

MSC register 3 Russian booters

Sports Reporter Title-aspirants Dhaka Mohammedan Sporting Club yesterday evening completed the registration formalities of three Russian footballers who will don their colours in the current Star First Division league.

The players, who arrived in the city earlier yesterday, were taken to the Bangladesh Football Federation and the DMFA's Dhaka Stadium offices last evening by club officials and fans to sign their registration papers.

Div II cricket

Sports Reporter Eastern Sporting Club and Dhanmondi Club won their respective matches of the Rank-Xerox Second Division cricket league, yesterday at two different city venues.

Eastern SC recorded an exciting three-run victory over Shantinagar A at the Mohakhali T & T ground.

Batting first, Eastern were all out for a narrow 107 in 23.2 overs with Sajal making 30 and Ranjit 17.

Tutul of Shantinagar wrought havoc in Eastern batting claiming six wickets for 24.

In their turn, Shantinagar A were booked for a poor 104 in 34.3 overs.

Riyad scored 33 and Munna 27 for Shantinagar.

Shimul, the most successful Eastern bowler, claimed three wickets for 20.

In the other match of the day, Dhanmondi Club posted an easy ninety-run victory over Young Pegasus B at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium.

Electing to bat, Dhanmondi scored a massive 201 runs for nine wickets from their quota of 35 overs with Ujjal making 58 and Chayan 56.

Jubayer, the most successful Pegasus bowler, claimed five wickets for 35 while Jewel, Jasim and Asif took a wicket apiece.

Facing the target, Young Pegasus B were booked for a poor 111 in 32.2 overs.

Asif and Bappi got 28 and 23 respectively for Pegasus. Babla claimed three wickets while Nasim took two wickets for Dhanmondi Club.

TODAY'S MATCHES

Lalbagh Arwar vs Amar Jyoti (DCS)

Rayer Bazar AC vs East End Club (T&T ground)

Nirman cricket

Sports Reporter Udayan School and Mohamadpur Govt Boys' High School won their respective matches of the Dhaka zonal championship of the ninth Nirman Schools cricket competition yesterday at the Dhanmondi Club ground.

On the eastern side of the ground, Udayan School recorded an impressive six-wicket victory over Nazrul Shikshalaya.

Sent into bat, Nazrul Shikshalaya were all out for 152 in 34 overs.

In reply, Udayan made 153 for four wickets in 24.4 overs. Skipper Javed Islam remained not out with 57 while Amir scored 27 for Udayan.

Crowe promises a tough go

HAMILTON, New Zealand, Feb 24: New Zealand captain Martin Crowe is determined not to let the joy of beating Australia affect tomorrow's match here against Sri Lanka, reports AP.

The game is the second for both countries in the World Cup tournament.

New Zealand Saturday scored an upset win over Auckland while Sri Lanka beat Zimbabwe in a record-scoring match yesterday.

"The Sri Lanka game is one of those we had pencilled in to win if we are going to have any chance to reach the semifinals," Crowe said today.

"We are just going to get down to earth and knuckle down and work hard."

Crowe said Sri Lanka had arrived in New Zealand a more confident combination than that which drew the three-Test series here last year.

"They seem a lot more confident, it's going to be a tough go," Crowe said.

He said of Sri Lanka's inspiring achievement of overhauling Zimbabwe's 312-run target on Sunday: "It was a tremendous game, and it shows it will be pretty hard to set a target for Sri Lanka on a good pitch."

Crowe added that the results from first-round games emphasised the fact that none of the matches could be taken for granted.

Meanwhile, Sri Lanka may again have to leave out their chief strike bowler, Rumesh.

Ratnyayke: Skipper Aravinda De Silva said today that Ratnyayke, who dislocated a shoulder in the World Cup warm-up match against Pakistan, had visited a physiotherapist but was still in doubt for tomorrow's match.

Lara faces fitness test

MELBOURNE, Feb 24: Injured batsman Brian Lara will have to undergo a fitness test before taking his place in the West Indies team to face England in the World Cup at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on Thursday, reports AP.

