

MSC in semis as Biman fail to take off

Sports Reporter

Bangladesh Biman, former champions, gave a bonafide finalists Dhaka Mohammedan Sporting Club almost a free trip to the semifinals as the airline team were outclassed by eight wickets in an anti-climatic Group Y match of the 14th Damal Summer cricket tournament at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

Batting first in a match that gave rise to lot of speculations following the rather perigrine defeat of 13-time finalists Mohammedans to the Greater Mymensingh Cricket Club (GMCC), a couple of days back, Biman yesterday struggled right through their two-bit innings of 131 for no good reason except the tight initial spells by Mohammedan new ball bowlers, particularly Shri Lanjan Gamage.

On a dreadfully slow track, Gamage bowled beautifully, giving very little away. His stringy streak could not have been better displayed than yesterday as the figures would testify: Nine overs, four maidens, eight runs and one wicket. The tall Shri Lanjan's local newball partner Zakir was not far behind, in fact better off wicket-wise. He spent 16 runs of his nine overs and sent back two Biman batsmen to detach the cockpit from the fuselage.

Both Selim and Rupam, the Biman openers, discovered

yesterday, much to their dismay, that seven is not always a lucky number because when the former nicked a Gamage delivery wicketkeeper Ratan made no mistake and Mohammedan skipper Minhazul Abedin Nannu had the cherry glued to his palms as it came with the print of Selim's bat on it.

Zakaria, the out-of-form one-drop batsman, came and



GAMAGEE... 9 overs for 8 runs

went, lbw to Zakir, and from then onwards Biman were up against the wall.

Shahnawaz Saheed Shanu and Enamul Huq Moni, the two stroke players on whom so much Biman hopes are pinned, could never get going as the

image of the sickening score-

board (three for 26) kept haunting the two.

Moreover, the Mohammedan spinner led by Azhar Hossain Shantu started from where they had left off with spot on bowling. In a bid to hit his way out Shantu gave a return catch to Shantu for 12 and skipper Enamul Huq Moni, with his natural swagger of a southpaw, swung across the line to be leg before for 25.



LITON... 66 no

made off 51 balls.

With the cream of the batting effectively skimmed out the remainder of the Biman willow-wielders had the thankless job of going through the motions.

Although wicketkeeper Barooah hung around for an

unbeaten 19 Biman could manage no more than 131 for seven when the 45 over quota was complete.

Gamage and Zakir apart, Shantu was the other major exponent in the Mohammedan bowling repertoire. Nannu, who depends on drift in the air rather than anything off the pitch as the irregular 'roller' bowler, finished with figures of one for 24. Aminul Islam Bulbul took one for 19.

Alok Chakraborty gave an evanescent promise of an afternoon stirrer by trapping Shantu in front of the wicket for two.

One down Rafiqul Alam, sadly out of form after a fine season only last year, hoisted left-arm spinner Moni, to be caught by Babul. Tied to his crease for 42 balls Rafiq, the moddy batsman could make only 18 to make the Mohammedan scoreboard a not-so-safe 43 for two.

Harun-ur-Rashid Liton, who parted with his wig for the sake of expedience, held one end up as Nannu joined him at the fall of Rafiq's wicket with some determined batting.

Neither Liton nor Nannu, however, looked very comfortable with the latter looking particularly leaden-footed. Life became a little easier for Liton with the passage of time, hammering six boundaries in his unbeaten innings of 66, off 101 balls.

Skipper Nannu was at the kill with a painstaking innings of 32, made off 48 balls with two hits to the fence.

The target of 132 for a win that would place them in the semifinals was achieved in the 33rd over for the loss of only two wickets. Dirt cheap, but none had any idea of the vaunted strength of the Mohammedan batting perhaps in the store for the semifinal showdown with yet anonymous rivals. This win Mohammedans came back from the death throes to emerge as the runners-up of Group Y as GMCC had already clinched to top spot in this group with two straight wins.

Mohammedans would play the champions of Group X, to be decided in today's encounter between Abahani and Brothers Union. Whoever wins will meet Mohammedans.

