

Acme Div II cricket

Sports Reporter

Young Pegasus 'A' pulled off an exciting one-wicket victory at the cost of a hapless Bangladesh Public Works Department (BPWD) in an Acme Second Division cricket league match at the Dhanmondi Club ground yesterday.

The winners posted 190 for nine in 39.3 overs, three balls short of the stipulated quota of 40 overs.

Chasing 189 for victory in the stipulated 40 overs, Pegasus were in the danger of losing as six of their wickets went down in 27.4 overs with just 119 runs on board.

The bulk of the runs of this phase were provided by Safil and Shams who contributed 24 and 28 respectively.

Pegasus were deadlifting from the slump notwithstanding these useful knocks by lower order batsmen Khoka and Shahadat Hossain Sunny.

Khoka was run out for 36 while Sunny stayed unbeaten on 32 till the end.

Alamgir Suljan and Shahid collected two wickets each for PWD.

Earlier Mohsin Ali Azad's 42 and a couple of other useful knocks allowed PWD to raise 188 for nine.

Skipper Fazlu made unbeaten 26 and Sohail 25.

Khoka picked up two wickets for 34 to mark himself out as the most successful Pegasus bowler.

At the Mirpur Outer Stadium DOHS beat Gandaria Cricketers by four wickets in day's other Acme league encounter.

Sohail Hamid and wicket-keeper Mottur Rahman remained unbeaten on 31 and 28 as DOHS chasing 124 for victory in 40 overs achieved the target in 31.5 overs.

Mofiz took three wickets for 18 to worry DOHS early.

Earlier, Gandaria snailed to 123 for nine from their stipulated quota.

Bulbul was the topscorer with 26.

Shahnawaz of DOHS was instrumental for Gandaria's problems with three for 22.

Sonali Bank win
Sonali Bank edged past Wanderers Club by a solitary goal in one of the two Green Delta Insurance hockey league matches at the Hockey Stadium yesterday, reports UNB.

Bulu netted the all-important goal in the 18th minute.

In the other match, Wari Club split points with babes Farashgarij SC after the game ended in a goalless draw.

SL-E Province match drawn
PORT ELIZABETH, South Africa, Dec 30: With more than 17 hours lost to rain, the four-day match between Eastern Province and Sri Lanka ended in the inevitable draw on Thursday, reports Reuter.

The two captains agreed to draw stumps 27 overs early at St Georges Park with Sri Lanka 125 for five in reply to Eastern Province's 198 all out.

Eastern Province resumed on Thursday at 93 for one, but lost captain Kepler Wessels for 48 without a run added. Seven runs later, Grant Morgan became Chaniinda Vaas's third victim for 31, and the middle and lower order fell to the off spin of Muttiah Muralidharan.

Muralidharan finished with six for 42 as Eastern Province lost their last nine wickets for 105. Vaas finished with three for 32.

Sri Lanka lost an early wicket in reply, but with the captains agreeing that a positive result was impossible, the rest of the innings was taken up with batting practice.

Asanka Gurusinha made 48 from 104 balls and Sanjeewa Ranatunga hit five fours in his 44.

The second wicket pair added 69 before a flurry of wickets fell to the spin of Shafiq Abrahams and Adam Huckle who picked up two each as Sri Lanka lost four for 15.

New BSJA body elected
The executive committee of the Bangladesh Sports Journalists Association (BSJA) for 1995-96 with Manzarul Haq as president and Nazimul Kabir as general secretary have been unanimously elected at the biennial conference of the association held at its office here yesterday, reports BSS.

The conference chaired by the outgoing president Masud Ahmed Rumi unanimously adopted the secretary and treasurer's reports respectively.

Before the start of the meeting one-minute silence was observed as a mark of respect to the athletes, players, organisers and sports journalists who died during the last two years.

The other members of the executive committee are: vice-presidents - Ajay Barua and Kamalur Rahman, treasurer - Kashinath Basak, members - Masud Ahmed Rumi, Enamul Haq Chowdhury, Syed Manam, Mahfuzur Rahman and Ditu Khandker.

President Cup shelved

Sports Reporter

The President Gold Cup football tournament scheduled to begin from January 20 has been officially postponed.

The decision came after an executive committee meeting of the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) at its office last night with the acting president M Azizul Haq in the chair.

