

Abahani drub Arambagh



Title-aspirants
Abahani Krishna Chakra continued their run of inspirational football to post a big four-nil victory against Arambagh Krishna Sangatha in yesterday's second match of the Star First Division football league at the Mirpur Stadium.

Their opponents, playing in the orange-navy blue combination of Brothers Union, did not deserve the drubbing the score-line would suggest but their planned show of temper and intimidatory tactics backfired to pave the path for a second-half blitzkrieg by the men from Dhanmondi in dazzling gold, which left Arambagh nonplussed, broke.

Abahani settled down quickly on a dusty ground with Philemon patches here and there. Sergei Zhukov and Alexey Artyev's eximious ball control and sense coupled with the pace and industry of Mamun Joarder and Zakir gave the Abahani offence a razor sharpness which left the Arambagh defence torn in shreds.

With the exception of Gaus, the left-winger who was relieved to be taken off later, everyone including the two wing-backs Alamgir and Nira worked hard to add to the bite of the attack of the defending champions. The goal, hanging like the sword of Damocles, finally fell in the 15th minute. A flag-kick deflected by skipper Munna was poetically cleared by the Arambagh defence; Zhukov standing free on the right corner of the box took a low, angular drive that crashed into the net, leaving the confused goalkeeper stranded out of position. The execution exemplified the superb sense of the two footballers from the former Soviet Union to keep themselves free from the preying eyes of opposition footballers; a lesson which they amply demonstrated later in the evening.

Munna, who has of late grown a penchant for martial arts, triggered off the skirmishes midway through the first half. The reportedly highest paid footballer of the country swooped on Arambagh's Kamal on the line near the centre circle. Tempers ran high as the Arambagh skipper engaged in a short scuffle with Rehan, the Abahani defender who is no less known for his talent in hacking players down than tackling properly. The foul which rendered Kamal unfit was serious enough to earn him a marching order. Instead he received a yellow card, something which he should have got earlier for dangerous play. The privileges one enjoys while playing for the big clubs! Arambagh were not far behind. The incident gave them the excuse to indulge in Tough football which made one quite apprehensive about the fate of the match.

The heat fortunately wore off, helped perhaps by the chill and the second half saw Abahani in a rapacious mood. The induction of Rumi in the place of totally ineffective Gaus did a world of good. Pacy Mamun Joarder, who had a good match yesterday, started finding himself in the shooting zone with dangerous frequency and he scored 23 minutes into the second half. He outpaced a defender after getting a ball from Alamgir and beat Bijoy with a powerful grounder to the second post 2-0.

Rumi, who multiplied the miseries of the beleaguered Arambagh defence with his delightful footwork, scored the third goal with another grounder from top of the box in the 30th minute, 3-0. Sheikh Mohammed Aslam who could not feature prominently in his side's attacks mainly because of an apparent non-cooperation by some of his teammates, got a beauty of a minus from Zakir and the striker scored his team's and his fourth goal of the season with a flashing header that had the speed and the venom of a cobra, 4-0. The striker was deprived of a goal earlier in the first half when his stinging

header in the 21st minute of the first half was tipped over the bar by the goalkeeper. Bijoy the Arambagh custodian, came to the rescue of his side minutes later when he barely got his fingers to a sudden, intelligent, dipping shot by Zhukov to thwart it from entering the net. The Abahani custodian in contrast was an epitome of maladroitness, blissfully unexposed by Arambagh forwards who wasted their two half-chances; once hanging on to the ball too long and on the other occasion shooting wide. The paucity of chances, however, cannot be explained as an absolute out-playing of the vanquished who displayed good brand of football in spells.

The win gives Abahani 12 points from six outings while Arambagh remain on five from as many outings.

Yellow cards: Munna and Zhukov of Abahani and Daboo and Sunny of Arambagh.

ABAHANI KC: Selim, Alamgir, Munna, Rehan, Nira, Arifeev, Zhukov, Munir (Mamun), Shakil (Zakir), Aslam and Gaus (Rumi).

ARAMBAGH KS: Bijoy, Daboo (Shamim), Ajmat, Haroon Sr, Anwar Sr, Sunny, Kamal, Tusher, Ekram, Sohel, Jahangir and Anwar Jr.

Referee: SK Badruddin.

POINTS SHARED
In the day's first match, Wari Club shared points with newly-promoted Eskaton Sabuj Sangha in a goalless encounter. Wari, enjoying a clear edge over their opponents, were rather unlucky to go home with a point as their forwards, particularly Tutul, missed a few chances. Eskaton missed their solitary chance in the second half when Rinku failed to beat a helpless Wari custodian. Wari and Eskaton have collected six and five points respectively from six matches each.

TODAY'S MATCHES
BJMC vs Wanderers (3 pm)
Mohammedans vs Dhanmondi (5 pm)

WB cricketers arrive Feb 9
Sports Reporter
A 15-member West Bengal cricket team will arrive on February 9, Sunday to play a number of matches at the Dhaka Stadium.

The tourists will play one-day matches each against Abahani Krishna Chakra and Dhaka Mohammedan Sporting Club on the tenth and eleventh respectively.

They will play a two-day match with a Bangladesh Cricket Control Board (BCCB) selection starting from February 13. Each side will play a maximum of 80 overs.

The visitors from across the border, who will leave on 16, will play their last match against a BCCB selection, presumably an under-25 one on February 15.

