

Chittagong national champs

Sports Reporter

Chittagong overcame searing heat, a fine century by national all-rounder Aminul Islam Bulbul playing for Sylhet, and their own poor fielding to lift the glittering trophy of the 18th national cricket championship for the second time with a four-wicket win over Sylhet DSA at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

Sylhet, in search of their maiden championship, found themselves in dire straits soon after Chittagong (CJJKP) captain Nurul Abedin Nobel, deputising for younger brother and national skipper Minhazul Abedin Nannu who had left for the UK, put the strong Sylhet Eleven into bat.

CJKP opening bowlers, left-arm Morshed and Subroto, had them reeling at three for eight in the seventh over. Opener Sohel Hamid, who played a ninety-plus innings in the semifinals, was bowled by Morshed for a duck and Ahmed and Alok left for four and one respectively.

Aminul Islam Bulbul, one of the most exciting all-rounders of recent times, then paired with skipper Rizvi to make the wicket-run proportion more sensible.

These two put on 85 runs for the fourth wicket before Rafiqul Alam, the man-of-the-match of the final, stepped in to claim the first of his three wickets. Rizvi left for a painstaking 32 but Bulbul mixed caution with aggression to do his best for his adopted side. Whether dancing down the wicket or lapping the ball behind square with his favourite paddle sweep, Bulbul was a delight to watch. The batsmen, who rode his luck, made 112 off 109 balls and two sixes over long-on and mid-wicket.

Golam Faruq Suru contributed a quick 24 off 15 balls while hired hands Nadir Shah and wicket-keeper Nasir Ahmed Nasu chipped in with 15 and 14 not out respectively to take the Sylhet score to 227 for nine from the stipulated 45 overs.

Subroto, the CJKP opening bowler who plays for Lalmatia Club, was the pick of the bowlers with figures of three for 33 from his quota of nine overs.

Rafiqul Alam, no longer a fearsome customer with the cherry, reaped rich with his slow wobbly, well-directed deliveries, finishing with three for 36. He broke through at the crucial phases of the Sylhet innings picking the vital wickets of Athar Ali Khan and a dangerous Golam Nowsheer Prince to stifle the go-go-spirit of the Sylhetis, a fact that prompted match adjudicator Dipu Roy Chowdhury to name him as the man of the match later.

Experienced Morshed bowled a good line to capture two for 23.

The Chittagong fielding, in keeping with the general low standard of fielding in our cricket, added to the discomfi-

ture of the heat-stricken spectators, left a lot to be desired. Chittagong opens Nurul Abedin Nobel and Zahid Ruzak Masum began cautiously, keeping in mind the unavailability of their best batsman Nannu and put on 36 before Suru

that has a time hallowed tag of gentleness and sportsmanship. Three quick wickets, including two run outs, revived Sylhet hopes to some extent but Akram Khan smashed the ball with power befitting his



National cricket champions Chittagong players and officials after yesterday's triumph at the Dhaka Stadium. —Star photo



M-o-M RAFIQUAL ALAM

provided Sylhet the first breakthrough. Form-batsman Rafiqul Alam, who originally hails from Barisal, then teamed up with Masum who, after a couple of reprieves, was stroking the ball freely. They put on 99 for the second wicket before Rafiq tried to force Nadir Shah and was caught by a languid Athar for a well-compiled 46, including four hits to the fence.

The departure of Rafiq meant little respite for the Sylhet players as burly Akram Khan another very successful and inform batsman, walked in to fill the void created by Rafiq's departure.

An unfortunate incident caused further calescence in an almost unbearable atmosphere when umpire Dilip ruled Masum leg before the wicket off Bulbul with the batsman on 73. The ball, either off the batsman's pad or bat or a bit of both, trickled down to the third man with the batsman setting off for a single but the raised finger of the umpire called for a return to the pavilion. An infuriated Masum stayed at the wicket for an embarrassingly long time and motioned rather threateningly at the umpire which did anything but good to the game.

girth to take CJKP to its cherished goal. He was there at the kill with an invaluable knock of 56 and rounded off the show with a pulled four off Prince from the first delivery of the last over to raise the total to 229 for six wickets.

Nadir Shah was the most successful Sylhet bowler with the expensive analysis of two for 62, from nine overs. Bulbul and Suru took one wicket apiece.

