

Brothers beat Victoria

Sports Reporter Last year's Navana Premier league champions Brothers Union have moved into the final of the Independence Day cricket tournament...

Brothers will now take on the winners of the Bangladesh Biman and Udayi Club tie in the final scheduled to be held on March 26.

Brothers skipper Athar Ali won the toss and invited Victoria to bat. Victoria made 183 for the loss of eight wickets...

TODAY'S MATCH

Biman vs Udayi Club (Dhaka Stadium)

Khoka meet SA sports minister

ADELAIDE, Mar 22: State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadek Hossain Khoka today met the Sports Minister of South Australia Kim Mayes here, reports BSS.

Khoka condoles N M Khan's death

State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadek Hossain Khoka yesterday condoled the death of Nurul Momen Khan, Secretary of the Ministry of Youth and Sports and President of the Bangladesh Olympic Association, reports BSS.

Wessels urges rules change

run, therefore they lost just one run off their tally. The rules, decided by the International Cricket Committee, have come under attack during the tournament for favouring the team batting second.

England, who scored 252 for six wickets off 45 overs, won the match after a late, 12 minute deluge interrupted South Africa's innings in the 43rd over with the side needing 22 off 13 balls.

SA to send 125 to Barcelona

JOHANNESBURG, Mar 22: South Africa plans to send about 125 competitors to the Barcelona Summer Games, the country's National Olympic Committee said on Saturday, reports Reuter.

Rules help England end S Africa's dream

SYDNEY, Mar 22: England finally ended South Africa's dream with a 20-run win in near-chaotic conditions after rain interfered with their gallant run chase in the World Cup cricket semifinal Sunday, reports Reuter.

With South Africa needing 22 off the final 13 deliveries, the umpires ordered the players from the field as steady rain fell.

As the play resumed after rain it was announced under the rules that South Africa were required to score 21 runs but off one ball for victory. The England total was revised after rain to 251 based on highest-scoring 43 overs, minimum possible in time left.

The ball was bowled, one run taken from it and South Africa finished on 232 for six in reply to England's revised 251 for six.

The packed crowd howled their disappointment and then rose to give the South Africans, making their World Cup debut, a standing ovation as they did a lap of honour.

The day-night match had earlier been cut to 45 overs each because of South Africa's slow over rate after they had won the toss and sent England in to bat.

England now meet Pakistan in the final in Melbourne on Wednesday.

It was a tragic end to a superbly entertaining match in which England had built their total around an innings of 83 by Graeme Hick.

Only the Members' enclosure was sparsely occupied. Elsewhere in the 40,000-seater stadium it was standing room only with the majority rooting for South Africa.

A high-vocal English contingent kept up an almost continual barrage of chants and songs, mainly borrowed from the soccer terraces.

Many had their faces painted in the national colours and flags and banners hung from their stand.

One read 'Beefy busts Kepler's Wessels' in reference to crowd favourite Ian Botham. But it was Hick more than Botham who earned their cheers as he ignored a scratchy start to produce a powerful innings off 90 balls.

South Africa were far from overawed by the asking rate of 5.62 an over and 21 came from the first three overs.

Wessels looked in dangerous form, making 17 from 23 balls before being lured into cutting a catch straight to backward point.

Peter Kirsten, South Africa's leading Cup score, was forced to use a runner after injuring his leg while fielding and made only 11 before being beaten and bowled by a Phillip DeFreitas' outswinger.

But South Africa kept abreast of the required run-rate, first through fluent strokes by opener Andrew Hudson and then some bludgeoning blows by Adrian Kuiper.

Both were prised out by left-arm spinner Richard Illingworth.

Hudson was trapped lbw after an elegant 46 which contained six boundaries while Kuiper, who had taken three successive fours off Gladstone Small, was bowled after charging down the pitch.

Hansie Cronje and Jonty Rhodes kept the score moving with smart running between the wickets but tight bowling by DeFreitas and, in their later overs, Botham and Gladstone Small kept them in check.