Although the only international meet in the country approved by the AFC has been deferred for an indefinite period it looks like the soccer tourney has gone into hibernation for quite sometime.

The almost eleventh hour postponement was attributed to the unstable political situation prevailing in the country following the opposition MPs' mass resignation from the Parliament.

The decision will be some source of embarrassment for

BFF which has already confirmed the participation of seven foreign teams in the proposed eight-team meet.

Apart from the hosts Asian Games champions Uzbekistan along with Iran, South Korea, Malaysia, India, Myanmar and Krylia Sovotov of Russia were expected to take part in the meet.

The bleak future of the tourney has, however, not precipitated the authorities to call off residential camp for the national team operational since November 1.

Training is never wasted, besides the coach feels in the event of a closure. Now he will have to take the pain of starting all over again, said the BFF general secretary Akmal Hossain.

The focus now shifts to the SAARC football tournament scheduled for a March 25 start in the Sri Lankan capital of Colombo.

The regional meet was ear-

lier scheduled to kick-off from December 2.

"You know the national camp at the BKSP was originally designed for the SAARC tourney. And there is no reason to postpone the camp," said Akmal Hossain, the BFF secretary.

"But their will be a fresh schedule after a recess," added Akmal who termed the expenditure involving the national camp as an investment.

But the decision of postponement certainly frustrated Man Young Kang who succeeded Aldrich Svab, the failed mentor of the Bangladesh soccer team in the Sixth SAARC Games last year in Dhaka where the hosts earned the dubious distinction of finishing sixth among six.

But the downer is even greater on the part of the players, who underwent rigorous training shortly after the grueling league campaign.

Flower keeps Zimbabwe afloat

NARYBOROUGH, Australia, Dec 30: Zimbabwe captain Andy Flower helped his side build a lead of 144 runs over Queensland with four wickets left despite a horror start to their second innings today, reports Reuter.

At close of play on the second day of their three-day tour match, Zimbabwe had steadied themselves to reach 73 for six.

Flower came to the crease after Queensland pace bowler Michael Kasprowitz ripped through the top order by removing openers Mark Dekker and Guy Whittall and Alistair Campbell during the first over of the innings.

Zimbabwe, who led by 71 runs following declarations by both captains, found themselves sought for three at the start of the second over.

Flower, who had contributed an unbeaten 139, his highest score in first-class cricket, to a first innings total of 294 for six declared, propped up the tourists again by remaining unbeaten on 24 at the close.

Kasprowitz finished the day with figures of three for nine from 10 overs.

Earlier, Queensland captain Matthew Hayden declared his side's first innings of 223 for five.

Hayden, a member of the Australia 'A' limited overs side which is competing in the World Series competition against England, Zimbabwe, and Australia, was top-scorer with 64.

BSWA meeting held

Sports Reporter
The annual general meeting of the Bangladesh Sports Writers' Association (BSWA) was held at the conference room of the National Sports Council (NSC) yesterday.

Representatives of the outstation units submitted reports on annual activities in the day-long meeting presided by association president ASM Roshidul Hassan.

"I've been happy with Mike's captaincy and his position is not under threat as far as I'm concerned," said Illingworth, who joined the tour party before Christmas to watch the second and third Tests.

Fed Cup b'ball

Mariner Youngs Club advanced to the final of the Purabi General Insurance seventh Federation Cup basketball tournament trouncing Dhumketa 75-42 in the first semifinal at the wooden floor gymnasium yesterday, reports UNB.

Dulal and Zaffar caged 26 points each for the winners. Mariner Youngs will meet the winners of the second semifinal between Grags Club and Josefites tomorrow (Saturday).

Ma hospitalised

HONG KONG, Dec 30: Chinese supercoach Ma Junren - who has trained an "army" of women world record holders in middle distance running events - has been hospitalised after a car accident, the Xinhua news agency said Friday, reports AFP.

Ma, who was travelling with his wife to his father's funeral in the northeastern city of Dalian Thursday, was in "good condition" in hospital after his van hit the railings on the side of the road, the agency said.



Mahmudur Hossain Khan Dulal, the general secretary of the Bangladesh Sports Writers' Association (BSWA), addressing the members on the eve of the annual general meeting of the community at the conference room of the National Sports Council yesterday. — Star photo

Illingworth backs Atherton



RAY ILLINGWORTH
SYDNEY, Dec 30: Michael Atherton's job as England captain is safe despite his side's dismal performances in losing the first two Ashes Tests against Australia, England chairman of selectors Ray Illingworth said today, reports Reuter.

