably poised in the Navana Premier Division match against the Greater Mymensingh Cricket Club at the Dhanmandi Cricket Stadium yesterday.



NURUL HADI... 101

GMCC, who managed to restrict Tarun to 225 all out in 62.2 overs, had made 90 for the loss of two wickets after 29 overs when stumps were drawn for the day. They need another 136 runs in their remaining 46 overs to post what would be their fifth win in eight games. Tarun also have won five of their previous eight games.

Surjo Tarun, taking the field yesterday for their last match of the league, won the toss and elected to bat, a decision that seemed sensible enough from the way Hadi began to stroke the ball. They lost their first wicket, that of Dipu Roy Chowdhury with only

nine runs on the board when Zakir clean bowled the left-hander for two. Zakaria joined Hadi who soon afterwards was

Roquibul Hassan joined Hadi and their third-wicket stand was worth 51 runs of which the veteran Roquibul made only 12 before Selim, who picked up four Tarun wickets, struck his first blow.

Sri Lankan Aruna de Silva, with several good scores including an century to his credit this season, helped Hadi add 85 runs for the fourth wicket in just 19 overs. At that point the Tarun total had threatened to take on impressive dimensions. But just when de Silva had looked to have played himself in he got involved in a terrible mix-up with Hadi and was run out after making 27 in that 85-run stand.

Hadi, who had by this time reached his century with the help of nine fours and a six off 127 balls, was dismissed at the same score to make Tarun from being 176 for three to 176 for five in no time. Former Bangladesh captain Gazi Ashraf Lipu latched on to a chance offered by Hadi — for whom it

was a fairly charmed day — off Selim. Hadi played 131 balls for his 101, the 17th century of the season.

Tarun lost their sixth wicket another three runs later, Rupam failing to make much headway before edging Selim to Nasu. Skipper Shaheen, coming rather late down the order, went Rupam's way after making ten, giving Nasu his fourth catch.

Arif, coming in at number eight, tried to push things but managed to proceed no further than his 22 runs before he gave Nasu his fifth catch of the match edging the veteran left-arm spinner Ramchand Goala — the highest number of dismissals this season by a wicketkeeper. Suppi, who helped Arif and 28 runs for the eighth wicket, was caught and bowled by Goala who soon put an end to any pretensions by the Tarun by having Tanjib Ashraf Saad snapped by Saiful.

Selim topped the GMCC bowling figures by taking four wickets for 47 runs off his 15 overs while ageless Goala, who remains ever fit and ever green, picked up three for 51 off 14.2 overs. Zakir's one victim cost 24 runs.

GMCC, who like Tarun started the season with three consecutive defeats, began their reply almost in the same fashion as Tarun, losing opener Liton on eight and Gazi Ashraf Lipu, scorer of two centuries this season, on 40. While Liton was bowled by Morshed for eight Lipu made 20 before Aruna de Silva disturbed his castle.

However, the other opener Tutul and Sri Lankan Duminda, another of this season's centuries, repaired the early damage and took their side to 90 without further loss in 29 overs when play ended for the day. Tutul is batting on 21 and Duminda on 31, 16 of those runs coming from four crisp boundaries.

Rupali face bankruptcy

Sports Reporter

For Rupali Bank, it appears their 1990-91 Navana Premier Division cricket campaign is ordained to end without a solitary win.

In their last league engagement against last year's champions Abahani Krira Chakra, they were left needing an improbable 213 runs with just seven wickets in hand after the first day's play at the Dhaka Stadium.

Abahani, also playing their last game after seeing their grip on the title loosened through three defeats, took no chances against winless Rupali who have already been rele-

gated to the lower Milnars First Division league for next season.

Battling first, Abahani piled up 244 for the loss of nine wickets in their stipulated 75 overs with Ehsan and Javed Omar Golla making 46 and 43 respectively. Skipper Rafiqul Alam made 34, Sohail 23, Nadir Shah 18 and Asif and Tipu 15 each. Rupali Bank didn't help their own chances very much by conceding far too many sundries — 47, to be precise — that only compounded their misery.