Team manager Deryck Murray said Lara's fate would not be known until Wednesday at the earliest.

The big toe on Lara's right foot still was badly bruised and swollen Monday and Murray said it was still too early to make a proper assessment of the injury.

The 21-year-old right-hander made 88, his highest one-day score, against Pakistan on Sunday being struck on the toe by a Wasim Akram yorker.

He was taken to Epworth Hospital for a precautionary X-ray which cleared him of any break.

"It's still too early to tell whether he'll play," Murray said Monday.

"He'll eventually lose the nail, but at the moment it's really a question of monitoring the situation."

Murray said he was pleased with the ease of the win and predicted it would give his side a great deal of confidence.

"While we were fairly happy with our batting against the West Indies we did lose our way a bit between the 25th and 40th overs when the spinners were on."

"It was our fielding which really let us down, as well as Imran being out of the bowling attack. Nothing went right."

"We concentrated on our fielding at the nets today and will put in even more work on it in the next two days."

If Imran recovers, he will go into the Pakistani team in place of allrounder Wasim Akram, who made his one-day international debut against the West Indies.

Intikhab said the Pakistanis had a "reasonable" knowledge of the Zimbabwe team.

"Our only aim now is to win every game left," he said. "That means we have to be adaptable; able to bowl out a side or restrict its runs."

"That's very difficult when everyone is trying very, very hard."

Those who already have lost their first game are now under some pressure — including us," he said.

"Nobody can afford to lose a

Pakistan await Imran's return

HOBART, Australia, Feb 24: Captain Imran Khan must play if Pakistan is to be a force in the World Cup cricket tournament, team manager Intikhab Alam said Monday, reports AP.

Imran missed Pakistan's 10-wicket loss to the West Indies on Sunday with a strained right shoulder — and the Pakistan attack struggled in his absence.

"We really, need Imran fit and out on the field," Intikhab said after Pakistan's arrival in Hobart to prepare for Thursday's match against Zimbabwe at Bellerive Oval.

"He's being constantly treated for his injury and with two more days before the match we expect him to be right to play."

"It was better for him to miss Sunday's opening game than two or three matches later in the series if he aggravated his shoulder further."

Intikhab said he believes a team will have to win at least

five of its eight first round matches to be in contention for the semifinals.



IMRAN KHAN

Our bowling can be better: Gooch

PERTH, Feb 24: England's bowling needs improvement, team captain Graham Gooch said here.

Sunday in the wake of his side's narrow win over India in their opening World Cup clash, reports AP.

"Though we batted quite well, and our fielding was excellent, we can certainly improve our bowling a bit," he said of Saturday's match.

"Overall, if we can make a 10 per cent improvement, we can match anybody."

England, who batted first and scored 9-236, dismissed India for 227 to scrape home by nine runs at the WACA Ground, but with India 2-126 in the 31st over, there was a real prospect of an upset result to match New Zealand's defeat of Australia.

"We did not bowl as well at the start of this game as we did in New Zealand," said Gooch. "Luckily, 'beefy' (Ian Botham) pull it around in the middle, but India had their chances."

Gooch said the entire team,

himself included, were nervous at the start.

But he was full of praise for number three batsman Robin Smith, who hammered a lightning 108-delivery 91.

"He has matured into a super player," Gooch said. "Ic



GRAHAM GOOCH

had a tough time on tour here last season, and I just hope he is going to be a star of the one-day tournament, because when he hits the ball it stays hit."

Gooch said he had not been surprised at Australia's defeat by New Zealand.

"I know New Zealand would have prepared the wickets to

Bata handball

Sports Reporter Three more matches of the 1992 Bata women's handball league were decided yesterday at the Outer Stadium wooden-floor gymnasium.

In the keenly-contested first match of the day, Viharunnisa Noon School beat Bangladesh Rifles School by 18 goals to 16.

Mariam and Rashida netted nine and four goals respectively for the winners while Helena with 10 and Rehana with four were the main goal-getters for Rifles School.

Victoria Sporting Club trounced Moghbazar Girls' School 28-0 in a one-sided affair.

Rasheda, Asma and Arfeen scored nine, eight and six goals respectively for Victoria.

