

Bangladesh salvage pride by shocking S Arabia

DOHA, Qatar, Apr 25: Bangladesh's players dealt a severe blow to their Saudi Arabian rivals in Saturday's Asia-Oceania Zone Group 3 games in Qatar, reports AP.

The Saudis, whose singles players outplayed their fancied opponents from Singapore on Friday, had been expected to beat Bangladesh and guarantee their promotion to Group 2 in the next season.

The Bangladesh players had no chance of qualifying for promotion, but they put up a tough fight for pride. Saudi Arabia's Badar al-Megayel, unbeaten in his singles matches all week, carried on the sequence beating Sk Mofnuddin Waliullah 6-4, 6-4.

After easily defeating Qatar Saturday, Singapore take on the United Arab Emirates on Sunday. Results after sixth day: Singapore defeated Qatar 3-0.

Mark Choy, Singapore, beat Nasser Ghanem al-Khulafi, Qatar, 6-2, 6-0; Chee Yen Chen, Singapore, beat Sultan Khalifan al-Alawi, Qatar, 6-4, 6-1; and Wei Pin Choo and Art Hobbs, Singapore, beat Sultan Khalifan al-Alawi and Ayman Azmy Galal, Qatar, 6-2, 6-2.

United Arab Emirates defeated Bahrain 2-1; Essam Jaffar Abdul-Aal, Bahrain, beat Manual Gayon, UAE, 7-6 (1), 6-4; Salem Dasmal, UAE beat Shehab Rashed Shehab, Bahrain, 6-1, 3-6, 6-3; and Salem Dasmal and Manual Gayon, UAE, beat Essam Jaffar Abdul-Aal and Nader Jaffar Abdul-Aal, Bahrain, 7-6, (6), 6-2.

Bangladesh beat Saudi Arabia 2-1; Badar al-Megayel, Saudi, beat Sk Mofnuddin Waliullah, Bangladesh, 6-4, 6-4; Hira Lal, Bangladesh, defeated Othman al-Enezi, Saudi, 6-2, 6-2; and Shovon Jamaly and Hira Lal, Bangladesh, beat Tawfiq al-Ahmad and Badar al-Megayel, Saudi, 3-6, 6-1, 6-4.

Lebanon defeated Syria 3-0; Fadi Haddad, Lebanon, beat Shafeek Diab, Syria, 6-4, 3-6, 6-3; Karim Khoury, Lebanon, beat Ahmed Diab, Syria, 6-0, 6-0; and Nicholas Kanaan and Karim Khoury, Lebanon, beat Shafeek Diab and Kahtan Malki, Syria, 6-2, 6-2.

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STANDINGS

Table with 7 columns: Pt, MW, SW, SL, GW, LR. Rows for Singapore, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Bangladesh, Lebanon, Bahrain, Syria, Qatar.

OK Sports cricket

Adarsha Kishore Sangha moved into the semifinals of the OK Sports Cup juvenile cricket tournament beating Nawabganj Best Eleven Fighters by two wickets in the quarterfinal at the Azimpur Community Centre ground yesterday.

Set to score 78 runs to win Adarsha Sangha reached the winning target in 14.3 overs losing eight wickets. Rinku topscored with 25 while Babu made 15.

Earlier, Kamal of Adarsha Sangha ripped through the Nawabganj Best Fighters batting line-up to bowl them out for 77. Only Anis (11) made it to the double-digit mark. Kamal claimed four wickets for 18.

Ganaktuli Kishore Ekadash, the organisers of the meet, take on Rahmatganj Royal Sporting Club in today's lone encounter.

Border, Simpson not complacent

LONDON, Apr 25: Australian cricket captain Allan Border and coach Bobby Simpson both predicted a close Ashes series in the forthcoming months on their arrival in England here on Sunday, reports AFP.

The Aussies are overwhelming favourites to win their third successive series against their arch rivals following England's desperate tour of India and Sri Lanka, when they lost all four Tests.

But Border insisted: 'I never take past situations into account when it comes to Australia-England contests.

'There is something uniquely special about Australia-England, with the Ashes up for grabs and so much tradition.

that his side were under more pressure to win than on their last trip in 1989, when they triumphed 4-0.



ALLAN BORDER

'The expectations are high on this side,' said the world's most-capped cricket captain and highest Test run-scorer.

