

BU bring Kalabagan down

Sports Reporter -



Brothers Union, still uncertain of a place in the six-team Navaia Premier Division cricket super league, added a new dimension to an already interesting scenario when the Gopibagh outfit ended leaders Kalabagan Krira Chakra's nine-match unbeaten streak with a squeaky two-wicket victory at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

Brothers' win not only reduced the star-studded side's lead at the top of the points table but also left the battle for the sixth slot wide open with Victoria Sporting Club and Greater Mymensingh Cricket Club (GMCC) also in the contention with Al-Shahriar's men.

However, Victoria seem to have an edge over the others, having won seven of the ten first-leg matches they have played so far and a win today against GMCC would see them through. On the other hand, if GMCC win, the trio will be locked with seven wins each and would have to taken on each other in a play-off series.

At the top of the table, the scenario is equally intriguing. Kalabagan, who had bounced back from a defeat in their league opener against Mohammedan Sporting Club to embark on a nine-match winning flight allowed Abahani Krira Chakra within two-point

distance, enhancing the prospect of a tight super league to a great degree.

Nothing went right for Kalabagan from the moment Brothers skipper Al-Shahriar invited them to take the first strike. Usually cautious Athar Ali Khan little bit overdid his new-found adventurism when the tall national opener, so far the highest run-getter in the league, went for a third boundary only to offer Aamir Hanif a catch off Sajal Chowdhury. Athar could add only 10 to his pre-match collection of 439 runs.

His opening partner Farid Hossain, who hung around for 15 balls without scoring, gave Aamir Hanif another catch eight runs later at 20. Khairuz-zaman being the bowler this time.

Although Zahid Razaque and Nasirul Islam withstood the pressure for a while, taking the score to 61, once Aamir Hanif came into the attack Kalabagan's innings simply fell apart.

The Pakistani all-rounder simply ran through the middle order in a superlative demonstration of seam bowling and Kalabagan were 62 for five in no time.

Aamir took another, the wicket of Zakaria Intiaz, who offered some sort of resistance with a sedate 56-ball 30, to finish with sparkling figures of

nine overs, four maidens, nine-teen runs and four wickets.

Eventually the innings stopped at 148 for nine when the last ball of the 45-over quota was bowled.

Despite a solid start by the openers Abid, the younger of the Hanif duo and Sajid Hasan, who put on 52 runs in 17.3 overs, the Brothers Innings almost lost their way when two run-outs initiated an ominous middle-order slump.

Brothers lost four wickets in the span of eight runs the last being that of Abid who played a patient 99-ball 48 with two fours and one sixer to be 88 for six.

However, Naimur Rashid along with Sajal Chowdhury teamed up for a virtually match-winning eighth-wicket stand which yielded valuable 38 runs.

When Naim eventually went back for a well-made 29, Brothers were still five runs adrift of the target but Sajal made sure no further damage was done, keeping the strike for most of the time before the Gopibagh outfit posted 152 in 44.4 overs.

In the other match of the day, Gulshan Youth recorded a similar margin win over Wari Club at the Dhanmudi Stadium.

Chasing Wari's 147 for eight, Gulshan Youth made 149 for eight in 43.4 overs.

Footballers' transfers deferred

Sports Reporter

The inter-club footballers' transfers for the upcoming 1994-95 season, originally planned for a March 21 start, has been deferred for 12 days for the convenience of the booters now engaged in the 19th Share-e-Bangla Cup national football championship.

The week-long players' bourse will now be held from April 2-7.

The decision came after a meeting of the organisers Dhaka Metropolitan Football Association (DMFA), who also formed a seven-member committee to make some changes in the existing by-laws which offer no remedy to the routine, malpractice of fixed-matches.

The committee headed by Mobarak Hossain, the additional district magistrate of Dhaka, will file a report on the feasibility of any type of amendments in the existing bye-laws by March 19.

Acme Div II cricket

Sports Reporter

Bangladesh Boys and Khelaghar Shishu Kishore Sangha earned promotions to the Yamaha First Division cricket league next year winning their respective semifinals of the Acme Second Division cricket league played at different city venues yesterday.