Yet Rupali had started the match so well, dismissing the first two Abahani batsmen with only four runs on the board,

Pappu falling for a nought and Zakir running himself out for two. But then the Abahani middle order settled down and nipped any hopes that Rupali might have harboured of bidding bye to the top division with a winning swansong in the end.

Off-spinner Nripen took three Abahani wickets for 30, Dulal got two for 29 while Prince, Billu and Pallab picked up one wicket each.

Rupali were soon reduced to 39 for three after 13.2 overs with Zakir, Hasnain and Efecce striking early blows.

Babu was batting on 11 when stumps were drawn. Abahani have won five

UEFA rejects Albania's request

BERNE, Mar 22: The European Football Union (UEFA) on Thursday rejected an Albanian request for the postponement of a European championship qualifier in France on March 30, reports Reuter.

"An appeal from Albania for a postponement has been rejected. They will have to play in France as scheduled or risk a 3-0 forfeit," UEFA spokesman Rene Eberle said.

Several Albanian players, escaping political turmoil at home, have gone abroad and the national federation cited team problems as the reason for wanting to postpone the Group one qualifier and an under-21 match in anger on March 29.

French Soccer Federation spokesman Philippe Tournon said France could not accept any postponement because 15,000 tickets for the senior match in Paris had already been sold.

France lead the group with maximum points from four matches while Albania have lost all their qualifiers.

Barnes in a new contract

LONDON, Mar 22: England winger John Barnes, who had looked set for a lucrative move to the European continent this summer, is reported to have agreed a new one-year contract with champions Liverpool worth 8,000 pounds a week.

Newspaper reports said on Thursday the 27-year-old forward's new deal would have a clause in the contract allowing Barnes to leave in the summer of 1992 for a fee of no more than 1.5 million pounds if he wishes.

Liverpool wanted their talented forward to sign a four-year contract, but he has always preferred the short-term option.

Meanwhile, the English champions have joined the chase for Brian Redd, the young Morton defender who is likely to make his Scotland under-21 debut next week.

They are among eight sides who have entered the bidding for the 20-year-old, who is valued at around 250,000 pounds.

Scottish champions Glasgow Rangers and Liverpool's English First Division rivals, Nottingham Forest, are leading the chase.

Jianhua withdraws

HELSINKI, Mar 22: Top seed Zhao Jianhua of China had to withdraw from the Finnish Open badminton championships on Thursday because of injury after a tough all-England championships last week, reports Reuter.

Zhao, ranked three in the world, had injured his back, vice-referee Tuomo Tennila said.

Zhao, who was ill late last year, lost his All-England title when he was beaten in the semifinals by Malaysia's Foo Kok Keong.

Azad Boys jolted

Sports Reporter

Title aspirants Azad Boys Club suffered a severe jolt when they conceded a five-wicket defeat to

Ajax Club in the second phase match of the Rank-Xerox Second Division cricket league yesterday at the Mahakhali T & T ground.

Put into bat, Azad Boys were bundled out for a meagre 97 in 30.5 of their stipulated 40 overs.

Iqbal Azim, 17, Ashraf Haque 14 and Pappu with 11 runs were the Azad batsmen to reach double figures.

Bobby and Shawkat ripped through Azad's batting line-up with four wickets each for 23 and 30 runs respectively.

Ajax Club, in reply, raced to victory scoring 99 runs for the loss of five wickets in 26.2 overs.

Wasil top scored with 43 runs off 46 balls. Bobby 23 not out, Topaz, 14 were the other notable Ajax batsmen.

Sajjad bowled his heart out to claim four Ajax scalps for 34

runs. In another match, at the Mirpur Pallabi ground, Victoria Sporting Club kept their championship hopes alive with a 32-run victory over Dhanmondi Club.

Victoria SC, batting first, scored 160 runs for the loss of eight wickets in their allotted 40 overs.

Rabbi 38, Shawkat 31, Nur Mohammed 26, and Iqbal with 13 runs were the leading Dhanmondi batsmen.