A comedy of verbal error reigned the prize distribution ceremony in which State Minister for Textiles Abdul Mannan gave away the prizes after a brief speech by Malcolm Fry, the representative of the sponsors BTC. Earlier, Foreign Minister and President of Bangladesh Cricket Control Board A S M Mustafizur Rahman witnessed the proceedings of the earlier part of the match.

Chittagong pocketed a winners' purse of Taka 25,000 and Sylhet Tk 16,000 while man of the match Rafiq went home richer for Tk 2,000.

SCOREBOARD

SYLHET
Ahmed c Ishtiaque b Morshed 4

ROLL OF HONOUR

Following is the Roll of Honour of the national cricket championship:

Year	Champion	Runner-up
1974-75	Comilla DSA	Barisal DSA
1975-76	Farpur DSA	Comilla DSA
1976-77	Comilla DSA	Dhaka DSA
1977-78	Beran	Rajshahi DSA
1978-79	Dhaka University	Beran
1979-80	Dhaka University	Barisal DSA
1980-81	Beran	Chittagong DSA
1981-82	Bangladesh Shipping Corporation	Dhaka DSA
1982-83	Sylhet DSA	Beran
1983-84	Dhaka University	Barisal DSA
1984-85	Dhaka University	Barisal DSA
1985-86	Dhaka University	Barisal DSA
1986-87	Dhaka University	Chittagong DSA
1987-88	Beran	Barisal DSA
1988-89	Chittagong DSA	Dhaka University
1989-90	Dhaka University	Narayanganj DSA
1990-91	Final could not be held	
1991-92	Chittagong DSA	Sylhet DSA



A.I. BULBUL ...112

Nasu not out	14
Wahid not out	3
Extras: (b2, lb7, wb6)	15
Total (for nine wickets in 45 overs)	227
Fall of wickets: 1/3; 2/7; 3/8; 4/93; 5/103; 6/161; 7/203; 8/204; 9/213.	
Bowling:	O M R W
Subroto	9 1 33 3
Morshed	7 0 23 2
Badshah	3 0 26 0
Masum	4 0 23 0
Rubel	7 0 45 1
Rafiq	9 0 36 3
Alok	6 0 32 0
CJKP	
Masum lbw b Bulbul	73
Nobel c Masum b Suru	15
Rafiq c Athar Ali b Nadir Shah	46
Akram Khan not out	56
Alzal b Nadir Shah	11
Ishtiaque run out	1
Badshah run out	5
Rubel not out	1
Extras: (b1, lb5, wb15)	21
Total: (For six wickets in 44.1 overs)	229
Fall of wickets: 1/36; 2/135; 3/163; 4/187; 5/199; 6/223.	
Bowling:	O M R W
Prince	7.1 0 41 0
Ahmed	2 0 14 0
Suru	3 0 16 1
Athar Ali	5 0 22 0
Bulbul	9 0 32 1
Nadir Shah	9 1 62 2
Wahid	9 0 36 0
Umpires: Milki and Dilip Saha.	

Nat'l youth cricket finals from today

Sports Reporter

The eight-team final round of the Siraj memorial national youth cricket championship begins this morning at two different city venues.

Last year's runners-up Dhaka DSA take on Tangal zonal champions and one of the favourites Mymensingh DSA at the Dhaka Stadium while at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium Sylhet zonal champions Chittagong, another fancied side, clash with Rajshahi, the champions of Pabna zone.

Defending champions Bangladesh Krira Shiksha Protishta (BKSP) will take on Thakurgaon zonal champions Rangpur DSA in their first match at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium tomorrow.

The two semifinals will be held on April 20 and 21 while the final will be held on April 23.

Meanwhile, Jessore DSA made the finals by emerging as the Barisal zonal champions. They beat Khulna in the zonal final on Thursday last.

Jessore will play Kushtia, the Jessore zonal champions, tomorrow at the Dhaka Stadium.

About forty DSAs — split into six zones — participated in the qualifying round held from April 10 to 16 at six different venues across the country.

Short earns draw

LINARES, Spain, Apr 17: British Grandmaster Nigel Short came from behind to adjourn in a winning position against former world champion Anatoly Karpov of Russia in their fourth game in the world chess championship semifinals on Thursday, reports Reuter.

