

# Sport



Former Test cricketer Ian Salisbury (left, foreground) together with his England A teammates busy signing the official team photographs at the Sheraton Hotel yesterday. They signed 250 pictures in all. The Englishmen take on Bangladesh today in the first of two one-dayers at the Dhaka Stadium. — Star photo

## Sher-e-Bangla Cup soccer

Sports Reporter

Pirojpur, Kushtia and Nilphamari moved into their respective zonal finals of the 10th Sher-e-Bangla Cup national football championship winning their respective matches held at different venues across the country yesterday.

Kushtia, placed in Zone-6, recorded a convincing 3-1 win over Jessore at the Khulna Stadium yesterday.

In a rather one-sided affair, the winners led the breather by a 43rd-minute strike from Younus Ali while Jamal Hossain restored parity 10 minutes into the second half.

Kushtia, however, took the lead again two minutes later through Sohrab and Towhid seated the fate of the match seven minutes away from the long whistle.

At Patuakhali, Liton duo struck once each as Pirojpur beat Bagerhat 2-0 in a Zone-5 semi-final.

After a barren first half, Arifuzzaman Liton gave the eventual winners a 72nd-minute lead before Liton Khan, added another nine minutes later.

In a Zone-8 semifinal at Rangpur, Nilphamari edged past Dinajpur by a solitary goal with Abu Hossain notching the match-decider in the 40th minute of the proceedings.

Narayanganj came from behind to beat Narsingdi by the odd goal in three in a Zone-1 engagement at the Faridpur Stadium.

Monir and Chapal scored once each for the winners after Nazimuddin gave Narsingdi a 58th-minute lead.

Away at Cox's Bazar, Rangamati beat Chittagong 3-1 in the breaker after the regulation period ended goalless.

Bablu and Biplob scored one goal apiece as Pabna beat Nawabganj 2-0 in a Zone-7 encounter at Jaipurhat.

## Okeke suspended for doping

Sports Reporter

OSLO, Feb 19: Norwegian sprinter Aham Okeke was suspended for three months and six days on Friday for a doping incident last year involving the stimulant pseudoephedrine, reports Reuter.

The verdict, handed down by the Norwegian sports court of appeal, was unrelated to a bigger, more recent scandal which could render the Nigerian-born athlete a four-year ban for alleged use of the hormone testosterone.

Okeke, 25, who came to Norway in 1982 and got Norwegian citizenship six years later, was initially banned for three months after testing positive for pseudoephedrine at the Stockholm Grand Prix on July 12, missing the European Championships in Helsinki.

Eventually freeing Okeke, the sports court said at the time it had no doubt Okeke was positive but ruled that he had not taken the drug willfully to enhance his performance.

But the Norwegian Athletics Association brought the case before the appeal court, which overruled the verdict on Friday.

Okeke's defence lawyer Aasmund Sandland, told the Norwegian news agency NTB he would appeal to the supreme athletics court.

Okeke already faces a four-year international ban by the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) after his second 'positive' test for a banned substance.

Okeke has protested his innocence saying he used medical substances for various ailments, but athletics leaders say he is finished as a top athlete in Norway.

## England A play locals today

Sports Reporter

The Dhaka Stadium readies to host another visiting side just two weeks after holding a number of exhibition cricket matches involving Kenya, Hong Kong and the Hyderabad Cricket Association (HCA) against different local selections when England A take on the Bangladesh national team in a limited overs tie. The 50-overs-a-side affair begins at 9 am.

Bangladesh Television and Radio Bangladesh will cover today's match and the other two, including a three-day encounter starting from February 24, of the exhibition series.

Veteran Sussex cricketer Alan Wells will lead the visitors, who arrived in the capital on Saturday following a successful tour of India, while Akram Khan will once again be at the helm of the local charge.

The second English selection, which won both the Test and one-day series against their Indian counterpart, will retain the services of stylish right-hand batsman Mark Ramprakash, who flew Down Under to join an injury-plagued England Test squad to play the fifth and final Ashes Test.

