

Nat'l TT results

Sports Reporter

Dhaka and Ansars topped respective groups in the boys' team event after winning their respective group final matches of the Meril 19th national table tennis tournament at the Pabna district gymnasium yesterday.

In the Group A final Dhaka beat Madaripur by 3-1 sets while Ansars blanked Narail by straight sets in the Group B final, said a faxed message received here last night.

Meanwhile, in the women's team events quarterfinals Ansars, Rajshahi and Madaripur won their matches by straight sets against Khulna, Patakhali and Barguna respectively.

Besides, ten men's team event matches were also decided on the day.

Navy, Rifles win

Bangladesh Navy and Rifles were leading their respective groups after recording their third consecutive victories in the Pepsi 17th national basketball championship at the NSC wooden floor gymnasium yesterday.

Bangladesh Navy playing in the last match of the day against Dhaka struggled to earn a 87-60 points win while Rifles routed Jessore 128-28 in an one-sided match.

Bangladesh Air Force and Rajshahi both smarting from their defeats in the openers earned convincing wins over their opponents.

Air Force beat Chandpur by 95-37 points while Rajshahi thrashed Brahmanbaria 128-56 to inflict their third successive loss.

Some tradition!

LONDON, July 23: Hard-hearted Lord's officials have banned South Africa's cricketers from flying their flag, reports Reuter.

They also attempted to stop Archbishop Desmond Tutu from entering the visitors' dressing room because he was "improperly dressed."

Coach Mike Procter proudly waved his country's new multi-coloured banner from the dressing room balcony when Kepler Wessels completed an emotional century on Thursday.

He might have unfurled it again on Friday as South Africa's bowlers took a vice-like grip on their country's first Test at Lord's for 29 years.

But the flag, ironically in the circumstances called the Freedom Flag, was packed away — by order of the MCC (Marylebone Cricket Club hierarchy).

"When it happened on the first evening it was such a special occasion that we turned a blind eye," said Lord's chief Roger Knight, the MCC secretary.

"But we have quite specific ground rules and they apply to players as much as spectators."

The Lord's regulations state that flags and banners are not allowed inside the ground, apart from those flying from the pavilion flag staffs.

"We are very, very disappointed," said South African tour manager Fritz Bing. "It was a wonderful sight to see Mike Procter waving the flag so excitedly."

"We can't see any real harm in it. The new flag is a symbol of the new country."

Smith's timely reminder

LONDON, July 23: Robin Smith, exiled by England for the first Test against South Africa, took his frustration out on Worcestershire on Friday, hitting an unbeaten 99 for Hampshire in the county league, reports Reuter.

The South African-born Smith, dropped for the Lord's Test after a run of poor form, bounced back to hammer 13 fours and two sixes off just 139 balls to give Hampshire a 232-run lead.

Darren Bicknell gave championship leaders Surrey a firm hold of their clash with Nottinghamshire at Trent Bridge.

Opener Bicknell struck an unbeaten 192, including 27 fours and a six, as Surrey reached 517 for four for an overall lead of 392.

He figured in partnerships of 172 with David Ward and an unbroken 166 with Alistair Brown against a Nottinghamshire attack weakened by the loss of Chris Lewis with a back strain.

Warwickshire, despite continuation of a slump by batting sensation Brian Lara, who made only nine before being trapped lbw by Ronnie Irani, kept up the pressure by claiming maximum bonus points against Essex at Edgbaston.

Acting skipper Tim Munton took six for 89 to dismiss Essex for 215 before Roger Those and Andy Moles carved out a century opening stand as Warwickshire reached 156 for three at the close, a 146-run first innings lead.



The jubilant Muktijodha players and officials pose with the Federation Cup trophy, the maiden success in the club's history after defeating Abahani Krira Chakra in the BEXIMCO 12th Federation Cup final 3-2 at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday. — Star photo

S Africans in driving seat

LONDON, July 23: South Africa slowly tightened the noose around England's neck in the first Test at Lord's today, reports Reuter.

England's only comfort for another sun-drenched day was to avoid the embarrassment of having to follow-on in their first Test against the South Africans for 29 years.