Ikku took four wickets for 36 runs.

Dhanmondi, in reply were bowled out for 128 runs in 30.3 overs.

Nadeem 28, Moin 19, Ikku 22, Nasim 17 and Shipu with 15 runs were the prominent Dhanmondi batsmen.

Shawkat and Talib bagged two wickets each for 26 and 10 runs respectively.

TODAY'S MATCHES

Gandaria CC vs Orient SC (Mirpur)

Lalbagh ASC vs Nabin Sangha (T & T)

Richards will remain till '92 World Cup

GEORGETOWN, Guyana, Mar 22: Viv Richards, the West Indies captain, plans to play in the 1992 World Cup and then retire, reports AFP.



VIV RICHARDS

even win — one last time" Richards declared.

The 1992 World Cup will be played in Australia and New Zealand during March. Richards' 40th birthday will be on March 7.

Richards, 39 earlier this month, made his Test debut in 1974 against India in Bangalore.

Geoff Marsh, who hit his ninth one-day international hundred in Australia's six wicket win here, said their success had put the side in good heart for the Test series.

"I am not interested in statistics for myself," Marsh commented.

"One important thing was that we kept winning. We won four matches and we should have won the fifth. Who scored the runs did not matter. I am hoping that I will score plenty when the Tests start.

But after West Indies' defeat in the fifth and final one-day international by Australia who took the series 4-1 Richards explained that he wanted to lead his country in a last World Cup series before he quit the game.

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Now they make a two-faced bat!

LONDON, Mar 22: A revolutionary two-sided bat is threatening to change the face of English cricket to the horror of traditionalists at Lord's, reports Reuter.

An English company has begun to market the double-faced blade, claiming the new model will last twice as long as its familiar rivals and become an established feature of the first class game.

It is the most controversial innovation since Australian Dennis Lillee pioneered an aluminum bat against England in the 1979-80 season and Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC), responsible for the game's rules, are not happy.

"It does not break the laws but it does attack the spirit of the law and the game itself," said Lt. Col. John Stephenson, secretary of MCC.

"I'm sure we will see players turning up for the first class matches with this bat this year. It's a shame but it looks as if we're going to have to tighten up the laws to stop this sort of thing happening."

In contrast, former Somerset batsman Julian Wyatt, now the county's assistant coach, said he thought the bat had a promising future.

"I think it's a great idea," he said. "I wouldn't hesitate to let our county side use it during matches."

Mekonnen to run in Boston marathon

BOSTON, Mar 22: Abebe Mekonnen of Ethiopia, the 1989 Boston Marathon men's champion, has entered next month's Boston marathon, organisers said on Thursday, reports Reuter.

Mekonnen, 28, has won seven marathons in his career including the one in Tokyo earlier this year.

He joins a field that includes Douglas Wakihuri of Kenya, the world number two, and Tanzanian Juma Ikangaa, who set a course record in the 1989 New York City marathon and has finished second in Boston for the past three years.

Also competing will be Kenya's Ibrahim Hussein, whose one-second margin of victory over Ikangaa in the 1988 Boston marathon was the closest-ever men's finish here.

Neither defending men's champion Gelindo Bordin of Italy NRO women's champion Rosa Mota of Portugal will complete this year, organisers said.

US Davis Cup team

NEW YORK, Mar 20: Brad Gilbert, Rick Leach, Jim Pugh and Jim Courier will make up the US Davis Cup team that will open their championship defence against Mexico, the United States Tennis Association said on Tuesday, reports Reuter.

The Americans, led by captain Tom Gorman, will play in Mexico City on March 29-31

Sabatini too good for Graf

KEY BISCAIYNE, Florida, Mar 22: Gabriela Sabatini lost the first six games and then mounted a stunning comeback to beat Steffi Graf in Thursday's semifinals of the International Players Championships, reports AP.

The fourth-ranked Sabatini defeated Graf for the fourth consecutive time and the second time in 11 days, 0-6, 7-6 (8-6), 6-1.