Ramprakash, who had scores of 72 and 42 in the Perth Test which Australia

won by a huge margin of 329 runs, will act as Wells' deputy.

Ramprakash apart, Ian Salisbury, England's first specialist leg-spin bowler for 20 years, is the other England A player with Test experience.

Tour manager John Barclay refused to make any prediction about today's match, saying he knew very little about cricket in Bangladesh. However, Barclay, a Sussex man, added his boys would play to win.

When asked how his side would benefit from this tour, the 41-year-old, now a director of coaching at the Arundel Castle Cricket Foundation, said, "I heard a lot of people throng at the stadium to watch cricket matches here and I believe my boys would surely get the feel of playing in front of a big crowd."

Barclay, who seemed satisfied with the condition of the Dhaka Stadium pitch, revealed each player of the 15-member team would have his chance to perform during the tour, adding the first eleven for today's match would be announced just before the start.

Meanwhile, the Bangladesh Cricket Control Board (BCCB) have already announced a 14-member national contingent for the friendlies.

Skipper Akram Khan, the burly right-handed bat from Chittagong who is currently

riding on a wave of success after replacing Faruque Ahmad following Bangladesh's disastrous tour of Kenya, was confident and said his men would try their best to heat their strong opponents.

Roqibul Hasan, the newly-appointed Bangladesh team manager who replaced former national teammate Tanveer Haider, was equally optimistic. A former national captain, Roqibul, however, seemed less concerned about the two one-dayers.

"I am looking forward to seeing how the boys fare in the three-day match because they have played quite a lot of limited-overs matches for the last few days and might find it rather too demanding," said the former national opening batsman.

Roqibul, however, refused to make any comment regarding the team selection but suggested "It could have been better."

"For tomorrow's match and the ones to follow, I am banking on Athar Ali, Minhazul Abedin, Akram Khan and Aminul Islam. I believe, any one of them can really make it for Bangladesh."

Meanwhile, organisers, the BCCB, have announced cash awards of Taka 5,000 each for the man-of-the-match for the exhibition series.

## Martin makes Sampras rue

Sports Reporter

MEMPHIS, Tennessee, Feb 19: Two match points away from victory Saturday, Pete Sampras tightened up, reports AP.

The world's No. 1 player won his first set 6-4 against Todd Martin in the St. Jude indoor tournament semifinals. But Sampras missed two match points and Martin pulled out a 4-6, 7-6 (8-6), 6-3 victory.

Martin will play Paul Haarhuis, who beat unseeded Jonathan Stark 6-4, 7-5 Saturday night, in Sunday's final.

"It's like a bad dream," said Sampras, who said he couldn't remember the last time he lost when he had match point. In fact, it happened last May when he didn't convert a match point before losing to Michael Stich in Germany.

Sampras served for the match at 5-4 only to be broken by Martin, his friend and practice partner who's ranked No. 10. The set went to a tiebreaker, and Sampras jumped ahead 5-1.

No matter what he tried, Sampras couldn't put Martin away. Martin pulled out the tiebreaker 8-6 for the second set victory and broke Sampras in the first game of the final set before winning.

"Basically the pressure was on me, and at that point he had nothing to lose," Sampras said. "He missed quite a bit, but he made the right points."

Sampras quickly fell behind 0-2 in the final set and didn't score a point until the third game. He said he never should've been playing a third set.

"I shouldn't have been in that position. I should have closed him out, but I didn't. He continues, I don't," Sampras said.

Sampras took two weeks off after losing to Andre Agassi in the Australian Open finals. The tour's leader in tiebreakers last year with a 29-8 record, Sampras is 0-6 in tiebreakers this year.

Martin, the defending champion who now is 4-2 against Sampras, sympathised with him.

"Pete's one of my better friends on the tour. It's never easy to beat your friends, and it's an enjoyable accomplishment as far as tennis goes. ... I feel not sorry, but I understand how Pete feels, and it's not a position I want to be in," Martin said.