After establishing a first innings lead of 177, South Africa patiently set about building an unbeatable position.

And by the close of the third day they were well on their way to that target. They were 195 for four — an overall lead of 372.

First innings century maker Kepler Wessels' dismissal at 141, during a period when spinners Graeme Hick and Ian Salisbury kept the batsmen on a tight leash, briefly raised England's hopes of being set a manageable total.

But Peter Kirsten and Jonty Rhodes put together an unbroken stand of 54 in the final hour and a half of press home South Africa's advantage. Kirsten was 40 not out and Rhodes 23.

Opener Gary Kirsten had set the tone of the innings with a highly disciplined 44 to follow his 72 on the first day.

Earlier AP adds: England managed to avoid the follow on, but will find it difficult to bypass defeat as South Africa took a tighter grip on the first Test.

Phil DeFreitas hit 20 off 12 balls on the third morning of the Test to steer England past the 158 runs required to make South Africa bat again.

But Alan Donald struck twice to claim five wickets for the innings and send England all out for 180, still 177 behind South Africa's first innings.

Angus Fraser dismissed Andrew Hudson early to have South Africa at 14 for one, but Gary Kirsten and Hansie Cronje settled the innings to go into lunch at 50 for one, an overall lead of 237.

DeFreitas and Ian Salisbury resumed England's innings at 141 for seven and DeFreitas swung the bat once too often

and found a thick edge off Donald which went to Kepler Wessels at first slip.

Donald bowled with the same pace and venom he did on Friday, and DeFreitas batted as if he knew he'd be there for a good time, not a long time. He layed at a ball which moved away from him looking for another boundary.

Darren Gough adopted a similar attacking approach as



DONALD...5 for 74

DeFreitas, but after hitting Donald for two fours and a two in the one over, he mistimed as he prodded at a ball which came in to his ribs and popped up a return catch to the bowler for 12.

Donald finished with five for 74 off 19 overs, the fourth time he has taken five wickets in an innings in his 14 Tests. Donald, Hudson and wicket-keeper David Richardson are the only players to have played in all of South Africa's Tests since returning to the international fold against West Indies in April 1992.

One of the great strengths of the South African team, its fielding, finished the England innings when Fraser challenged Gary Kirsten's arm going for a third run. Kirsten ran from short leg

to chase a Fraser push to mid off, picked up and threw in our motion for a direct hit to find Fraser a yard short of the crease.

Fraser came back 20 minutes later when he trapped Hudson plumb in front of middle stump on his back pad to give England some hope.

Kirsten and Cronje never looked troubled, even though DeFreitas and Fraser were finding some movement. They played some elegant shots off both front and back foot, Kirsten going into the break on 26 not out, and Cronje unbeaten on 15.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard on the third day of the first Test between England and South Africa at Lord's on Saturday:

SOUTH AFRICA: First innings 357 (K Wessels 105, G Kirsten 72; D Gough 4-76).

ENGLAND: First innings (overnight 141-7)

Atherton c Wessels b Donald	20
Stewart b Donald	12
Crawley c Hudson b De Villiers	9
Hick c Richardson b De Villiers	38
Gough lbw b De Villiers	20
White c Richardson b Donald	10
Rhodes b McMillan	15
Salisbury not out	6
DeFreitas c Wessels b Donald	20
Gough c and b Donald	12
Fraser run out	3
Extras: (b-8, lb-5, nb-8)	15
Total	180

Fall of wickets: 1-19; 2-41; 3-68; 4-107; 5-119; 6-136; 7-141; 8-161; 9-176.

Bowling	O	M	R	W
Donald	19.3	5	74	5
De Villiers	16	5	28	3
Matthews	16	6	46	0
McMillan	10	1	25	1

SOUTH AFRICA: Second

G Kirsten st Rhodes b Hick	44
Hudson lbw b Fraser	3
Cronje c Fraser b Gough	32
Wessels c Crawley b Salisbury	28
P Kirsten not out	40
Rhodes not out	23
Extras: (b-8, lb-8, nb-9)	25
Total: (for four wickets)	195

Fall of wickets: 1-14; 2-73; 3-101; 4-141

Bowling	O	M	R	W
Fraser	16	3	44	1
Gough	12	4	31	1
DeFreitas	11	3	30	0
Hick	23	14	32	1
Salisbury	15	3	42	1

Jager wants to prove a point

ST PETERSBURG, Russia, July 23: Tom Jager, the world record-holder at 50 metres, finds himself in the unusual role of underdog in his goodwill games sprint showdown with Olympic gold medalist Alexander Popov of Russia, reports AP.

