

## Sport



A midfield tussle from yesterday's crucial Star Premier Division football league encounter between Mohammedan Sporting Club and Muktijoddha Sangsads at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday. Mohammedans won one-nil. —Star photo

## MSC edge past Muktijoddha

Sports Reporter

A win would have put star-studded Muktijoddha Sangsads back into the title race and they surely played for one, creating as many as six scoring opportunities but their stars were not in the right alignment and at end of last night's crucial Star Premier Division football league encounter against reigning champions Mohammedan Sporting Club at the floodlit Dhaka Stadium, the Federation Cup winners found themselves undone by a 33rd minute goal from Russian Andrei Kazakov.

The lone goal win not only kept Mohammedans' all-win record against the star-studded squad in the league but also placed them at par on points with last night's losers and Brothers Union at 20 from 15 matches. Yesterday's outcome came as a blessing for Abahani Krira Chakra, who currently reign at the top of the points table with 23 from 14 outings and are only a few steps away from regaining the league title they surrendered to their arch-rivals last year.

The second match of the day billed for the big bowl saw the men in black and whites dominated by a rejuvenated Muktijoddha for most of the regulation period. Apart from Kazakov's strike and a couple of chances in the first half, the holders were kept busy defending their own citadel throughout the match.

Muktijoddha, desperately needing a victory to stay in the

title race, penetrated the Mohammedan defence in the very third minute of the proceedings when Mianur Rahman unleashed a blistering drive from the edge of the box only to see goalkeeper Lahul fisting the goal-bound ball over the bar for a corner.

Rakib and Naqib squandered two easy chances in the space of five minutes with the former shooting just wide off the mark after national winger Mamun Joarder had set him up with a neat minus.

Naqib had a relatively easy chance when a Mamun Joarder polderive came his way after bouncing off the Mohammedan goaltender but he only managed to shoot the ball wide from a point blank range, to the utter dismay of the Muktijoddha camp.

Having survived three close calls, the black and whites turned around and nearly went two goals up but thanks to Asad, who showed a somewhat surprising ability of squandering siters, Muktis were off the hook in the span of three minutes.

However, eight minutes from the short whistle, the lady luck seemed to walkout on the Federation Cup winners, as Kazakov made amends for his teammate's due blunders when the Russian striker tapped home an Alamgir free-kick, triggering off a thunderous roar in the stands.

Denying to be disgruntled by the first half setback, the Muktis booters launched a number of sorties deep into the heart of the Mohammedan

defence, but to no avail. The eventual losers ran out of luck in the remainder of the match as every move they produced were thwarted one way or the other.

Three minutes into the session, they were deprived of a sure chance when a Mizan crack at goal bounced back into the play off the far post and again in the 58th minute the woodwork proved Muktijoddha's bane as Rumi Rizvi Karim's close range attempt from an Arman through-kissed the sidebar on its way out.

Rumi's second realistic chance was foiled by former national captain Kaiser Hamid, who cleared the ball from goalline after the national striker let a powerful grounder past the out-of-position Lahul.

Towards the end of the match, Mizan spoiled what could have been the equaliser, missing an open net after Mamun Joarder set him with a lot of space to manoeuvre.

In the first match of the day at the same venue, involving two Star First Division outfits, Dhaka Wanderers again found winning a tough proposition when they drew goalless with Eskaton Sabuj Sangha.

It was Wanderers' 13th draw in 16 matches while Mamun Joarder set him with a lot of space to manoeuvre.

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IN THE SPOTLIGHT

Dhanmondi vs Muslim Institute 4-30 (Dhaka Stadium)

Abahani vs Agrani Bank 6-30 (Dhaka Stadium)

England's Ashes tour begins on October 19

## Can Atherton do the trick?

PERTH, Oct 12 (AFP): There is a popular sports quiz question here: Which England cricket captains have led their country to victory in an Ashes series in Australia over the past half century?

The answer, suggests the quizmaster — not without a smirk of patriotic pleasure — is simple.

After all, there have been so few.

Len Hutton (1954-5), Ray Illingworth (1970-71), Mike Brearley (1978-79) and Mike Gatting (1986-87) are the only four to have returned home with the game's holy grail since World War II.

This exclusive quartet managed what eight others failed to do, because they had the firepower to outgun Australia on hard, bouncy pitches.

