

Zia, Reefat share lead Sports Reporter

The ninth GM Hossain IM chess champion Ziaur Rahman and national champion Reefat bin-Satter jointly shared the lead with five points each on completion of the fifth round of the seven-round Swiss league Dr Milton memorial active chess tournament at the National Sports Council chess room yesterday.

Zia beat Amir Hossain, Saifuddin Lablu and Neamul Huq Niru in his third, fourth and fifth round encounters respectively yesterday.

Reefat defeated Hasibul Hasan Hanif, IM Zillur Rahman Champak and Saifuddin Lablu in his three matches yesterday. Those who have collected four points each are Champak, Niru, and Hanif.

Ziaul Kader Tuhin, Syed Ruhul Kabir Shipu, Farid Ahmed, Alimul Huq Kajal and Aminul Islam have collected three and a half points each.

The sixth and seventh round matches will be held today at the same venue.

Forty-four players are participating in the competition jointly organised by the Dr Milton Smriti Sangsad and the Dhaka Chess Foundation.

Becker eager to impress partisan crowd at Frankfurt

FRANKFURT, Nov 17: A couple of young, trigger-happy gunslingers have stormed into town. A few old rivals are lurking in the shadows. Can Boris Becker finally prevail on his home turf? reports AP.

A rich television deal and new wealthy sponsors lured the Association of Tennis Professionals World Championships from New York to Frankfurt in 1990.

The sudden German interest and willingness to invest in the event stemmed from the nation's love affair with Becker, the youngest champion in the history of Wimbledon and Germany's new hero.

Becker won the year-end event, once known as the Masters, in 1988 in New York. He was runner-up there three times.

But since the tournament came to Frankfurt, Becker has not made the final — let alone win the title.

He was a semifinalist in 1990, but did not advance past round-robin group play last year. The event pits the eight top-ranked men's players in the world.

One reason for Becker's unspectacular showing is that he has never come to Frankfurt completely healthy. This year is no exception; he pulled out of a weekend exhibition tournament in Rome with a fever.

The three-time Wimbledon champion almost didn't make it to Frankfurt at all. His slide in the rankings reversed only when he won the Paris Open 10 days ago. He is now No 7.

Becker played his best tennis of the year in Paris. His victims included No 1 Jim Courier, No 4 Goran Ivanisevic and No 12 Guy Forget.

That made him a favourite in Frankfurt, until his health became suspect again over the weekend.

Becker said Monday he fell ill last week and only went to Rome to honour his commitment.

Becker will open against Pete Sampras, the defending champion.

Sampras, who saw Becker trounce John McEnroe, Courier and Goran Ivanisevic in Croatia in the French capital, was in cautious mood.

"Boris was ever so impressive," he said. "He's playing really well. But you can't count on easy matches in a tournament like this one."



Champions Dhaka University who beat Khulna DSA to lift the national soccer title yesterday at the Mymensingh Stadium. — Star photo

Agrani falter against City

Sports Reporter

A dramatic collapse by the lower-order batsmen ruined the hopes of Agrani Bank as they lost to City Club by 10 runs in the only match of the Milners First Division cricket league at the Mirpur Pallabi ground yesterday.

Chasing a modest total of 185, Agrani Bank had managed 156 for five wickets in 31.5 overs but the remaining five wickets fell for only 19 runs in another 6.4 overs much to the disappointment of the bankers. Agrani Bank skipper Jogesh won the toss and put City Club into bat.

City Club opener Ujjal was run out for 4 with nine runs on the board.

But a second wicket partnership of 40 runs between skipper Zakir and Gautam helped City Club to get over the initial setback. Zakir scored 17 with the help of two boundaries playing 44 balls before being caught by Jogesh off the bowling of medium-pacer Raja.

Gautam, then pairing with Monti, added 37 runs in the third wicket stand. Gautam made 40 off 61 deliveries while Monti scored 18 facing 33 balls. Gautam hit the ball five times to the fence.

Salahuddin, the opening bowler of City Club, made a quick 32 not out off just 19 balls, an innings which included four fours and a six.

Al-Amin scored 22 and Bappi 10 to take the City collection to 185 for eight wickets when the stipulated quota of 40 overs ran out.

Raja with two for 38 was the most successful of the Agrani Bank bowlers while Kawser, Azam, Atiq and Al-Amin bagged one wicket apiece.

The bankers started quite convincingly as their opening pair of Anwar and Niaz collected 31 runs in 5.5 overs before Niaz was bowled by Bappi for 13.

One-down Tipu was bowled by Salahuddin for a duck in the very next over, making it two down for 33.

When opener Anwar departed for 29 with the score on 59 in 11-3 overs, Agrani Bank seemed in deep trouble.