"Being the underdog is exciting for me and takes the pressure off," the 30-year-old American said. "Popov is the next generation and each generation takes the sport to the next level. I'm just trying to get to the next level with him."

The Popov-Jager duel Sunday is the first event of the swimming competition. Swimming was to have opened Saturday, but a failed pool filtration system set things back one day.

Sunday's card is jammed with 20 races packed into one day instead of being spread out over two days as planned.

The 22-year-old Popov has claimed most of the world sprint records and titles, except Jager's world mark of 21.81 seconds at 50 metres. Popov has clocked 21.91.

"I know he's after it," said Jager, who first set the record in 1985 and set the present mark in 1990.

Popov won both the 50 and 100 metres in the Barcelona Olympics and last month broke Matt Biondi's 100-metre world record, lowering it to 48.21 from 48.42.

"Popov takes one fewer stroke in 50 metres than either Matt or me, so he has that advantage and youth — but I

came here to win," said Jager, known as a tenacious racer who's not quite as smooth as Popov or Biondi.

"At times when you're not expecting it you just go fast," Jager added.

Jager has won a gold medal in three consecutive Olympics and five overall — and he's shooting for a fourth Olympics in 1996 in Atlanta. He said he planned to swim next month in US trials for September's World Championships in Rome — but would skip the world meet even if he made the team.

"I know my body as well as any person in the sport," Jager said. "Swimming in the Goodwill Games and the US trials in a few weeks time is enough. It may sound silly, but if I went to the World Championship I think it would hurt my preparation for 96 in Atlanta."

Popov has the world's best time this year of 22.25 in swimming's shortest race and Jager has the second best at 22.52 in the US championships in April.

"I'm swimming very well now, but I think my start is keeping me from going under 22 seconds," Jager added. "In my whole career I've never been as good as I should be off the blocks — I'm a little stiff."

Popov vs Jager is the top draw. But many eyes will be on the 200-metre butterfly, where world record-holder Mel Stewart of the United States faces European champion Denis Pankratov of Russia.

The two will also match up in the 100 butterfly and be joined

Imran to take up Botham's gauntlet

LONDON, July 23: Imran Khan's solicitors said here Friday that the former Pakistan captain would fight the libel suit brought against him by ex-England all-rounder Ian Botham, reports AFP.

Imran referred to Botham, former Test colleague Allan Lamb and England's former record wicket taker Fred Trueman as lacking class up-bringing in the Asian publication, India Today.

Botham has issued a writ for libel and it is believed Lamb intends taking similar action.

But Imran's solicitors, the Leeds-based Howard Cohen Co, confirmed they would defend proceedings brought against their client by either player.

It is the latest twist to a long-running ball-tampering saga.

Last winter, Botham was prepared to act as a key witness in the libel action over alleged ball-tampering brought by another former Pakistan bowler, Sarfaraz Nawaz, against South Africa-born Lamb.

In the event, the case collapsed and so his testimony was not needed.

Imran admitted in his autobiography earlier this year that he used a bottle top to gouge the ball during his county championship career in England and also, accused England bowlers of doctored the ball.

Botham's solicitor Alan Hurd told the Daily Mirror newspaper here on Friday: "A writ has been issued to Imran."

"Botham is extremely angry at the aspersions being made about his cricket, integrity and upbringing."

"He didn't want to do this but he feels very insulted."

Hagi can't agree terms

BARCELONA, Spain, July 23: Romanian Gheorghe Hagi and Spanish champions Barcelona have failed to agree transfer terms, reports Reuter.

Hagi, one of the outstanding players of the World Cup, left the club on Friday night after several hours of talks and said: "I came here with a set of terms and now they've been changed."

