

Sport

Abahani-MSC tie now on Feb 26

Sports Reporter
The much-awaited Navana Premier Division cricket league tie between title holders Mohammedan Sporting Club and arch-rivals Abahani...

Both Mohammedans and Abahani have 16 points from nine matches each. Mohammedans suffered their lone defeat in the league at the hands of Bangladesh Biman...

The postponement of yesterday's two matches, which were supposed to complete the first phase of the eleven-team league, thus delayed the commencement of the six-team super league, scheduled for a February 22 start.

An unconfirmed report quoting the BCCB said the super league is now likely to begin from the last day of this month.

BFF warns booters

National footballers will face stern disciplinary action if they fail to report to coach Kazi Salahuddin at the Mirpur Stadium by four this afternoon. This was decided at an emergency meeting of the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) with its chief Sediqur Rahman in the chair.

Shaikat to lead u-19 cricketers on Nepal tour

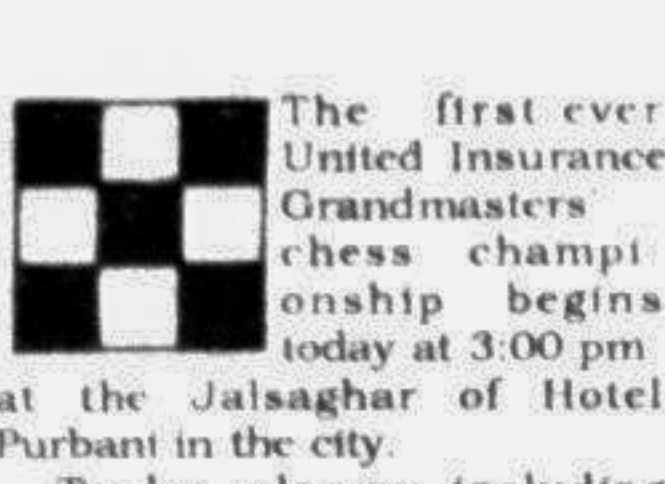
The Bangladesh Cricket Control Board (BCCB) has named Shaifuddin Islam Shaikat, Victoria Sporting's left-arm spinner, as the captain of the Bangladesh under-19 cricketers who are to play in the Silver Jubilee tournament in Birganj, Nepal.

Three more players will accompany the team as stand-by. They are: Zahid Salamian, Sajjad Hossain and Sharif Hossain.

Hira Lal clinches Jabbar tennis

National champion Hira Lal retained his men's singles title of the Engineer M A Jabbar memorial tennis championships. Hira Lal beat Faisal 7-6 (7-5), 7-5, 6-2 in the keenly-contested final held at the Engineers Club courts yesterday.

Grandmasters' meet begins today



The first ever United Insurance Grandmasters' chess championship begins today at 3:00 pm at the Jalsagar of Hotel Purbani in the city.

Twelve players including five GMs will compete in the fortnight-long meet organised by the Bangladesh Chess Federation (BCF).

The GMs are Niaz Morshed (2520) of Bangladesh, Dibyendu Barua (2530) of India and Julian M Hodgson (2565), David Norwood (2525) and Daniel J King (2500)—all from England.

The seven other competing players are International Master Zillur Rahman Champak (2320), Ziaur Rahman (2430) and Rifat bin-Sattar (2385) of Bangladesh; IM Arun B Vaidya (2385), IM Neeraj Kumar Mishra (2365) and Varugese Koshi (2420) of India and well-known Pakistani IM Mahmood Ahmed Lodhi (2430).

The GMs have been put up at a rest house in Gulshan while the other players are staying at a city hotel.

The sponsors United Insurance Co Ltd will bear the entire expenses of the meet estimated at seven lakh taka.

Four thousand US dollars will be on offer for the top eight finishers but the BCF is yet to finalise the break-up.

Besides each of the five GMs is likely to receive one thousand dollar as appearance fees. Other players will also be awarded cash allowances.

The meet, belonging to Category Eight of the FIDE, will be of great importance for the IMs and rated players.

Should any of the competing IMs score eight points from his eleven matches in the robin league competition he will earn the required norm to be honoured as a Grandmaster while if a rated player can score six points he will be awarded the International Master's title, subject to confirmation by the International Chess Federation (FIDE).

Meanwhile, the number-drawing ceremony for the tournament was held at the playing venue yesterday evening with State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadek Hossain Khoka doing the honours as chief guest.

All the players excluding the lone GM of the country Niaz Morshed attended the ceremony.

BCF vice-president and chief arbiter of the competition Professor AR Khan drew the lots for Niaz Morshed.

