

Abahani trounce Dhanmondi 6-0

Sports Reporter
Reigning champions Abahani Krishna Chakra ran up their biggest winning margin in the current Star First Division football league Wednesday by trouncing neighbours Dhanmondi Club by half a dozen goals at the Mirpur Stadium.



SHEIKH ASLAM
the Abahani forwards the Dhanmondi boys would have returned home with an even more humiliating margin of defeat.

Star striker Sheikh Mohammad Aslam netted the first two goals for Abahani in the fourth and 35th minutes. Mamun Joarder in the 43rd, Rumi in the 67th, and Zakir in the 77th minute. In between, the harried and harassed Dhanmondi betrayed a bout of nerves by putting one in their own net by pushing an intended backpass to the goal to give Abahani their fifth goal.

The two goals Wednesday took Aslam's tally this season in the league to six.

Abahani now have fourteen points, having won all seven games to date.

In the other match on the day, played earlier in the afternoon, Arambagh played out a goalless draw with newcomers Eskaton Sabuj Sangha.

SATURDAY'S MATCHES

Wari vs Wanderers (3:00pm)
Mohammedans vs Adamjee (5:00pm)

Baggio on target

CESENA, Italy, Feb 20: Roberto Baggio underlined his return to form this season with two of Italy's goals in the comprehensive 4-0 win over little San Marino in a friendly international here on Wednesday, reports AFP.

In a match which was little more than a stroll for Arrigo Sacchi's side, Baggio started and finished the scoring, the first goal coming in the 36th minute and the last in the 85th.

In between, AC Milan's Roberto Donadoni made it 2-0 after 42 minutes and Baggio's Juventus club-mate Pierluigi Casaraghi hit the third in the 47th minute.

Div II cricket

DOHS Club and Eastern Sporting Club won their respective matches of the Rank Xerox Second Division cricket league on Wednesday last.

At the Mohakhali T&T ground, DOHS Club beat Azad Sporting Club by five wickets.

Batting first, Azad were all out for a poor 108 in 29.5 overs. Rasul got the highest 28 with the help of four boundaries while Anis and Manu scored 20 and ten respectively.

Faisal claimed three wickets while Biplob got two for DOHS.

In reply, DOHS sailed safely home in 34 overs for the loss of five wickets.

Skipper Mithu top scored with 22, hitting three boundaries while Coco remained notout on 21.

Anis and Rasul got two wickets apiece for Azad.

In the other match of the day, Eastern Sporting Club recorded a 27-run win over Nabin Sangha at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium.

Electing to bat, Eastern were all out in 33.2 overs for a handsome 219.

Maruf top scored with 42 off 45 deliveries that contained a six and five hits to the ropes.

Close call for Biman

Sports Reporter
Bangladesh Biman just managed to keep their super league chances alive when they were declared winners for having lost fewer wickets in their tied play-off match against Surja Tarun Club at the Dhaka Stadium Wednesday.

Sent in to bat by Tarun's Sri Lankan skipper Priya Lal Rodrigo, Biman collected 190 for five wickets from their allotted 45 overs. Tarun, in their turn, levelled the score losing all ten wickets in their 45 overs. With both teams standing at the same score, Biman's score of 190 for five held them in good side as the airlines' scraped through for losing fewer wickets.

Tariqzaman Munir seemed to be prouetting on one spot as he was dismissed for six, exactly the score he made in the earlier match against Brothers Union. Long-serving Ahmed Iqbal Bachchu, the other opener now approaching the twilight of his career, set about taking Biman out of the air-pocket.

Zakaria, of whom Ashik Malhotra, the captain of the West Bengal side that was here recently spoke highly, gave Bachchu fine support. Bachchu was the second batsman to go when he was run out for a sedate 36 made with the help of two boundaries. Zakaria was stumped for a well-made 30.

Enamul Huq Moni scored a quick-fire 46, studded with a superb six and a four before holding out to a substitute fielder off left-arm spinner Saikat. Plaf remained unbeaten on 47, inclusive of two fours, as Biman reached 190 for five.