"I've been happy with Mike's captaincy and his position is not under threat as far as I'm concerned," said Illingworth, who joined the tour party before Christmas to watch the second and third Tests.

"Atherton is not the outgoing type so it's hard for him to get the players up," he said. "He believes they should be able to do their jobs properly."

"But it doesn't always work that way and sometimes you have to remind them."

Illingworth said he was shocked by England's deterioration since their comprehensive defeat of South Africa at The Oval in August, and he appeared to attribute the decline to the side's preparation.

"It's amazing to me in two or three months how things have drifted," Illingworth said. England, who have won only one of the last 21 Ashes encounters, are two-nil down in the five-Test series following massive defeats in Brisbane and Melbourne, where they collapsed for 92 on Thursday to lose by 295 runs.

That defeat means England must win in Sydney to stand any chance of regaining the

advantage because of leg spinner Shane Warne and off spinner, Tim May.

Warne has taken 20 wickets in two Tests, including his feat in capturing the first hat-trick in an Ashes Test for 91 years when he hastened England's demise on Thursday.

Australia's main problem could be complacency but captain Mark Taylor said he would be guarding against it.

"It's too early to talk about us winning the series 5-0," said Taylor, who will take an unchanged 12-man squad into the game.

"I just want to make sure we take the confidence we had in Melbourne into the next Test to give us the third win to retain the Ashes," Taylor added.

Both sides rested today, with Fletcher defending England's decision not to practice despite their recent abject form.

"We've got another hard Test on Sunday and we'll have a practice on Saturday. We never planned to practice and we never contemplated changing our plans," Fletcher said.

TEAMS

AUSTRALIA (from): Mark Taylor (captain), Michael Slater, David Boon, Mark Waugh, Michael Bevan, Stephen Waugh, Ian Healy, Shane Warne, Craig McDermott, Tim May, Damien Fleming, Glenn McGrath.

ENGLAND (from): Michael Atherton (captain), Graham Gooch, Graeme Hick, Graham Thorpe, John Crawley, Mike Gatting, Steven Rhodes, Phillip DeFreitas, Darren Gough, Phillip Tufnell, Shaun Udall, Joey Benjamin, Angus Fraser, Devon Malcolm.

helping slow bowling. Fletcher said England would consider including off-spinner Shaun Udall for his Test debut to partner slow left-arm Philip Tufnell.

But if the pitch does turn, Australia should still hold the

OCA insider pleads for China



HONG KONG, Dec 30: One of Asia's most senior Olympic officials on Friday appealed for China to be given a chance to prove it was free of drugs, reports AFP.

Speaking ahead of the opening World Cup swimming meeting in Hong Kong next week, Arnaldo de Oliveira Sales, a leading member of the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA)

executive, called for "patience" in dealing with Chinese sport following the multiple drug failures of its swimmers.

China will not be at the World Cup next Tuesday and Wednesday, disputed in the short course 25 metre pool. But the scandal of the two world champion Chinese women swimmers, who failed drugs tests at the Asian Games in October, will hang over the event.

Sales, president of Hong Kong's Amateur Swimming Association, said China now had to be left to investigate the cases of world champions Lu Bin, Yang Aihua and the five other Chinese swimmers to test positive in Hiroshima.

"Let us give China a chance to find out for themselves what had happened," he commented.

But even Sales hinted that the sport should not expect more cases of such a magnitude now China has decided to keep a low profile in world swimming.

"Whatever has occurred has been restricted to a limited number of places," Sales said.

"Every schoolboy knows the sports in which competitors are on steroids," he said. "Swimming is generally not one of them."

Officially the Chinese absence is over visa problems and to recover from recent competition. But the squad is virtually certain to miss the other World Cup events in Finland, France, Italy, Britain, Sweden and Germany.

In the absence of Lu, Yang and the other Chinese who dominated last year's world championships, the Hong Kong organisers admitted that fewer world records should be expected now in international competition.

The star of the Hong Kong leg of the World Cup will be Germany's Franziska van Almsick. She is reported to be preparing an attack on the world record in the 200 metres freestyle. Van Almsick set the current world mark of 55.84 sec in Beijing two years ago.