Rhodes, who has captured the public's imagination with brilliant fielding, attempted a final charge with a brave 43 from 39 balls.

But then he perished to a catch in the deep, leaving to a standing ovation.

Brian McMillan and Dave Richardson defiantly kept alive South Africa's hopes.

But then rain and umpires Brian Aldridge of New Zealand and Australian Stephen Randall took matters out of their hands and once again the much-despised rain rules made a mockery of a fascinating match.

LUCKY HICK A large slice of fortune surrounded the start of Hick's innings as umpire Aldridge turned down a loud appeal for leg before off his first ball that must have been desperately close.

And off his fourth, Hick presented a simple catch to Wessels at first slip, only for a no-ball to be called.

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The first three overs saw 25 runs on the board, but also the wicket of captain Graham Gooch to a very dubious decision when umpire Randell adjudged him caught behind after the ball appeared to brush his thigh.

England had already suffered a setback with the withdrawal of Robin Smith because of a pinched nerve, joining Derek Pringle on the injury list.



England all-rounder Ian Botham tries to console a disappointed Brian McMillan after the farcical end to yesterday's second semifinal of the World Cup at the SCG. —Star TV photo

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catch from a full-blooded slash in to the gully. His 83 contained nine boundaries and was only four short of his highest one-day score for England.

Allan Lamb, recovering from a pulled hamstring, managed only one boundary in his 19 before he became Donald's second victim, caught behind.

When it became clear that South Africa's slow over rate meant there would not be time for the full compliment of 50, Chris Lewis and Dermot Reeve attacked the bowling to good effect.

Reeve was especially savage during Donald's closing over, bludgeoning three boundaries and scoring all but one of the 18 that came from it.

Reeve was unbeaten on 25, from only 14 balls, and Lewis 18.

Donald returned his worst figures of South Africa's debut campaign with two for 69 from 10 overs.

The scene was set for an exciting finish, but what would anyhow have been a memorable match will now be remembered for the wrong reasons.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the World Cup cricket semifinal between England and South Africa today:

ENGLAND

Table with 4 columns: Player, Runs, Wickets, Overs. Includes Gooch c Richardson, Botham b Pringle, Stewart c Richardson, b McMillan, Hick c Rhodes b Snell, Fairbrother b Pringle, Lamb c Richardson, b Donald, Lewis not out, Reeve not out.

Extras: (b-1, lb-7, nb-6, w-9) 23 Total: (six wickets -- 45 overs) 252

Fall of wickets: 1-20; 2-39; 3-110; 4-183; 5-187; 6-221. Did not bat: R DeFreitas, R Illingworth, G Small.

Table with 4 columns: Bowling, O, M, R, W. Includes Donald, Pringle, Snell, McMillan, Kulper, Cronje.

SOUTH AFRICA

Table with 4 columns: Player, Runs, Wickets, Overs. Includes Wessels c Lewis b Botham, Hudson lbw b Illingworth, Kirsten b DeFreitas, Kuiper b Illingworth, Cronje c Hick b Small, Rhodes c Lewis b Small, McMillan not out, Richardson not out, Extras: (lb-17, w-4) 21.

Total: (43 overs -- six wickets) 232

Fall of wickets: 1-26; 2-61; 3-90; 4-131; 5-176; 6-206. Did not bat: R Snell, M Pringle, A Donald.

Table with 4 columns: Bowling, O, M, R, W. Includes Botham, Lewis, DeFreitas, Illingworth, Small.

Result: England won by 20 runs (South Africa innings reduced after rain by two overs but England total remained 252, based on highest-scoring 43 overs).

Man-of-the-match: Graeme Hick (England).

Smith hangs his gloves

AUCKLAND, Mar 22: New Zealand wicketkeeper Ian Smith announced his retirement from international cricket after his team's World Cup semifinal defeat by Pakistan on Saturday, reports Reuter.

Smith, 35, played in 63 Tests since his debut in 1980 and captured a total of 177 victims, 169 caught and eight stumped.

His tally puts him ninth on the list of the world's leading keepers which is headed by Australian Rodney Marsh, who had a total of 355 victims when he retired.