Saikat was the pick of the Tarun bowlers claiming two for 31. Left-arm medium pacer Suppi also bowled well to finish with figures of one for 29.

Hadi and Titu gave Tarun a sound start by putting on 31 for the first wicket. Left-arm pacerman Rafiq brought one sharply in to trap the Lanky Hadi leg before, for 14. Titu followed him and neither Sri Lankan Aruna Silva nor Javed Omar Belm Golla stayed long enough to consolidate the position.

Skipper Rodrigo then stepped in to play a captain's knock but failed to cauterize the putrefaction that had reached to the Tarun bones by that time. While Biman spinners Anwarul Amin Azhar, the seasoned office and left-arm spinner Moni kept on removing Tarun batsmen at regular intervals, Rodrigo held one end up, maintaining a delicate balance between attack and defence. He was still there, unconquered on 65, a knock that contained five hits to the fence, when Saikat, the last Tarun batsman, running as if his shirt was on fire for the 191st run of their innings found himself stranded out of the ground.

Moni once again gave an excellent demonstration of his match winning qualities by rounding off his five batting with a commendable bowling analysis of three for 46 from nine overs. Azhar rose to the occasion in keeping the batsman quiet as well as taking wickets. He took two for 20 from his quota of nine overs.

Meanwhile, the super league phase of the Navana Premier Division cricket league will begin from February 24.

On the opening day, Dhaka Mohammedan Sporting Club will take on the sixth qualifier to emerge from the play-off matches, to be held till February 23.

Win for Bangladesh SC

Sports Reporter
Coming from behind, newcomers Bangladesh Sporting Club recorded an impressive two-one victory over good old Victoria Sporting Club in the Green Delta First Division hockey league at the Hockey Stadium on Wednesday last.

All three goals of this entertaining tie were scored in the second session.

Though Bangladesh Sporting, who inflicted a shocking 3-1 defeat on Bachelors Sporting Club in their previous league encounter, from the outset appeared a spirited side, a side with a mission, but it was the ordinary-looking Victoria who scored the first goal quite against the wind of the game.

A couple of minutes after the breather, Victoria were awarded a penalty stroke and Mukhter Hossain made no mistake in placing the ball into the Bangladesh Sporting net (1-0).

Soon afterwards, Bangladesh Sporting were also provided with a penalty stroke by the umpire; Mitu equalised for his side by converting it (1-1).

Nirman cricket

Sports Reporter
Morning Sun School and Bagan Bari High School won their respective matches of the Dhaka zonal championship of the Nirman Schools Cricket competition on Wednesday last at the Dhanmondi Club Ground (DCC).

At the DCC (East), Morning Sun beat Abdullah Mollah High School by eight wickets.

At the DCC (West), Bagan Bari High School recorded an impressive 70-run victory over Islamia Govt High School.

Sent into bat, Bagan Bari School made 199 all out in 30.4 overs with Mr Extras contributing the highest 54 and skipper Shaheen and Badal scoring 30 each.

Majumder snooker from tomorrow

Sports Reporter
The inaugural F H Majumder memorial snooker championship, an invitational meet under the auspices of the Narayanjan Club, begins at the club pavilion tomorrow, February 22.

State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadek Hossain will formally inaugurate the meet at 9:30 in the morning.

Organised by the Narayanjan Club in memory of one of its late lamented members and former General Secretary Fazlul Haq Majumder who was a keen snooker and billiards player and several times club champion, the meet will be participated by twenty-eight players from seven clubs of the country.

The Clubs taking part are Comilla Club, Comilla Station Club, Chittagong Club, Dhaka Club, Engineers Club, Gulshan Club and hosts Narayanjan Club.

Competition will be held according to the following format: The players, split into eight groups of three and four players each, will play a best of five frames preliminary round league. This will be followed by a quarterfinals knock-out round of best of seven frames. The quarter finals will be best of nine frames contests followed by the best of 11 frames semifinals. The final, to be held in two sessions, will be a best of 13 frames affair.

The thirteen-day competition will be played under the general rules of snooker as approved by the Bangladesh Billiards and Snooker Federation.

The championship is being sponsored by the Majumder Group of Companies, of which late F H Majumder was the founder chairman.

