

United Insurance Grandmasters' tournament

Niaz's non-appearance mars start

The much-vaunted United Insurance Grandmasters' chess tournament got off to a stuttering start at Hotel Purbani yesterday afternoon with Niaz Murshed, the lone Grandmaster of the country, failing to turn up for his opening match.

Niaz, the top-ranked player among the four Bangladeshis taking part in this 12-man competition involving four foreign



Grandmasters, still hasn't returned from Calcutta where he had gone earlier this month to compete in the Goodricke International tournament. However, Bangladesh Chess Federation (BCF) officials yesterday assured newsmen he'd be reaching Dhaka by today and would play his second round match this afternoon.

According to BCF sources, Niaz's first round opponent Grandmaster Julian Hodgson of Britain, who too participated in the Goodricke meet, has

reportedly agreed to take on Niaz for the deferred match next Friday, the first rest day in this fortnight-long tourney.

Two other British Grandmasters - Daniel King and David Norwood - as well as Grandmaster Dibyendu Barua of India had all played in Calcutta and reached Dhaka on time for the current meet. But Niaz, who had reportedly gone on to Delhi for some personal reasons, has been delayed.

Niaz's non-appearance on the inaugural day not only embarrassed the organisers but also incurred the displeasure of the steerable chess fans who had paid good money and hoped to see the best local bet in action. Niaz has not taken part in any competition in this country for more than a year now.

Getting back to the matton, David Norwood was the only one among the three Grandmasters in action yesterday to record a win.

Norwood, with a rating of 2525, gave himself a fine start in this 11-match round robin competition by beating Indian Grandmaster Dibyendu Barua, rated 2530, in 27 moves of a game of the Reti opening. Barua is only the second Grandmaster in India after his more famous compatriot Viswanathan Anand who has made such a great impact on the international scene.

Norwood, playing white, checkmated Barua with a Rd2 on the 27th move on Table Fve.

The other GM on view yesterday, Daniel J. King, rated 2500, was held to a draw by former national champion Ziaur Rahman (2430) in his first encounter.

Zia, knocking at the gate for the title of an International Master(IM), and considered by experts as the most attacking player in this country, did himself credit by forcing his more fancied opponent to split the point after 38 moves of an English opening game which lasted nearly four hours. Playing with the white pieces, Zia always appeared to enjoy a slight edge over King.

Zillur Rahman Champak, another former national champion and the only IM of the country with a rating of 2320, also shared points in his first outing against the veteran



NIAZ MURSHED
Indian IM Arun Vaidya (2385). Their match, known as the Sicilian Seven Engine variation, petered out into an uneventful draw after 32 moves.

variation.

Indian IM Neeraj Kumar Mishra (2365) also made a good start by beating his higher ranked compatriot Varghese Koshi (2420) in the other match of the day.

Their marathon five hours and twenty minutes long encounter finally ended when Koshi, realising the hopelessness of his position, surrendered after the 60th move in a game of the flank variation.

The tournament carries a total prizemoney of US 4000 dollars of which the winner will receive 1250 dollars and the runner-up 875 dollars. The player finishing third will earn 625 dollars while those securing the fourth to eighth positions will each receive 250 dollars.

Interestingly, as is usually the case, far too many people were seen crowding the Jalsaghar, the venue of the competition, carrying BCF badges on their persons. Very few among them appeared to have any real business with the going-on in that stuffy room. Reporters seeking answers to their questions, hardly found anyone worth talking to. The ignorance of some of the so-called organising committee members regarding the details of the tournament was most pathetic. For example, although the numbers of the participating players were drawn amid much fanfare on Friday last yet no one from the BCF could provide the fixture for today's competition even half an hour after the completion of yesterday's last encounter.

Play begins at 3.00 pm today.

Pak hockey squad clinches series against France

PESHAWAR, Pakistan, Feb 20: A hat-trick by full back Rana Mujahid gave Pakistan a comfortable 4-0 victory against France in their third field hockey Test played here Saturday, reports AFP.

The win clinched the four-match series for Pakistan, who now hold an unassailable 3-0 lead.

Rana Mujahid converted three penalty corners in the two sessions.

Opening their account through centre forward Tahir Zaman in the 17th minute Pakistan consolidated the lead after Mujahid netted in the 32nd minute.

Pakistan led 2-0 at the break.

France could not convert the two penalty corners they won against the 12 secured by Pakistan.

The tourists lost the two previous matches at Lahore and Peshawar 7-1. The fourth and final Test will take place in Karachi on Monday.

B Bank sports

Head office and Rajshahi branch jointly emerged champions in the ninth inter-office sports meet of Bangladesh Bank last Friday, reports UNB.