'Our press have been full of England's woes during the winter and the fact that we've won the last two series pretty convincingly suggests we're under more pressure than going into other series.'

Gooch retains captaincy

LONDON, Apr 25: Graham Gooch looks certain to retain the England captaincy for the forthcoming Ashes series after deciding that he definitely wants the job, reports AFP.

The veteran opening batsman has hesitated over continuing following England's 3-0 humiliation in India under his captaincy.

But he told the Mail on Sunday newspaper today: 'I've thought long and hard about the situation and I'm keen to do the job if the committee want me to carry on.'

'Obviously I was terribly disappointed by what happened in India and I did not want to make any decision until the dust had settled, in case I said or did something in the heat of the moment.'

Pakistan face innings defeat

Pakistan, following on 234 runs behind the West Indies first innings total of 455, were 27 for one at tea on the third day of the second cricket Test at Bridgetown, Barbados yesterday, according to Star TV monitored in Dhaka late last night.

Benjamin then struck a telling blow by having veteran Javed Miandad also caught by Richardson for 22. Inzamamul Haq, normally an aggressive strokemaker, never looked settled and was trapped leg before, playing a lazy defensive shot to Bishop.

Aamir Nazir Ambrose not out Benjamin b Waqar Younis 0 b Waqar Younis 3 Extras: (b-1, lb-1, w-2) 29 Total: 455 Fall of wickets: 1-122; 2-200; 3-303; 4-337; 5-363; 6-426; 7-440; 8-440; 9-445.



Pakistan wicketkeeper Moin Khan, who spilled two easy chances on the first day, dives to his right to collect Carl Hooper's catch off pacesman Aatur Rehman during the second day's proceedings at Bridgetown, Barbados on Saturday. — Star TV photo

Rameez Raja was batting on eight and Asif Mujtaba on 15 after Aamir Sohail gave Winston Benjamin an easy catch at mid-on off Curtley Ambrose with the score on four. Sohail made four.

boosted West Indies with a fine half-century after they began the second day on 351 for four. Carl Hooper (15) fell early on but Arthurton and Junior Murray then shared a sixth-wicket stand of 63.

Both were dismissed before lunch, Arthurton for 56 and Murray for 35, but their partnership was enough to put West Indies in a commanding position.

Earlier, Pakistan were dismissed for 221 in their first innings with Basit Ali, playing only in his second Test, remaining unbeaten on 92. Skipper Wasim Akram made 29 while three batsmen — Moin Khan, Waqar Younis and Aatur Rehman — failed to score. Aamir Nazir made one in his maiden Test innings.

Scoreboard on the second day of the second cricket Test between West Indies and Pakistan on Saturday: WEST INDIES: First Innings (overnight 351-4) Haynes b Aamir Nazir 125 Simmons c Moin Khan 87 Richardson lbw b Aatur Rehman 31 Lara c Moin Khan b Aatur Rehman 51 b Wasim Akram 56 b Bishop 11 b Waqar Younis 15 b Moin Khan 35

PAKISTAN: First Innings Aamir Sohail c Murray b Ambrose 10 Rameez Raja c Haynes b Ambrose 37 Asif Mujtaba c Richardson b Walsh 13 Javed Miandad c Benjamin Richardson b Benjamin Inzamamul Haq lbw b Bishop 7 Basit Ali not out 33 Wasim Akram not out 3 Extras: (nb-6) 6 Total: [for five wickets] 131 Fall of wickets: 1-12; 2-31; 3-62; 4-79; 5-109 Still to bat: Moin Khan, Waqar Younis, Aatur Rehman, Aamir Nazir.

The visitors still needed 125 to avoid follow on with their top five batsmen back in the pavilion. The West Indies were spurred by some accurate and penetrating bowling by their pace quartet, once again, led by the 6 foot, 7 inch Curtly Ambrose.

Veteran West Indian opening batsman Desmond Haynes swings one from Pakistan spinner Asif Mujtaba over the wicket mid-on fence to reach his second successive hundred in the current tour. Haynes clobbered two consecutive sixes to race to 100 from 88 during the first day of the second Test at the Kensington Bridgetown Oval, on Friday. — Star TV photo

Lineker bids bye to English soccer

LEEDS, England, Apr 25: Gary Lineker bade a disappointed farewell to English Soccer on Saturday, failing to score for his Japanese club Grampus Eight in a 2-1 defeat by Leeds, reports Reuters.