Frank "Typhoon" Tyson worked the magic for Hutton, John Snow was Illingworth's alchemist, Ian Botham, Bob Willis and Mike Hendrick spearheaded Brearley's team, and Graham Dilley and Gladstone Small delivered the rapier thrusts which cut down Allan Border's side.

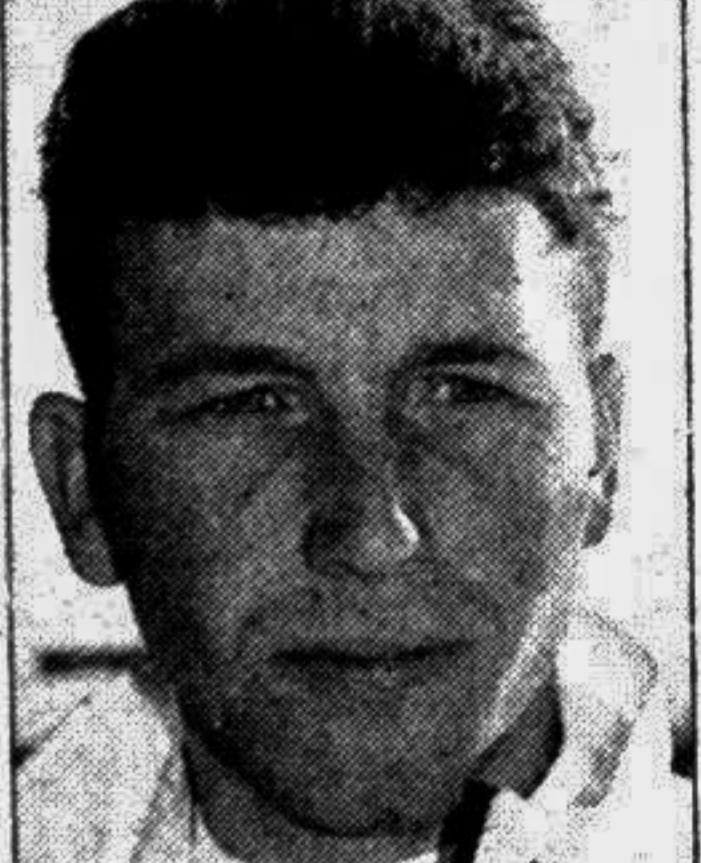
Mike Atherton's prospects of joining the select club will, similarly, rest on the broad shoulders of his heavy artillery, Devon Malcolm, Darren Gough and Martin McCague.

England arrive in Perth on October 19 to prepare for the five-Test series starting in Brisbane at the end of November.

While they may cut (and sometimes break) their teeth on some of the world's fastest pitches, Australian batsmen remain vulnerable to a persistent rib-cage assault, evidenced by repeated failures against the West Indies, at home and in the Caribbean, and more recent uncomfortable hiccups against South Africa and Pakistan.

But unless England's speed specialists strike form early and maintain fitness for three gruelling months, Atherton can expect to and his name to those who failed in one of the game's toughest missions.

The challenge proved too much for Wally Hammond



MIKE ATHERTON

old, will be supported by the inclusion in his party of a trio of elder statesmen of English cricket.

Gatting, 37, especially, knows that Australia can be beaten at home, his side swept all before them, winning two rugged one-day competitions, as well as the Ashes.

Gooch's presence will also be valuable, even if the veteran batsman finds the long, scorching days a trial for a man 15 months into his fifth decade.

What's more, Smith's appointment as manager provides another brain with a thorough knowledge of just how uncompromisingly the game is played in Australia.

Newly-elected Australian skipper Mark Taylor and his side certainly believe they will have too many aces for the tourists, despite Australia's current torment in Pakistan, where they are trailing 0-1 after the second of three Tests in a series they fancied they could sew up.

However, they reason that because they were much too

### Ctg football

CHITTAGONG, Oct 12: Both the matches of CJKP First Division football league ended in draws at the Chittagong Stadium here today, reports BSS.

The first match between Regency Club and Chittagong City Corporation Club ended in a goalless draw.

In the other match of the day, Chittagong Mohammedan Sporting Club and Bakala Krira Sangsads shared points with a one-all draw.

However, they reason that because they were much too

## FIFA may extend Maradona's ban

ZURICH, Oct 12: FIFA said on Tuesday it would consider whether Diego Maradona's continual involvement in soccer broke the terms of his ban from the sport for taking dope, reports Reuter.

