



Nadeem Younus, Mohammedans' Pakistani opener, has a narrow squeak as an Akram delivery screams past his stumps during yesterday's Navana Premier tie at the Dhaka Stadium. — Star photo by AKM Mohsin.

Mohammedans' double delight

(Contd from page 1)

Mohammedans, who made light of the awesome presence of a cricketer of Wasim Akram's calibre in the opposition camp, controlled the proceedings until the fog end when it all started happening.

Cruising along towards a victory target of 186 in 45 overs, Mohammedans were well placed due to some solid batting by Pakistani Nadeem Younus and local lad Sajjad Mansur.

Once Mansur, the neat, little right-hander who came out with flying colours from the ordeal of facing the fury of Akram, Nadeem (84), the top-scorer of the match left, Mohammedans' grip loosened.

Panic gave way to indiscipline and wickets fell in a heap. But a lucky break in the penultimate over with victory only nine runs away allowed Mohammedans to seal the fate of the match.

Akram, who eventually returned figures of three for 40, bowling from the pavilion end in his third and final spell, clean bowled Mustadrir but not before spoiling what would have been the fall of the ninth Mohammedan wicket through over stepping.

To make matters worse for Abahani, Saiful, who was manning the fine leg boundary and

seemingly did not hear umpire's call; allowed the ball to speed away to the boundary and the pendulum was decisively swung Mohammedans' way.

Having got a new lease of life, Mustadrir cut the fourth ball of the last over, bowled by Pakistani Iqbal Sikander, to the backward point fence to bring up a morale-boosting victory.

Mohammedans made a splendid recovery after Wasim Akram, the dreaded Pakistani speedster who came here to play a few matches for Abahani, blasted experienced opener Nurul Abedin out with a snorter.

A solid second-wicket partnership of 121 runs between Nadeem, the other opener and one-drop Sajjad brought Mohammedans right back in the game.

Aggressive as usual, Nadeem enjoyed a slice of luck on 58 when Akram, fielding at short midwicket, failed to arrest a simple offering off Sikander's bowling.

Nadeem eventually left for 84 made off 120 balls featuring seven powerful hits to the fence with three in a row in one over by new-ball bowler Zakir Hossain.

He was one of the three victims of former national skipper Minhazul Abedin who, irrespective of the result, had a highly satisfying day having got the treble haul after a well-made half century earlier in the day.

Sajjad Mansur was the other notable scorer in the Mohammedan innings. His was a courageous assay a technically correct 42 off 82 balls that featured one boundary only — a lovely stroke off his pads against Akram. Minhaz fooled him with a slower ball and then went on to account for Aamir Malik, the other Pakistani.

Earlier Abahani were undetermined in their aim to make the best use of the wicket by some accurate bowling and energetic fielding.

Only a workmanlike 82-ball 50 by Minhaz allowed Abahani to reach a fighting total of 185 in 44.3 overs.

The experienced right-hander hit a four and a sixer off Mohammedan skipper Aminul Islam in his otherwise sedate knock that was cut short by left-arm spinner Rafiq, the pick of the Mohammedan bowlers with a haul of three for 28.

The highlight of the Mohammedan fielding was two superb catches by Mustadrir

and Khaled Mahmud, a feat somewhat equalised by Harunur Rashid, who, too, came up with a quality catch in the deep.

Mohammedans have so far collected seven wins from ten matches while Abahani suffered their second loss to stay second in the table behind Kalabagan, who have won nine out of their ten outings.

GMCC GALLOP

Effective bowling by national cricketer Anisur Rahman and Sanwar Hossain powered Greater Mymensingh Cricket Club to their sixth win in the day's other Navana encounter played at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium.

They beat lowly Eskaton by five wickets.

Sent in to bat first, Eskaton were all out for 116 in 41.1 overs with left-arm pacer Anis and offie Sanwar bagging four wickets each.

Skipper Mahbubur Rahman remained unconquered on 37 as GMCC posted 120 for five in 36.4 overs.

Marwar, too, made 37 while Sanwar did one better making 27.