Graf's defeat ensured that Monica Seles will remain No. 1. Seles, scheduled to play Mary Joe Fernandez in Thursday night's semifinal, replaced Graf at the top of the rankings last week.

Sabatini, seeking her third tournament title this year, will play the Fernandez-Seles winner Saturday.

US David Wheaton served 10 aces as he rallied to beat Cristiano Caratti in the men's quarterfinals, 6-7 (7-9), 6-2, 6-0.

Wheaton, who lost his opening match in his four previous tournaments this year, is one of three Americans in the semifinals.

His opponent Friday will be the winner of Thursday's match between top-ranked Stefan Edberg and Emilio Sanchez.

Jim Courier and Richey Reneberg will play in the other semifinal Friday.

Sabatini won just eight points in the 23-minute first set against Graf, and only two points on her serve. But the match began to turn when the Argentine broke Graf's serve to start the second set.

The second-ranked Graf dodged two set points before forcing the tiebreaker. Then she fell behind 4-0 and overcame two more set points to pull even 6-6, which left her just two points from the match. But the German netted a backhand and then a forehand to give Sabatini the set.

Sabatini, now 19-1 this year, was nearly flawless in the final set, and even an overrule on an important point didn't help Graf. Trailing 30-40 on her serve, Graf hit a forehand that the linesman called long.



Gabriela Sabatini hits a backhand on her way to winning her Lipton International Players' Championship match against the top seeded Steffi Graf 0-6, 7-6, 6-1 at Key Biscayne, Florida, March 21.

The chair umpire ordered a replay, but Graf then double-faulted to give Sabatini the game and a 5-0 lead.

Graf, who won 10 tournaments last year, is still without a title through four events in 1991. Sabatini beat her in the

finals of the Virginia Slims of Florida on March 10, but Graf still has a 20-8 lead in the rivalry.

Edberg survives set points

KEY BISCAIYNE, Florida, Mar 22: Top-seeded Stefan Edberg survived four set points against

him on his own serve in the second set to take a 6-2, 7-6, (8-6) quarter-final victory over Emilio Sanchez at the 2.55 million-dollar international players' championships on Thursday, reports Reuter.

Second-seeded Monica Seles in a sloppy but still dominant performance moved into the semifinals with a 6-1, 6-3 win over fourth seeded Mary Joe Fernandez. It was Seles' fourth victory in five matches over the sixth ranked American.

The Women's final pits Seles of Yugoslavia against third-seeded Gabriela Sabatini. Earlier Thursday, Sabatini of Argentina returned from a set down against top-seeded German Steffi Graf to win their semifinal 0-6, 7-6, (8-6) 6-1.

"Gaby is a tough opponent," said Seles, of her next match. "She'll come in a lot against me. I'll have to play my game

and go for my shots. With her advance to the finals, Seles remains the world's number one player. The only way Graf could have recaptured the top spot would have been to win as Seles and eliminated before the finals.

Edberg, the only non-American semifinalist in the men's draw, cruised through the first set only to have a battle in the second.

With the eight-ranked Sanchez ahead 5-4, Edberg was lucky to escape four break points on his serve which

would have sent the match into a third set.

"I didn't have any chances until those set points," said Sanchez.

"I was a little surprised. He played those points really fast and didn't give me a chance to play them."

Both players broke serve in the last two games to bring the set into a tiebreaker which Edberg finally won on his third match point.

"I enjoyed playing today," said Edberg, who is 5-1 against Sanchez. "It's the best match I've played here. He's a hard-working guy and makes you work hard for points."

Edberg is a definite favourite as the men's event moves into the semifinal round. The closest player to the Swede is 13th seeded American Jim Courier, who won the Indian Wells title.

Edberg's next plays unseeded David Wheaton, who beat 28th-seeded Cristiano Caratti of Italy 6-7, (7-9) 6-2, 6-0 in an early match. Courier faces 24th-seeded Richey Reneberg in the other semifinal.



