

We'll give it a go, says Kanan

Sports Reporter
Syed Hassan Kanan, the well-built Mohammedan captain and custodian, refused to indulge in any futuristic predictions for today's match.

The number one national team custodian felt that his team was in with a fine chance of vying for the title from the same platform.

"We are not on even terms, you see; we have to win today to be at par with Abahani and once we erase the two-point deficit, we can really give it a go."

Today's match holds the key to further advancement and I do not want to make a fool of myself by predicting anything. I can only say that we are confident and all of our players are in fine form and fully fit. They are raring to go."

PROBABLE TEAMS FOR TODAY

Probable line-ups for today's contest (numbers against players' name suggest their jersey number):

Abahani	Mohammedans
Mohsin (Capt 1)	Kanan (Capt 1)
Alamgir (24)	Kaiser Hamid (3)
Rohan (5)	Jewel Rana (5)
Masud Rana (7)	Shamim (13)
Sergei Zhukov (11)	Johnny (4)
Munna (13)	Kuznetsov (11)
Zakir (23)	Nabikov (28)
Rumi (17)	Tito (6)
Anam (8)	Shabbir (8)
Polynkov (18)	Rahimov (12)
Shakil (16)	Nayib (20)
Substitutes:	Substitutes:
Selma (22)	Tuhin (22)
Nira (6)	Abul (2)
Ghausa (21)	Roxy (17)
Mamun Joarder (15)	Mizan (18)
	Ayaz Khan (23)



RAHIMOV



NAQUIB

Reigning champions Abahani Krira Chakra and last year's runners-up Dhaka Mohammedan Sporting Club will break lance with each other for the 45th time a few hours later at the Mirpur Stadium to decide the championship for the First Division football league.

Abahani Krira Chakra need only a draw to retain their title for the second time in a row while Mohammedans have to win to push the 20-team contest to a playoff and then have a more effectual go at the title. Abahani have 35 points at their disposal from 18 matches, dropping their only point against BRTC in a one-all draw. Mohammedans, trailing their arch rivals by two points, lost to War Club 0-1 and drew with Rahmatganj 1-1 to lose three vital points in the earlier part of the league.

Today's derby kicks off at 4 pm. Radio Bangladesh and Bangladesh television will cover the clash of the local football giants alive.

Abahani Krira Chakra will be without one of their three Russian footballers, Alexei Arifiev, who has to sit out the match following the marching order he received in the last game against Brothers Union. However, Abahani will take the field with an added advantage of being ahead of their opponents by two clear points. Complacency or dilemma about whether to go all-out or adopt a defensive policy to ensure the one point they need for retaining the title may affect the outcome of the game.

Mohammedans, on the other hand, have nothing to lose and can concentrate on all-out football to force a win

which would allow them to have another go at regaining the title.

Mohammedans, of late, have shaken of the gremlins that bugged them at the beginning of the league.

The inclusion of the three Russians — Abdou Rahimov, Sergei Nabikov and Boris Kuznetsov — have really galvanised the black-and-whites. Rahimov, the star striker, has already netted 17 goals from nine matches with three hat-tricks in a row. In Nabikov they have a fine distributor with the effervescent Ruman Bin-Wali Shabbir always there to initiate moves with his footwork and crosses from the flank.

Although Mohammedan Sporting Club are being deemed as the better of the two teams from the viewpoint of combination Abahani Krira Chakra are also in fine shape with Sergei Zhukov being the live wire of the team. His Russian teammate Alexander Polynkov now looks to be in his elements. Ghaus, the dark, supple winger and key defender Monem Munna are also in fine form.

Meanwhile, Dhaka Metropolitan Football Association (DMFA), the organisers of the league, have issued new directives for today's potentially explosive match. Eighteen players from each side will be allowed inside the field while only two officials and two bearers on ball boys will be able to accompany their respective sides.

Tickets will be available at the counters from nine in the morning. The counters at the Dhaka Stadium will be closed at 1 pm and the ones at the Mirpur Stadium at 3 pm. Stadium gates, which will be opened at 12, will be closed by

4 pm.

Meanwhile the Players' Welfare Association, in a press release, has appealed to the supporters of both teams to exercise patience and accept any result sportingly.