Three members - Silko Gunzel, Jirka Letzin and Mark

Castro keeps WBA title

MONTERREY, Mexico, Dec 30: Argentina's Jorge Castro came back from the edge of defeat Saturday to defend his WBA middleweight championship with a ninth-round knockout of John David Jackson, reports AP.

Jackson, of Los Angeles, Calif, had driven Castro into the ropes and pounded the seemingly helpless and bloody Argentine. But Jackson's wild swings left him open and Castro lurched out with a left that sent his opponent to the canvas.

Jackson wobbled to his feet twice more but was unable to stay up, and the clock was stopped at 2:43 of the ninth round.

Jackson was trying to regain the title stripped from him after he made an unauthorised fight. Saturday's bout was part of a court settlement brought by Jackson to regain the title he claimed had been unfairly taken.

"Once I hit him, I knew it would be over," said Castro, 27, of Santa Cruz, Argentina. "I never thought of quitting."

Added Castro: "I never thought I would lose the fight. I know that I hit very hard. The hand of God came in. Then he fell."

The fight boosted Castro's record to 96-4-2 with 67 knockouts. It was Jackson's first loss after 32 victories.

It was the second time in the fight that Castro seemingly returned from the dead. By the seventh round, he was bleeding heavily from the nose, and his right eye was virtually closed from a gash in the eyelid.

S Africa restore parity



DURBAN, Dec 30: An unbeaten 66 from opener Gary Kirsten steared South Africa to an eight-wicket victory in the second Test against New Zealand on Friday, the home side levelling the series

The first hour had produced 51 of the remaining 111 needed as both batsmen looked to attack the bowling. Kirsten struck Morrison for two boundaries off successive deliveries as he went on to reach 50 from 92 balls.

It was his fourth Test half-century and his 66 meant that he ended as South Africa's top run-scorer in Test cricket in 1994 with 663.

Commins hit five boundaries in his 45 but perished when he miscued a lofted drive off left-arm spinner Matthew Hart to Bryan Young at mid-off.

His departure, though, only brought in Cullinan who hurried South Africa to victory at 153-2.

Winning captain Hansie Cronje told reporters his bowlers had won the match.

"It was a hard-fought Test and the guys showed a lot of guts," he said. "They all bowled very well especially Fanie (De Villiers) with his eight wickets. Steen Jack also did well in his first Test."

New Zealand captain Ken Rutherford said: "It was always in favour of the batsmen today. We needed to take a couple of wickets last night and then this morning as well."

"It was unfortunate that Steve Fleming dropped that early catch and a couple of the umpire's decisions didn't go our way. When the catch went down I thought maybe this wasn't going to be our day."

Earlier Thursday New Zealand opener Bryan Young laboured to the third slowest half-century in Test cricket but his dogged resistance appeared unlikely save his side from defeat.

They were bowled out for 192 in their second innings and by the close of the fourth day South Africa, chasing 152 for victory, were 41 for one.

Young spent 333 minutes compiling his 50, scored from 229 balls.

Only England's Trevor Bailey, who reached 50 in 357 minutes against Australia in 1958-59, and compatriot Chris Tavare, with a 350-minute effort against Pakistan in 1982, have taken longer.

"It's not a record you really want to pin up on the bedroom wall for everyone to see," Young joked with reporters.

"I think I'll be on the end of a few 'snail' jokes from the rest of the team. But I can take that."

Young, who scored just nine runs in the pre-lunch session, put on 53 with Stephen Fleming for the fourth-wicket and 63 with Shane Thomson for the fifth-wicket as New Zealand built slowly on their overnight score of 48 for three.

But his dismissal sparked a collapse which saw four wickets go down for just nine runs.