Kazi Saidur Rahman and Shamsur Rahman Mukul of head office, Dhaka and Md. Babar Ali of Rajshahi office became joint-champions on the men's group.

About 350 athletes from different branches participated in the meet held at the National Hockey Stadium.

In the women's group, Majeda Khatun of Bogra office became the champion.

In the 100 metres sprint, Mahfizul Islam and Afroza Shaheen of Rajshahi became the fastest man and woman respectively.

Deputy Governor of Bangladesh Bank, Kamaluddin Ahmed inaugurated the meet and later distributed prizes among the winners.

SA plan to fight fire with fire

JOHANNESBURG, Feb 20: South Africa's cricketers, twice battered into submission by the Pakistani pace attack, plan to fight fire with fire for the team's vital one-day international near Pretoria on Sunday, reports AFP.



DO YOU CALL THAT A SMILE... Veteran Pakistan batsman Javed Miandad trying to hide his frustration with a smile as he watches last man Aaqib Javed coming in to bat in the one-day international against the West Indies on Friday. Miandad hung around for quite some time but found no support from his teammates as the world champions crashed to a 124-run defeat. -Star TV photo

Fast bowler Fanie de Villiers returns to his home ground in a beefed-up South African pace attack that will aim to exploit a Pakistani batting line up humbled by a 124-run defeat by the West Indies in Durban on Friday.

The South Africans hope that the recall to national duty of fast bowler Richard Snell will help cancel out the threat of Pakistan speed duo Waqar Younis and Wasim Akram.

Sunday's match is a vital one, as the three teams are in a dead heat, having each played four matches, winning two and losing two - Pakistan have beaten South Africa twice, South Africa have beaten the West Indies twice, and the West Indies have beaten Pakistan twice.

They all play each other one more time this week.

There is a complex procedure for deciding who gets to next Saturday's final in



ALLAN DONALD
Johannesburg in the event of all the teams being equal on points.

In the event of dead heat between three teams, run-rates will be used as a deciding factor, with complex compensations for matches shorted by rain.

TEAMS

South Africa (from): Andrew Hudson, Kepler Wessels (capt), Hansie Cronje, Peter Kirsten, Daryll Cullinan, Jonty Rhodes, Dave Callaghan, Dave Richardson, Errol Stewart, Richard Snell, Fanie de Villiers, Allan Donald, Craig Matthews, Mccryck Pringle.

Pakistan (from): Wasim Akram (capt), Waqar Younis, Salim Malik, Javed Miandad, Rameez Raja, Shoaib Mohammad, Aamir Sohail, Zahid Fazal, Rashid Latif, Aatur Rehman, Aaqib Javed, Mushtaq Ahmed, Asif Mujtaba, Arshad Khan, Ghulam Ali, Saeed Anwar.



MEYRICK PRINGLE STANDINGS

Standings in the triangular one-day cricket series between South Africa, Pakistan and West Indies after Friday's match (tabulate under played, won, lost, points):

Pakistan	4	2	2	4
West Indies	4	2	2	4
South Africa	4	2	2	4

Booters seek talks with BFF

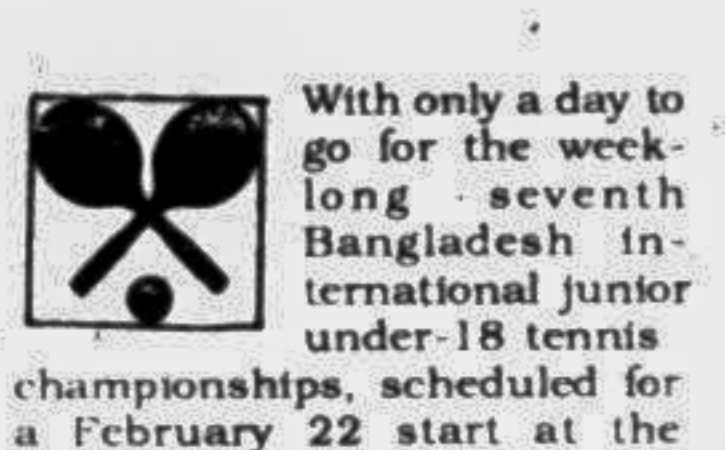
Sports Reporter
National footballers have asked the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) to sit with their representatives to find out an amicable solution to the problem which has kept them away from the national coaching camp.

Earlier on Friday the BFF warned the players selected for the national team that serious disciplinary measures would be taken against them if they did not report to coach Kazi Salahuddin by yesterday afternoon for practice.

The players decried the BFF's decision and said that they would not participate in the camp for the 1994 World Cup qualifying matches unless the inter-club transfers for the coming season were completed.