"I am disappointed because I wanted to sign."

Barcelona vice-president Joan Gaspart denied the club had changed their offer but said: "We could not agree on some economic aspects. The breakdown is final."

Hagi had been expected to sign a two-year contract worth some 125 million pesetas (one million dollar) a year to the player.

Spanish newspapers suggested on Saturday that disagreement over a possible option for a third season had caused the talks to fail.

Hagi, an attacking midfielder, has played the last two seasons for Italian club Brescia. Before that he was with Barcelona's arch-rivals Real Madrid for two seasons.

Hagi would have replaced Danish international Michael Laudrup, who has moved to Real Madrid after five years with the Catalans.

Aliu world jr 100m champ

LISBON, Portugal, July 23: Nigeria's Deji Aliu won the men's 100-metre final in 10.21 on Thursday, while in the decathlon Norway's Benjamin Jensen topped the field at the 5th annual International Amateur Athletics Federation's World Junior Championships, reports AP.

In 100-metre final, Aliu was chased by Britain's Jason Gardener in 10.25 and Deworski Odom of the USA in 10.26.

In the decathlon, Jensen finished with a combined score of 7,676 points.



Muktijodha coach and the former ace striker Kazi Salahuddin (L) who look charge of the team two weeks ago after a day-off from football, is being congratulated by his counterpart Abahani's Shamir Shaker after the final of the BEXIMCO 12th Federation Cup at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday. Muktijodha won the match 3-2 to clinch a domestic football title for the first time in the club's history. — Star photo

New twist in baggage dispute

SAO PAULO, July 23: Brazil's government, bowing to a storm of protest and reversing an earlier decision, ordered Friday that 17 tons of luggage brought home by the Brazilian World Cup soccer squad be inspected and taxed by customs, reports Reuter.

The Economy Ministry said in a statement it was opening an investigation into the incident late Tuesday in which players and officials of the victorious squad refused to allow their luggage to be inspected by Rio de Janeiro customs officers.

Asked if this meant the 17 tons of boxes and crates — including televisions, videos, washing machines and microwave ovens — that returned with the soccer delegation would now be subject to customs duties, a ministry spokeswoman said: "Yes, they will."

This move effectively reversed an initial dispensation granted by President Itamar Franco late Tuesday. The president ordered the baggage to be released un-inspected to prevent a threatened boycott of a victory parade in Rio by the team.

The World Cup baggage controversy became an embarrassment to Franco's government Thursday when Brazil's top tax official, federal revenue secretary Osiris Lopes, resigned. Lopes said he believed the law should be equal for everyone even soccer heroes.

The incident provoked a storm of criticism against the government and the Brazilian Soccer Confederation (CBF), whose leaders had blocked customs officials from checking the luggage.

"They are all losers in this sorry episode," O Globo newspaper said in an editorial. A commentary in Folha de Sao Paulo newspaper said federal tax chief Lopes' resignation "was a moral slap in the face for President Itamar Franco."

The dispute over the luggage threatened to sour the national mood of euphoria that

had gripped Brazil since the team beat Italy 3-2 on penalties in a nailbiting World Cup final.

Leading political figures also chastised the government for its handling of the case. "Even if the team are four times world champions, if they bring fridges back as contraband booty then they have to pay the tax," Sao Paulo Mayor Paulo Maluf said.

Rio customs officials estimated the amount of duties due on the excess luggage brought back by the squad, which left the country with only two tonnes, could total one million dollars.

Brazilian customs laws require the payment of duties on any purchases made abroad over the value of 500 dollars per person.

The Economy Ministry said it was instructing the national carrier, Varig, and Brazilian consular officials in the United States to draw up a precise list of the passengers — and their respective baggage — who travelled on the plane bringing the victorious squad home.

Sigei shows his prowess

OSLO, July 23: William Sigei transferred his cross-country prowess to the track on Friday when he slashed more than six seconds off the world 10,000 metres record, reports Reuter.

Running by himself for the second part of the race, Sigei clocked an astonishing 26 minutes 52.23 seconds to shatter the previous mark of 26:58.38 set at last year's Bislett Games by his compatriot Yobes Ondieki.

