



Participants in action during yesterday's matches of the 17th national women's chess championships. — Star photo

Nat'l women's chess qualifier

Sports Reporter

Ferdousi Sultana Munni of Chittagong failed to qualify for the final round of the 17th National women's chess championship against six other girls in tie-breakers as they all earned 3.5 points each at the end of the five-round qualifying phase at the NSC chess room yesterday.

Munni's 9.5 progressive score was one point short of Fatunnissa Poly's who qualified for the final round as the sixth and last qualifiers. Former national eve champion Zakia Sultana and Zahanara Haque Runu scored the highest 12 points in the tie-breakers while Nazrana Khan Iva, Syeda Afsana Parveen Nira and Masuda Begum earned 11.5 points each to become the first five qualifiers.

Defending champion Syeda Shabana Parveen Nipa, runner-up Afroza Khanum Babby and international rated women chess players IWM Rani Hamid and Tanima Parveen will have direct entries in to the final round which will begin tomorrow afternoon at the same venue. The draw of the final round will be held at the Bangladesh Chess Federation office this evening at 6pm.

Nat'l athletics from May 10

Sports Reporter

The 24th national and 14th national junior athletics championships will begin at the Mirpur Stadium from May 10 and 13 respectively under the arrangement of Bangladesh Amateur Athletic Federation (BAAF), says a press release.

Affiliated organisations of BAAF are instructed to make their entries latest by May 8 for the National meet and May 11 for the junior's event, the press release added.

Padma win in Barisal cricket

From Staff Correspondent

BARISAL, Apr 8: Padma Juba Sangha recorded a hard-fought two-wicket win over PCC in the Senior Division cricket league here at the local stadium today.

In a 35-over-a-side match, PCC, after winning the toss, elected to use the wicket in the morning and scored a fighting 167 for nine with Sujon Hattimier the highest 32 runs for his side.

For Padma JS Kishore was the wrecker-in-chief with a haul of four wickets for 30 runs. In reply, Nasir cracked a dazzling 42 to propel Padma to victory with two wickets in hand.

Four-H Club will take on Arunadry Krira Chakra at the same venue tomorrow (Tuesday).

Prevention better than cure

ORLANDO, Apr 8: The sudden deaths of young athletes can usually be prevented by early detection and treatment of heart problems and should not discourage young people from participating in sports, researchers said Monday, reports Reuter.

An Italian study of the deaths of 46 competitive athletes found that in many instances there were warning symptoms or changes in the athletes' electrocardiograms that could have predicted the deaths.

Dr Domenico Corrado of the University of Padua, Italy, who presented the study at a meeting of the American College of Cardiology, said many of the deaths occurred in athletes with a thinning of the wall of the right ventricle, a detectable and treatable disease that "appears to predispose sport-related sudden cardiac arrest."

Dr Adolph Hutter of Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston said young athletes should get a physical examination and be screened for their medical history, including whether they have suffered light-headed spells, rapid heart action, chest pain or abnormal shortness of breath.

"The incidence of sudden death is incredibly small when you consider the millions of people who participate in sports," he said.

Biman still airborne

Sports Reporter

BRIEF SCORES
WARI CLUB: 128 in 43.4 overs (Biplab 44, Nasir Khan 4/25, Rupom 2/23)
BIMAN: 129 for four in 27 overs (Sumon 52 n.o, Nasir Khan 30, Shanu 25)

Bangladesh Biman kept their title hopes alive in the Premier cricket league when they recorded a convincing six-wicket victory over minnows Wari Club in their penultimate super league encounter at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

Put in to bat Wari were shunted out for a paltry 128 in 43.4 overs. In reply, the Biljo Dibash cricket champions Biman took only 27 overs to reach home conceding four wickets.

The win kept Biman well on course for the league title. With 22 points from 15 matches, Biman now need a win against Mohammedan Sporting Club who have 24 points also from 15 encounters, in their last super league outing for a better chance of clinching the championship with a superior run-rate.

On the other hand, Brothers Union, also in the contention with 20 points

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from 14 matches, can manage win in their remaining two appearances against Kalabagan Krira Chakra and Wari Club, their neat run-rate will also be considered for deciding the champions.