All the matches for the next two days will remain suspended due to a 48-hour hartal call by the opposition alliances.

Mohammedans				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Wasim Akram	9	0	40	3
Saiful Islam	2	0	8	0
Iqbal Sikander	8.4	0	35	2
Jewel Hossain	9	0	31	0
Zakir Hossain	2	0	16	0
Minhazul Abedin	8	0	32	3
Naimur Rahman	6	0	23	0

Abahani				
Overs	Abahani	Mohammedans		
5 overs	15/1	20/1		
10 overs	36/2	38/1		
15 overs	47/3	56/1		
20 overs	63/3	70/1		
25 overs	81/3	92/1		
30 overs	107/4	113/1		
35 overs	125/5	137/2		
40 overs	167/7	158/4		

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the Navana Premier Division cricket league match between Mohammedan Sporting Club and Abahani Kirta Chakra at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

ABAHANI:

Gazi Ashraf c Mustadrir b Hasibul Hossain	0
Harunur Rashid b Mustadrir	19
Naimur Rahman c Mustadrir b Murshed Ali	8
Akram Khan c Aminul Islam b Khaled Mahmud	38
Minhazul Abedin lbw b Rafique	50
Wasim Akram c Younus b Rafique	17
Iqbal Sikander c Khaled Mahmud b Rafique	17
Saiful Islam b Hasibul Hossain	4
Khaled Masud run out	17
Jewel Hossain b Hasibul Hossain	1
Zakir Hossain, not out	0
Extras: (b-3, lb-8, nb-1, w-2)	14
Total: (all out in 44.3 overs)	185
Fall of wickets: 1-0; 2-24; 3-36; 4-86; 5-122; 6-149; 7-164; 8-167; 9-173.	

BOWLING:

Hasibul Hossain	7.3	1	34	3
Mustadrir Litu	5	0	21	1
Aminul Islam	9	1	44	0
Murshed Ali Khan	9	3	17	1
Khaled Mahmud	6	0	30	1
Md Rafique	8	1	28	3

MOHAMMEDANS:

NADEEM Younus c Akram	
Khan b Minhaz	84
Nurul Abedin c Naimur Rahman	

Japanese univ spikers arrive tomorrow

Sports Reporter

A 23-member All Japan Men's University volleyball team is likely to arrive in the capital tomorrow to play an exhibition match against a local selection.

The Japanese spikers, who are now in Thailand on a goodwill visit, will play their only match at the Mirpur indoor stadium on March 14 before leaving for Pakistan the next day.

Organised by the Bangladesh Volleyball Federation (BVF), the exhibition volleyball match will start at 2.45 pm.

NSU sports held

Sports Reporter

The annual sports championship of the North South University was held at the Banani playground yesterday.

The day-long meet featured athletics, chess, cricket and a friendly football match involving students of the first private university of the country.

Prof Muslehuddin Ahmed, president of the North South University, inaugurated the meet in the morning while Iftekharul Alam, chairman of the governing body, gave away prizes among the winners.

Hide's warning for Bowe

LAS VEGAS, Mar 11: Riddick Bowe watched Herbie Hide stop Michael Murray in the fifth round of a fight in England in 1993 and was unimpressed, reports AP.

"That's the fight Bowe still has in his mind," Hide said.

It, said the WBO heavyweight champion from Britain, is not the Hide Bowe is going to fight Saturday night at the MGM Grand Garden.

One who thinks Bowe had better be sharp despite being a 3-1 underdog is Eddie Futch, the former undisputed champion's veteran trainer.

"I've told him, 'I saw this guy fight and you are in for a rough fight,'" Futch said.



Officials escort Nasir Ahmad and Mustadrir out of the ground after the pair saw Mohammedans post 189 for eight for a crucial two-wicket victory over arch-rivals Abahani in a crucial Navana league tie at the Dhaka Stadium. — Star photo

Imran terms it fabrication

DUBAI, Mar 11: Imran Khan strongly denied on Friday a newspaper report that he had called for Pakistan cricketers to be hanged if they were found guilty of offering bribes, reports Reuter.