But a partnership of 73 between Azam and Kawser for the fourth wicket revived the bankers' hopes.

Azam scored a fine half century with the help of three boundaries while Kawser contributed 38 hitting a couple of over boundaries and a four. Kawser's departure brought Atiq to the crease. Atiq helped add 24 runs for the fifth wicket with Azam, taking the total to 156. But then Atiq was stumped by Kamru behind the wicket off spinner Sajan.

At this stage Agrani Bank, needing just 30 runs to win in 8.1 overs, quite inexplicably lost two wickets in quick succession. Both Biplob and Intoo were run out for one and six runs respectively.

Raja and Al-Amin returned to the pavilion without scoring while Jogesh, the veteran cricketer, remained unbeaten as the Agrani Bank innings came to a premature close for 175 in 38.3 overs, ten runs short of the target.

Sujan claimed three wickets for 18, Bappi two for 33 while Salahuddin and Tinku took one wicket each to steer City Club to an exciting 10-run victory.

The result was doubly galling for Agrani Bank who are likely to see the two points they had earned by beating newcomers Evergreen Club in their first match of the league

last week, being forfeited by the BCCB. Evergreen filed a protest with the league committee claiming Agrani Bank breached the rules by fielding an unregistered player.

SCOREBOARD

Table with 5 columns: Player, Runs, Wickets, Overs, Extras. Lists Agrani Bank and City Club scores.

Bowling table for Agrani Bank with columns: Player, O, M, R, W.

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Bowling table for Agrani Bank with columns: Player, O, M, R, W.

Umpires: Nil Ratan and Jahangir

TODAY'S MATCH

Wari Club vs Evergreen SC (Mirpur Pallabi)

Windies may have to return home without a penny

HOBART, Nov 17: West Indian cricketers are worried they could return home from Australia penniless because of the International Cricket Council's (ICC) 90 overs a day rule for Tests, reports Reuter.

"We could go home without a cent in our pockets which I think is really, really hard on the players," captain Richie Richardson said on Tuesday.

The ICC legislated in July last year for a minimum of 90 overs a day, with fines of five per cent of match fees imposed for each over short of the requirement.

The touring West Indians, whose four-pronged pace attack is notoriously slow at getting through the overs, will be playing under the new rule in a full series for the first time.

Richardson said it would be virtually impossible for his attack to meet the ICC demand during the five-Test series which begins on November 27. "Eighty-five overs in a day would be a fairer figure," he said.

"We don't make as much money as the other cricketers so when we are fined, we really, really hurt."

"We are not marketed the way other cricketers are, so we depend on our salary."

The West Indians were fined a total of 24,000 dollars for poor over-rates on their 1988 tour of Australia but Richardson said his side felt it was being unfairly penalised when its bowlers were winning games with ten to spare.

"A lot of the guys felt really hurt in 1988. If fast bowlers are going to bowl a team out, why should you have to play a spinner just to make sure you bowl the overs?" Richardson said.

"If people are deliberately wasting time, then some action should be taken. You should only be penalised for a deliberate waste of time."

DU cricket

Department of Political Science registered an emphatic 59-run victory over Department of Botany in the Dhaka University inter-department cricket tournament at the Jagannath Hall ground yesterday.

Battling first Political Science Department made 174 for the loss of seven wickets.

Botany Department were bundled out for 115 runs in 26.2 overs.

Mashuk clinches singles title

Sports Reporter Shamsur Rahman Mashuk of Dhaka Club outplayed Nasiruddin Ahmed of Engineers Club to clinch the men's singles title of the fifth Nasiruddin Memorial tennis tournament which concluded at the Officers' Club, Bailey Road, yesterday.

In the men's doubles Syed Wahed and Azmat Moin of Gulshan Club downed Shamsur Rahman Mashuk and Dr Zahir of Dhaka Club 6-4, 6-2 to win the title.

In the veterans' doubles Bazlur Rahman and Dr Rashiduddin of Officers' Club became the champions by defeating Syed Mahmood and H Zaman of Gulshan Club.

Mrs Azizunnessa Nasiruddin Ahmed gave away the prizes among the winners as chief guest.

Windies settle for a draw at Hobart

HOBART, Nov 17: Opener Desmond Haynes scored a solid 79 Tuesday, but the West Indies still had to settle for a draw in their four-day cricket match against an Australian XI at Bellerive Oval, reports AP.

Set 253 for victory from a minimum of 52 overs, the tourists finished on 213 for five.

Fast bowler Merv Hughes wrecked any hopes of victory for the West Indies with three wickets in the last hour. He finished with figures of three for 44.

Carl Hooper was unbeaten on 38 at stumps, while Jimmy Adams was on six.

Haynes began aggressively and struck five fours from the first 73 deliveries, he faced.