ABAHANI'S RUSSIAN TRIO: From left: Arifiev (ruled out for today), Polynkov and Zhukov



MOHAMMEDANS' RUSSIANS: From left: Rahimov, Kuznetsov and Nabikov

Records don't worry me: Mohsin

Sports Reporter

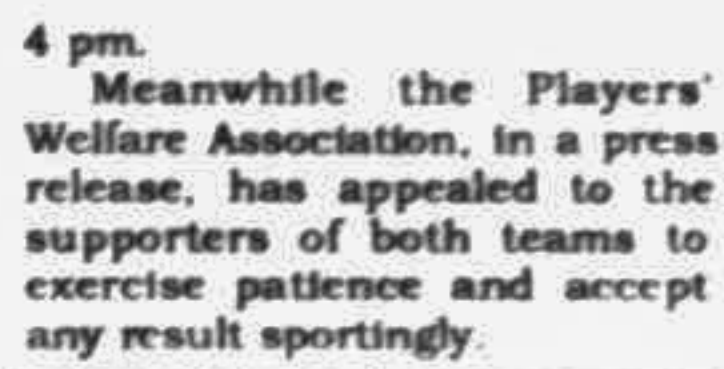
The two last guards of the two teams — and both captians — were rather tight-lipped about possible result of today's match.

Abahani goalkeeper Mohammad Mohsin dismissed any suggestion about the much-anted advantage of arch-rivals Mohammedans for whom he played for five seasons before returning to his parent club Abahani.

"I am not worried by the past records. I believe in the present and on current form we should retain the championship," said Mohsin when reminded of Mohammedans' impressive records in similar 'make-or-break' situations.

Abahani captain Mohsin, who has the rare distinction of leading both the top teams of the country (he led Mohammedans in 1985), paid tributes to the way Mohammedans have rallied from a seemingly hopeless position. The national team custodian added that the presence of high quality foreign players has given rise to great expectations.

Although, Alexei Arifiev, one of the three Russian footballers in Abahani, will not take the field, Abahani have competent and fit local players to more than make up for the loss, concluded a confident Mohsin.



POLYNKOV



ASLAM

THE RECORD

Following is a chronology of Abahani-Mohammedan football clashes

SENIOR DIVISION LEAGUE:

	P	W	D	L
Mohammedans	33	12	12	9
Abahani	33	9	12	12

WE HAVE TO WIN: KAIKOBAD

Sports Reporter

The result of the clash between the two local football giants have often played havoc with predictions and prophecies. Yet the last-minute quips of the coaches and captains of the rival teams have a charm of their own, no matter how futile they prove once the show is over:

Mohammedan Sporting coach Kaikobad, a very capable mid-fielder in his playing days, had fewer 'ifs' and 'buts' in his views regarding today's clash between the arch-rivals.

"The desperate situation prevailing regarding Mohammedans' chances of regaining the championship is nothing new for us. We have been through similar circumstances in 1987 and 1986. Our players are familiar with this sudden-death situation and the fact that we have to win today's match to be in with some chance has not put any extra pressure on our players.

"We will go all-out for goals and with Shabbir and Rahimov in such fine form I do not see why should not get them.

"Our midfield has been bolstered by the presence of Nabikov and Kuznetsov. Kaiser, Jewel, Shamim, Pappu in the defence are doing



KAIKOBAD

fine job and Kanan is brimming with confidence under the bar," quipped Kaikobad.

Like his counterpart Salahuddin, Kaikobad declined to give any idea about the formation or strategy his team will adopt today.

Mohammedans have better record

Sports Reporter

Dhaka Mohammedan Sporting Club and Abahani Krira Chakra have met each other on 33 occasions in the Senior Division league before today's clash, expected to go down in the annals as the 34th between the two most popular clubs of the country. So far Mohammedans have won 12 matches while Abahani nine while twelve others ended in draws.

Out of the 46 encounters between the two teams, which includes various tournaments, Mohammedans have won 18 matches while Abahani on twelve occasions and 15 matches were drawn. The biggest margin of victory was achieved by Mohammedan Sporting Club when they trounced Abahani Krira Chakra 4-0 in 1975.

Four matches between the two teams were not settled on the field for reasons ranging from violence to arbitrary decisions by the rival captains, countermanded later by the organisers of league football.

In the return league match Mohammedans were again declared the winners in 1984 when crowd trouble caused a premature death of a match with Mohammedans were leading by a goal from Salim.