Lineker was starved of opportunities to show the goal-poaching skills that made him one of the England's most productive strikers of the modern era.

More than 10,000 spectators saluted Lineker in his only appearance in England before the start of the new Japanese league on May 15.

Brazilian midfielder Jorge posed the biggest threat to Leeds goalkeeper John Lukic. Jorge punished an error by defender Jon Newsome to score in the 53rd minute, and twice went close afterwards.

Chris Whyte spilled Grampus's day by heading two goals in five minutes before the interval. The goals exposed the Japanese aerial weakness, as he nodded home a free-kick from Gary McAllister and a corner by Kevin Sharp.

Lineker said: 'I thought we did well, considering the team only arrived in this country on Wednesday night. It was a good performance holding Leeds to a 2-1 scoreline because I thought we might get a good hiding.'

Australians arrive in England

LONDON, Apr 25: Australia's cricketers flew into England Sunday looking for another shutout series triumph against a team still stunned by defeats by India and cricket minnows Sri Lanka, reports AP.

Australia have not lost a Test against England since 1986 and won 4-0 on their last appearance in a country known as the home of cricket. When the two teams met in Australia three years ago, England lost 3-0.

Since then, however, Australia have fallen behind the West Indies and Pakistan in the order of the world's strongest teams and are suffering from a confidence breakdown. They have left behind one-time batting superstar Dean Jones and named four uncapped players in a 17-strong squad.

Now Australia are only interested in beating England and winning a six-match series for 'The Ashes.'

'I don't take too much notice of what has happened in the past,' said team captain Allan Border, who has scored more Test runs than any other player. 'It's the next four months that count. An Ashes tour for us is the ultimate.'

England lost 3-0 to India and never even got close to victory in any of the three games, and then lost to Sri Lanka for the first time. They returned home to widespread criticism of the players and their management.

England A face defeat

CHELMSFORD, England, Apr 25: England A, 220 runs behind Essex on first innings, were 217-6 in their second innings at the close of the third day of their four-day cricket match on Saturday, reports Reuters.

SCORES: Essex 394, England A 174 (D Cork 52, P Such 5-26) and 217-6 (M Lathwell 84, G Lloyd 64 not out).

While the Australians have included four uncapped youngsters in batsmen Matthew Hayden and Michael Slater plus pace bowlers Wayne Holdsworth and Brendon Julian, there are rumours England will go the other way and recall veterans David Gower and Ian Botham.

Gower is a talented but erratic left-handed batsman while Botham, who has announced he plans to retire after this season, is famed for a match-winning performance against the Australians at Headingley in 1981.

'It was a surprise to everyone when David was omitted for the winter tour,' Border said. 'I guess it's now up to him to show his class in your domestic cricket. I'll be watching with interest.'

It's the same with Botham. You can't just say he performed brilliantly in 1981, it's 1993 now. But he does generally save his best for Australia.'

Seles back in harness

HAMBURG, Germany, Apr 25: World no 1 Monica Seles returns on court after a nine-week break at the 375,000 dollar Hamburg tournament here on Monday, reports AFP.

Seles bypassed tournaments at Key Biscayne in Florida, Houston in Texas and Barcelona in Spain with a viral infection.

Germany's Steffi Graf, no 2 in the world, also returns to action after tree weeks out with a knee injury.

Monica Seles begins her campaign against Germany's Veronika Martinek while Steffi Graf plays Austrian Judith Wiesner.

Sanchez's title

BARCELONA, Apr 25: Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario, the top seed, beat second seed Conchita Martinez 6-1, 6-4 in an all Spanish final at the Barcelona Open here today, reports AFP.

In the Doubles Final Americans Patty Fendick and Meredith McGrath won a closely fought encounter against a combination of Nicole Arendt of United States and Christine Radford of Australia, 6-4, 7-6 (2).

The winners shared dlr 6,000 prize money while the runnerup received dlr 3,500.

Provis' title

KUALA LUMPUR, Apr 25: Australian Nicole Provis won the dlr 100,000 Malaysian Women's Open tennis championship defeating Ann Grossman of the United States 6-3, 6-2, 6-2 in the final match at the National Tennis Centre here Sunday, reports AP.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down. Includes a solution key at the bottom.

CRYPTOQUIP puzzle with a grid and a list of words to be placed in the grid.