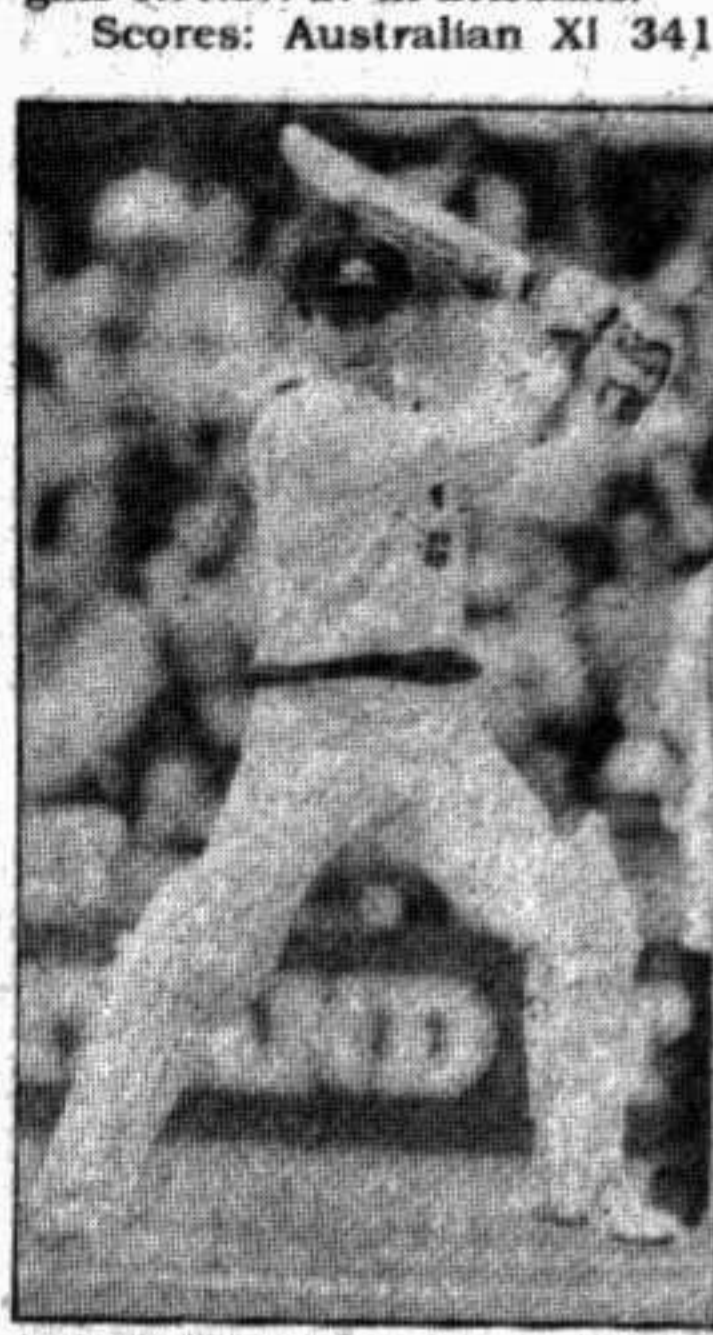
Richie Richardson scored 32 and Keith Arthurton contributed 46, but the tourists still fell 40 runs short of victory.

Earlier, Steve Waugh made virtually certain of an Australian Test team place. He followed up his first innings 95 with an unbeaten century by the time the Australian XI declared at 293 for four.

The century took Waugh only 169 minutes and included seven fours. It was his fourth international century, but his first against the West Indies.

Damien Martyn scored a breezy 44 and Darren Lehmann weighed in with 54 as the Australians set a tough target.

The West Indies next will play New South Wales in Sydney starting on Friday. The first Test against Australia begins on Nov. 27 in Brisbane. Scores: Australian XI 341



S WAUGH ... back in form

and 293-4 declared (Steve Waugh 100 not out, Darren Lehmann 54), West Indies 382 and 213-5 (Desmond Haynes 79; Merv Hughes 3-44). Match drawn.

SCOREBOARD

Table with 5 columns: Player, O, M, R, W. Lists batting and bowling figures for both teams.

on Tuesday: AUSTRALIAN: 1st innings 341 (S Waugh 95, C Hooper five for 72).

WEST INDIES: 1st innings 382 (P Simmons 106, K Arthurton 76, M Hughes three for 76, S Waugh four for 104).

AUSTRALIAN XI: 2nd innings (overnight 142-3) M Hayden lbw b Cummins 53 W Phillips c Simmons b Cummins 1

D Boon c Logie b Cummins 30 S Waugh not out 100 D Martyn c Murray b Bishop 44

D Lehmann not out 54 Extras: (b-4, lb-4, nb-3) 11 Total: (for four wickets) 293

Fall of wickets: 1-5; 2-84; 3-93; 4-178

Table with 5 columns: Player, O, M, R, W. Lists bowling figures for West Indies.