Scoreboard at stumps on the third day of the four-day cricket match between the touring Indians and Combined Bowl XI here yesterday:

COMBINED BOWL XI (first innings - 230)
 Second innings:
 M J Cann c Azharuddin 2
 B Banerjee 2
 N M Snyman c Azharuddin 2
 H de Vos c Yadav b Kumble 21
 W S Truter c Kumble b Banerjee 11
 F S Cronje lbw b Sharma 6
 B Randedi lbw b Raju 2
 T Marsh not out 3
 Extras: (1 lb, w3) 4
 Total: six (wickets) 51
 Fall: 1-5; 2-5; 3-23; 4-35; 5-44; 6-51

BOWLING: O M R W
 Kapil 8 2 15 1
 Banerjee 10 6 13 2
 Sharma 7 2 22 1
 Raju 4 4 0 1
 Kumble 1 1 0 1

INDIA: first innings (overnight 296-1)
 W V Raman c Randedi b Botha 11
 A D Jadeja not out 254
 S V Manjrekar c Snyman b Marsh 186
 S R Tendulkar c Randedi b Williams 65
 M A Azharuddin not out 1
 Extras: (b8, lb 12, nb 15, w 4) 39
 Total (3 wickets dec -142 overs) 556
 Fall: 1-15; 2-430; 3-553
 Did not bat: K Dev, S Banerjee, CM Sharma, V Yadav, AR Kumble, VS Raju

BOWLING: O M R W
 Botha 23 5 79 1
 Williams 26 3 63 1
 Marsh 31 4 112 1
 Cronje 18 3 76 0
 Henderson 21 1 94 0
 De Vaal 10 1 48 0
 Cann 10 0 64 0

India begin SA tour on a high note

SPRINGS, South Africa, Nov 3: India thrilled the combined Bowl XI by an innings and 241 runs on Tuesday to begin their South African tour on a flying note, reports AFP.

The Indians toyed with the inexperienced Bowl XI, who were all out for 85 in their second knock 40 minutes before lunch on the fourth and final day at the Pam Brink Stadium here.

Resuming at Monday's score of 51 for six, the last four Bowl wickets added only 34 runs with the 47-year-old Peter de Vaal remaining unbeaten on 24.

Seamer Subroto Banerjee took three of the four wickets of fall this morning and was India's most successful bowler with five for 29.

Overnight batsmen De Vaal and Terry Marsh defied the Indians for 40 minutes to add seven runs when Banerjee earned the days first break by having Marsh caught in the gully by Anil Kumble for three.

New batsman Wickus Botha failed to get off the mark when Indian captain Mohammad Azharuddin caught him diving to his right at second slip off Banerjee.

In the same over wicket-keeper Vijay Yadav took a low catch to his right to remove Claude Henderson (0) and give Banerjee his fifth wicket in the innings.

Leg-spinner Kumble bowled last man Henry Williams for six to wrap up the Bowl XI

innings.

"It's great to begin the tour on a winning note," said Indian tour manager Amrit Mathur. "We need to keep up the good work for the sterner Tests ahead."

A delighted Mathur gave the team a day off to visit the Sun City gambling casinos, a three-hour drive away from Johannesburg.

The Indians take on the United Cricket Board of South Africa (UCBSA) Presidents' XI in a four-day match at Centurion Park from Friday before flying to Durban for the first of four Tests from November 13.

Record stand

An earlier AFP report said: Ajay Jadeja and Sanjay Manjrekar's 415 run partnership rewrote the record books and put India in line for an easy win in the first official match of their South African tour.

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Kiwis declare at 325 for 3 in Bul wayo

BULAWAYO, Zimbabwe, Nov 3: Heavy rains gave way long enough for New Zealand to declare at 325 runs for three wickets Tuesday in a Test plagued by tropical downpours, reports AP.

New Zealand captain Martin Crowe moved his fielders in tight after declaring, restricting Zimbabwe's reply to 54 for one when rain forced a halt to play after just 130 minutes on the third day.

Minutes before the end, Zimbabwe's Grant Flower was caught off Dipak Patel for 29 runs. Kevin Arnott was 25 not out.

With rain causing long delays in play since Sunday, Zimbabwe appear left to hang on for a draw, despite New Zealand's impressive first innings.

Bulawayans have applauded the storms, which come amid the worst drought in southern Africa in a century.

