

Sher-e-Bangla Cup final today

Sports Reporter

The final of the 18th Sher-e-Bangla Cup national football championship will be held at the Khulna Stadium today.

Hosts Khulna, last year's runners-up, will play Feni in the final.

Khulna is playing in the final for the third time. Previously, they became champion in 1982 while runners-up in 1992.

It is Feni's second appearance in the final. They last played in 1984, when they won the title.

Khulna reached the final beating Narayanganj 2-1 in the semifinal while Feni eliminated last year's champions Dhaka University 3-2 in the other semifinal.

Speaker Shaikh Razzak Ali is expected to witness the final match and distribute prizes among the winners.

TEAMS

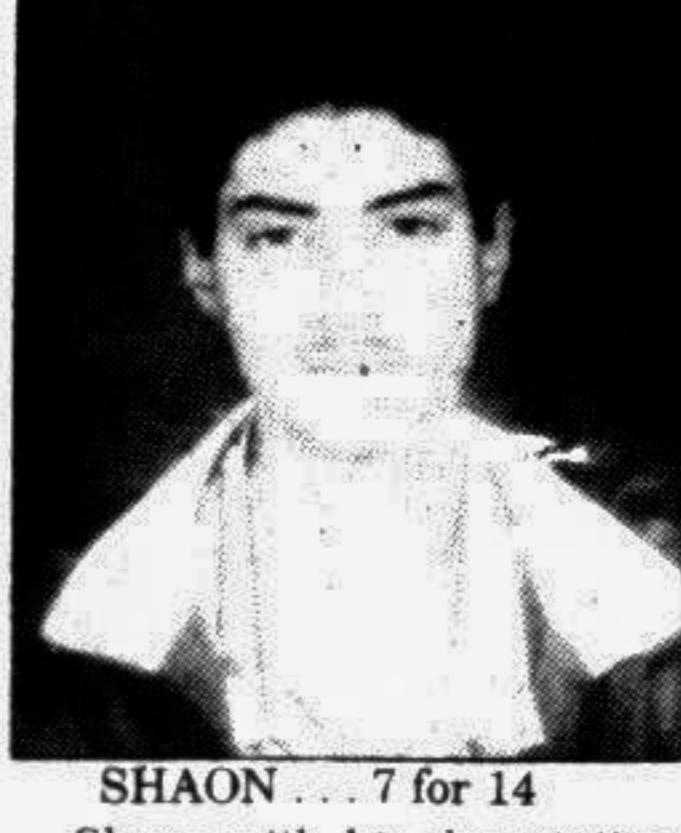
KHULNA: Totam, Partha, Sani, Chanchal, Raj, Asad, Badal, Aslam, Rumi, Jahangir Sr and Jahangir Jr.

FENI: Selim, Shipar, Mizan Sr, Shahzad, Bachchu, Ata, Shimu, Manik, Ratan, Mizan Jr and Jilani.

Shaon shines for Dhanmondi Govt High

Sports Reporter

A superb bowling performance by Shaon enabled Dhanmondi Govt High School easily move into the semifinal of the 12th Nirman School cricket championship at the Dhanmondi Club Ground yesterday.



SHAON... 7 for 14

Shaon with his devastating spell of seven for 14 wrapped up Pallabi M I Model School for a meagre 87 runs is 26.5 overs.

Dhanmondi aided by an unbeaten 36 from Dipu won in 25 overs losing only six wickets.

In the other match of the day Armanitola High School earned a 45-run victory over Rajdhani High School to pave the way to the quarter-final. The game was played on the eastern strip of Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium.

Batting first, Armanitola compiled a handsome 167 runs in the allotted 35 overs losing nine wickets with Fayaz making an excellent 78 runs.

Arif was the other notable contributor to the Armanitola to bat with an unbeaten 25.

Mamun captured four wickets for 30 runs while Nakib took two for 24 for Rajdhani High School.

Chasing 167 runs for victory, Rajdhani were bundled out for 122 runs is 32.5 overs.

Mamun who shone with the ball also scored an unbeaten 48 for the losers.