Bangladesh Ansars swamped Rajarbagh Police Lines School 63-3 in yet another mismatch.

Jahanara got as many as 24 goals while Sahera netted twelve and Papiya seven for Ansars while Shahana scored all the three goals for Police Lines School.

Econo jr TT

Sports Reporter Bangladesh Ansars, Azampur Young Boys and Surja Tarun Club from Group A and Bangladesh Biman, Azampur Young Star and Kalpataru Club from Group B have moved into the super league of the 1992 Econo junior table tennis league.

Ansars recorded a straight 3-0 sets victory over Azampur Young Boys to decide the Group A champions while Biman also registered an easy victory over Azampur Young Star to clinch the Group B championship yesterday at the National Coaching Centre.

Surja Tarun Club beat Armanitola Juniors 3-1 to finish third in Group A while Kalpataru Club beat Swarnibagh TTS 3-0 to become the third qualifier for the super league from Group B.

The six-team super league will begin on Friday, February 28.

Meanwhile, the three-day long Federation Cup invitational table tennis competition will begin this morning at the National Coaching Centre.

Nissan tennis

Sports Reporter Thirty-six more matches of the Nissan Cup tennis championship '92 were decided yesterday at the Gulshan Club courts and the National Tennis Complex.

Rumi, Afzal, Babu, Hira and Rahat moved into the quarter-finals of the boys' singles under-12 while Fayaz, Bijoy, Alam, Arjun, Omar and Rony qualified for the quarter-finals of the boys' under-16 singles.

Nat'l junior volleyball

Reports Reporter Six more matches of the final round of the Rahima Food national junior volleyball championship '92 were decided yesterday at the Outer Stadium volleyball court.

Rangpur DSA, Tangail DSA, Comilla DSA, and Pabna DSA defeated Faridpur DSA, Khulna DSA, Pabna DSA and the BKSP respectively while Dhaka DSA posted victory in both matches on the day, against the BKSP and Kustha DSA.

Zimbabweans boost their Test claim

NEW PLYMOUTH, New Zealand, Feb 24: Zimbabwe's bid for Test status may have been enhanced by their performance in the World Cup cricket match against Sri Lanka here on Sunday, according to captain David Houghton, reports Reuter.

Zimbabwe, seeking full membership of the International Cricket Council (ICC) at its traditional Lord's meeting in July, scored a huge 312 for four in their 50 overs, only to lose by three wickets with four balls left.

Opener Andy Flower scored an unbeaten 115 and Andy Waller blasted 83 not out off 45 balls as Zimbabwe easily beat their previous Cup best of 240 against Australia in 1983.

Houghton said his team's effort showed they were worthy of performing in the Test arena and the World Cup was the ideal shop window for Zimbabwe's bid to break into the top level.

"That is the big idea of showing people we are capable of competing at this level. We've got a good first-class batting side," Houghton said.

Houghton said bowling was their big concern but "hopefully over the years you pick that up and you find yourselves a Richard Hadlee somewhere," he added.

Sunday's surprisingly strong showing has boosted Zimbabwe's hopes of an upset such as they pulled off in the 1983 Cup by beating Australia.

"If we play well and consistently we'll surprise a few people," Houghton said.

Zimbabwe's next match is against Pakistan in Hobart on Thursday.

Dujon retires

Discarded West Indies wicketkeeper Jeff Dujon has announced his retirement from first class cricket, reports Reuter.

Dujon (35) was omitted from West Indies' World Cup squad after a distinguished 10-year international career during which he played 81 Tests. He scored more than 3,000 runs and captured more than 200 victims.

At his peak he was the most elegant of the West Indies batsmen with an upright, wristy style and also a splendidly athletic wicketkeeper to a succession of fearsome fast bowlers.

"I think this is a good time to bow out," Dujon said on Saturday. "Cricket can no longer be a priority for me. I have to think of my future and my family."

Moxon sidelined

Martyn Moxon, captain of the touring England cricket team, is being flown home after breaking a thumb, but should be fit for the start of the English county season, reports Reuter.