At the Jagannath Hall ground, Khelaghar piped Western Cricket Club to the post with a convincing 48-run victory.

Sent into bat first, Nishan hammered an unbeaten half century to guide Khelaghar to a fighting total of 181 for eight in the stipulated 40 overs. His almost run-a-ball 60 off 61 balls included five fours and three huge sixes.

Openers Shamsul and Jewel with 27 each were the other notable run-getters for the eventual winners.

Faiyaz with three for 28 was the most successful man with the cherry among the Western bowlers.

In reply, Western Cricket Club were bowled out for 133 in 36 overs in the face of some accurate bowling of Sajjad, Ripon and Babu who evenly shared six wickets in between.

Only Dola, who offered some sort of resistance chipped in with a sedate 37 off 62 balls but failed to avoid the maiden first and final defeat for his team.

In the other semifinal of the day at the Dhanmudi Club ground, Bangladesh Boys recorded a squeaky two-wicket win over Azad Sporting Club in a low scoring affair.

Chasing a modest total 143 runs for an outright victory, Bangladesh Boys reached the target in 38.4 overs for the loss of eight wickets.

Opener Golam Rabbani with 35 was the top willow-wielder for Bangladesh Boys, who are yet to lose a match in the league.

Earlier, new-ball bowler Sayeed and Titu devastated Azad who electing to bat first, were bundled out for 142 in 39.2 overs.

Someone for Tapie

VALENCIENNES, France, Mar 14: Jean-Jacques Eydelie, the alleged go-between, told a court here on Tuesday that Bernard Tapie had not ordered the match-fixing which secured Olympique Marseille's fifth successive French league title in 1993, reports AFP.

"To my knowledge he didn't know about it," the former Marseille player said after proceedings resumed following a clash between Tapie and his former general manager and co-accused Jean-Pierre Bernes.

Bernes told the court on Monday he had followed Tapie's orders when he and Eydelie offered three Valenciennes' players 200,000 francs (40,000 dollars) each to throw the match.

New twist in English Premier League bribery scandal

Grobbeelaar taken into custody



LONDON, Mar 14: English football's best-known goalkeeper Bruce Grobbeelaar was arrested by detectives on Tuesday at his home at Lynton, Hampshire, in connection with a match-fixing inquiry involving Far East betting syndicates, reports AFP.

Hampshire police said they also arrested Wimbledon's Dutch goalkeeper Hans Segers at his home as well as Melissa Kassamfi - girlfriend of Aston Villa player John Fashanu - at her London home.

Detective chief inspector Rod Davis said a fourth person, not connected with football, was also arrested but refused to name the man.

A police spokesman added: "There may be further developments during the day."

Police said Grobbeelaar and Segers had been taken to separate police stations.

Hampshire police said Grobbeelaar's arrest, at 6.55 am at his rented cottage in the New Forest, was part of investigations into alleged match fixing.

The spokesman said the 37-year-old former Liverpool star and Zimbabwean international, who now plays for Southampton, was being held "on suspicion of being involved in a conspiracy to defraud."

Grobbeelaar, who won a string of medals during a glittering 13-year career with Liverpool has strenuously protested his innocence since allegations surfaced in November that he let in goals in return for cash.

Grobbeelaar looked shocked and bewildered as he was led from his house after two male and two female detectives spent an hour quizzing him.

The police spokesman added: "We have to go through the legal processes which are well documented. There is an operation going on which will probably expand the inquiry from that which was initiated in Hampshire seven months ago."

There are specific people that are being seen by police officers today. A number of people have been arrested. There are connections with the football world, I would only put it at this stage that the inquiry exists beyond the boundaries of Hampshire."

Grobbeelaar was questioned by police last November after newspaper allegations of match-fixing from his former business partner Chris Vincent.

Vincent claimed Far Eastern gambling syndicates bet huge sums on the results of big English games.