The BFF is likely to discuss the issue at its next meeting on February 23.

BTF not quite ready



CHAMPION VENUE TENNIS COMPLEX
A Morshed Khan Chowdhury, general secretary of the Bangladesh Tennis Federation, talking to newsmen during a press conference convened yesterday at the Ramna Tennis Complex in connection with the seventh Bangladesh international junior championships which begin tomorrow. -Star photo

Sports Reporter
Although the BTF secretary A Morshed Khan Chowdhury sounded optimistic about getting everything ready on time during a press conference at the complex yesterday, he lamented that the required funds, estimated at six lakh

Thailand, Austria, India, Iran and Nepal.

The singles champion will earn 40 points and the runner-up 30 points while each of the losing semifinalists will be awarded 20 ITF points in the junior category.

The doubles winners will share 60 points while the runners-up will earn 20 points each.

The foreign players and officials will be housed at Hotel Purbani and they will receive free local hospitality.

Following is the list of the seeded boys players:

Ganiya Adenekan (106) - Nigeria; Sohel Malhotra (154) - India; Puthipong Ruyamane (162) - Thailand; Genuan Gunawardene (181) - Sri Lanka; Syed Faisal Huq (209) - Bangladesh; Previn Waas (280) - Sri Lanka; Djanuar Radjab (314) - Indonesia and Soysa Chandragupta (351) - Sri Lanka.

The seeded girls are as follows:

Nirupama Vaidyanathan (138) - India; Sarana Sangakkara (186) - Sri Lanka; Anoushka Boralessa (202) - Sri Lanka and another Lankan, Vpekha Wijeratne.

In an answer to a query the federation secretary informed the journalists that the BTF had a deposit of 29 lakh taka in a bank but would not draw a penny from that account. The funds for this meet would have to come from elsewhere, he said.

Tournament director Byazidur Rashid, BTF treasurer Riaz Rahman Sohel and chief referee Syed Wahed also spoke on the occasion.

State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadek Hossain Khoka will inaugurate the meet as the chief guest tomorrow at 9:30 am.

The sixth junior international, an International Tennis Federation approved tournament, were held in November, 1991.

taka, had not yet been made available to his federation.

Thirty-two boys representing twelve countries including some foreigners are likely to participate in the singles and doubles while eleven girls from four countries including Bangladesh are to play in the girls' singles and doubles events.

The participating countries other than Bangladesh are Romania, Sri Lanka, Cyprus, Nigeria, Indonesia, Pakistan,

Volleyball semis tomorrow

Sports Reporter
The semifinals of both the men's and women's groups of the Incontrad inter-district volleyball championships will be held tomorrow, Monday at the Outer Stadium volleyball court.

The men's semifinals pit Tangail against Dinajpur and Rajshahi against the winners of the tie between Dhaka and Bogra, also scheduled for Monday.

Narayanganj will be up against Rangpur while Rajbari will take on Tangail for the final slots of the women's event.

Dhaka, Faridpur, Tangail and Rajshahi DSAs' men won their respective matches yesterday.

Dhaka, who are just a step away from the semifinals, had to work hard to get rid of Rangpur 15-13, 2-15, 15-8 and 15-9. Faridpur earned a walkover against Comilla.

Rajshahi had their moments of worry against the spirited Jessore spikers before polishing off the tie 15-9, 13-15, 15-11 and 15-6. In the last match of the day, Tangail were too good for the man from Pabna and this was reflected clearly in the 15-6, 15-1 and 15-6 scoreline.

Koeman suspended for three matches

MARDIRD, Feb 20: Dutch defender Ronald Koeman was given a three-match suspension by the Spanish Soccer Federation on Friday for insulting the referee in last weekend's ill-tempered encounter between Barcelona and Atletico Madrid, reports Reuter.

The ban is in addition to the one-match suspension slapped on Barcelona's Koeman and two other players sent off during the match. A fourth player shown the red card escaped without a ban.

The federation decided to punish Koeman further after match referee Pajares Paz told their disciplinary council



BRAINS AT WAR: FIDE master Ziaur Rahman awaits English Grandmaster Daniel King's move in their first round match of the inaugural United Insurance Grandmasters' chess tournament at Hotel Purbani yesterday. Zia held King to a draw. -Star photo

Hearing of Borg's petition for divorce in Sweden

STOCKHOLM, Feb 20: Former tennis star Bjorn Borg's petition for divorce from his Italian wife Loredana Berte will be heard in Sweden rather than Italy, the national news agency TT reported on Friday, reports Reuter.

A regional high court ruled that Borg had filed for divorce before Berte filed a counter-suit in Italy. The suit would consequently be heard in Stockholm district court, ending a six-month tussle between the couple over jurisdiction.