He now has the chance to become the first to successfully defend his St. Jude title since Jimmy Connors won back-to-back championships here in 1983-1984.

## Quiet day at Hockey Stadium

Sports Reporter

After an incident-packed three-day streak in which the local fans witnessed the brilliance of Pakistani hockey players, the Green Delta Insurance First Division hockey super league had a rather quiet day at the Hockey Stadium yesterday with two lesser sides fighting out a tame draw.

Ajax Sporting Club and Sonali Bank, who are yet to win a match in the six-team super league, earned their first point when they shared honours in a goalless draw.

## TODAY'S MATCH

Ushá vs Abahani

## Yamaha cricket

Sports Reporter

In an inconsequential match of the Yamaha First Division cricket play-off series, Gopibagh Friends Association finally managed a win when they beat Agrani Bank by 15 runs at the City Club ground yesterday.

With the other three — Dhaka Wanderers, Bangladesh Railway and Agrani Bank, involved in the four-team play-off league, having already qualified for the super league, yesterday's match was only of academic interest.

The trio joins Ajax Sports Club and City Club in the five-team super league, scheduled to start some time in March.

Yesterday's match, which had a delayed start due to wet ground conditions following overnight drizzle, was truncated to a 25-overs-a-side affair.

Gopibagh Friends, sent in to bat first, struggled to 108 before being all out in 25 overs and then skittled the bankers out in 24.3 overs to carve out an insignificant win.

## Office cricket league begins March 10

The metropolis office cricket league, organised by Bangladesh Cricket Control Board, will begin on March 10, reports UNB.

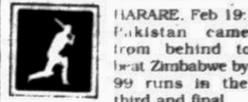
Interested teams have been asked to complete registration formalities between February 25 and March 8.

Each team will be permitted to enlist up to 25 players and have to field at least four of their employees in every match, allowing seven guest players.

No foreign player is entitled to play in this year's league, but foreigners will be eligible to play in case of their appointment with the organisation six months before the league starts.

Any new player will be treated as a binding player for two years in case of first registration with the team, said a BCCB press release yesterday.

## Aamir Nazir runs through Zimbabwe batting Pakistan wrap up series



Aamir Nazir

HARARE, Feb 19: Pakistan came from behind to beat Zimbabwe by 99 runs in the third and final Test here Sunday, reports AFP.

Chasing 239 runs to win Pakistan bowled Zimbabwe out for 139 in their second innings on the fourth day to clinch the match and with it the series 2-1.

In an incident-packed day, 14 wickets fell for 154 runs as the match swung one way then the other.

The match tilted Zimbabwe's way in the morning when Pakistan resumed their second innings at their overnight 235-6.

Pakistan went on to be bowled out for 250, losing their last four wickets for 15 runs in the space of nine deliveries.

Heath Streak took two more wickets to finish with 4-52 and 22 in the series at an average of just over 13 apiece while David Brain got the other two.

But the relatively small target over two days proved beyond the Zimbabweans.

With Aamir Nazir bowling with great fire and passion the home team were immediately in trouble and limped to 45-3 at lunch.

Zimbabwe lost five more wickets in the next session with Nazir taking another two to finish with 5-46. His first

five-wicket haul in Test cricket, as the home team struggled to 97-8 at tea Nazir also became only the third Pakistan bowler after Waqar Younis and Wasim Akram since 1989 to take five or more wickets for Pakistan.

Zimbabwe's tail wagged once again in the final session as the last two wickets added 42 runs.

Heath Streak led the charge with an unbeaten 30 off 54 balls and including four fours. He was well supported by David Brain who made eight.

Streak was also at the centre of controversy when he was given a second life by Zimbabwe umpire Ian Robinson who adjudged that the slip fielder Saeed Anwar did not take the catch cleanly. Streak was 17 at the time and the score 122-9.

There was also a 15-minute interruption for rain in the third session but this did not stop Pakistan, who have been under immense pressure because of the bribery allegations, winning a memorable match and series.