Grobbeelaar was charged with misconduct by the Football Association (FA) after the Sun newspaper handed over a dossier of videos, interviews and photographs to its Lancaster Gate headquarters last November.

The FA is not planning further action until the police complete their inquiries.

Tuesday's arrests follow a series of bribery allegations and scandals involving Far East betting syndicates.

In the last four months, Malaysian police have arrested nearly 100 players, coaches and bookies with 22 of them banished or sent into state exile in a crackdown against bribery and corruption in the National Premier League.

The crackdown was launched last August to improve the image of Malaysian football with the saga spawning daily reports of footballers' arrests.

Dramatic tales emerged, including reports of a cobra left in the car of a player who

rejected a bribe and a blind man rigging dozens of matches despite having no interest in football.

Newspapers here claimed Grobbeelaar received 40,000 pounds from an Asian gambling syndicate to lose a match between Liverpool and Newcastle last season.

The Sun broke the claims last November, prompting Hampshire police to launch an investigation and the Football Association to announce an inquiry.

The syndicate was said to have made three million pounds from the Newcastle-Liverpool match which Newcastle won 3-0.

Grobbeelaar was also said to have been promised 175,000 pounds for fixing other scores.

His lawyers issued a libel writ against the Sun and Grobbeelaar received the full backing of his club and continued to play for Southampton and Zimbabwe.

It was reported last week-end that Hampshire CID were studying a 62-page dossier into the corruption claims.

The Sunday Times said the police had widened their inquiry to include three other international soccer stars. It was reported one was paid 800,000 pounds for his services, including recruiting other players.

The trio, who play for Premier League clubs, are also alleged to have taken cash payments from Malaysian gamblers to fix scores, the paper said.

Detectives were reported to have identified a high street bank in central London allegedly used by the betting syndicate to pay players.

Staff have been questioned about the withdrawal of 40,000 pounds from an account in the autumn of 1993, the paper said.

Ten days ago, former top British referee Ken Aston told a newspaper he was approached by a Far East betting syndicate to help fix English Premiership matches.

Aston, a former chairman of FIFA's refereeing committee and a member of the international board, claims he was offered 25,000 pounds by two representatives of a syndicate to pass on names, addresses and telephone numbers of the country's top players and referees.

Aston, who refereed a number of international matches, claims he was approached in a Singapore restaurant by two Indians.

He said the two men promised to pay cash for the information they believed would help the rake in up to 2.7 million pounds from a betting stake of around 450,000.

A month earlier, Birmingham City manager Barry Fry confirmed reports that his goalkeeper Ian Bennett was offered 20,000 pounds to throw an FA Cup replay with Liverpool.

Fry said that two people masquerading as journalists had offered Bennett the money at City's training ground five days before the Anfield clash in mid-January.

A couple of people who said they were journalists from Singapore said they had made Bennett the man of the match in the first game and wanted to interview him and take a few pictures," said Fry.

GROBBELAAR: FACTFILE

LONDON, Mar 14 (AFP): Biographical factfile of Zimbabwean goalkeeper Bruce Grobbeelaar follows.

1990: The last of Grobbeelaar's six championship wins with Liverpool.

1992: Final honour with Liverpool as Sunderland are beaten 2-0 in the FA Cup final.

1993: Four games on loan at Stocke but then returned to reclaim his place in the Liverpool goal, playing his final game at Leeds last season.

1994: Joined Southampton on a free transfer. Charged by the FA with misconduct after Sun newspaper hands over a dossier of videos, interviews and photographs in connection with alleged match-fixing allegations. He protests his innocence and FA put inquiry on hold until police complete investigations.

1995: Grobbeelaar arrested by police in connection with match fixing investigation.

PLAYING CAREER: For Crew: 24 matches. For Liverpool: 628 matches. Honours: Champions 1981-82, 1982-83, 1983-84, 1985-86, 1987-88, 1989-90. FA Cup winner: 1986, 1989, 1992. League Cup winner: 1982, 1983, 1984. European Cup 1984.

For Southampton: 34 matches.