Lalmatia beat Dhanmondi

Sports Reporter

BRIEF SCORES

DHANMONDI CLUB: 167 in 44 overs (Biplab 44, George 28)
LALMATIA CLUB: 168 for eight in 43.3 overs (Babu 35, SQ Biplab 33)

Lalmatia Club defeated Dhanmondi Club by two wickets in their Yamaha First Division super league encounter at the City Club ground, Mirpur yesterday.

Electing to bat Dhanmondi were all out in 44 overs scoring 167 runs with AKM Biplab scoring the highest 44 off 77 balls. In reply, Lalmatia cruised to victory in the 44th over with two wickets in hand. Middle-order bat SQ Biplab and Jamaluddin Babu added 33 and 35 respectively to the Lalmatia account.

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Biman skipper and national all-rounder Ziaur Rashid Rupom's decision to go for a chase in the afternoon proved to be correct as they bundled out Wari for only 128 runs. Biman's new ball bowler Nasir Khan of Pakistan was the architect of Wari destruction. With his deadly medium pace Nasir four wickets for only 25 runs while Rupom did the main damages taking two wickets for 23 runs from his allotted ten overs.

Opener Biplab was the only Wari batsman who could face the Biman attack with a little bit of courage scoring 44 off 48 deliveries inclusive of seven boundaries.

Chasing a small target, Biman suffered a big blow in the very first over losing national opener Athar Ali Khan for nought.

But everything went smooth from then on as Nasir Khan, the other opener, and one down Habibul Bashar Sumon carried their side to a comfortable position sharing 45 runs for the second wicket.

After a good show with the ball in the first session, Nasir Khan scored a valuable 30 off 42 balls with three fours while Sumon scored the only half-century of the day and remained not out on 52 off 69 deliveries which features four boundaries and a huge six.

Booters' transfer after JS polls

Sports Reporter

The members of the Dhaka Metropolitan Football Association (DMFA) have demanded to arrange the inter-club players' transfer after the national elections of the country.

In an emergency meeting of the DMFA yesterday, chaired by its president M Azizul Huq, representatives of all the clubs of Dhaka, while expressing their inability to involve in the transfer business in the wake of the forthcoming parliamentary polls expected to be held sometimes in May, claimed that it would be impossible for them to arrange funds for the transfer.

The have also advocated to scrap two regular tournaments — DMFA Cup and the Federation Cup — for smooth holding of the two-tire Senior Division football leagues.

Besides, most of the clubs have asked the DMFA to hold open discussion with different professional groups regarding 'players' pool' before adopting a resolution in this sensitive issue which have already raised as animated debate among different quarters.

Regarding the widely practised arranged affairs by most of the clubs during the last couple of the years, they have recommended various proposals to curb the perennial problem.

However, the meeting have been adjourned till the announcement of the date of the general elections in the country.

Lankan fans smell a rat!

COLOMBO, Apr 8: Cricket fans in Sri Lanka have demanded a probe into the involvement of bookmakers in the country's spectacular defeat at the Singer Cup matches in Singapore, a state-run evening paper said here today, reports AFP.

A group calling themselves the Sri Lanka Cricket Lovers Association (SLCLA) had asked sports minister SB Dissanayake to investigate Arjuna Ranatunga and his teammates' stunning defeat to Pakistan on Sunday.

"This is not cricket," the Observer newspaper quoted a (SLCLA) spokesman as saying. He had wanted allegations that bookmakers had used influence on cricketers. The paper did not name the cricketers allegedly involved.

Sri Lanka seemed set for victory but the middle-order batsmen, including skipper Ranatunga and dashing batsman Aravinda de Silva, collapsed for 172 in 32.5 overs while chasing a modest target of 215 set by Pakistan.

Several key players in the Sri Lankan team had been linked to betting centres although no one has been proved to have taken bribes to throw away a game.

The reaction of the local press and fans here to their team after their Singer Cup debacle contrasted sharply with the red carpet welcome afforded after the World Cup win last month.

There were no ceremonies to receive Arjuna Ranatunga and his men and no banners welcoming them back unlike after the World Cup win when the entire country erupted in noisy celebration.

Organisers' U-turn

NAGANO, Japan, Apr 8: The organisers of the 1998 winter Olympics backed down today from their pledge to pay the full travel expenses of all athletes taking part in the Nagano Games in Japan, reports Reuter.