Pioneer soccer

Spandan Club registered a solitary goal victory over Gulbagh Krira Chakra in the Janata Bank Pioneer round robin league at the Outer Stadium on Wednesday last.

Rezaul Karim Liton netted the all-important goal for the winners.

Liton of Spandan and Kabir and Mazharul of Gulbagh were shown the green card.

The other match between Aganagar PMS and Nawabkhatra Juba Sangha at the same venue ended in a goalless draw.

Countdown to the fifth World Cup-I

A M Chowdhury
Australia, England, the West Indies, India and Pakistan can reasonably be grouped together as the favourites in the forthcoming fifth World Cup. Four out of these five are likely to find semi-final berths. But which four? Each and every one of the five can be considered good enough and it will largely depend on the consistency of their performances.

The Australians are the hot favourites for all the 'pundits' of the game and it is likely that they will retain the Cup which they won at the Eden Gardens, Calcutta, in 1987 beating England by only 7 runs.

This writer had the privilege of being among the 80,000 spectators, and still often wonders what would have been the outcome of the match had Mike Gatting not tried that adventurous and unnecessary reverse-sweep which caused his dismissal and turned the tide in Australia's favour.

In the recently concluded World Series Triangulars, Australia proved their superiority quite emphatically over India and the West Indies. It is beyond any doubt that they are the most balanced side; their strong batting line-up is backed by a superb battery of fast and medium-fast bowlers; their spinners do the containing role admirably; in fielding they are simply excellent, and in running between the wickets they have attained the nearest thing to perfection.

Australia no doubt possess the strength and the ability to be the champions for the second consecutive time and that, too, on their home grounds. David Boon, if he continues in the same fashion as he had been doing this season (in the World series he averaged 61.72 and compiled 432 and in the 5 Tests he collected 545 runs at an average of 77.85), he alone is capable of ensuring victory for his side. But in cricketing circles there is a superstitious belief, based on the so-called law of averages that every one has a quota for the season and David Boon may have used up a substantial portion of his quota before the World Cup. Let us wait and see if such beliefs have any credibility.

Graham Gooch shall enjoy the advantage of having at least three quality all-rounders, from among Ian Botham, Dermott Reeve, Chris Lewis and Derek Pringle, in his first eleven, which in turn will allow him to have an extra batsman, who in all probability, will be Neil Fairbrother. Graeme Hick looks like not to have settled down yet and if Ian Botham fills up the opening slot the middle order will be fairly strong with Robin Smith, Allan Lamb and Alec Stewart.

Phillip DeFreitas may be a different bowler under swinging conditions. Gooch can reasonably count on the good services of either of his two spinners, Phil Tufnell and Richard Illingworth. Gladstone small may provide able back-up in emergency.

The West Indies are something of an enigma. A team in transition, their recent performances promise some hope as well as despair. At Sharjah, they failed, but with some honour; they retrieved their position in Pakistan but their recent Down Under experience in the World series must have been demoralising for them.

The strength of the Caribbees lie in their bowling. Their fast bowling department manned by Curtly Ambrose, Malcolm Marshall, Patrick Patterson, Anderson Cummins and Winston Benjamin, is capable of ripping through any batting line-up. But they will have to cut down their wides and no-balls.

Logic, a diminutive man, loves to play shots square of the wicket and his subtle placements keep the 'score board moving. On Australian wickets batsmen of short stature have an advantage in tackling the rising ball. Brian Lara and Keith Arthurton are batsmen with great potentials. If they have learnt their lessons from the recent WSC triangular matches, they are expected to do well. If the West Indian batting comes off and gets enough runs, their bowling prowess is capable of wresting the initiative from any side.

Pakistan, under the leadership of Imran Khan, is a power to be reckoned with. If injury problems do not decapitate them seriously, they, on their day, can win against any opponent. Their bowling line-up may lay a claim to be among the best in the tournament with the experienced Wasim Akram, Aqib Javed and Imran Khan. Wasim Hyder will be the stock medium-pacer. This line-up may thunder through any batting line-up and it is likely that the Pakistan quickies shall find the fast bouncy



US figure skater Kristi Yamaguchi performs the Winter Olympics original programme portion of the women's competition in Albertville on Feb 19. —AFP photo

Skating like the Danube

ALBERTVILLE, France, Feb 20: The athlete and the artist were supposed to battle each other for the gold.