The pair had played 60 moves in six hours and the game was adjourned with Short in possession of a rook, a bishop and two pawns against Karpov's knight, bishop and two pawns.

Karpov, playing his favourite Caro Kan defence — the same strategy as in the second match of the best-of-10 series — could easily have drawn after sacrificing a rook for a bishop.

But thirsting for victory, and with both players in serious time trouble, Karpov forced a series of exchanges which Short turned to his advantage, leaving Karpov struggling for a draw.

If Short wins, the score will be level at two games each. Dutch Grandmaster Jan Timman won against Russian Artur Yusupov in their fourth game after 31 moves and two hours of play to round the match score at two games each.

Yusupov played a Russian defence, as in his second game, but came under time pressure and lost a pawn, giving Timman the chance for checkmate. Yusupov then resigned the match.

Chang on course in HK Open

HONG KONG, Apr 17: Chinese-American Michael Chang took a step nearer fulfilling his ambition of winning the Hong Kong Open with an accomplished straight sets victory over Jim Grabb in the second round on Thursday, reports Reuter.

Chang, 20, is a hero figure in Hong Kong and was mobbed by hundreds of girl fans after his 6-2, 6-4 win over American Grabb.

He found the lines with impressive regularity and the number three seed's winners were met with screams of delight from his youthful supporter.

"I would like to win here before 1997, otherwise it might be a bit more difficult," said Chang, with reference to Hong Kong's handover to China. "I like playing here and the attention I receive."

World number one Jim Courier avenged his defeat by Gary Muller in the 1990 US Open by crushing the extrovert South African 6-2, 6-1 in the quarter-finals on Friday.

"I was murdered out there," was Muller's accurate summing up of his defeat.

Courier, winner of the Japan Open last week, will play fourth seed Brad Gilbert in Saturday's semifinal.

Gilbert, ranked 21, came from a set behind to defeat Japanese Shuzo Matsuoka 4-6, 7-6, 6-1.

Big upsets in Pattaya Volvo

BANGKOK, Apr 17: Big upsets marked the fourth day of the Volvo Women's Open tennis championships at Thailand's seaside resort of Pattaya Thursday, reports AFP.

Stephanie Rotier of the Netherlands defeated second-seeded Naoko Sawamatsu of Japan, ranked 34th in the world, 6-1, 7-5 in the second round contest, while Wang Shi Ting of Taiwan downed Germany's Claudi Porwik 6-3, 6-4.

Wessels' dilemma: To bat or not to bat

BRIDGETOWN, Apr 17: South Africa face a dilemma if they win the toss on their momentous return to Test cricket on Saturday, reports Reuter.

The touring team are still undecided what to do should captain Kepler Wessels call correctly when the political talk ends and the action begins in their inaugural five-day Test against West Indies.

The South Africans will be sorely tempted to unleash paceman Allan Donald on the grassy Kensington Oval strip.

But history — West Indies have not lost a Test here for 57 years — and a Transatlantic phone call to coach Mike Procter suggest that any side winning the toss should take first knock.

Procter spoke by phone on Thursday to Steve Coverdale, manager of the recent England A tour to the Caribbean.

"He didn't even say hello," Procter said. "He just said: 'You've got bat.'"

Last year Australia shot out

tends to become a perfect batting surface on the second and third days, before getting steadily slower and lower in the latter stages.

Whatever thunderbolts Donald produces, South Africa know they have to perform with the bat to stand a chance of a result against a West Indies side with plenty to prove themselves.

Their fast bowlers have to deal with tougher laws on short-pitched bowling and, like the South African, they have been force-fed a constant diet of one-day cricket since the start of the year.

But the only Test West Indies have lost at Kensington Oval was a rain-affected affair in 1935. They have won their last 10 Tests on the ground.

That sort of statistic is daunting enough for and team, let alone a South African side for whom five-day cricket is largely a mystery.

Ali Bacher, managing director of the United Cricket Board of South Africa, has said the team's results are of less importance than the warm welcome they have received in the Caribbean.

Cricket rather than politics, though, is what the touring team would like to be remembered by when the Ballyhoo of their re-acceptance to world cricket has died down.

"Everyone is assuming the game will fall to last five days after we lost the three one-dayers," said Procter.

"But I believe we have a side capable of providing an upset. Their batting is not as strong as it might be and can be a little bit suspect."