Tour manager Steve Coverdale said the Yorkshire opener received the injury attempting a catch during a knock about 20-over game after England's match against the Bermuda President's team finished early.

National women's handball Feb 26-28

Sports Reporter The eighth national women's handball championship will be held in Munshiganj from tomorrow, Feb 26 till February 28 under the joint auspices of the Bangladesh Handball Federation and the Munshiganj District Women's Sports Association.

Nine teams, namely, Bangladesh Ansars, BJMC, Bakerganj DSA, Faridpur DSA, Jessore DSA, Narail DSA, Rangpur DSA, Dhaka DSA and Munshiganj DSA will take part in the meet.

Inter-company badminton

Sports Reporter A ten-day long friendly inter-company badminton tournament concluded on February 20 at the grounds of Pfizer Laboratories in Paritbagh, says a press release.

Bangladesh Oxygen Ltd, Pfizer Laboratories Ltd, Phillips (BD) Ltd and Rhone-Poulenc, Beximco Pharma, Fisons and Ciba-Geigy took part in the meet.

Jahan of Pfizer became the individual champion while Rowshan of Beximco finished runner-up.

In the doubles meet, Ekram and Reaz pair from Fisons emerged champions while Jahan and Zaman of Pfizer became runners-up.

G O Doeg of Ciba-Geigy was adjudged the man-of-the-tournament.

Fire Service meet

The annual sports competition of the Fire Service and Civil Defence Directorate will be held today, reports UNB.

Teams from different divisions of the directorate will participate in the competition.

Besides athletics, contests will also be held in volleyball and kabaddi.



Man-of-the-match Andy Flower of Zimbabwe who made an unbeaten 115 against Sri Lanka on Sunday in New Plymouth, dives to beat a run out attempt. — AFP photo

For SA, a baptism of fire

SYDNEY, Feb 24: Twenty years late, a South African team will finally walk on to the Sydney Cricket Ground on Wednesday, no longer pariahs of the international game, reports Reuter.

The occasion will be far different from what was intended in that earlier, withdrawn invitation.

That would have been a five-day Test match. Instead, a new generation of South Africans will be initiated into the hurbury excitement of the World Cup, a tournament that did not exist at the time of their exile.

Fittingly their opponents are Australia, co-hosts with New Zealand of this fifth World Cup.

It could hardly be a tougher baptism.

Australia are the champions and, like a kangaroo with its tail tweaked, will be in a fighting mood after their shock defeat by New Zealand in the opening match.

South African coach Mike Procter, who would have been playing on that aborted 1971-72 tour, has taken encouragement from the Auckland upset.

"It was good for us because it puts a lot of pressure on the Australians," he said.

"I think our guys will be more confident now than they would have been otherwise."

That could be misplaced optimism. Since they captured the Cup in Calcutta four years ago, Australia have won 75 per cent of their one-day international matches.

And being well beaten by their old adversary New Zealand will only have served to make them doubly determined.

It says much for their will to win and their ability to quickly learn that they fought back to take the final match. Much of their hopes, on Wednesday and for the remainder of the tournament, will rest on the young shoulders of Allan Donald, sometimes referred to as the world's fastest white bowler.

They will look to him for an early breakthrough or to at least put slow-scoring pressure on opposing teams.

But in one man, their captain Kepler Wessels, who is among the few cricketers to represent two countries, South Africa do have one player of considerable experience.

South African born, Wessels played in 24 Tests for Australia during the boycott years before returning to his native land and playing against Mike Gatting's England rebel team two years ago.

It would be a story-book return for South Africa to win on Wednesday but logic suggests they are unlikely to gain the better of the Cup holders on their home ground.

But just being there after two decades of isolation will probably suffice.

For Ali Bacher, chief executive of the recently-formed, multi-racial United Cricket Board of South Africa, it will certainly be an emotional occasion.

When South Africa were readmitted to world cricket at a meeting of all the countries at Lord's last year, Bacher wept.

A tough man who has walked through the minefields of politics and racial hatred to make his country part of the normal world again, he also has an emotional side.