In 1987, rival captains — Ranjit Kumar Saha of Mohammedans and Sheikh Mohammed Aslam of Abahani — declared themselves joint champions after the teams had failed to score in the extra time of the play-off match held at the Dhaka Stadium with both teams finishing their league engagements on the same number points. The Bangladesh Football Federation nullified the result and in the second play-off match at the secluded, spectatorless Army stadium Mohammedans defeated Abahani to annex the title for the second year in a row.



KANAN

in 1973 Mohammedan Sporting were leading by a solitary goal from Hafizuddin. One Abahani official entered the field with arms in protest of a deci-



MOHSIN

sion by the referee. The match was abandoned and when the league committee announced a new date for the game, Mohammedans refused to play and Abahani got a walk-over. Mohammedan Sporting were declared winners in 1982 when the return league

WE'LL MISS ARIFIEV: SALAHUDDIN

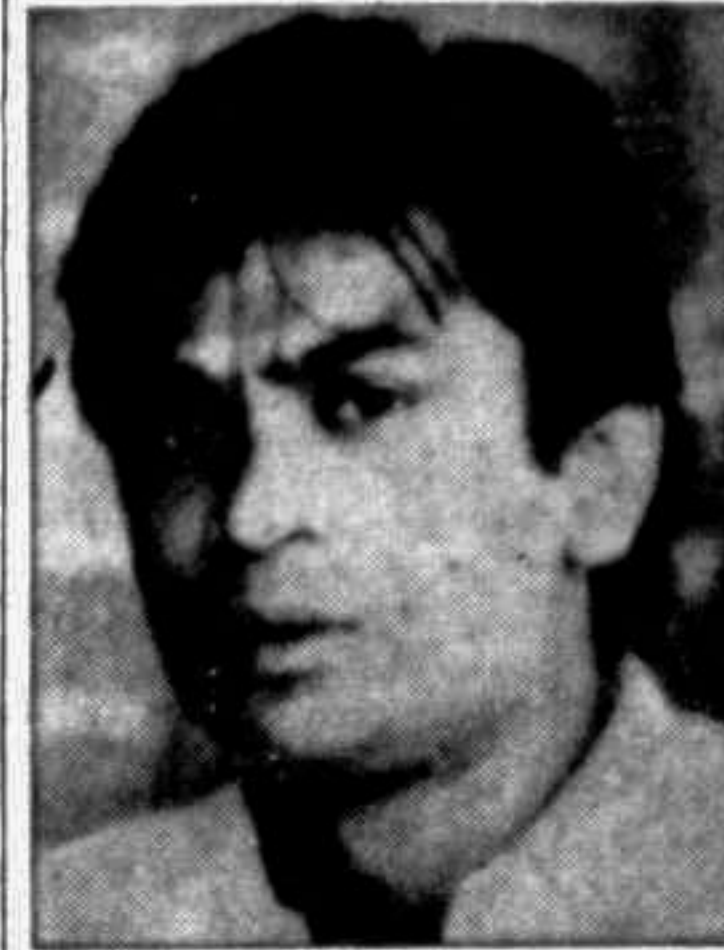
Sports Reporter

Kazi Salahuddin, the most celebrated footballer the country has produced today, took over the reins as the coach of reigning champions with the advantage of being ahead of arch-rivals Mohammedans by two clear points. Abahani who dropped their only point against BRTC are a little handicapped, according to Salahuddin, because of the non-availability of Russian midfielder Alexei Arifiev who will watch the clash of the titans from the sidelines following the marching order he got in the last match against Brothers Union.

"My defence has to be reorganised because Arifiev is not there to back the defence as the defensive mid-fielder.

"However, Sergei Zhukov is in fine fettle and Polynkov has found his touch. So not much for me to worry about, but as you know, it is mainly a battle of nerves and my players have to hold their own to press home the advantage we have."

Salahuddin was, however, all praise for the superb rallying of late by Mohammedans and the remarkable display of marksmanship by Russian striker Abdou Rahimov.



SALAHUDDIN

Abahani Krira Chakra after the debacle of the team in the last Federation Cup.

An accomplished speaker, Salahuddin seemed quite confident about his team's retaining the title this year

Adieu, Police!

Sports Reporter

Police AC, the other new comers apart from Eskaton Sabuj Sangha in this year's league bowed out in style with a 4-2 victory against Sadharan Bima at the Mirpur Stadium yesterday.

With their fate already settle the myrmidons of law had hardly any reason to rejoice over their victory that marked the end of their rights to stay in Senior Division football league which they only recently won. Police with point from matches join BJMC, the other demotees in Second Division league next year.