"We've got guys who can occupy the crease. It's going to be tough, but that's what life's about."

Seam bowler Meyrick Pringle had a light work-out in the nets on Thursday but his rib cartilage injury is still likely

to keep him out of the team.

West Indies manager David Hoford, under fire from his home islanders for the omission of Bajan seam bowler Anderson Cummins, is more concerned about possible complacency.

"We have had long discussions about the different attitude to both batting and bowling required in Test cricket," he said.

"We dominated them in the limited-overs games and we intend to keep it that way."

TEAMS: WEST INDIES (from): Richie Richardson (captain), Desmond Haynes, Brian Lara, Phil Simmons, Carl Hooper, Keith Arthurton, Jimmy Adams, Winston Benjamin, Curtly Ambrose, David Williams, Courtney Walsh, Kenneth Benjamin, Patrick Patterson.

SOUTH AFRICA (from): Kepler Wessels (captain), Andrew Hudson, Mark Rushmere, Peter Kirsten, Adrian Kuiper, Hansie Cronje, Jonty Rhodes.



RICHIE RICHARDSON

West Indies on the first day of the Barbados Test, yet still ended up convincing losers. The pitch, lively at first,



KEPLER WESSELS

David Richardson, Omar Henry, Corrie van Zyl, Richard Snell, Meyrick Pringle, Tertius Bosch, Allan Donald.

Seeds sail along in Houston

HOUSTON, Texas, Apr 17: Third seeded Zina Garrison ended the hopes of 14-year old Iva Majoli of Croatia at the 3,50,000 dollar Virginia Slims women's tennis tournament with a 6-3, 6-4 victory on Thursday to advance to the semifinals, reports Reuter.

The American was in complete control during the one-hour, 16-minute match against the teenager.

Earlier in the day, Laura Gildemeister and Sandra Cecchini, the sixth and seventh seeds, also posted straight set victories to gain quarterfinal berths.

Gildemeister of Peru, currently ranked 25 in the world, beat Halle Cofis of the United States 6-2, 6-1 and Cecchini of Italy defeated Germany's Sabine Hack 7-6 (7-2), 7-6 (7-3).

Bettina Fulco-Villella of Argentina scored the second upset of the tournament, a 6-4, 6-3 victory over eighth-seeded Magdalena Maleeva of Bulgaria. Fulco-Villella will play defending champion and world number one, Monica Seles of Yugoslavia today.

Garrison, who had to be hospitalised suffering from dehydration during a second-round match here last year, was satisfied with the effort.

"I played smart tonight," Garrison said. "I stayed relaxed."

When asked about her opponent she replied: "She played really good. She hits the ball well. She's aggressive and calm and uses the lines and angles well. But she's got a lot to learn."

Both players banged away from baseline. At 4-4, Garrison got the pivotal service break in the eighth game and served out the set.

In the second set, the American built a 5-2 lead with another pair of breaks. Majoli survived a match point, broke and held for 5-4. But Garrison served out the loss.

Despite the victory, Majoli was all smiles.

"It was my first big tournament and I think I did pretty well," said Majoli, who entered the event ranked 537.

Asked to compare the Garrison match with the McNeil upset, Majoli said: "Tonight, I thought I made too many mistakes, but Zina played very well. Still, I'm very

happy."

Gildemeister, who next faces fourth-seeded Gigi Fernandez of the United States today, is surprised how well she is playing in her first clay court event of the year.

"Usually I'm not confident, on clay this early. It takes me some time to get used to," said the South American, after rolling to her second straight impressive victory.

"I think I'm playing well," she added. "I thought it would be closer, but she missed a lot of easy shots and I hit the ball hard."

Gildemeister mixed in an effective drop shot to go along with her punishing forehand to claim the 62-minute match.

"It looks like I'm having an easy time but it's not really easy. You have to make the points."

Cecchini, a semifinalist last year, needed two tiebreaks before coming away with the two-hour, 25-minute victory.

Tied at 2-2 in the tiebreak, the Italian reeled of the next five points to win the opening set.

In the second set tiebreak, Cecchini, again took control, racing to a 5-1 advantage on the way to victory.

CIS gymnasts to the fore

PARIS, Apr 17: Hungary's Henrietta Onodi proved the only gymnast capable of breaking the domination of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) at the World Championships on Thursday, reports Reuter.