The Sydney Morning Herald said former Pakistan captain Imran told his country's cricket authorities in Lahore on Wednesday that they must take bold action against players found guilty of attempted bribery.

"This is complete nonsense. I strongly deny that I ever called for their execution, which obviously is not the right punishment," Imran, who is on a visit to the United Arab Emirates, told Reuters.

"This is not an quotation, it is told fabrication and please say this. I certainly did not speak to any Australian newspapers recently and not on this issue.

"They should be banned not executed," he added.

His remarks followed the sacking of Pakistan captain Salim Malik, who has been accused of offering bribes to two Australian players, to throw a Test, and given a week to explain his conduct.

"If anyone is guilty he should be kicked out of the team," the newspaper quoted Imran as saying. "The culprits should be sent to jail and should be given due punishment because whoever disgraces the country has no right to represent it at international level."

It further quoted Imran as saying "They should be hanged for disgracing the country."

Malik has denied allegations he offered 50,000 dollars each to Australian spinners Shane Warne and Tim May to lose the first Test in Karachi last September.

Imran is in Dubai to raise funds for a cancer hospital of which he is patron.

Queensland falter

SYDNEY, Mar 11: Sheffield Shield leaders Queensland's title challenge faltered on Friday when their nearest rivals South Australia grabbed a 369-run first innings lead at Adelaide Oval, reports Reuter.

In reply to South Australia's first innings 543, the Queenslanders collapsed to 174 all out in the last over of play on the second day of their four-day encounter.

South Australia will move alongside Queensland on 32 points at the top of the table if they force an outright victory.

Queensland captain Stuart Law provided the only resistance with a resolute 81 as South Australia pace bowler Mark Harris took four for 39. No other batsman scored more than 25.

In Hobart, Victoria opener Matthew Elliot scored 140 to give the visitors a 52-run first innings lead against Tasmania at Bellerive Oval.

Victoria, who began the match in third place on the table with 25.1 points, were dismissed for 325 just before close of play in reply to Tasmania's 273.

Elliot's fifth first class century featured nine fours and two sixes during a 346 minute stay at the crease.

His innings ended when he was trapped leg before wicket by Colin Miller, one of six wickets for the pace bowler at a cost of 29 runs.

After a lengthy delay because of rain, the match between New South Wales and Western Australia appeared to be drifting towards an inevitable draw at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

At close of play on the second day, New South Wales were 26 for two.

Kishoreganj complete quorum

Sports Reporter

Kishoreganj completed the 12-team final-leg quorum of the 19th Sher-e-Bangla Cup national football championship the Zone-2 hosts recorded a convincing 3-1 win over Tangail in the final at the local stadium yesterday.

The winners led the breather 2-0.

Shahjahan gave Kishoreganj a 29th minute lead before Masud doubled the margin five minutes later.

Bazur Rahman pulled one goal back for Tangail in the 72nd minute before Masud sealed the fate of the match eight minutes away from the final whistle.

Kishoreganj are placed in Group A along with defending champions Khulna, Bhola, Niphamari, Sylhet and Bangladesh Army in the final round, scheduled to start in Naogaon from March 16.

Hosts of the final leg against Narayanganj, Cox's Bazar, Bogra, Kushtia and Dhaka University in the other group.

ROK rallies for joint Korean World Cup bid

MAR DE PLATA, Argentina, Mar 11: South Korea, involved in a two-horse race with Japan for the right to host the 2002 World Cup, said on Friday it was prepared to share the organisation of the competition with North Korea, reports Reuter.

South Korea is also willing to enter a unified Korean team and allow the North to host some of the group matches, said Lee Bok-Hyung, a member of the South Korean World Cup organisation committee.

The hosting of a competition by one Korea would "quicken the process of unifying the two countries," Lee told a news conference in the Argentine resort of Mar del Plata, where the Pan-American Games begin today.

In a clear dig at rival Japan, which has never qualified for the World Cup finals, Bok-Hyung said that the two Koreas between them had appeared in five World Cup tournaments.

He admitted that the suggestion had not officially been made to North Korea but said he believed North Korea was willing to talk about unification, at least as far as soccer was concerned.