The other two matches of the day, somewhat obscured by today's clash between Mohammedan and Abahani ended in draws.

Agrani Bank finished seventh in the 20 team league with 20 points from 19 matches after having shared points with Dhanmondi who took the 13th slot in the goalless encounter in the first of the two matches played at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

Arambagh Krira Sangstha who notched the fourth position drew two all with Mukti-joddha Sangsad in the second match under the flood-lights.

Striker Sohel put Arambagh ahead with a headed goal from Sunny's cross in the sixth minute of the match.

Three minutes later Masudur Rahman Rana who with his two goals yesterday raised his personal tally to twelve to share the honour of being the second highest scorer in this year's unfinished league along with Abahani's Aslam restored party utilising a fine through from Chapal 1-1.

AFC award for Maj Hafiz

Renowned former footballer of the country Major (retd) Hafizuddin Ahmed, MP, has been honoured with an award by the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) for his contribution to football, according to a message received in Dhaka yesterday, reports BSS.

The award will be handed over to him during the congress of AFC in Hong Kong on June 12.

Hafizuddin, who is also a vice president of the AFC, leaves for Hong Kong today to attend the AFC congress and also preside over the meeting of the AFC disciplinary committee. He is the chairman of the committee.

Member of the Bangladesh Football Federation Zafar Imam, who is also a member of the AFC tournament committee, will represent the BFF in the congress.

Zafar Imam and AFC media committee member Akhtar Hossain Khan, the former NSC Secretary, also leave for Hong Kong today.

A former star footballer of Dhaka Mohammedan Sporting Club, Hafizuddin has been elected an AFC vice president in 1990 for a four-year term. He has been a member of the AFC since 1982.

Major Hafiz was the president of the BFF 1986-89 and general secretary from 1982-86.

A former 'fastest man' of the then East Pakistan in 1964-66, Major Hafiz led the then Pakistan football team against Iran in the RCD tournament in Tehran in 1970.

The 3 who take their bows today

Three renowned footballers — Khurshid Alam Babul, Shafiqul Arefin Tutul and Abdul Salam Mursheedi — have decided to 'officially hang up' their boots in today's 'battle royale' between Abahani and Mohammedans.

Shafiqul Arefin Tutul, popularly known as Tutu, added a new dimension to the role of a side-back with his fearless overlaps down the right flank to lend a cutting edge to the attack.

With his angry young man's attitude on the field and aggressive temperament, Tutul join arch-rivals Mohammedans. For Tutul it was a baptism by fire as Abahani lost the first match of the 1975 season to Babul Pal's goal. If the loss was a bolt from the blue for the dumbfounded Abahani supporters Tutul's emergence on the scene was a revelation for Union and returned home in 1984 and actively witnessed his favourite side's hat-trick of championship attained in 1985 after having won it in 1983 and 1984 consecutively.

According to many, Khurshid Alam Babul epitomised the ideal role of a mid-fielder in modern football with his seemingly endless store of stamina and up and down industrious football marked by his remarkable ability to snatch the ball from opponents and then distribute it to the teammates to initiate attacks.

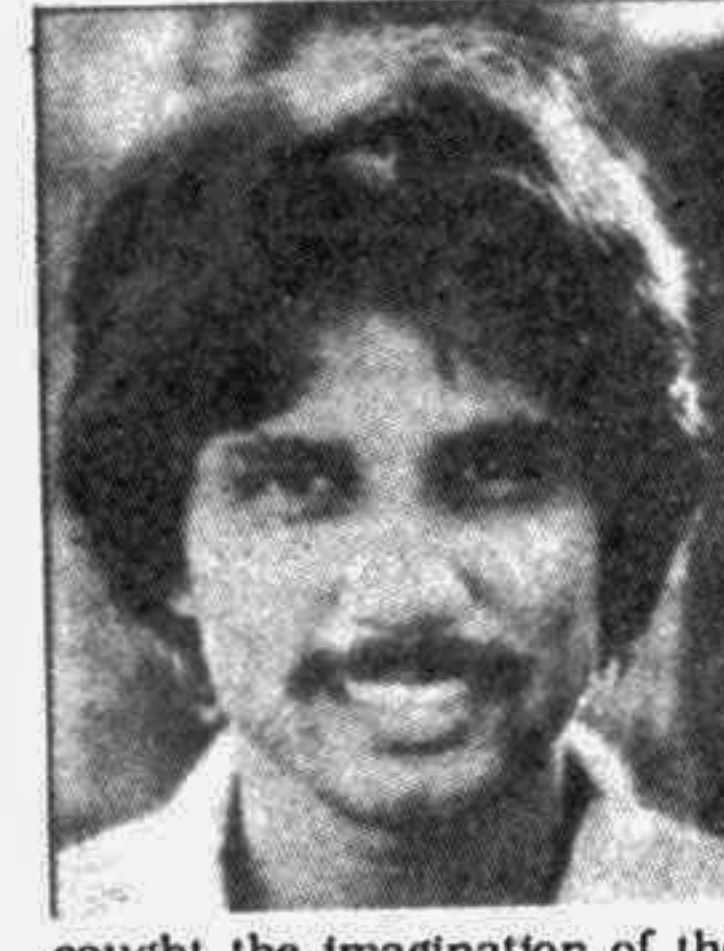
Not really a crowd-puller Babul, who was essentially a 'team' player made his debut in the Senior Division league in 1975 for Victoria Sporting Club. His joining Abahani in 1977 was the high noon of the career of the modest footballer as Abahani set the unique example of becoming the first unbeaten champions that year, a feat later emulated by Dhaka Mohammedan Sporting Club.

