

Two Pakistani cricketers for Mohammedans

Sports Reporter

Two more Pakistani cricketers arrived in the city yesterday to play for Mohammedan Sporting Club. Left-arm paceman Naveed Bhatti and batsman Nadim Yunus, who play for Railway in domestic cricket, are expected to feature in the Mohammedan line up for today's Damal Summer match against War Club.

While Yunus will be making his debut in Bangladeshi cricket arena, Naveed will only relive the memories of his last visit with a Pakistani youth team that came here to take part in a competition way back in 1988.

Although the reinforcements are likely to whet a rusty Mohammedans, who registered an unconvincing victory in the opener of this year's curtain-raising competition, the former champions are actually looking forward to the arrival of Pakistani Test cricketer Aamer Malik expected to be here shortly.

Narrow squeak for Munna

Sports Reporter

Ace national footballer Monna Munna escaped unhurt when the car he was in skidded off the road near Gazipur on Monday.

Munna, currently undergoing training at the BKSP residential football camp, was on his way to his father-in-law's at Gazipur to see his ailing daughter when the mishap occurred.

Div I chess

Sports Reporter

Grandmaster Niaz Mursidh was back on board and Brothers Union were on the winning track again in the First Division chess league with a comfortable 4-0 victory over Noor-e-Alam Khan Daba Sangsad in the 14th round at the National Sports Council chess room yesterday.

After Tuesday's stunning defeat at the hands of the Dhaka University chess team, their second in the league so far, incidentally the second time without Mursidh, yesterday's outcome refuelled Brothers' campaign for title defence as the Gopibagh outfit consolidated the lead at the top of the points table with 43.5 points — five ahead of their nearest rivals Bangladesh Biman.

The regular four of Brothers — Mursidh, Pakistani International Master Mahmood Ahmed Khan Lodhi, Indian V Sharavanan and local Abdullah al-Raqib — faced little or no resistance at all from Noor-e-Alam Daba Sangsad's Zahid Chowdhury, Shafiqul Islam, Mansur Helal and M R Milky respectively.

Biman, bolstered by the consistent performance of newly-crowned 11th Dr Qazi Motahar Hossain IMs meet king Reesat bin Sattar and his archrival Ziaur Rahman, etched an impressive 3.5-0.5 win over Parjat Chess Club.

National women's champion Taneema Parvin joined Reesat and Zia in the victory march while the fourth Biman campaigner Veteran Rezaul Huq drew with Masud Kamal.

The two top places apart, the competition in this year's league is really mounting with Bangladesh Ansars and Bangladesh Textile Mills Corporation (BTMC) really fighting hard for the third slot. Both teams now have 34 points each.

Yesterday, Ansars ended at the wrong end of the table for the second consecutive day when Leoline Chess Club inflicted on the services team a 2.5-1.5 defeat. The loss let BTMC, who trailed Ansars by one and a half points, back to the third position. BTMC beat Farashganj Sporting Club 3-1 in their outing.

In the fourth place were Narayanganj Mashgul Mefil, winners over Sonali Bank by 3.5-0.5 points, half a point ahead of the DU team who have 31.

Incontrad v'ball results

Kulna DSA emerged zonal champions to reach the final round of the Incontrad inter-district volleyball championship yesterday, reports UNB.

In a Sunderban zone match at Kulna, the host team overpowered Sathkira DSA 15-7, 15-7, 15-9.

Earlier on Monday, Tangail DSA qualified for the final phase as the champions of Madhupur zone eliminating Narashindi DSA 15-3, 15-3.

The ten team final round will begin at the Volleyball court from November 26.

Seven teams — defending champions Dhaka, Chittagong, Comilla, Rajshahi, Kushtia, Rangpur and Rajbari DSAs booked their final round berths.

Rokon powers Brothers

Sports Reporter

Al Shahriar conjured statistically the most memorable performance of his burgeoning career as Brothers Union handed Eskaton Sabuj Sangha their maiden defeat in the 15th Damal Summer cricket tourney yesterday.

At the Dhamondi Cricket Stadium, powered by their young skipper's five-wicket haul and a blazing unbeaten half century, the Gopibagh side crushed Eskaton by eight wickets.

While Eskaton came down to earth rather crashingly after two creditable wins, Brothers.

Abed Hanif provided excellent support with figures of three for 39.

For sheer economy Saifullah and Sohel outshone the wicket-takers with the former conceding just 15 for one wicket from his nine overs while Sohel, who too picked up a wicket from his quota, spent 26.

In comparison, Brothers were off to a shaky start losing opener Sajid, one of the youngest members of the national squad, cheaply.

But his partner Abed Hanif and skipper Al Shahriar put on 154 runs for the second wicket to make the whole thing look a no-contest.

Hanif did get out but not before accumulating 59 including nine boundaries.