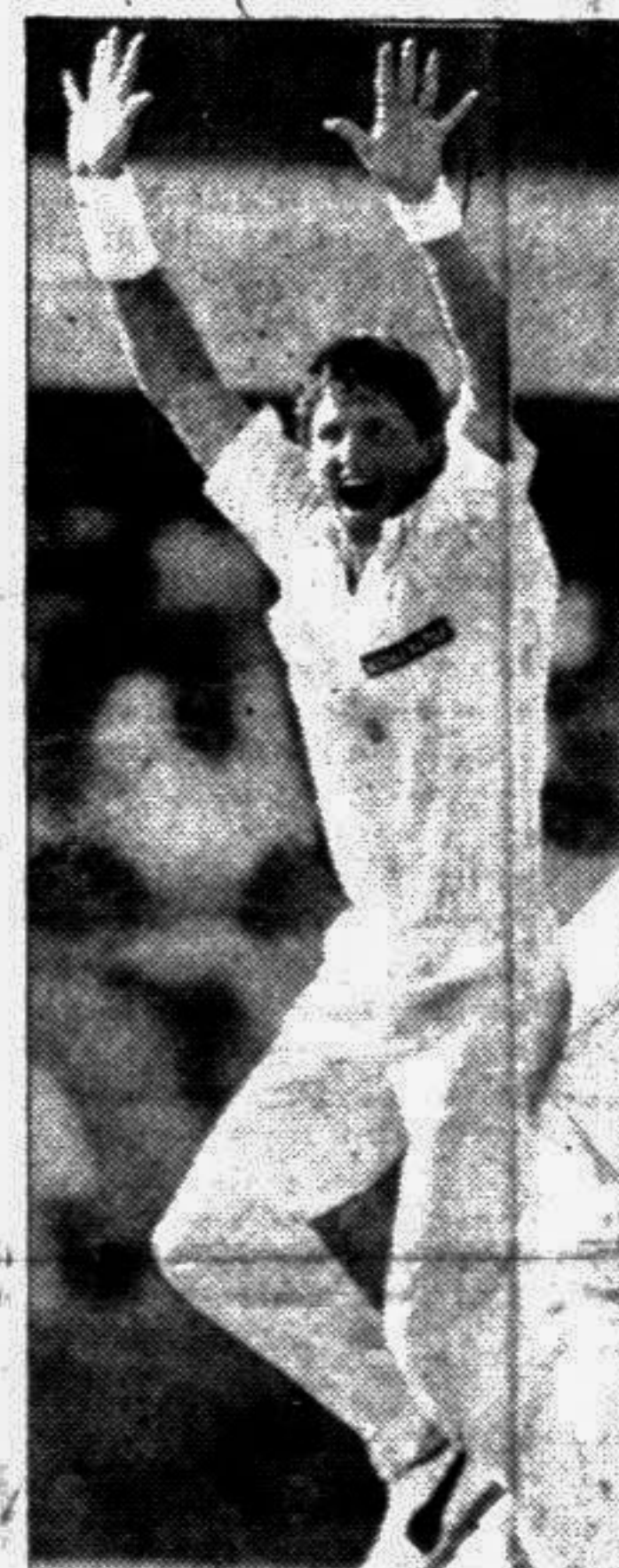
Young's concentration finally wavered when he cut a rising ball from Brian McMillan to Daryll Cullinan in the gully. In the next over Thomson was bowled by Jansie Cronje for 35.

Adam Parore was next to go, a run-out victim of the television replay as Cronje, following up his own bowling, played the stumps with a direct hit.

In the last over before tea occasional spin bowler Gary Kirsten turned the ball enough to catch the edge of left-hander Matthew Hart's bat.

Fallenders Simon Doull, Danny Morrison and Chris Pringle added 39 useful runs after the break before Fanie de Villiers mopped up with the new ball.

South Africa lost Andrew Hudson - caught down the legside by Parore off Doull for six - in 19 overs before the close.



DE VILLIERS: no-o-m

J. Commins c Young b Hart 45
D. Cullinan not out 25
Extras: (lb-9, nb-2) 11
Total: (for two wickets) 153
Fall of wickets: 1-20: 2-117

Bowling: O M R W
Doull 15 5 26 1
Morrison 15 1 56 0
Hart 13.4 2 52 1
Thomson 2 1 10 0

Man-of-the-match: Fanie de Villiers (South Africa)
Result: South Africa won by eight wickets
First Test: Johannesburg - New Zealand won by 137 runs.
Third Test: Cape Town - January 2-4.



L.A. Clipper Terry Dehere tries to shot around Miami Heat centre John Salley during the second period action of their NBA game in Miami on Dec 29. The Heat defeated the Chippers 126-83. — AFP photo

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard on the fifth and final day of the second Test between South Africa and New Zealand at Kingsmead on Friday:
NEW ZEALAND: First innings 185 (Thomson 82; De Villiers 5-64)