Mamun and Fazal claimed three wickets for Armanitola while Fayaz bagged two for 24.

Div II cricket

Sports Reporter

Gopibagh Friends Association, Gandaria Cricketers and Dhanmondi Pragoti Sangha recorded wins in their respective matches of the Second Division cricket super league at different city venues yesterday.

Gopibagh trounced Mirpur Nabin Krira Chakra by eight wickets at the Dhaka Stadium.

Batting first Mirpur Nabin scored 116 for nine in the allotted 40 overs.

Babu and Faruk contributed 39 and 20 not out for Nabin. Liton claimed three for 19 for Gopibagh.

Gopibagh reached their target scoring 118 for two in 19.2 overs.

Liton made his 39 for the winners.

At the City Club ground Gandaria Cricketers earned an eight wicket win over Young Pegasus A.

Young Pegasus were all out for 60 in 21.4 overs.

Rashed captured three for 19 for Gandaria.

Chasing a paltry target of 61 to win, Gandaria posted 63 for two in 14.4 overs.

Mozaffar top scored with 26 for Gandaria.

At Jagannath Hall ground, Dhanmondi earned a 52 run victory against Kathalbagan Green Crescent Club.

Dhanmondi piled up 197 for eight in the stipulated 40 overs.

Pikloo and Rofiq contributed 55 and 30 respectively.

Kathalbagan were all out for 148 in 33.3 overs.

Hussain top scored with 50.

So near yet so far

Sports Reporter



Bangladesh touched the nadir and acme of form in a day but lost an existential tie narrowly and with it all hopes of further advancement in the fifth ICC Trophy when they, according to Radio Bangladesh broadcast monitored here in Dhaka, went down fighting to hosts Kenya in a high-scoring entertaining quarterfinal tie of the championship in Nairobi, Kenya yesterday.

Left with the only option of winning the tie in order to stay alive for semifinal contention of the 20-team fray of ICC's associate members, Bangladesh fell short of the winning target by 13 runs as their heroic and rather belated batting prowess could reap 282 runs for eight wickets when overs ran out.

The seemingly impossible victory target of 296 runs looked tangible and attainable at one stage of the match as openers Aminul Islam Bulbul and Jahangir Alam laid the foundation for a hectic chase with some splendid batting. Later Minhazul Abedin Nannu carried the good work gamely but pressure told on as the asking run-rate kept on creeping up and with some vital wickets falling in a heap at a critical juncture of the game left tournament's second seeds with broken images dream and expectations. Statistically it was just another loss or another victory in a not so important cricket tournament of international circuit but for a South East Asian nation, it meant the going of a dream by the window.

The whole of Bangladesh was over the moon recently in anticipation of its cricket team's expected showing in the 20-team championship for the 20 associate members of the ICC. The bottom line of this hyped up imagination and expectation was a place among the top three finishers of the meet. It was the barest of the demands of the cricket lovers because prior to the meet Bangladesh were tipped as the second seeds just after Holland. So, Bangladesh should have been in the hunt for the title at least theoretically, let alone a place among the three top finishers.

The darkness at the noon which has engulfed our cricket had its last shade yesterday from the fielders and bowlers of the Bangladesh team for the batsmen raised their game beyond expectation and the final score of 282 was more than any staunch patriot could think of.

Bangladesh bowling was put to sword after captain Faruque Ahmed won the toss in the morning and opted to field first. However on a placid wicket Bangladeshi attack sans the experienced seamer Golam Nawshir Prince did not do all that badly initially. But Kenya who progressed quite cautiously for the first half of the innings with a conscious plan

of ensuring minimum loss of wickets took the Bangladesh attack by the scruff its neck only after 40 overs.