Julian Hodgson, one of the three English GMs in the fray, was the first to try his luck and he drew number 11.

Dibyendu Barua, who followed Hodgson, drew number seven while the other three GMs—Niaz, Norwood and King—drew numbers two, six and nine respectively.

Zimbabwe's 1st overseas Test to be against India

NEW DELHI, Feb 19: Zimbabwe will play their first overseas Test against India in New Delhi during their 15-day tour next month, Indian cricket officials said on Thursday, reports Reuter.

Zimbabwe, who had their Test baptism in Harare last October when the Indians played a one-off game, will also contest three one-day internationals.

Zimbabwe last played in India in 1987 during the World Cup. ITINERARY: March 13-17—Test, New Delhi. March 20—1st one-day international, Faridabad. March 22—2nd one-day international, Guwahati. March 25—3rd one-day international, Pune.

Wright back in Kiwi squad

WELLINGTON, Feb 19: Veteran opener John Wright and promising allrounder Chris Cairns return to New Zealand's cricket team next week for the first of three Test matches against Australia, starting on Thursday in Christchurch, reports Reuter.

Wright, 38, has been called up to bring some stability to New Zealand's top order batting. He will open with fellow left-hander Mark Greatbatch.

Wright, who will be playing his 80th Test, is New Zealand's record Test run scorer, with 5,097.

Cairns, who underwent a kidney operation after returning from English county side Nottinghamshire five months ago, has been called in as a fourth seam bowler. Offspinner Dipak Patel has recovered from an injured knee and will play.

Rod Latham, who opened in New Zealand's last Test side against Pakistan last month, has been dropped.

Australia, who have brought only 13-strong squad to New Zealand for the 10 match tour, will announce their team after a three-day match against a New Zealand President's XI, which starts on Saturday.

New Zealand: John Wright, Mark Greatbatch, Andrew Jones, Martin Crowe (captain), Ken Rutherford, Chris Cairns, Dipak Patel, Adam Parore, Murphy Su'a Danny Morrison, Michael Owens, Chris Harris.

Inter-district volleyball

Pabna, Kushtia, Dinajpur and Jessore DSAs won their respective matches in the men's group of the Incontrad inter-district volleyball championship at the Outer Stadium volleyball court yesterday.

Pabna polished off their encounter against Meherpur in 60 minutes 15-9, 15-10, 15-8; Kushtia overcame a one-set deficit to beat Bogra 10-15, 16-14, 15-10 and 15-8. But they were kept on the court 15 minutes less than the Pabna spikers.

Dinajpur needed three minutes more but one set less to take care of Noakhali 15-5, 15-4 and 15-8 while Jessore came out winners without a fight as their opponents Satkhira failed to show up.

Four more matches were in progress when this report was filed.

In the women's group, six matches were settled on the second day of the meet with Jaipurhat, Rajbari, Tangail, Narayanganj and Rangpur managing straight-sets victories.

The Rajbari spikers must have been elated after winning both their matches of the day. First they outplayed Chittagong 15-1, 15-7, 15-5 in the morning and then took care of Dinajpur 17-16, 15-1 and 15-7 in the afternoon.

Jaipurhat snuffed Sylhet 15-4, 15-13, 16-14 in their first encounter but then were downed by the Tangail spikers 15-2, 15-0, 15-6.

Rangpur routed Chittagong 15-1, 15-4 and 15-7 while Sylhet again found the winners' luck elusive in the afternoon when they were ripped by the Narayanganj girls 15-4, 15-3 and 15-1.

Mitali Vidyapith's annual sports held

Sports Reporter
The annual sports competition of Mitali Vidyapith was held yesterday at the school playground.

A K Fayedul Huq, the President of the Gopibagh Neighbours' Association—the organisers of the meet, inaugurated the competition.

State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadek Hossain, who is the president of Mitali Vidyapith, was present as chief guest.

Afroza Begum, a deputy director of the Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Board (Dhaka zone), gave away prizes among the winners as a special guest.

Christie-Lewis showdown likely to be in Europe

WASHINGTON, Feb 19: The much awaited showdown between Olympic 100 metre champion Linford Christie and world record holder Carl Lewis will probably be in Europe, reports AFP.

Lewis's manager Joe Douglas said offers from Britain and France had topped those made in America.

US cable television company HBO has made an offer for the Christie-Lewis race and a long jump competition between Lewis, the Olympic champion, and world record holder Mike Powell.

Douglas said he would prefer the contest in American, but plans have been upset because the higher offers have come from Europe.

Christie, 32, has said he wants to face Lewis, 31, before retiring from athletics next year.