The full West Bengal squad is: Ashok Malhotra (Captain), Raja Venkat, Snehashish Ganguly, Srikanth Kalyani, Sourav Ganguly, Indu Bhusan Roy, Debanik Gandhi Mintu Das, Sharadindu Mukherjee, Satyen Bhattacharya, Rajiv Seth, Jayanta Dasgupta, Anup Das, Debanik Sengupta and Dipak Dasgupta (Manager), accordingly to the corrected players' list sent to the Bangladesh Cricket Control Board by the Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB) yesterday.

CONNORS' TERMS FOR FACING SELES
SAN FRANCISCO, Feb 6: Jimmy Connors said Wednesday he was prepared to play women's number one Monica Seles if she agreed that both players put down one million dollars and the winner takes all, reports AFP.

Since Seles spoke of her desire for a match with the 39-year-old former men's number one, such an encounter has been billed as battle of the grinders because of the noise both stars make when hitting the ball on court.

Connors, who is playing at a men's circuit tournament in San Francisco, said: "I know she wants to play me without changing the rules of the game."

"So I propose that we each put one million dollars on the table and the winner takes all. I will play on that condition."

Seventeen-year-old Seles said at the Australian Open that she would like to play Connors.

"If we did meet, the tennis public would see the world's greatest grinders on the same court at the same time. It would be noisy, great and fun," she commented.

Joyner-Kersey eyes golds in Barcelona
NEW YORK, Feb 6: Jackie Joyner-Kersey is aiming for another pair of gold medals at the Barcelona Olympics this summer both the long jumper and hept-athlete has a longer range plan in mind, reports Reuter.

Nineteen eighty four was my first Olympic team and it was in American said Joyner-Kersey, who is in New York for Friday's Millrose Games. "I was not strong mentally then, and I came up short with a silver (in the heptathlon)."

"God willing, I would like to stay through '96 and end my career on American soil. By that time I'll be 33 or 34 I would love to start in Los Angeles and finish in Atlanta."

Joyner-Kersey will be defending her Olympic heptathlon and long jump titles in Barcelona.

While there is strong competition in the long jump, there is rarely any doubt about Joyner-Kersey winning the heptathlon. Suspense centres around whether she will set another world record.

She has four world heptathlon marks since 1986, including the current standard of 7,291 points established at the 1988 Seoul Olympics.

The most important thing is the win, Joyner-Kersey said. "Once I am in shape—and at that time of year, injury not withstanding I will be in the best shape of my life—I will go to the Olympics thinking win. If I am in the best shape of my life, those other things will come."

Keegan's new job
NEWCASTLE, England, Feb 6: Former English captain Kevin Keegan made a sensational return to soccer Wednesday as manager of his former club Newcastle United, reports AFP.

"This is the only managerial job I have ever wanted," said the two-time European footballer-of-the-year. "We will turn this club around. It will go back where it belongs."

Keegan, who turns 41 next week, replaces former Argentinian international Ossie Ardiles who was sacked only three hours before the appointment was announced.

Last weekend, the former World Cup and Spurs star had been reassured by club owner and chairman Sir John Hall that his job was safe.

On Wednesday, Ardiles said he was sad and disappointed about his dismissal.

"But I have no bitterness towards Newcastle United or Kevin Keegan. I wish Kevin ev-

Wrestling meet
Sports Reporter
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Connors' terms for facing Seles

run-partnership which ended when Hick was also bowled by the Kenyan born off-spinner for 43.

Hick's innings, which included two sixes and five fours, was his Test best. A prolific run scorer, Hick has not been able to find his form at international level and doubts

three catches—played a mature innings similar to the 148 he scored in the first Test in Christchurch, but fell shortly before the close of play when strike bowler Danny Morrison returned to the fray and bowled him with a yorker.

England ended the day in a relatively comfortable position.

New Zealand brought in batsman Rod Latham for the injured Watson.

Score: England 239 for five (A Stewart 107, D Patel four for 77).

Scoreboard at the end of the first day of the third cricket Test match today between England and New Zealand.

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Jabbar tennis from today
Staff Reporter
The MA Jabbar Smriti tennis competition gets underway at the Ramna Tennis Complex today, says a press release.

A total of 175 players from different parts of the country are likely to take part in seven events.

Major General Mahbubur Rahman, Chairman of the National Sports Council will inaugurate the meet at 4 pm while the Mayor of Dhaka City Corporation Mirza Abbas will distribute prizes among the winners on the concluding day February 14.

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Batting first, Lalbagh made 119 runs for nine wickets in their allotted 35 overs with Moti and Azad scoring 35 and 14 respectively.

Moin and Nayan took two wickets each for Western.

In their turn, Western reached safely home in 31.3 overs for the loss of seven wickets with Sanchay and Torey scoring 25 and 21 respectively.

Jasim and Naju claimed four and two wickets respectively for Lalbagh.

In the other match of the day, Azad Sporting Club beat Dhaka Friends Union by 23 runs at the Dhanmondi Club ground.

Electing to bat, Azad scored 177 for nine wickets from their quota of 35 overs with Nirmal and Sajjad making 47 and 37 respectively.

Atiq of Friends Union claimed five wickets for 11, in reply, Friends Union could muster only 154 for nine wickets in their 35 overs.

Milton, Shakil and Chayan got 24, 22 and 19 runs respectively for Friends Union.

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Kakrail Boys Club vs Cantonian SC (DCS)
United Heroes vs Spread Eagles (DCO).

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