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Six Kiwis in Lankans' way



NAPIER, New Zealand, Mar 14: Sri Lanka were well poised to push for victory after decimating the top of the New Zealand batting order on the fourth day of the first Test today, reports Reuter.

Facing a mammoth fourth innings target of 427 for victory after Sri Lanka were all out for 352 soon after lunch, New Zealand finished the day at 139 for four.

At stumps, captain Ken Rutherford was on 20 and Shane Thomson on two, with the New Zealanders needing to score a further 288 runs for victory or to bat out the last day to stave off their fifth loss in six Tests.

For the Sri Lankans, who have carefully worked themselves into a position of strength, the final day offers the chance to record a first Test victory outside their own country and to go one-up in the two Test series.

Sri Lankan wicketkeeper Chamara Dunsinghe narrowly missed a century on his debut when he was bowled by Danny Morrison for 91. The New Zealand paceman removed Ravindra Pushpakumara for a duck next ball to wrap up the tourists' innings and leave himself poised on a hat-trick in his next Test.

New Zealand started their reply cautiously and lost Bryan Young, caught at short leg off spinner Muttiah Muralidharan for 14, when the score was 37.

Mark Greatbatch and Darin Murray then made good progress, with the former hitting four fours and a six in his 46. But his dismissal, caught at first slip off Muralidharan, triggered a mini-collapse.

Murray was caught behind off left-arm seamer Chaminda Vaas, and Stephen Fleming departed for nought in similar fashion to Greatbatch.

New Zealand coach John Reid at the end of the day voiced concern over the bowling action of Muralidharan, who took three for 47 on the day. He stopped short however of accusing him of "throwing."

Reid said he thought the spinner's action should be investigated, although he did not know what would be the appropriate forum.

"We're not saying the throws. What we are saying is that there is a doubt about his action. I think quite a serious

Ranatunga said he expects Muralidharan to play a key role in the push for victory on the last day on Wednesday.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard on the fourth day of the first Test between New Zealand and Sri Lanka at McLean Park today:

SRI LANKA: First innings: 183 (A Ranatunga 55)

NEW ZEALAND: First innings: 109 (C Vaas 5-47)

SRI LANKA: Second innings

A Gurusinha lbw b Larsen 8
D Samaraweera run out 6
S Ranatunga lbw b Larsen 7

A de Silva c Parore b Morrison 62
H Tilakaratne c Young b Nash 24
A Ranatunga b Morrison 78
C Dunsinghe b Morrison 91
C Vaas b Walmisley 36
P Wickremasinghe c sub (Hart) 16

Larsen 16
M Muralidharan not out 10
R Pushpakumara c Parore b Morrison 14
Extras: (b-2, lb-7, nb-5) 10
Total: (144.3 overs) 352

Fall of wickets: 1-14; 2-21; 3-22; 4-121; 5-165; 6-205; 7-294; 8-323; 9-352.

Bowling O M R W
Nash 36 12 87 1
Walmisley 38 7 112 1
Larsen 39 13 73 3
Thomson 6 3 10 0
Morrison 25.3 5 61 4

NEW ZEALAND: Second innings

B Young c Samaraweera 16
M Muralidharan 14
D Murray c Dunsinghe b Vaas 3
M Greatbatch c Tilakaratne b Muralidharan 46
S Fleming c Tilakaratne 0
D Muralidharan 20
K Rutherford not out 2
S Thomson not out 2

Extras: (b-4, lb-11, nb-6) 21
Total: (four wickets - 56 overs) 139

Fall of wickets: 1-37; 2-108; 3-108; 4-112.

Bowling O M R W
Wickremasinghe 13 2 42 0
Vaas 16 5 24 1
Pushpakumara 5 1 11 0
Muralidharan 22 9 17 3



MUTTIHAH MURALIDHARAN... 3 for 47 one. Reid told reporters, Muralidharan should be given the chance to prove his action was above-board, he added.

Sri Lankan captain Arjuna Ranatunga said he was not concerned about New Zealand's attitude towards the spinner.

"He has played all over the world with neutral umpires and match referees, so we aren't concerned," he said.