Sigei, one of a family of six from Kenya's Rift Valley, has romped away with the world cross country title, run over 12 kilometres, for the past two years.

"Track is harder than cross country," Sigei confessed but added he thought he could set a world 10,000 record after finishing behind Ondieki last year.

Any thought of a world record seemed to have vanished at the halfway stage when the field were four seconds down on world record schedule after some decidedly indifferent pacemaking.

"I wasn't worried," Sigei said. "I didn't know I was so far behind."

The 25-year-old Kenyan, now running solo, steadily increased his pace, throwing in a lap of 63 seconds, and by 8,000 metres he was back on record pace.

Cheered on by more than 18,000 track fans on a warm, sunny evening, Sigei collected the 50th world record set at this famous athletics stadium

with a scorching last lap of 56.85.

"I was surprised at the time," Sigei said. "But I was going for the world record."

Sigei will return to Kenya for the national trials next week although he said he had already been selected for the team to travel to the Commonwealth Games in Victoria, Canada, next month.

He presently trains near London in a camp which includes Ireland's Sonia O'Sullivan, who made an unsuccessful attempt on Paula Ivan's five-year-old world best.

O'Sullivan, on her own admission, ran too fast too early and had little left on the last lap. Her time of 4:17.25 was comfortably a personal best but outside Ivan's mark of 4:15.61.

"I'm satisfied but I can run a lot faster," O'Sullivan said. "I ran too fast, too early."

A third world record attempt, this time on the men's 5,000 mark, also ended in failure although Morocco's former world cross-country champion and Olympic 10,000 gold medalist Khalid Skaah had a satisfying win over another group of Kenyans.

Skaah clocked 13:01.89, ahead of American Bob Kennedy who finished in 13:02.93.

Olympic and world Bronze medalist Dennis Mitchell raced away with the 100 metres in 9.94, his fastest time since the 1991 World Championships.

Mitchell finished ahead of Jon Drummond, who beat Britain's Olympic and world champion Linford Christie in London last week, then re-

vealed he had received a late invitation to the Goodwill Games which open in St Petersburg on Saturday.

"I can run a lot faster," said Mitchell who will come up against fellow-Americans Carl Lewis, Leroy Burrell, Andre Cason and Drummond in Monday's Goodwill Games 100 metres.

"I feel I can run 9.8 seconds, I want to break the world record this year," Mitchell added.

Britain's world champion Colin Jackson confirmed he had made a full recovery from a groin strain by winning a high-class high hurdles.

Jackson clocked 13.22, finishing ahead of compatriot Tony Jarrett, the world silver medalist, and Olympic champion Mark McKoy.

"Everything felt fine," Jackson said.

The dream mile, final track event of the evening, was won by Burundi's emerging young talent Venuste Nyongabo in 3:48.94 ahead of Somalia's 1987 world 1,500 champion Abdi Bile.

FA to take leaf out of UEFA's book

LONDON, July 23: European-style observers will attend every English Premiership match next season, with the Football Association also looking to adopt some aspects of the refereeing style seen in the World Cup, reports AFP.

Observers have been employed by UEFA for a number of years, but until now the FA have relied on referees' assessors.

"Now the role is being extended to include crowd trouble and any adverse situations regarding players," said former top referee Pat Partridge.

Partridge will join the panel along with fellow ex-referees, managers and players, who will also monitor the performances of match officials.

Partridge said: "I've been a UEFA observer for a few seasons and if the Premier league system works on the same principle then it can only benefit our game. Referees have certainly got nothing to worry about."

Ken Ridden, the FA's director of refereeing, said: "What we hope to do is capitalise on the World Cup, take the best form it and use to our advantage."

He was referring to a more flexible approach to the off-sides rule and a clamp down on tackling from behind and dissent.



DOING AN ESCOBAR ACT? Abahani's Imdadul is all remorse after unwillingly helping the ball into his own net for Muktijodha's third goal during the final of the 12th Federation Cup which Muktijodha won beating Abahani 3-2 at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday. Let's hope the youngman will have a second chance to learn from his mistake. — Star photo by Enamul Huq