Onodi's complex floor routine earned the 18-year-old veteran 9.912 marks in the qualifying round.

CIS gymnasts led all four of the day's other events, suggesting a feast of medals for the team in the weekend's finals.

Onodi, appearing at her third World Championships, held off Tatiana Lisenko of the CIS and American Kim Zmeskal, the reigning all-around world champion, by just 0.012 points in a close floor competition.

But the 16 women who made it into today's semifinal will start again from zero points.

Zmeskal took the early lead on the beam with 9.862 but was overtaken by Tatiana Gutsu of the Soviet Union, with 9.937 despite a wobble, later in the day.

Assuming Zmeskal makes it into the final, she will meet her old rival Svetlana Boginskaya of the CIS who, as defending champion, has automatic qualification.

Boginskaya refused to shake hands with Zmeskal at the beam final at the Indianapolis World Championships last year, two days after the American had taken the all-

round title from her.

CIS coach Alexander Alexandrov reopened the wounds on Thursday by saying of Zmeskal: "She is the best only in America. She hasn't got what it takes to be a real champion."

Men's all-around champion Vitaly Scherbo had a disappointing day, failing to qualify for the vault final — usually his best event — with 9.275.

But Scherbo, who also won team gold in Indianapolis, had already qualified on Wednesday for the floor, pommel horse and rings semifinals.

For the first time, there is no team event or all-around competition at the World Championships.

But Scherbo's male teammates made up for him on Thursday.

Former Soviet gymnasts took the top three places in the parallel bars, posing a problem for the team coaches.

Only two competitors from each nation are allowed into the semifinals, leaving the CIS to choose between Valeri Belenki and Alexei Voropaev, who shared the lead, and Igor Korobchinski, who was only 0.075 points behind.

Korobchinski held joint first place in the vault with South Korea's Yeo Hong-Chul, both on 9.775, while Grigori Misutin, another member of last year's gold medal-winning team, led in the high bar with 9.800.

The spectators at Paris's Bercy arena watched in sympathy as British gymnast Louise Redding was carried off in tears on a stretcher after injur-

ing her knee in a bad final landing in the floor exercises.

Team officials said they would decide this morning if Redding could compete as planned in the vault semifinals.

Controversy mars wrestling meet

APIA, Apr 17: The Oceania wrestling championships ended here Thursday in controversy when New Zealand filed a protest over the one-point defeat of their 62kg champion Steven Reinsfeld, reports AFP.

He was drawn seven-all against Australia's Musa Ihan at the bell, with Ihan gaining the crucial extra point in overtime.

Both camps believed their wrestler should have been awarded more points on separate occasions, when the bout was stopped during point-scoring moves.

Officials postponed the medal presentation when the protest was filed.

After 50 minutes deliberating and reviewing a video of the bouts, the officials added another point to Ihan's lead for a final point score of 9-7.

The protest marred the finest bout in the seniors championship, an Olympic qualifying event, which saw both wrestlers drawing crowd support for skill and speed.

Ihan led most of the scoring, but Reinsfeld, spurred on by the crowd, pulled back on the bell.

COOB, IAAF haggle over schedule

BARCELONA, Spain, Apr 17: With just 100 days left before the Summer Games, world track officials and local Olympic organizers remain locked in a battle over the timetable for several key races, reports AP.

The focus of the debate is American sprinter Michael Johnson, the world's fastest man at 200 and 400 meters. The problem is that the finals of both events are now set for the evening of Aug 5.

The International Amateur Athletic Federation has tried for months to change that schedule, in order to give Johnson a chance for two gold medals. Such a move would require organizers to move five finals.

The Barcelona organizers say it is too late for such a move, since tickets and programmes already are printed.

Though they privately acknowledge the IAAF probably will get its way in the end, they continue to publicly stick by the present schedule.



MICHAEL JOHNSON

"We don't want to change this calendar, which was discussed for two years," said Sixte Cambra, who will supervise track and field events at the Olympics. "We have a calendar published and we have sold tickets, and the programme is approved by TV and the broadcasters. It is difficult

for us to change it."

The IAAF Council decided in November to move five finals — the men's 200 meters and the women's 200 meters, 400 meters, 400-meter hurdles and 800 meters — and has renewed its call for such a move several times in the last few months.