WEST INDIES: 2nd innings D Hayden b Hughes 79 P Simmons lbw b Matthews 8 R Richardson c Freedman b Warner 32

K Arthurton b Hughes 46 G Logie c Healy b Hughes 0 C Hooper not out 30 J Adams not out 6

Extras: (lb-3, b-1) 4 Total: (for five wickets) 213

Fall of wickets: 1-13; 2-92; 3-160; 4-160; 5-197

Table with 5 columns: Player, O, M, R, W. Lists bowling figures for Australia.

Result: match drawn

Courier, Edberg count on Mac for changes in ATP ranking system

FRANKFURT, Nov 17: Jim Courier and Stefan Edberg, the top-ranked players in world tennis, want the system changed. Both believe John McEnroe is the man to change it, reports AP.

"I am not worried about losing the No. 1. I have nothing to lose or gain. I just have to go out and play well," the top-ranked Courier said on Monday, the day before the start of the season-ending Association of Tennis Professionals Tour World Championship. "But the points system is flawed and the best of 14 tournaments doesn't work."

The year-end championship could leave the game with a new No 1 in the world. Pete Sampras, the No 3, and Edberg also have a shot at the top spot.

The players are ranked according to the ATP computer, which awards points for every tournament. Only a player's best 14 tournaments in a year count for a ranking at the end of the year.

"Every tournament should count. You should play your best at every tournament if you are a professional. And Grand Slams should count much more," Courier said. "Now you can have guys losing in the first round of every Grand Slam and still be ranked very high."

"I don't want to be playing the computer. At the end of my career I don't want to know how many points I've won."

"I spoke to Stefan about it after practice and he feels the same way," Courier said.

He said drafting McEnroe to argue their case was Edberg's idea.

"John would be perfect, he wouldn't take any crap from anyone," Courier said. "And I think John would love it."

McEnroe, a former No 1, is scaling down his schedule as he nears the end of his career.

"We are going to be talking about the system here. If the top eight players can't change

the system, then no one can," Courier said.

The dlr's 2.5 million ATP World Championship pits the top eight players in the world. They are split into two round-robin groups, with the top two in each advancing to the semifinals.

Courier, Goran Ivanisevic, Michael Chang and Richard Krajicek are in the Rod Laver Group, while Edberg, Pete Sampras, Petr Korda and Boris Becker are in the Ken Rosewall Group.

Krajicek is ranked 10th, but made the tournament after No 8 Ivan Lendl and No 9 Andre Agassi pulled out with injuries.

Edberg was to open the tournament Tuesday against Korda, while Becker met Sampras and Chang faced Ivanisevic.

While Courier said he was not worried about losing the No 1 ranking, Edberg said he was eager to regain it.

"No 1 is being the best player in the world and no one can take that away from you," the Swede said. "To me it means a lot."

"I want to regain the No 1 spot and to finish No 1 for the third year in a row. Not too many guys have done that."

"I am going to take every opportunity I can to be No 1 again," Edberg said.

Sampras, the No 3, agreed that Grand Slam tournaments should carry more weight, but said there was no ranking system that would make everyone happy.

"You are not going to have a perfect system, but I'd sit down and talk about it," said Sampras, the defending champion here.

Seles also said playing Madison Square Garden is special.

Good starts for Seles, Navratilova

NEW YORK, Nov 17: World number one Monica Seles began her bid for a third consecutive title at the 3 million dollar Virginia Slims Championships by crushing a hopelessly over-matched Nathalie Tauziat of France 6-1, 6-2 Monday, reports Reuter.

"I played pretty well for so early in the tournament," said Seles, who handed Tauziat her third successive first-round loss here. "It was a good Monday."

Earlier, fourth-seeded five-time champion Martina Navratilova opened the season-ending tournament by trouncing a lifeless Manuela Maleeva-Fragniere of Switzerland 6-2, 6-2 to precede Seles into the quarter-finals.

The players are fond of saying there are no easy matches in this prestigious event for the year's top 16 players, but someone obviously forgot to tell Seles and Navratilova.

Seles also said playing Madison Square Garden is special.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down words. Includes a solution time of 21 mins.

Cryptoquip puzzle grid with numbers 1-30 and a key for the letters.

CRYPTOQUIP G J K N C O V A Z L J - X K W W F X N M , B K W J K S K N C M V W J R A W F N W W A K T W F K B V C A Z L J K N J K S J L A T G A C . Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHY DID YOUR ELEVATOR OPERATOR VIEW HIS PROFESSION AS UPLIFTING? Today's Cryptoquip clue: N equals U The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.