Dublin may bid for 2004 Summer Games

DUBLIN, Feb 19: Dublin may bid for the 2004 Summer Olympics—but first it plans to spend 1.5 million dollar deciding if the dream can be fulfilled, reports Reuter.

erning body would pay prize money to medalists in this year's World Championships in Stuttgart in August. He said 70,000 dollar would be available to US athletes.

Surber said no decision had been made yet on how that money would be allocated.

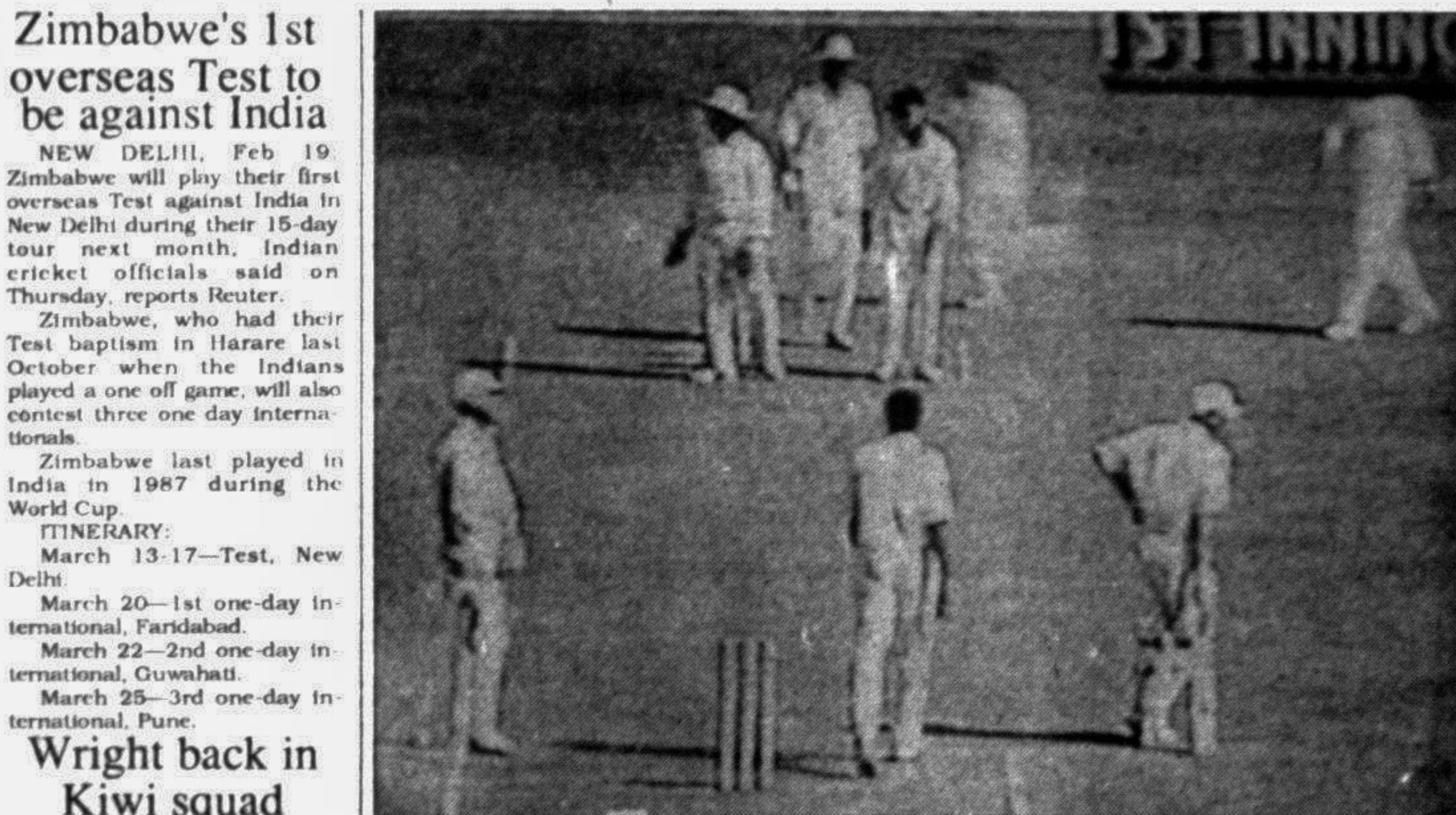
The absence of prize money at the World Championships has been a sore point with a number of the world's leading athletes.

Agents for some competitors said their athletes would be disappointed.

London Marathon faces problems

LONDON, Feb 19: A dispute between race chairman Chris Brasher and the British government over money has cast a shadow over this year's London Marathon, reports Reuter.