After having served Abahani to the best of his abilities for a decade Babul changed allegiance in 1987, signing up for Mohammedans and hit the headlines by scoring the crucial, last goal in Mohammedans' 3-2 victory against Abahani, a result which pushed the league to a play-off and went a long way in Mohammedans' ultimate winning of the title that year. After Salahuddin, Babul is probably the second player to have won the most international caps for Bangladesh.



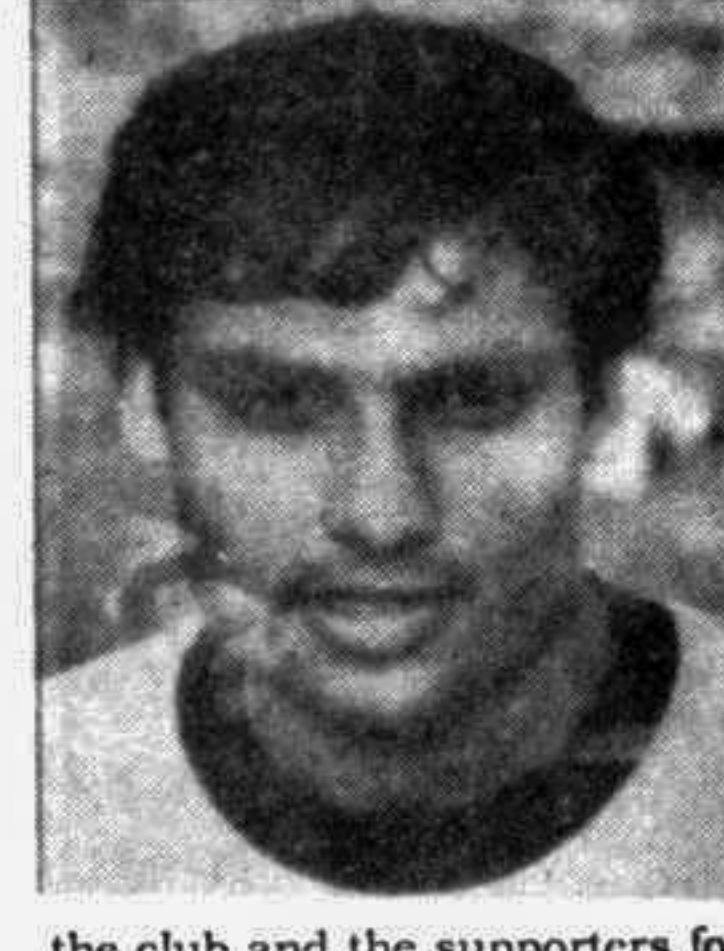
Abdul Salam Mursheedi, currently playing the role of the manager for Dhaka Mohammedan Sporting Club for whom he played five seasons of active football — from 1980 to 1984 — emerged as the highest scorer in 1982 with 27 goals eclipsing the previous record of 24 goals set by Salahuddin in 1994.

Salam left 1979 champions BJMC to join the black-and-whites in 1980 and played a major role in Mohammedans' regaining the title after a year. Salam started his career in the Dhaka league for Azad Sporting Club in 1977.