The cricket Test is the first between Zimbabwe and New Zealand.

An earlier AFP report said: New Zealand's top order batting dominance continued on a rain-affected second day's play in the first Test match against Zimbabwe at the Bulawayo Athletic Club here Monday.

With opener Rod Latham registering his maiden Test century, Martin Crowe contributing an arrogant 42 from just 44 balls and vice-captain Andrew Jones accumulating a typically neat 67 not out, New Zealand closed on 325-3 in their first innings when rain brought a premature end to proceedings.

A mixture of early morning rain and inadequate covering of the square allowed only 150 minutes of batting time in the day and with further rain possible over the remaining three days, Kiwi skipper Crowe will probably choose to bat on to around the 400-450 mark rather than a score in excess of 500.

Benefiting from the easy-paced pitch and a Zimbabwe attack shorn of slow-left armer Grant Flower and, later in the day, medium pacer Ali Shah (both suffering from food poisoning), the New Zealand batsmen continued their easy acquisition of runs.

Resuming on 205-1 overnight, Latham and Jones extended their second wicket partnership to 127 until Latham was run out for 119, courtesy of a brilliant stop at extra cover by Kevin Arnott.

Latham's innings, in only his second Test, included 14 fours and one six and he was at the crease for almost five hours.

Either side of an early lunch and tea, Jones and Crowe accelerated the momentum in a third wicket stand of 71 in 19 overs.

Crowe picked up a six and five fours, mainly through confident on-drives off the spin of John Traicos but the bowler gained his revenge when Crowe top-edged a sweep to Malcolm Jarvis at deep backward square leg.

Jones, who had earlier posted his seventh Test fifty with four boundaries and some sweetly timed on-drives, was then joined by Ken Rutherford and the pair took New Zealand effortlessly through to the close.

DMYC sports week

The annual sports week of the Dhaka Mariner Youngs Club, a First Division hockey team, will begin from today, at the club premises at Arambagh in the city.

State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadek Hossain Khoka will inaugurate the week-long programme as chief guest at 10 in the morning.

Secretary of the Bangladesh Hockey Federation, Shamsul Bari, who is also the acting president of Mariner Youngs, will be present as a special guest.

Lara must curb aggression

PERTH, Nov 3: Aggressive West Indies batsman Brian Lara is seeking the right blend of natural flair and studied professionalism on his team's current tour of Australia, reports AP.

Kallicharran, Lara has tended to treat any ball outside off stump as loose — blazing away regardless of the number of fieldsmen poised in the slip cordon.

The West Indies are hoping for more restrained batting from the Trinidad left-hander during their five-Test tour



BRIAN LARA... an impulsive stroke player

Lara, 23, opened the tour Monday with a superb 106 as a makeshift opener in the festival match against an Australian Cricket Board Chairman's XI at Lilac Hill.

In the tradition of previous West Indies greats like Roy Fredericks and Alvin

Down Under.

Lara may be used as an opener in the Test matches and has been told by captain Richie Richardson that he might have to be prepared to move up and down the order.

"The captain hasn't set a role for me on the tour, but he

has told all of us that we have to be flexible and be prepared to move around the order if we have to," Lara said Tuesday.

"I've never opened in a Test and it would take some time to get accustomed to it because you have to put in a lot more concentration.

"The ball outside off stump is something I have to do a lot of work on because it's a strength and also a problem for me.

"It's really hard to stop playing those sorts of shots in one-day cricket because you're looking to get after the bowling, but the Test matches will have a lot of slip and gully fieldsmen.

"You need to be tighter outside off stump for the Tests and I'm working very hard on that."

The West Indies have not found a regular opening partner for Desmond Haynes since the retirement of Gordon Greenidge 18 months ago.

Lara is a leading candidate after scoring 333 runs at an impressive average of 47.57 during the World Cup earlier this year.

The West Indies meet Western Australia in a one-day match at the WACA ground on Wednesday and then face the state team in a four-day match starting Friday.

Strike bowler Curtly Ambrose is expected to make his first appearance on tour on Wednesday, while Haynes should also return to the side after a minor back strain left him on the sidelines Monday.