SA pip England to the post

BOMBAY, Mar 11: South African cricket idol Barry Richards slammed a brilliant century Saturday to steer his side to a four-wicket win over England in the Masters Cup tournament here, reports AFP.

The South Africans clinched third place in the six-nation tournament by virtue of the victory, which was achieved with 14 balls to spare.

The 49-year-old Richards, who has lived in Australia for the past seven years, entertained a small crowd at the Brabourne Stadium with vintage batting, racing to his century off a mere 99 balls as South Africa cruised past the 248-run target.

He hit 13 fours and three sixes and shared a 98-run stand for the third wicket with another past master, the left-handed Graeme Pollock (45).

Richards, named man-of-the-match, also added 104 runs for the fourth wicket with Clive Rice (47).

He was at his aggressive best in racing to his second 50 in just 33 balls, striking seven fours and three sixes off the hapless English attack.

Earlier, England recovered from a dismal 93 for five to post a fighting total of 247 after being asked to bat first by South African skipper Rice.

Derek Pringle and Paul Downton added 108 for the sixth wicket in rapid time to rescue England. The burly

Pringle hit 64 off 77 balls with four fours and four sixes, Downton struck a run-a-ball-77 including four fours and a six.

Rice claimed five wickets, including three in his second spell, to restrict the English total.

India will take on the West Indies in the final Sunday.

Wicket-takers:

W Larkins lbw b Le Roux	2
W Athey lbw b Rice	3
T Robinson c Rice b Henry	28
D Randall c Biji b Henry	5
C Cowdrey st Smith b Ebrahim	30
F Downton b Rice	77
D Pringle c Chawia (sub) b Rice	64
N Radford st Smith b Ebrahim	17
J Embury not out	8
J Lever lbw b Rice	2
D Underwood b Rice	0
Extras: (lb-5, w-6)	11
Total: (all out in 44.2 overs)	247
Fall of wickets: 1-9; 2-11; 3-39; 4-56; 5-93; 6-201; 7-224; 8-244; 9-247.	

BOWLING:

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Rice	8.2	0	44	5
Le Roux	7	0	51	1
Biji	7.2	0	18	0
Henry	9	0	64	2
Ebrahim	9	0	49	2
Magjet	3.4	0	16	0

SOUTH AFRICA:

H Fotheringham c Pringle	
b Radford	2
B Richards b Embury	102
T Smith b Radford	0
G Pollock c (sub) Gatting	
b Underwood	45
C Rice c (sub) Gatting b Radford	47
G Le Roux not out	20
C Henry lbw Lever	4
K McKenzie not out	9
Extras: (lb-2, lb-5, nb-5, w-10)	22
Total: (for six wickets in 42.3 overs)	251
Fall of wickets: 1-14; 2-17; 3-105; 4-209; 5-232.	

BOWLING:

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Radford	9	0	42	3
Lever	8	0	27	1
Pringle	6	0	48	0
Underwood	9	0	70	1
Embury	8.3	0	41	1
Athey	2	0	16	0

Result: South Africa won by four wickets.

Richardson doubtful starter

PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad, Mar 11: West Indies captain Richie Richardson is nursing a sore right shoulder and it's doubtful he'll play in the second Cable & Wireless one-day cricket international against Australia here on Saturday, reports AP.

The 33-year-old Richardson sustained the injury in the first match in Barbados on Wednesday when he dived in vain to avoid being run out.

At Friday's training session at the Queen's Park Oval, he left the nets early and headed to the dressing room.

Andy Roberts, the West Indies manager, confirmed after the practice that Richardson was "hardly likely to play" Saturday.

The captain's position will be taken over by Courtney Walsh, who was a successful stand-in on the team's recent tours of India and New Zealand, when Richardson was resting on doctor's orders to recover from acute fatigue.

There is optimism surrounding the fitness of fast bowler Winston Benjamin, who strained his neck and had to miss the tense closing stages of Wednesday's match that the West Indies won by six runs.

His Antiguan colleague Kenny Benjamin has been added to the West Indies 13-man squad as a possible replacement.