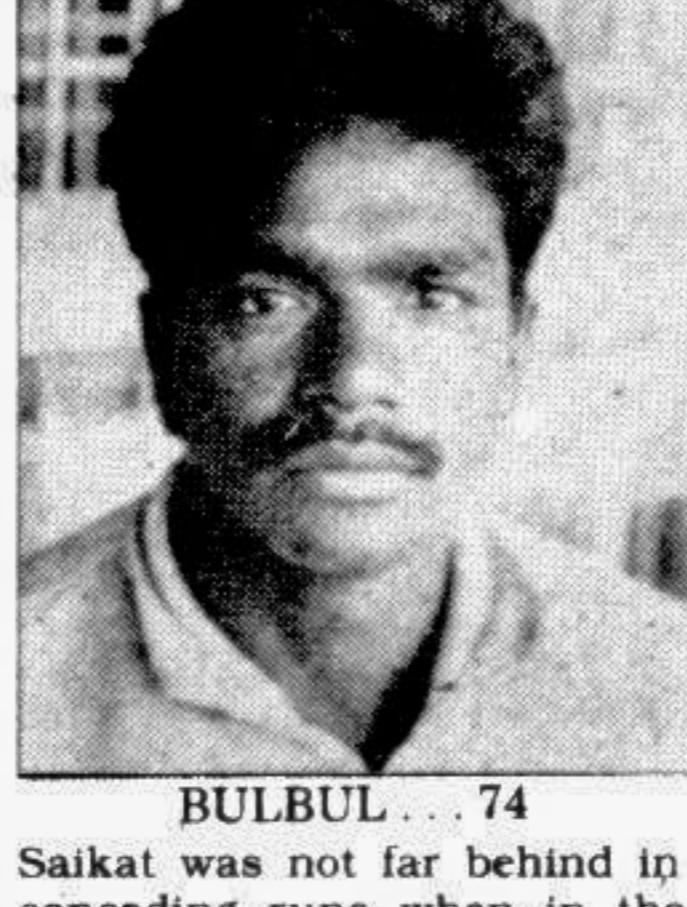
One of their openers scored a superb century, 119 to pre-



cise with his hundred coming from just 71 balls epitomised the onslaught by taking 22 runs in over from Minhazul Abedin.

Given a new lease of life by Bangladeshi wicketkeeper Jahangir when in his 70s the powerful hitter with a typically African surname (we regret our impropriety in being unambitious as the BCCB officials failed to provide the faxed copy of the scorecard last night for reasons best known to them) hit a couple of sixes of successive deliveries and then a boundary to jump to 100 from 84 in that fateful over by Nannu.

Young left-arm spinner Sharfuddowla Ibne Shaheed



BULBUL... 74

Saikat was not far behind in conceding runs when in the very next over he gave away 16 runs. All this blitzkrieg took place in the last ten overs of the Kenyan innings as consistently faulty fielding by the Bangladeshi players filled the tourists' cup of woe full to the brim. Almost everybody on the field was heard to have fumbled at even the simplest of fielding challenges posed by the marauding Kenyan batsmen who too must have been under lot of pressure regarding the result of the match. Kenya, of course, were in a partially better frame of mind having beaten Hong Kong in their first quarter-final tie. For Bangladesh it meant a do or die because after that 46-run loss to Holland in the

run-rate

| Kenya | Overs | Bangladesh |
|-------|---------|------------|
| 13/0 | 5 overs | 14/0 |
| 28/0 | 10 | 34/0 |
| 46/0 | 15 | 65/0 |
| 64/1 | 20 | 92/0 |
| 74/1 | 25 | 133/0 |
| 105/1 | 30 | 154/2 |
| 155/1 | 35 | 182/2 |
| 186/2 | 40 | 210/2 |
| 244/3 | 45 | 242/5 |
| 295/6 | 50 | 282/8 |

qualify for the semifinals.

Put into bat, Naqoja managed a paltry 61 in 27.3 overs.

Kurigram posted their target of 62 in 13.4 overs without loss.

Zubayer and Polash remained unbeaten on 27 and 24 respectively for the winners.

Jhalakathi outclassed Barguna by nine wickets at Barisal to reach the semifinals.

Batting first, Barguna scored 173 for nine in 41 overs.

Miraj scored 60 for Barguna.

Masum took three while Badal and Liton took two apiece for Jhalakathi.

Kurigram trounced Naogaon by 10 wickets at Dinajpur to

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