Wednesday night, artistry won out in the form of American's Kristi Yamaguchi, who may already have locked up the Olympic women's figure skating championship, reports AP.

Waltzing over the ice, Yamaguchi was as smooth as the waters of the "Blue Danube" she was dancing to, gliding elegantly and spinning superbly. At the same time, she hit all her jumps solidly—including the one that Japan's Midori Ito couldn't, the triple lutz.

Yamaguchi landed in first place going into Friday's free skate finals, followed by the US's Nancy Kerrigan, France's

Surya Bonaly and then Ito, who fell resoundingly after substituting a triple lutz for the more difficult triple axel.

"I am sorry," said the Acrobatic Ito, who had been considered the gold medal favourite. "I did not think I would fail the triple lutz. I chose it for safety. I was under the pressure of having not done the triple axel well in practice."

American Tonya Harding also fell, while performing a triple axel, and skidded into the sixth place. She trailed another Frenchwoman, Lactitia Hubert, who was a surprising fifth.

Yamaguchi finished first with all nine judges, drawing seven 5.9s for presentation.

"I tried to just skate free out there," she said. "I wanted a romantic mood, something easy, flowing and nice-to watch."

Winning start by hosts, Aussies

KARACHI, Feb 20: A last minute goal gave Pakistan a 1-0 win over Britain in the opening match of the 14th Champions Trophy world hockey tournament today, reports Reuter.

Pakistan skipper Shahbaz Ahmed dived full length to connect a right plant cross from Mohammad Shahbaz and score the winner two minutes from time.

Olympic champions Britain played better than expected and came close to snatching a point after Pakistan failed to capitalise on dive penalty corners.

Pakistani half Qamar Ibrahim was shown the green card for arguing with the Spanish umpire when a goal was disallowed at the start of the second half.

At first the umpire whistled for a goal, but reversed his decision after Britain's players showed it had entered through the side netting.

AUSTRALIA'S REVENGE
Meanwhile, Australia gained sweet revenge by defeating holders Germany 2-1 in the second match of the day.

In the final match of the 13th tournament played in Berlin last September, Germany had won 2-0 to regain the trophy from Australia but it was a different story this time.

Australia were the sharper and more committed team, while the Germans only came into the game spasmodically.

After a slow start, Australia went ahead in the 33rd minute when Mark Hager picked up a loose ball in midfield, ran on

unchallenged and then left German goalkeeper Michael Knauth stranded with no chance against a strong, well-placed shot.

The Germans failed to give any sign of mounting a recovery after the cross-over, and Australia went further ahead in the 47th minute when Stephen Davies seized on a rebound from a short corner to scoop the ball into the net.

Germany reduced the lead in the 62nd minute with a

Donald's goal
BRISBANE, Feb 20: South African Allan Donald is playing down his reputation as the fastest white bowler in the world as his team continue their build-up to the cricket World Cup, reports Reuter.

"I am sure that any fast bowler here for the World Cup won't be here to prove he is the quickest," said Donald.

"It's very difficult in one-day cricket to bowl at pace, depending on the conditions of the day.

"Some days you feel really good and you can bowl as quick as anyone in the world but other times you don't have to concentrate on line and length.

"I just want to soak up some experience, take a few wickets and maybe man-of-the-series in a good goal to achieve."

South Africa, who are here for a one-day warm-up match against Queensland on Friday, have their first Cup clash next Wednesday when they face holders Australia in Sydney.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down words.

Wednesday's answer 8-20

Cryptoquip puzzle grid with letters and numbers.

CRYPTOQUIP

PXUPWBF IXUBV UF CWGJF
GCF CVJLT JV IXB TCL
Wednesday's Cryptoquip: SAID TIRED AUTHOR, MY COOKBOOK IS FINALLY FINISHED, AND IT'S ABOUT THYME.

Today's Cryptoquip clue: P equals C

The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.