A spokesman for soccer's world governing body said FIFA's executive committee would discuss Maradona's situation when it meets in New York from October 25 to 27.

Maradona was banned for 15 months by FIFA after he tested positive for taking stimulant at this summer's World Cup finals in the United States.

Maradona appeared in a low-key charity match in Argentina on Monday when 30,000 fans invaded the pitch and held up play for 10 minutes.

He has also taken up coaching duties with Argentine club Deportivo Mandiyu in apparent defiance of his ban.

The FIFA spokesman refused to comment on whether Maradona could appear in charity games but said his ban extended to all soccer activity, not just to playing.

FIFA's executive could extend Maradona's ban if it found he had broken the terms of his suspension or it could demand that the Argentine Federation take action to stop his involvement in the sport.

## AB Bank TT

Defending champions Bangladesh Biman and Armanitola JS recorded their 13th consecutive victories in the AB Bank table tennis men's league at the Dhanmondi wooden floor gymnasium yesterday, reports UNB.

The airlines paddlers defeated Wari Club while Armanitola Boys beat Inter-sports both by 3-0 sets. Incidentally, it was the first defeat for both Wari Club and Inter-sports.

In other matches, Brothers Union outplayed Armanitola Juniors 3-0 while Wari Juniors edged Swamibagh TTS 3-2 in a close match.

In the women's league, Dhaka Mariners Club registered a hard-fought 3-2 sets victory over Mitali Club while Swamibagh TTS overpowered their neighbour Swamibagh Girls 3-1.

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### TODAY'S MATCHES

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Abahani vs Agrani Bank 6-30 (Dhaka Stadium)

HIROSHIMA, Oct 12: Japan will replace Brazilian coach Paulo Falcao after it bombed out of the Asian Games soccer tournament with a heart-breaking loss to old rivals South Korea, Japan's top sports newspaper said on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

The Nikkan Sports, a tabloid with record of soccer scoops, reported that the Japan Football Association (JFA) will dump Falcao at a meeting after the Games.

GURUSINHA hits 3rd slowest Test ton

SRI LANKA all out for 383

HARARE, Oct 12: Sri Lanka opener Asanka Gurusinha compiled the third slowest century in Test history before his side collapsed against Zimbabwe today, reports Reuter.

Gurusinha reached three figures in 533 minutes — a time exceeded only by Pakistan's Saeed Anwar and South African Jackie McGlew in Tests.

Gurusinha's dismissal in the 147th over with the total 318 effectively led to a slump in which the last seven wickets fell for 65, Sri Lanka being all out for 383 in their first innings at the close on the second day of the first Test.

Left-hander Gurusinha finished with 128, his fifth Test century, which occupied 10 hours and contained 14 fours and one six.

Mudassar spent 557 minutes compiling the slowest hundred, against England at Lahore on the 1977-78 tour, while McGlew took 545 minutes to reach three figures against Australia 20 years earlier.

Sri Lanka, who had painstakingly made 157 on the opening day, continued their innings on a marginally quicker note, with Sanjeewa Ranatunga completing his maiden Test century in only his second appearance.

Ranatunga, younger brother of Sri Lanka's captain Arjuna Ranatunga, scored 118 in a little under eight hours and struck 17 fours.

## SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard on the second

## S Waugh leads Aussies to a six-run win

## Cronje ploughs in sands



LAHORE, Oct 12: Australia beat South Africa by six runs, despite vice captain Hansie Cronje's unbeaten 98. Wednesday in the first game of the one-day triangular series that will also feature Pakistan, reports AP.

After opting to bat first, Australia scored 207 for six. After 50 overs South Africa came up six runs short with a final score of 201 for eight.

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Maradona appeared in a low-key charity match in Argentina on Monday when 30,000 fans invaded the pitch and held up play for 10 minutes.

He has also taken up coaching duties with Argentine club Deportivo Mandiyu in apparent defiance of his ban.

The FIFA spokesman refused to comment on whether Maradona could appear in charity games but said his ban extended to all soccer activity, not just to playing.

FIFA's executive could extend Maradona's ban if it found he had broken the terms of his suspension or it could demand that the Argentine Federation take action to stop his involvement in the sport.

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The 25-year-old right-hander, Cronje, produced a brilliant 125-ball innings. But it was overshadowed by Steve Waugh's all-round performance that propelled Australia to victory.

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