Smith's skills behind the stumps were complemented by his ability as an effective lower order batsman, scoring



IAN SMITH 1,815 Test runs at an average of 25.26.

Smith hit two Test hundreds, the highest being a remarkable innings of 173 against India at Auckland's Eden Park Ground in the third Test of his series in early 1990. Smith's score came off 136 balls, was the highest by a New Zealand wicketkeeper, and the highest by anyone batting at No. 9 in a Test match.

Azad SC shock Wari in hockey

Sports Reporter Azad Sporting Club collected two invaluable points upsetting Wari Club by two goals to one in the Green Delta First Division hockey league at the Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Fazle Nomani and Shariful Alam scored for the winners while Khurshid Hossain netted the only goal for Wari.

Azad now have nine points while Wari have eleven from 14 matches each.

The other encounter of the day, between Bangladesh Railway SC and Dhaka Wanderers Club, ended in a goalless draw.

The result left Wanderers with 11 points from 14 engagements while Railway have seven points, also from 14 matches.

TODAY'S MATCHES

Sadharan Bima vs Victoria SC (1:45 pm) Sonali Bank vs Bachelors SC (3:15 pm)

Inzamam - instant hero

AUCKLAND, Mar 22: Inexperienced Inzamamul Haq has emerged as the unsung hero in Pakistan's quest for their first World Cup cricket title, reports AP.

On Saturday, Inzamam shredded New Zealand's hopes



INZAMAMUL HAQ

just 37 balls, including seven fours and a six. Inzamam's 50 was the equal second-fastest in the World Cup, coming off just 31 balls.

Inzamamul received the man-of-the-match award for his 60, which turned the game.

The 22-year-old middle order batsman came in when Pakistan were struggling at 140 for four. He reached his half century in just 31 balls and his innings altogether included five fours and one six.

He and Miandad put on 87 vital runs in 64 balls, hauling back a required run-rate of more than eight an over to set up the victory.

Javed remained 57 not out, tidying up the singles and twos behind the flash and dash of his partners.

Cruel irony for South Africans

By Tawfiq Aziz Khan

The heavens started showering blessings on the Englishmen. The umpires, Australian Steve Randell and Brian Aldridge of New Zealand, conferred and called the groundsmen to cover the pitch and retired to drier shelter, much to the relief of the Englishmen and disenchantment of the South Africans.

Earlier in the day, when a similar light shower started the South Africans had very much wanted play to be held up but the men in white shirts did not agree. To compound the confusion the electronic scoreboard flashed that South Africa needed 22 runs from seven balls. But the umpires made their calculations again and came up with the absurd arithmetic of 22 runs from one ball! Call it cricket?

Kepler Wessels, a veteran of 65 one-dayers, may be a good player but seems to lack the imagination and keen cricketing mind which is so vital for leading a side in such important matches. He was not only guilty of sending England in to bat after winning the toss, but also partly responsible for restricting the match to 45 overs. His task was made more difficult by his 'speed quartet,' specially Richard Snell, whose rhythm went haywire.

There were quite a few umpiring errors also. Gooch did

not get a touch but was given out. Hick survived a close shave from the very first ball he received and then the umpire called a no-ball as he was caught at slip, and then, in the same over, spooned a catch which fell slightly short of the fielder. That proved the turning point as Hick went on to celebrate his nine lives with a score of 83 from 91 deliveries. England thrived to score 252 for 6 in 45 overs.

The South African reply was as spirited, with Wessels leading from the front. A compulsive front foot player, he is particularly known for his fine placements. He left in the fifth over trying to force the bowling. Then the veteran Kirsten left at 62 and when hard-hitting Hudson left at 90 it looked to be over for them. But there were great surprises in store for England!

Hard-hitting Kuiper made Gladstone Small feel still smaller as he lofted him for three consecutive fours. Cronje, Rhodes, McMillan and Richardson kept up the challenge. None in his right mind would have imagined that these players, with their very limited experience of the one-day variety, would give the