State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadek Hossain Khoka conducted the number-drawing for the first United Insurance GM chess championship at a local hotel yesterday. The meet begins this afternoon.



ENDING UP AT THE SAME END: England's vice captain Alec Stewart (L) and one-down batsman Mike Atherton stranded at the bowler's end after a terrible mix-up during the first day's play of the third and final Test in Bombay yesterday. Stewart was given out. —Star TV photo

Hick spares England blushes

BOMBAY, Feb 19: Graeme Hick compiled a classy unbeaten 99 Friday to save England from another hiding by the Indian spinners in the third and final Test at the Wankhede Stadium here, reports AFP.

England appeared to be in the doldrums at 118 for six midway through the post-lunch session after electing to bat first on a wicket that aided turn from the start.

But the 26-year-old Zimbabwean-born Hick played the best knock of his 14-Test career to spare England the blushes and carry them to 239 for seven by close of the eventful opening day's play.

Hick, whose previous best Test score was 64 made in the second Test in Madras last week, defied the Indian spinners for four hours to hit 10 boundaries during his 189-ball innings.

Cheered by some 35,000 spectators, Hick took three runs in the day's last over to move to 99, but partner John Emburey played out the last two balls to deny Hick an early celebration.

Till Hick appeared on the scene, England were reliving the nightmares of the crushing defeats in the first two Tests which saw the Indian spinners claim 34 of the 40 wickets.

Captain Graham Gooch's delight at winning the toss for the first time in the series was short-lived as India ripped through the top order in the morning session to make the tourists 58 for four.

Hick and Mike Atherton retrieved the situation by adding 58 for the fifth wicket, but England remained in deep trouble when they were reduced to 118 for six.

All-rounder Chris Lewis, who struck a brilliant century in the Madras Test, continued the good form to help Hick wrest the initiative in a brisk 93-run stand in 115 minutes for the seventh wicket.

Lewis fell one run short of his fourth Test half century when a ball from leg-spinner Anil Kumble kept low to trap the batsman leg before, an hour before close which made England 211 for seven.

England's innings followed a familiar tale despite the tourists overhauling their team with four changes from the Madras Test.

Gooch, Atherton, seamer Phil Defreitas and off-spinner John Embury replaced the indisposed Neil Fairbrother, spinner Ian Salisbury and seamers Devon Malcolm and Paul Jarvis.

Wicket-keeper Richard Blakey who made his Test debut in Madras, was retained at the last minute as left-hander

leg before for one to make England 118 for six in the afternoon session. Lewis and Hick prevented any further damage till tea which was taken at 176 for six, the pair having added a brisk 58 in 52 minutes before the second interval.

Aussies rest Hughes, S Waugh

NELSON, New Zealand, Feb 19: Australia will rest pace bowler Merv Hughes and batsman Steve Waugh when they face a New Zealand President's XI in a three-day cricket match starting Saturday at Trafalgar Park, reports AP.

Opener David Boon rejoined the team Friday night after attending his father's funeral, while spinner Tim May will play for the first time on tour.

The Australians made an impressive start to their tour with a nine-wicket victory over a New Zealand Cricket Board XI in New Plymouth on Thursday.

Several of the New Zealand President's XI are on the verge of Test selection and have plenty to prove, said captain Ken Rutherford.

Only four have played Test cricket—batsmen Rod Latham, Shane Thomson and Rutherford and fast-medium bowler Chris Pringle.

"Everyone will be wanting to further their claims in the eyes of the New Zealand selectors," Rutherford said.

Rutherford is a member of the Kiwi team to face Australia in the first Test starting Feb. 25 in Christchurch and welcomes the change to get a look at the Australian attack.

"From a purely personal point of view there is the chance to get quality time at the crease," he said.

Bhola, Sohel in Biman Open final

Sports Reporter
National champion Bhola Lal Chouhan takes on Sohel Hamid in the final of the inaugural Biman squash championship today at 5:00 pm at the Dhaka Club squash court.

Bhola moved into the final beating Shahjahan Sikder 9-4, 9-3, 9-6 while Sohel Hamid made it to the final defeating Ramjagadish 9-3, 9-0, 9-6 in their respective semifinals held at the same venue yesterday.

State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism A Mannan will witness the final as chief guest and give away the prizes.



State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadek Hossain Khoka conducted the number-drawing for the first United Insurance GM chess championship at a local hotel yesterday. The meet begins this afternoon.



Mr and Mrs Alfred Gooch, the parents of the England skipper Graham Gooch, watching the opening day's proceedings of the third and final Test between India and England in Bombay yesterday. They must have been disappointed to see their son managing only four before edging a Kapil Dev delivery behind the stumps. —Star TV photo