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Tyson loses a round in legal battle

NEW YORK, Mar 22: Former heavyweight champion Mike Tyson has lost a round in his legal battle to derail next month's Evander Holyfield-George Foreman championship bout, reports Reuter.

A federal judge in Manhattan dismissed on Wednesday Tyson's lawsuit against the World Boxing Association that sought to bar the April 19 fight in Atlantic City.

Tyson claimed he was wrongfully deprived of the right to fight Holyfield for the crown since he was the top-ranked contender.

He accused the WBA of being "arbitrary and capricious," in sanctioning the Holyfield-Foreman bout despite its own rules requiring the champ to fight the leading contender.

U S District Judge John Martin ruled that the WBA had the right to use its own discretion in allowing a champion to fight someone other than the top contender.

"It strikes the court as somewhat ironic," Martin said in his 23-page opinion, that it was Tyson "himself who was the repeated beneficiary of the WBA's practice of sanctioning optional bouts."

Specifically, Tyson twice delayed fighting Holyfield when [Tyson] was the heavyweight champion and the latter was the leading contender. This court is not called upon to substitute its judgment for that of the WBA," Martin said.

Tyson sued after claiming he was entitled to a re-match with Buster Douglas after Douglas knocked him out in February 1990. Douglas later fought Holyfield and lost.

Tyson has since defended his claim to the top contender's spot by beating Donovan "Razor" Ruddock on Monday.

Kenya and Ethiopia, who between them have won the last ten team titles, are again favourites to win the team event, but face the challenge of arguably the strongest Moroccan team ever — including Skah, Brahim Boutayeb and Hammou Boutayeb.

Ngugi is joined in the Kenyan team by Moses Tanui Runner-up to Skah in 1990.

On the women's side, American Lynn Jennings is favourite to retain her title.

Like Skah, she has already scored a big win in Europe this winter at Tour Conging, France, in January.

Among her main challengers will be last year's runner-up, Maria Albertina Dias of Portugal, Olympic 10,000 metres silver medalist Liz McColgan of Britain and the Kenyan pair of Susan Sirma and Jane Ngothi, who have won four races between them this winter.

Jahangir's comeback

COLOGNE, Germany, Mar 22: Jahangir Khan, seeded to meet arch rival Jansher Khan in the final of the German Open Squash championship, had to stage a stirring comeback to reach the last eight on Thursday, reports Reuter.

Jahangir trailed by two games to one and 10-6 in the fourth before clawing his way back to beat New Zealander Ross Norman 13-15, 17-16, 14-15, 15-10, 15-8.

Jahangir, who dropped out of the world's top two for the first time in 10 years earlier this month, preserved another proud 10-year-long record.

Ngugi hopes to leave in style

ANTWERP, Belgium, Mar 22: Kenyan John Ngugi, who monopolised cross country running from 1986 to 1989 by winning four world titles in a row, hopes to bow out in style on Sunday by regaining the world crown he lost last year to Khalid Skah of Morocco.

Ngugi, always a special attraction because of his long, loping stride, confirmed this week the world championships near the port of Antwerp would be his final title race. He will concentrate in future on his speciality, the 5,000 metres.

The 28-year-old Olympic 5,000 metres champion will have to do better than last year in Aix-Les-Bains, France, when he faded badly near the end to finish a distant 20th.

Defending champion Skah, who followed by his amazing title win by becoming one of the world's top long distance track runners last summer, tuned up for the championships with an impressive victory in Italy earlier this month, easily beating Ethiopian Addis Abebe.

"Skah and Abebe are the favourites," said Australian outsider Steve Monaghan, last year's fastest marathon runner. But he added it would be interesting to see how the new generation of Kenyan runners — especially Osoro Ondoro and Thomas Osano — would perform.

Monaghan expects the African runners to dominate the field once again, "especially on this kind of circuit."

The Antwerp track is sandy and mainly flat, dotted with artificial hills.

But organisers, who described the course as "treacherous," said it was unlikely there would be an early breakaway because of the ever-



JOHN NGUGI

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