Ranatunga described Muralidharan as probably the best off-spinner in the world at the moment.

Sri Lankan manager Neil Perera said his board had video taped the bowler's action in the past, and that umpires had examined the tapes and found nothing wrong.

Sampras blasts Agassi off



INDIAN WELLS, California, Mar 14: World number one, top seed and defending champion Pete Sampras pounded 13 aces and played nearly perfect serve-and-volley tennis to beat number two and second seed Andre Agassi 7-5, 6-3, 7-5 on Monday in the final of the 1,800,000-dollar Newsweek Champions Cup, reports Reuter.

Sampras, who closed out the two-hour, 12-minute win with an ace, was assured win or loss of retaining the number one ranking for at least another two weeks, until after the Lipton Championships which begin Friday in Key Biscayne, Florida.

However, Sampras, who captured his first 1995 title and extended his career lead over Agassi to 8-6, said that Agassi should be number one by virtue of his record over the past seven months.

"He's won the last two Grand Slam tournaments (the US Open and the Australian Open), and he deserves to be number one," Sampras said. "But what matters most is being number one at the end of the year. That's what I'm looking toward."

Agassi paid an emotional tribute to his father, Mike Agassi, in the award ceremony after the match, as his father is undergoing open-heart surgery

today in Las Vegas. Agassi later said that he was flying home in his private jet to be with his father.

"Dad I love you and I'm coming home to be with you," Agassi said. "And I'm going to kick Pete's (butt) next week."

Agassi, who tallied nine aces against just two double faults, was on the defensive on his service games the entire match, as he faced 14 break points, four of which Sampras converted, while Agassi held only four break points and converted just one.

Sampras who lost in the Australian Open final to Agassi in January, felt that everything in his game clicked.

"This is really sweet to beat Andre in straight sets because it showed I was at my best, Sampras said.

"If there is one shot that did it for me today it was my serve. I hit a lot of huge serves at 15-30 and 0-30 and even though I made some mistakes from the backcourt, I felt my baseline game was especially solid."



Bernard Tapie (C), protected by policemen, leaves the court in Valenciennes, northern France on Mar 13. Tapie, the maverick, French businessman, who was once a serious contender for the country's president went on trial for his part in the Marseille bribery scandal.

— AFP/UNB photo

Dennis Wise freed on bail



LONDON, Mar 14: Less than two hours after receiving a three-month jail sentence for assaulting a taxi driver, Chelsea and England midfielder Dennis Wise was freed on bail Monday pending an appeal, reports AFP.

The 28-year-old Chelsea captain, who has made eight international appearances for England, was convicted Feb. 8 for common assault and criminal damage over an incident on a London street last October.

After hearing his sentence announced in a London magistrates' court, Wise appeared shocked and on the verge of tears as he was led away. When the magistrate refused to grant bail for an appeal, Wise's lawyer rushed to Southwark Crown Court, where a judge granted unconditional bail while the player appeals both his sentence and conviction.

Handing down the jail term, magistrate Geoffrey Breen said Wise had resorted to the actions of "a bully" when he assaulted 65-year-old taxi driver Gerald Graham after Graham declined to take the player and his girlfriend where they wanted to go.

"You have been found guilty of assaulting a 65-year-old man in quite disgraceful circumstances," Breen said. "When he made it clear that he was not going to bow to your demands, you resorted to violence."

The incident had been

complicated by the assertion that, before the assault, Wise's girlfriend was clinging to a door as the cab tried to pull away.

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handed (the driver) with a view to further violence."

Breen said the offence was "so serious that only a custodial sentence can be justified."

Wise, who denied the charges, was also ordered to pay 965.14 pounds (dls 1,544.22) compensation for damage to Graham's taxi, 169.95 pounds (dls 271.92) for damage to Graham's spectacles, 100 pounds (dls 160) for the "shock and distress" suffered by Graham and 370 pounds (dls 592) in court costs.

Had his three-month sentence taken effect immediately, Wise would have missed the rest of the domestic English season.

Chelsea managing director