Under an agreement with the International Olympic Committee, the Nagano officials said they would now only pay up to 1,000 US dollars for each foreign athlete.

Nagano governor Goro Yoshimura also told a news conference that officials traveling with national teams would not now receive any travel assistance.

"I think the deal shows that the IOC appreciates our financial circumstances," said Nagano Olympic Committee director general Makoto Kobayashi.

Nagano offered to pay the entire travel expenses of all overseas athletes in a successful late effort to ward off competition to stage the Games from Salt Lake City.

Opinion: Bangladesh cricket

Back-peddalling to the '80s

Kamal Z Islam

DURING the recent visit of the MCC team we had captain Alan Fordham and manager John Jameson and a few other members of the team over to our house for dinner. When I told Alan that we had enjoyed having him as our house guest in 1989 for two months, he reminded me that he had actually stayed with us not for two months but for over four months, when he came to Bangladesh to coach school boys. Earlier John Jameson, the manager and asst. secretary of MCC had spent two months in Dhaka. So both of them were like family members to us. I wonder how many Wisden wizards know that Jameson holds the not so distinguished record of the maximum number of consecutive run outs in the history of Test cricket. As Jameson says "I ran hard but not fast".

In May 1990, I had travelled from London to Northampton to meet the president of the Northamptonshire County Cricket Club. Alan who plays for Northants went along with me to meet the president of the county cricket club. I had arranged with the club president that during the summer four of our Bangladesh school boys would stay the entire cricket season in Northampton spending their time generally assisting the county players, practising with them and spending their full time in a cricketing environment. The County would arrange for them to play week-end matches with some local clubs. They would generally try

cussed with Alan this can be revived quite easily in the future. Both the captain and the manager of the MCC team had yards of sympathy for Bangladesh and our cricket. They were quite puzzled at our poor showing in the ICC tournament. During our discussions the following points emerged.

1. Bangladesh presently has a strong and a committed cricket Board. All the officials are dedicated and I can personally vouch for this as I know them all intimately. They all wish to take the game forward and cherish a desire to see Bangladesh cricket prosper.

2. Country-wide infrastructure of cricket is good. There are stadiums in the principal district towns and a reasonable number of playing fields.

3. There are well-organised cricket tournaments in Dhaka and the principal towns of Bangladesh. There are nationwide adult and youth tournaments.

4. The jewel in the crown of BCCB is the schools cricket played throughout the country. This is the envy of other sports federations.

5. There appears to be plenty of sponsors with the upsurge of the private sector in Bangladesh.

6. Foreign teams are visiting Bangladesh and our boys are going abroad thereby getting plenty of exposure.

Watching the thrilling matches of the World Cup Cricket my saddest thoughts were why Bangladesh couldn't make it to the elite group. During my brief association with

being the chief-de-mission when our cricket team went to Nairobi to play the ICC Associate Member's Trophy matches. This honour soon turned into anguish seeing the performance of our boys. We had gone to Kenya with high expectations and our hopes were that we were certain to make it to the finals. Bangladesh was seeded number three. But the rude awakening came very expeditiously in the preliminary rounds. Till this competition everyone including ourselves had taken it for granted that the Bangladesh team was a side to be reckoned with. But by the end of the tournament we revealed ourselves as paper tigers of Bengal and had the ignominy of finishing sixth.

Throughout the eighties the feeling of the Associate members of ICC was that the next Test playing status would go to Bangladesh. But by the beginning of the nineties we had ourselves extinguished all such expectations and relegated ourselves. I remember having attended the ICC Associate members tournament in 1982 and 1986 held in England and in the two tournaments I recall my conversation with the Zimbabwean players. In both the tournaments the only team the Zimbabweans feared was the Bangladesh team.

It has been a long slide since then. We should be keenly aware of the fact that cricket has gained considerable popularity in the cricket playing nations. If we pride ourselves having taken one step forward, then others have



England A vs Bangladesh in Dhaka February last year.

to upgrade the cricketing skill of our boys. In return we would host two of the country players in Bangladesh to coach our school boys and also to play with the schools' teams. Why this scheme fell through is another story but as I dis-

the BCCB my oft repeated statement was "Test status by the turn of the century". The turn is only round the corner and if anything we are further away from our goal than ever before.