Ben hopes to regain lost glory

TORONTO, Nov 3: Canadian sprinter Ben Johnson is training hard for the upcoming indoor athletics season and said on Monday he hopes to regain some of his lost glory in the shorter indoor sprints, reports Reuter.

"Now my power is back. I'm way ahead in my training. My injuries are better," said Johnson, who missed the 100 metres final in Barcelona after stumbling out of his blocks in a semifinal heat.

Johnson was stripped of his world indoor 50- and 60-metre records as well as his world outdoor 100-metre record by

track in 1991, despite qualifying for the Canadian Olympic team in Barcelona.

"Ever since (returning from his ban in January, 1991) I was always behind. It was hard to get caught up," he said. "My power wasn't there and I couldn't get off the blocks.

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the International Amateur Athletics Federation in 1989 and after admitting he'd used banned steroids between 1981 and 1988.

The 30-year-old sprinter's 1987 world indoor 60-metre record had been 6.41 seconds. His best 60-metre clocking since his comeback is 6.58, while the current 60-metre standard is 6.48 seconds.

Johnson said he is training much harder than in the past as he gears up for the indoor season.

McNeil breezes through to round 2

OAKLAND, California, Nov 3: Fifth seeded Lori McNeil breezed through her opening-round match yesterday against University student Kimberly Po 6-3, 6-3 at the 350,000 dollar Bank of the West Classic in Oakland, reports Reuter.

McNeil had been expected to play Natalia Medvedeva, but the Ukrainian was forced to withdraw with the flu.

Seventh-seed Mary Pierce withdrew earlier due to a recurrence of nerve condition and was replaced by first alternate Stephanie Rehe.

McNeil, ranked 17 and a semifinalist in Oakland a year ago, said she was not bothered by the last-minute change.

Po, who said she didn't know she would play until 20 minutes before the match, said she "wasn't ready" and felt nervous at first.

McNeil, who has already clinched a spot in the season-ending Virginia Slims Championships, advanced to the second round where she will meet 15-year-old Iva Majoli of Croatia.

Majoli, a first-round victor over Karina Habudova, is one of eight players in the tournament who are ranked number one in their respective countries.

Other first-round winners were Larisa Svachenko (Neiland, Ann Gross man and Nicole Provis).

The world's number one player, Monica Seles, and defending champion Martina Navratilova will play their first matches Wednesday for Thursday.

Wiranata tops GP rankings

LONDON, Nov 3: Hermawan Susanto's win in the China World Grand Prix last weekend strengthened Indonesia's hold on men's badminton, reports AFP.

Indonesians hold five of top 10 places on the Grand Prix ladder with Susanto only 210 points behind compatriot Ardy B Wiranata who lost to his old foe Wu Wenkai of China in the Shanghai semifinals.

Yet Ye Zhaoying, the Chinese teenager beaten in the semifinals, skipped away to a 300 points lead over expatriate Lim Xiaoping of Sweden.

Mens singles-standings:
 1. Ardy B Wiranata (Ina) 1,430 pts, 2. Hermawan Susanto (Ina) 1,220, 3. Thomas Stuer-Lauridsen (Den) 1,055, 4. Poul-Erik Hoyer-Larsen (Den) 1,030, 5. Wu Wenkai (Chn) 975, 6. Joko Suprianto (In) 855, 7. Fung Permadi (Ina) 845, 8. Zhao Jianhua (Chn) 840, 9. Liu Jun (Chn) 820, 10. Allan Budi Kusuma (Ina) 785.

Women's singles:
 1. Ye Zhaoying (Chn) 1,430, 2. Lim Xiaoping (Sweden) 1,240, 3. Sarwendah Kusumawardhand (Ina) 1,085, 4. Tang Jihong (Chn) 940, 5. Christine Magnusson (Sweden) 915, 6. Susi Susanti (Ina) 850, 7. Huang Hua (Chn) 730, 8. Lee Heung-Soon (S Kor) 705, 9. Yuliani Santoso (Ina) 685, 10. Pernille Hedegaard Jessen (Den) 625.

"I am coming back with enthusiasm," said Baresi. "I hope my teammates will forgive me a month ago I needed to get away from it all because I was going through a difficult stage in my life.

"But it is still the best thing to happen to a player to be in the national team," he added.</