Rokon was obviously the more dominating batsman on the wicket and he deservedly stayed until the finish with a belligerent 69 off 66 balls embellished with seven fours and two sixes.

The ease and elan with which Brothers accomplished

ROKON ... brilliant

who had posted resounding victories in their previous matches, brace for the second round showdown as the Group B champions.

Sent into bat first in the morning, Eskaton after a fairly sound start — 58 coming from 14.2 overs — lost their way against some tenacious spin bowling, amply on display by messers Rokon, Pakistani Abed Hanif and Saifullah G.

Hughes eager for a recall

ROKON ... brilliant

HOBART, Nov 22: Pace bowler Merv Hughes has vowed to regain his place in the Australian cricket team despite missing out on the first Ashes Test against England, reports AP.

The Australian selectors Monday named Hughes' Victorian state teammate Damien Fleming as the third fast bowler to support new ball pair Craig McDermott and Glenn McGrath for the first Test, which begins on Friday at the Gabba Ground in Brisbane.

Hughes, who will be 33 on Wednesday, boasts a 212-wicket career haul, placing him seventh on the all-time Australian list, but he has struggled with his weight over the past couple of seasons.

"It's very disappointing to miss out, but you certainly never throw in the towel," Hughes said Tuesday.

"I have to perform and make sure there's no way I can be left out of a team. I've been set a goal to reach with my weight, and I want to put the work in to get there."

Hughes girth has been closely monitored by team physiotherapist Errol Alcott and it is understood the question of his weight was a deciding factor in the final decision on who would play in Brisbane.

England will doubtless be relieved not to be facing Hughes, who is at his most devastating in Ashes series. In 20 Tests against Eng-

land, he has taken 75 wickets — with 31 of those secured during the 1993 Ashes series.

Fleming made his debut on Australia's recent tour of Pakistan and bowled superbly in his only Test at Rawalpindi, taking seven wickets.

When you are a kid growing up, it's a dream to play a Test against England, and especially the first of the series," Fleming said.

England captain Mike Atherton, meanwhile, has said that his team will take a positive approach into the first of the five Tests.

He said a poor start to the series could cost his men any chance of regaining the Ashes.

Australia have won the opening Test of the last three series and have gone on to record emphatic 4-1, 3-0 and 4-0 victories.

"I think the first Test sets the tone for the series ahead," Atherton said. "It's a crucial game."

"It is pointless saying to yourself: 'It is a five Test series and we can get back.' You have to play as if your lives depend on those five days."

Merv Hughes

Dutch accent on attack

ROKON ... brilliant

SYDNEY, Nov 22: Dutch coach Roelant Oltmans Tuesday promised more field goals and less traditional reliance on penalty corners when the Netherlands begin defending their World Cup hockey crown here this week, reports AFP.

The Dutch, whose fierce-hitting short-corner specialist Floris Bovender denied Pakistan the last World Cup in Lahore, are favourites to retain the title from host nation Australia, Olympic champions' Germany and this year's Champions' Trophy winners Pakistan in the 12-team tournament.

Oltmans has five members of his 1990 World Cup-winning team to buttress a well-organised Dutch lineup, but he says there's more to the Netherlands' game than just teeing up short corners for Bovender and Taco van den Honert to slam at opposing goals.

"We have shown enough in the past that we can do a lot more than just hitting penalty corners," Oltmans said Tuesday.

"Penalty corners are, of course, one of the things that can happen in a game, and we also try to score penalty corners, but really it's not the only thing we try to do.

"Usually we have a lot of opportunities during a game, but we don't score enough, we have to improve that during this tournament to have a really good chance of winning."

"Assure you we will make more goals from open play, and not just from penalty corners."

The Dutch are grouped with Germany, Asian champions South Korea, India, Belgium and South Africa, and hit off against the Belgians on

Thursday. The tournament gets under way Wednesday with Australia taking on minnows Belarus.

"I consider Germany as a very strong team, also South Korea and India showed us during the Asian Games in Hiroshima that they are playing well at the moment," said Oltmans.

The Dutch spent six days in Malaysia on the way to Australia with the purpose of acclimatising to warm, humid conditions they might encounter here over the next 10 days.

Oltmans believes Australia, the Olympic silver medalists at Barcelona, are the team to beat.

"To me they are the great favourites for this tournament," Oltmans said.

"They're a very strong side, an experienced side and they're playing in front of a home crowd, so to me they're the number one."

"But there are many strong sides and I think it's the strongest World Cup Champions ever held," Oltmans.

"It's not only the top four any more, but Korea, Spain and England have performed very well in the last few months."

The second-seeded Germans have drawn four times with the Dutch this year and beaten South Africa once, but have not played Korea, India or Belgium.

"Holland is always difficult for us because we're very equal," said German coach Paul Lissek this week.

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