Pakistan had more reason to smile when Inzamamul Haq, who scored 367 runs in the series at an average of 73.40, was adjudged man-of-the-match and joint man-of-the-series with Heath Streak.

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## SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard on the fourth day of the third Test between Pakistan and Zimbabwe at the Harare Sports Club today.

PAKISTAN: First innings 231  
ZIMBABWE: First innings 243

PAKISTAN: Second innings (overnight 235 for six)  
Saeed Anwar c Carlisle b Streak 26  
Shakeel Ahmed c A Flower b B Streak 33  
Inzamamul Haq c G Flower b Whittall 83  
Salim Malik c Carlisle b Whittall 5  
Ijaz Ahmed c Whittall b Streak 55  
Aamir Nazir c G Flower b Whittall 19  
Rashid Latif c A Flower b Streak 6  
Wasim Akram c Campbell b Brain 4  
Manzoor Elahi c A Flower b Streak 0  
Aaqib Javed c A Flower b Brain 3  
Aamir Nazir not out 0

Zimbabwe: (3 lb, 3 w, 10 ab) 16  
Total (all out in 95.1 overs) 250  
Fall of wickets: 1-58; 2-72; 3-88; 4-204; 5-230; 6-233; 7-245; 8-247; 9-250; 10-250.

Table with columns: Bowling, O, M, R, W. Rows: Sreak, Brain, Whittall, B Streak, P Streak.

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AAMIR NAZIR 5 for 46

F Buttart c and b Ammir Nazir 5  
P Strong c Ijaz Ahmed b Aaqib Javed 5  
H Streak not out 30  
D Brain c Inzamamul Haq b Wasim Akram 8  
B Streak c Shakeel 8  
Ammir c Aaqib Javed 0  
Extras: (lb-5, nb-16) 26  
Total 139

Fall of wickets: 1-2; 2-12; 3-37; 4-68; 5-72; 6-85; 7-95; 8-95; 9-122.

Result: Pakistan won by 99 runs

Man-of-the-match: Inzamamul Haq (Pakistan)

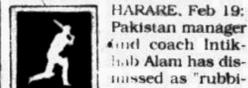
First Test, Harare: Zimbabwe won by an innings and 64 runs.

Second Test, Bulawayo: Pakistan won by eight wickets.

Men-of-the-series: Inzamamul Haq (Pakistan) and Heath Streak (Zimbabwe).

Pakistan win the series 2-1.

## Intikhab goes on record



INTIKHAB ALAM

HARARE, Feb 19: Pakistan manager and coach Intikhab Alam has dismissed as 'rubbish' suggestions made in the Observer newspaper in London by former fast bowler Sarfraz Nawaz that Pakistan 'threw' a one-day international against England at Trent Bridge in 1992, reports Reuter.

"I have known Sarfraz a very long time" said Intikhab. "He played under my captaincy and he has always been a controversial person and to be honest I don't believe what he says. I just don't take any notice."

"He is saying this after three years, it's ridiculous. We bowled badly and England scored a lot of runs and we lost badly but does that mean that every time you lose a match you have thrown it away? I mean, that's terrible."

"I am a great believer that if you make allegations then you must have more than 100 per cent proof or some kind of evidence which shows the other party to be guilty. Everyone is saying these things but no one is coming out with the truth."

Intikhab said that he was not aware of Sarfraz's allegations and that the Pakistan government had set up an anti corruption committee to gather evidence of bribery against several Test cricketers but believed it was a good thing.

"It might clear the dirty air. A lot of people have been writing and I think it will be good if they have got any evidence of proving somebody guilty instead of just writing every day."

Intikhab confirmed that he

and the team would be giving the committee their full cooperation: "Of course and I will be giving them my tour report as well. I think the time has come now to stop all this nonsense."

He also pointed out inaccuracies in the Observer's story, denying that Pakistan had ever been given mobile phones either in Zimbabwe or South Africa and that vice-captain Rashid Latif had threatened to leave the tour party in South Africa because of the bribery allegations.