Lawyers for the five times Wimbledon champion said they interpreted the decision as annulling a Milan court ruling last November, under which Borg was ordered to pay his estranged wife 20,000 dollars a month maintenance for three years, pending divorce.

Berte had accused Borg of damaging her career as a singer.

"My client was very relieved at the decision," Borg's lawyer Lars Mattsson said.

Hockey camp

Sports Reporter
The practice session for the hockey players of Dhaka Mariner Youngs Club will begin tomorrow, Monday, says a press release.

All players of the club have been asked to report to Mahbub Alam Choudhury, the team manager, at the club tent by seven this evening.

Bhola wins Biman Open squash

National champion Bholal Chauhan clinched the First Biman Open squash tournament title when he beat rival Sohel Hamid 9-3, 9-6, 7-9 and 9-6 in a keenly contested final at the Dhaka Club squash court yesterday, reports UNB.

Bhola reached the final eliminating Shahjahan Sikder 9-4, 9-3, 9-6 while Sohel Hamid outplayed Ram Jagadish 9-3, 9-0, 9-6 in his semifinals on Friday.

Ram Jagadish finished third defeating former national champion Shahjahan Sikder in a place deciding match yesterday.

In the veteran singles, Marry Potter of British High Commission emerged champion beating Managing Director of Bangladesh Tobacco Company Malcolm Fry by 2-1 sets in the final.

State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Abdul Mannan witnessed the Men's singles final as chief guest and later distributed the prizes. Managing Director of Bangladesh Biman Abdul Mueyed Chowdhury was also present on the occasion.

Eighty players including 16 foreigners took part in the two groups of the 12-day competition.

Biman single-wkt from tomorrow

Sports Reporter
The first-ever Biman Invitational single-wicket cricket championship under the aegis of the Bangladesh Sports Journalists' Association (BSJA) will be held from tomorrow, February 22 to 24 at the Dhaka Stadium.

Thirty-six players including eight overseas players playing in the local leagues will participate in the knock-out tournament.

The BSJA had originally extended their invitation to seven foreigners. The eighth invitee, Gamagee of Sri Lanka, replaces his Mohammedan Sporting teammate Azhar Hossain Shantoo who is currently suffering from a knee-injury.

Interestingly the proposed meet will adopt some devices which are usually employed in double-wicket tournaments. For instance, the batsman who will bat first, will have to do the willow-work for the stipulated three overs up to the quarterfinals.

However, five runs will be deducted from his account for each time that he is dismissed.

The semifinals and final innings will be of five overs' duration.

A senior official of the Bangladesh Cricket Control Board told The Daily Star yesterday that these rules are followed in double-wicket meets, not in single-wicket cricket.

But he said that these changes would surely make the tournament more exciting

with the batsmen enjoying an edge over bowlers.

Biman Bangladesh Airlines, the sponsors, will pay 25,000 taka to the BSJA for holding the tournament.

Besides, they will also provide the championship and runner-up trophies. The champion will also win a Dhaka-Singapore-Dhaka air ticket while the runner-up will receive a Dhaka-Bangkok-Dhaka ticket.

The final of the meet will be held next Wednesday, Feb 24.

State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadek Hossain Khoka will give away the prizes as chief guest.

Following are the players: Minhazul Abedin Nannu, Aminul Islam Bulbul, and Abu Hamid Piyal of Mohammedans; Faruk Ahmed, Akram Khan, Jahangir Alam, Gazi Ashraf Hossain Lipu and Khaled Mahmood Sujon of Abahani; Zahid Razaque Masum, Nurul Abedin Nohel, Athar Ali, Golam Faruk Suru and Habibur Bashir Sumon of Brothers; Golam Nawsher Prince, Selim Shahed and Masudur Rahman Mukul of Victoria; Jahangir Alam Talukder Dulal and Saiful Islam of the GMCC; Nasir Ahmed Nasu and Shabbir Chowdhury of Gulshan Youth; Enamul Huq Mont, Shahnewaz Shahid Shanu, Mahbubur Rahman Selim and Rupom of Bangladesh Biman; Shaon of Kalabagan; Rahul and Durjoy of Uddity and Javed Omar Belim Golla of Surja Tarun Club.

The seven foreigners are



The prize winners in the inaugural Biman Open squash championship seen with the chief guest State Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism M A Mannan at the Dhaka Club squash court yesterday. (From left to right) veterans' winner H Potter, Anwar Hossain, champion Bholal Lal, the chief guest, runner-up Sohel Hamid and the Biman Managing Director Abdul Mueyed Chowdhury. -Star photo