

Sport

ITF satellite
main draw
tomorrow

RAJSHAHI, Nov 28: The third leg of ITF Thailand-Bangladesh satellite circuit tennis tournament began at the Rajshahi Tennis Complex today, reports BSS.

Forty tennis players from thirty-seven countries are taking part in the week-long tournament. The main draw of the tournament will start tomorrow.

On the opening day, six singles matches of the qualifying round were decided. Saki (Ban) beat Collins (Ban) 7-5, 6-4. Kaisan (Ban) beat Taskin (Ban) 6-1, 6-4. Omar (Ban) beat Manik (Ban) 6-0, 6-3. Lampert (USA) beat Mao (China) 6-4, 7-6. Becker (Germany) beat Wang (China) 6-2, 6-7, and Guo (China) beat Barron (Ireland) 6-2, 6-2.

State Minister for Planning Dr Moin Khan will formally open the tournament as the chief guest tomorrow while Rajshahi City Corporation Mayor Mizanur Rahman Minu and Youth and Sports Secretary Azizul Huq will attend as special guests.

Milla's true
farewell

YAOUNDE, Nov 28: Cameroon's veteran soccer star Roger Milla, retiring from professional soccer for the final time, failed to save Tonnerre Yaounde from a 2-1 defeat by Olympic Involve in the Cameroon Cup final on Sunday, reports Reuter.

Milla, 42, initially retired after the 1990 World Cup when Cameroon lost to England in the quarter-finals, but was persuaded out of what became a semi-retirement to help the indomitable lions' ultimately flawed bid for further success in this summer's World Cup in the United States.

The last goal of his long and colourful career came from a header 14 minutes from time. Afterwards he ran to the side of the pitch to give his customary celebration gesture, wiggling his hips to an ecstatic capacity crowd.

Minutes before, Milla was visibly infuriated when he had a long range goal disallowed for offside, he was also booked for disputing a throw-in.

TODAY'S MATCH
Biman vs Brothers (Dhaka
Stadium)

A hit in time is a hit indeed. It was, in fact, two hits that helped materialise the biggest upset of the just begun cricket season yesterday as unfancied Victoria tamed down Abahani's right to defend the title within a few hours with a stunning three wicket victory.

In an enthralling finish of the second round opener of the 15th Damal Summer cricket tournament at the Dhaka Stadium, Iqbal, who smacked an unbeaten 36 off 28 balls, whipped Gazi Ashraf Hossain over midwicket for his second six to pull off a truly memorable win with just one ball to spare.

Little known Iqbal dashed off to the pavilion in delight with his precious bat raised heavenwards once Naimur Rahman, the Abahani fielder manning that spot signalled the overboundary after completing the catch, much to the anguish of the Abahani fans up on their feet with bated breath.

In the hindsight it was a classic case of stealing thunder by the unheralded young man better known for his exploit with the ball rather than the willow. He came at the wicket when Victoria, chasing a challenging victory target of 181 in 45 overs, suddenly looked to have lost way at 116 for four in 33.5 overs.

He immediately pitched himself in, carting medium pacer Rahat for a massive sixer.

Minhaz smashed 24 runs

Batistuta's unique distinction

Branca pulls Parma thru'

Luigi Apolloni deliberately handled in his own six-yard box, before Branca struck his acrobatic equaliser in the 61st minute.

But Parma, reduced to ten men after Apolloni was shown the red card in the 88th minute, were indebted to goalkeeper Luca Bucci for a brilliant injury-time save from Pierluigi Orlandini's freekick.

Earlier, Juventus briefly drew level with Parma after a late goal from unsung striker Fabrizio Ravanelli gave the Turin side a hard-fought 2-1 win at Padoa.

But Juventus lived dangerously for much of the second half after Dutchman Michel Kreek's 68th minute strike wiped out Roberto Baggio's superb 20-metre freekick.