"That is just speculation, he never threatened to leave the tour," he said. "There was a little bit of a misunderstanding (with Salim Malik) over the toss in the first Mandela Trophy final but that can happen."

Intikhab said that Rashid had missed the Wanderers Test because of a bad back and had nothing to do with the dispute with Salim.

He also dismissed Sarfraz's comments that Pakistan's defeats in that first Mandela final as well as in Test matches against New Zealand and Sri Lanka were suspicious: "It's all rubbish. I don't believe a word he says. I know him too well."

## Atletico Rosario beat Yokohama

Sports Reporter

YOKOHAMA, Japan, Feb 19: Dario Oscar Scotto and Pablo Andres Sanchez scored in each period, powering the Club Atletico Rosario Central of Argentina to a 2-0 victory over Japan's Yokohama Marinos Sunday, reports AP.

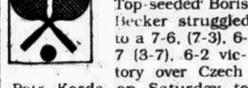
Scotto, received a pass from Roberto Antonio Molina and struck into the goal just eight minutes into the first half before 16,823 spectators at Yokohama Stadium.

Sanchez booted into the goal in the 7th minute of the second half after receiving a grounder from Omar Arnaldo Palma.

Atletico Rosario outshot the Yokohama Marinos, one of Japan's Professional soccer teams 20-15.

The visitors meet another Japanese team on Feb 26 to Tokyo's National Stadium.

## Korda keeps Becker waiting



Petr Korda

MILAN, Feb 19: Top-seeded Boris Becker struggled to a 7-6, (7-3), 6-7 (3-7), 6-2 victory over Czech Petr Korda on Saturday to reach his fifth final at the Murrati Time indoor, reports AP.

The German needed two hours and 38 minutes and a lot of determination to overcome his sixth-seeded opponent which served as a replay last year's final.

Saturday's victory at the Assago Forum kept Becker unbeaten in five matches against the Czech and gave him a 27-2 record in Milan, the most victories here.

Becker will face fifth-seeded Russian Yevgeny Kafelnikov, who beat Goran Ivisevic in the other semifinal Saturday, for the winner's check of \$128,000 in Sunday's final.

Kafelnikov celebrated his 21st birthday Saturday by winning a battle of serves and outlasting the second-seeded Croat 7-5, 6-7 (4-7) 6-4 in one hour and 41 minutes.

Kafelnikov, who will be playing in his first ATP Tour event final since August, has never faced Becker.

"He's a good, tough player," Becker said of Kafelnikov. "I am playing very well. I have a 50 per cent chance to win another title tomorrow."

record 32 aces, the fastest at 208 kph (129 mph).

However, the Croat was overwhelmed by Kafelnikov in exchanges from the baseline.

The Russian, who broke Ivisevic in the 12th game of the first set and in the seventh of the third set, succumbed in the second set without losing his serve, Kafelnikov had 12 aces and 10 double faults.

Becker, who won his 43rd career tournament in Marseille last Sunday following a bitter first-round elimination in the Australian Open, had his toughest match of the week against Korda, losing his first set in four outings.

Korda, playing his second consecutive ATP Tour event semifinal, fought back from a 2-5 deficit in the second set to force Becker to a tense third

## A Japanese sweep

OHME, Japan, Feb 19: Hisayuki Ohkawa Sunday led a Japanese sweep of the men's 30-kilometre (19-mile) race in the 29th Ohme-Hochi Marathon, amid a field of more than 15,000 runners, reports AP.

Ohkawa covered the distance in one hour, 30 minutes, 49 seconds in sunny and windless weather through the streets of Ohme, northwest of Tokyo.

Japanese runners, most of whom run marathons as a pastime, swept the top 10 places.



With an overnight downpour upsetting a planned practice session at the Dhaka Stadium, a few members of the visiting England A cricket squad opted for a work-out at the Sheraton Hotel's tennis court yesterday. — Star photo by Enamul Haq