A diminutive striker feared by the opponents for his amazing speed and shooting abilities, Salam captained Mohammedans in 1983, the year after setting his record-breaking record of 27 goals, engineered mostly by Badal Ray with the couple's combination reaching dizzy heights.

Tremendously successful in the local league, Salam's international career was seriously hampered and cut short by injuries.



Tutul severed his relations with Abahani in 1981 to have a two year stint with Brothers

HOW THEY PERFORMED IN THIS YEAR'S LEAGUE

Abahani	Opponents	Mohammedans
1-0	Police AC	6-0
4-1	Eskaton SS	3-2
2-0	Wanderers	3-1
3-1	BJMC	2-0
3-0	Wari	0-1
4-0	Arambagh	2-0
6-0	Dhanmondi	1-0
5-1	Adamjee	1-0
4-0	Parashganj	3-0
3-1	S Bima	2-0
1-0	Rahmatganj	1-1
2-1	Victoria	2-0
1-0	Agrani Bank	2-0
3-0	Mukti-joddha	5-0
1-1	BRTC	5-0
3-1	Fakirerpool	1-0
2-1	PWD	7-0
3-0	Brothers	3-0

THE SCORE

Following is a chronology of Abahani-Mohammedan football clashes in various meets since Independence:

Total contests: 46
 Won by Mohammedans: 18
 Won by Abahani: 13
 Drawn: 15
 Goals by Mohammedans: 52
 Goals by Abahani: 37

* * * Matches decided by tie-breakers have been considered drawn.

Walder's warning to Powell, Lewis

AUSTIN, Texas, June 6: Erick Walder, hoping to make a big impact before the US Olympic trials, sailed 8.47 metres (27 feet 9-1/2 inches) on his first jump to become the ninth best long jumper of all time at the NCAA Championships on Friday, reports Reuter.

"It was a big pressure reliever," said Walder, who was heavily favoured to win the event at these US Collegiate athletics championships at the University of Texas.

Only two-time Olympic champion Carl Lewis and world record holder Mike Powell have jumped as far this year without an aiding wind.

Nigerian Olapade Adeniken equalled the third fastest time in the 100 metres this year when he clocked 9.27 seconds in the semifinals. He also was one of the top qualifiers in the 200 metres with a clocking of 20.62 seconds into a head wind of 2.45 metres per second.

Hungarian Istvan Bagyula, silver medalist at the World Championships in the pole vault, easily won here with a clearance of 5.80 metres (19 feet 1/4 inch). He elected not to attempt another height because of temperatures topping 90 degrees Fahrenheit (30 C).

Kamy Keshmiri, the world's leading discus thrower this year, won his third successive US Collegiate title with a third-round toss of 67.06 metres (220 feet).

"I don't think I'm the best thrower in the world this year, but I think I am one of the best, one of the three to five best," said Keshmiri, who is favoured to win the US best," said Keshmiri, who is favoured to win the US Olympic trials in New Orleans later this month.

He threw a surprising 70.84 metres (232 feet 5 inches) last week for the 1992 world leader.

Rifles Club retain title

From Our Correspondent

NARAYANGANJ, June 6: An all-round performance by Jahangir engineered Rifles Club to retain the title when they beat Narayanganj Cricket Club by six wickets in the final of this year's First Division cricket league at the Narayanganj Omani Stadium today.

Narayanganj Cricket Club made the first use of the strip and were all out for 137 in 33.1 overs with Anup making an unbeaten 72.

Jahangir, who has been in excellent touch this year, took three wickets for 25 while Ranjan and Zia got two wickets apiece for Rifles Club.

In reply, an unbeaten 63 by Jahangir helped Rifles Club cruise past Narayanganj Club's total making 141 with six wickets to spare in 20.2 overs.

Ashim and Jahangir took two and one wicket respectively for Narayanganj Club.

Jahangir, who deservedly won the man-of-the-match award, also received the best batsman award for the highest aggregate of 322 runs including two centuries.

Organised by the Narayanganj DSA, eight teams — split into two groups — participated in the meet that began on February 11 of this year.

Div II cricket

Sports Reporter

DOHS (Jrs) became the seventh team to reach the eight-team finals of the qualifying meet for the Second Division cricket league.

DOHS outplayed Cute Star by 46 runs in the Group F final held at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium yesterday.

Batting first, DOHS were all out for 149 in 32 overs.

Cute Star, in reply, were booked for a poor 103 in 32.2 overs.