A tear will not be far away when he watches Wessels lead out his young side in Sydney.

Coach Bob Simpson dismissed the defeat as one of those strange, strange days.

"I don't think we should go overboard after one very poor game," he said. "We are not going to win them all and I think we can."

Australia have the most experienced one-day player in the world in Captain Allan Border with a record 234 matches. He is not a man to allow the sentiment of the occasion to cloud his judgement or his will to win.

South Africa's advantage may lie in the fact they are something of an unknown quantity because of their long period of exile. They are also used to playing under floodlights in day-night matches such as the one on Wednesday.

But the ultra-professional Australians have done their homework as best they can.

"We have some tapes of them to have a look at and we have spoken to a lot of people who have played them," Simpson said.

Certainly the Australians will not underestimate the South Africans, who have maintained a degree of international competition through the boycott years with a series of rebel tours, including visits from West Indies and Sri Lanka whom they have never played at official level.

Since their return last year from banishment, South Africa have already played a short series of one-day matches against India losing 2-1.

Not surprisingly they were beaten in the cauldron of Calcutta's Eden Gardens, surrounded by a continuous din and after a bewildering red carpet arrival.

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Video lessons for jolted Aussies

Border said many of his players knew nothing about the South Africans until watching the videos.

"It was a useful exercise — at least now we'll be able to recognise their players on Wednesday," he said.

"We are just trying to familiarise ourselves with the South Africans. They are a bit of an unknown quantity."

Border said his lack of knowledge about the opposition made his job as captain more demanding.

"When you don't know the strengths and weaknesses of opponents, or what their favourite shots are, it does make field placements a bit more difficult," he said.

"These days, fielders' positions are fairly routine, but there are occasions when you're looking for a breakthrough when you like to try something a bit different."

Border said he had faced only two of the South African bowlers, veteran spinner Omar Henry and medium-pace Brian McMillan.

Defending champion Australia suffered a surprise loss to New Zealand in its tournament opener, while South Africa has not yet played a match.

Australian coach Bobby Simpson said the squad was calm, despite the loss.

"We intend to go out and win every game from now on," Simpson said.

"It's possible a team could lose four games and still reach the semifinals depending on how the other results go, so there's absolutely no reason to panic at this stage."

South African coach Mike Procter said his team had been encouraged by Australia's loss to New Zealand.

"It was good for us, because it puts a lot of pressure on the Australians," he said.

"I think our guys will be more confident now than they would have been otherwise."

Kasparov's fine start

LINARES, Spain, Feb 24: World Champion Garry Kasparov of Russia made a winning start at the 10th international chess tournament in Linares on Sunday with a quick victory over Jan Timman of the Netherlands, reports Reuter.

Kasparov, playing black, needed only 25 moves of a king's Indian defence to defeat Timman, who contributed to his own downfall with a bad mistake on the 10th move.

Former world champion Anatoly Karpov, also playing black, took 60 moves of a Carokan defence to overcome Ljubomir Ljubojevic of Yugoslavia.

Karpov was better positioned throughout the match but appeared to be heading for a draw until Ljubojevic made an error late in the game.

Jansher to face Dittmar in final

CARDIFF, Feb 24: Jansher Khan, the defending champion on Sunday, reports Reuter.

World number five Robertson overturned a 12-7 deficit to win the second game and was well in contention until the last few rallies of the third game.

It was not until the Australian went over heavily on his ankle very early in the fourth game that his stubborn resistance subsided.

Jansher went on to win 15-9, 14-7, 15-11, 15-3 in 74 minutes.

His opponent in Monday's final will be Chris Dittmar, the world number three, who won an all-Australian semifinal 17-15, 15-12, 10-15, 15-13 against world champion Rodney Martin.

Martin, playing his first tournament since suffering a foot injury during the Canadian Open final in October, wilted at vital stages of the match.

The women's final will be between Susan Devoy, the world number one from New Zealand, and England number one Martine Le Motgan.

Devoy came through 15-13, 12-15, 15-13, 15-12 after a keenly contested 52-minute semifinal with world junior champion Cassie Jackman of England.

Ctg Press Club meet begins