The selectors were expected to name another player as a potential stand-in for Richardson in a meeting Friday. The 27-year-old Barbadian middle-order batsman Roland Holder is the likeliest choice. But left-hander Keith Arthurton, an original member of the squad, would probably be preferred to start in the final eleven.

Australia's selectors seem certain to make one change from the side that lost on Wednesday. Off-spinner Tim May bowled five expensive over and his exclusion would open the way for another fast bowler, either Glenn McGrath or the less-experienced Damien Fleming.

The third match of the five-match series is scheduled for the same location Sunday, with the fourth in St. Vincent next Wednesday and the last in Georgetown, Guyana on March 18.

The matches will be followed by four five-day Tests and three minor matches.

TEAMS

WEST INDIES: (from) Richie Richardson (captain), Courtney Walsh (vice-captain), Stuart Williams, Phil Simmons, Brian Lara, Carl Hooper, Jimmy Adams, Keith Arthurton, Junior Murray, Winston Benjamin, Vaseb Drakes, Curtly Ambrose, Kenneth Benjamin.

AUSTRALIA: (from) Mark Taylor (captain), Ian Healy (vice-captain), Michael Slater, Mark Waugh, David Boon, Steve Waugh, Greg Blewett, Paul Reffel, Shane Warne, Glenn McGrath, Craig McDermott, Justin Langer, Ricky Ponting, Tim May, Damien Fleming.



Star Abahani batsman Minhazul Abedin returns for a leg bye only to be ruled leg before against Mohammedans' Rafique during yesterday's vital Navana Premier Division cricket league match at the Dhaka Stadium. Minhaz made 50 in an Abahani total of 185. — Star photo

Graf, Martinez move on

DELRAY BEACH, Florida, Mar 11: While top-seeded Steffi Graf advanced to the semi-finals without playing, Conchita Martinez pulled out a tense victory over unseeded Kristie Boogert at the Delray Beach Winter Championships Friday, reports AP.

Intermittent rain and gusting winds continued to plague the 430,000 tournament, but the conditions weren't as damaging as the early-morning withdrawal of Barbara Rittner. She is the 10th player to pull out of the main single draw due to injuries or sickness.

"It's pretty amazing that many players pulling out," said Graf, who benefited by Rittner's absence. "It's very disappointing. I would have preferred to play."

Graf, who has won the tournament five times, including the last three, treated the spectators to a 6-1 pro-set exhibition victory over Jana

Novotna, who dropped out before the tournament began with a shoulder injury.

Martinez, the second seed, trailed 4-6 in the second-set tiebreaker before her experience kicked in, forcing the 21-year-old Dutchwoman to lose her last five service points and the match. The score was 6-4, 7-6 (9-7).

"Once I start to play these top players, I'll get to know them and what they do on important points," said Boogert, who is ranked 82nd. "I lost to the No. 4 player in the world. That's not a bad loss, and it was even a close match."

During the evening match, fourth-seeded Brenda Schultz injured her left thigh at the end of the third set, but managed to defeat Florentia Labat of Argentina 3-6, 6-3, 7-6, (7-5).

Schultz, the Netherlands' top-ranked player, will play Martinez of Spain in the second semifinal Saturday.

After injuring her leg, Schultz spent three minutes

with the trainer before extending Labat to a tiebreaker. Labat charged back to 5-6, staving off six match points, including one in the 10th game when Schultz missed an easy backhand volley.

Schultz' sharp-angled forehand took Labat off the court, where she netted a backhand, to end the two-hour, 29-minute match.

"Suddenly I was patient when I got injured," said Schultz, who had 13 aces. "On one leg, I'm definitely not going to beat Conchita. But I'm going to stand on the court."

Martinez, meantime, retired from her quarterfinal doubles match in the second game because of a strained hip. She is listed as probable to play in Saturday's semifinal.

Seven of the 10 sidelined players would have been seeded. The sick list includes sixth seeded Mary Joe Fernandez (stomach), No. 8 Yayuk Basuki (back), No. 12 Rittner and No. 14 Larisa Neiland (hip).