Parma now lead Serie A with 24 points from 11 matches, one ahead of Juventus, who have played a gameless and two clear of Fiorentina, held to a 2-2 draw by Rudi Gullit's 86th-minute equaliser for Sampdoria.

At least there was some consolation for Fiorentina's Argentine striker Gabriel Batistuta, who broke a 32-year scoring record.

Batistuta's 56th-minute penalty, which matched a first half penalty converted by England captain David Platt, meant the Prolific striker had found the net in each of Fiorentina's first 11 games of the season.

The goal beat the record set by Bologna winger Ezio Pascutti, who struck in each of the first 10 games of the 1962-63 season.

The unstoppable Batistuta almost got his name on the scoresheet again in the 73rd minute, but his deflected header was credited as an own-goal to Petro Vierchowod.

Fiorentina's double celebration was short-lived as Gullit struck his late goal, his first since rejoining Sampdoria from Milan, to give the visitors a point.

Roma's South American duo of Abel Balbo and Daniel Fonseca inspired their side to a stunning 3-0 triumph over arch-rival Lazio in a heated derby marred by ugly scenes on the terraces.

Roma, who had struggled over the last month after toppling the table, took the lead as early as the third minute after Balbo raced between

from left-arm spinner Biplob Sarkar's ninth and final over with two sixes, as many fours and a couple of couples.

The former national captain, who remained unconquered on a 38-ball 54, courtesy a dropped sitter by Ziauddin off Biplob to pile on pain, began the willow explosion by hoisting the first ball over long off for a sixer.

Jewel Hossain with 52 and Akram Khan with 23 stood out as the other notable contributors.

Apart from Biplob, who had his analysis metamorphosed in an over, all the Victoria bowlers bowled to the field to return respectable figures.

Unlike the Abahani batsmen, who went about their task rather circumspectly, reading too much in the pitch, put to use of the first time this season, Victoria openers Azhar Hossain and his nephew batted purposefully to lay the foundation of some sort.

While the experienced uncle, a former national cricketer, got 38 in an opening partnership of 90 in 26 overs, Mihirbhan played his strokes authoritatively to make 42 before being bowled round his legs.

The solid start went a long way in the outcome notwithstanding the fascinating ups and downs of fortunes finally fixed by Iqbal.

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in the 41st over.

Nantes increase lead at top

PARIS, Nov 28: League leaders Nantes extended their unbeaten run to 19 matches when they beat Cannes 1-0 on Sunday to move six points clear of second placed Paris St Germain, reports Reuter.

Uruguay's Ruben Sosa had fired Inter in front from the penalty spot in the 23rd minute after central defender

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The eleven-member Bangladesh team which left Dhaka yesterday to take part in the 31st Chess Olympiad, beginning in the Russian capital, Moscow from November 30. — Star photo

Damal second round augurs unwell for Abahani

Victoria's victory indeed

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that slammed against the VIP balcony, plundering in the process 25 runs from the 40th and the 41st overs.

From 42 off 36 balls the equation suddenly came down to a very simple statistics of 17 from 18 balls, yet callousness coupled with panic resulted in two run outs in the last over and it had to be Iqbal, the man of the moment, to snatch victory fittingly with a sixer.

At the end of the day, the what-could-have-been Abahani supporters must have engaged themselves in fancy if the impulse of Mustafa Kamal, a club official, to take every one by a pleasant surprise by bringing Pakistan international Nadim Khan straight into the ground had cost them the match.

Abahani, who were actually awaiting the Indian pair of Raman Lamba and Maninder Singh, did find left arm spinner Nadim Khan at the ground, thanks to the initiative of the aforesaid official but it was a few minutes too late as the match just could not wait long enough for his arrival.

The Dhanmondi team was destined to be doomed from the beginning once Azhar Hossain won the toss and opted to field first.

Wickets were held for dear life but took a heavy toll on the run rate and only a brilliant last over assault by star batsman Minhazul Abedin Nannu helped them raise a fighting though not safe total of 180 for five.

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