I had the singular honour of

probably taken three and as nothing stays still — either you go forward or you go backward — by comparison we may have gone two steps backward.

The author is a businessman and a leading sports organiser.

IBM Corp on its mettle

ATLANTA, Apr 8: Inter-national Business Machines Corp is about to claim a victory in the race to turn the Internet into a roaring consumer marketplace, reports Reuter.

The worldwide Olympic sponsor and the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games (ACOG) this week will detail the success of a proprietary on-line system that began offering Olympic tickets for sale last month over the worldwide web.

Andrew Morbitzer, IBM's manager of advanced Internet technology, would not divulge the number of consumers willing to pony up credit card information on-line for tickets to Olympic basketball, soccer, gymnastics and other sports.

But he told Reuters the ticket venture may be pivotal to the development of electronic consumer sites on the web.

This is our first reality check to say how consumers are going to react to an electronic commercial service," Morbitzer said in a telephone interview.

Hi-tech companies, consumer credit firms and retailers see the Internet as a potentially huge consumer market. But its commercial devel-

opment has been retarded by concerns about on-line credit card fraud.

IBM hopes to use the Internet to shake off its old corporate image as a lumbering giant, by capturing the lead in on-line commercial services from rivals such as Microsoft Corp.

"We're here to show that only aren't we the traditional IBM people think of we're actually meeting very effectively with our competitors," Morbitzer said.

"What we're finding is that there are a lot of people out there who, I'm sure, have come in contact with all the press about whether or not it's safe to put your credit card on the Internet, but who feel comfortable."

IBM expects to announce a series of products and services offering electronic commercial solutions in the coming months.

Olympic ticket buyers must have a valid credit card account with Visa International, IBM's fellow sponsor.

To order tickets on-line, web users call up the official Olympic website, check ticket availability or a list of sports and enter credit information into an on-line purchase form. The order is then submitted to ACOG via electronic mail.

The biggest draw has been

135,000 tickets to previously sold-out events that ACOG put up for sale about two weeks ago. Up to now, however, the Olympic ticket service has been known mainly for its shortcomings.

Internet purchases have had to be processed manually because ACOG's underlying ticket system, designed mainly to handle phone orders, does not interface directly with IBM. As a result, it has taken more than a week to confirm some on-line purchases.

Recent news reports also say some Internet orders simply have disappeared into cyberspace.

But Morbitzer claims the biggest problems have been encountered by people who do not have web browsers that conform to an industry-wide security protocol known as Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) technology.

Most browsers, ranging from Netscape Communications Corp's netscape navigator to Microsoft's Internet Explorer, comply with SSL standards. But others including some available through the popular America on line service, do not.

A lot of subscribers have had trouble submitting orders, and to tell the truth, they haven't understood why," Morbitzer said.

ROK WC bid brightens

SEOUL, Apr 8: South Korea's bid to host the 2002 World Cup, sweetened by the prospect it may share some matches with North Korea, will not be hurt by Pyongyang's recent military threats, a senior soccer official said today, reports Reuter.

The current situation reinforces the need to give the World Cup 2002 to South Korea," said Song Young-Shik, secretary-general of KOBIID, the South Korean Bidding Committee.

"Hosting the World Cup can play a role in facilitating the reunification process," Song said.

There have been many similar incidents over the past 40 years," Song said, adding that the awarding of the 2002 World Cup to Seoul would play a role in lessening tension on the Korean peninsula.

Pyongyang wrote to FIFA in

January saying it was willing to stage some matches. The matter has not gone past that stage.

South Korea seized on the unexpected Pyongyang letter as a way to reinforce its bid, raising the stakes in its campaign to attract the Cup by proposing soccer as a way to help solve one of Asia's most intractable conflicts.

Sport has been used in the past as a bridge between the two Koreas, which sent a unified team to the 1991 world youth soccer championships.

South Korea is in a bitter fight with arch-rival Japan to host the first World Cup of the 21st century, and the first to be held in Asia.

"At the moment, it is a very tight race," Song said, adding that the bid will be announced on June 1 in Zurich. FIFA officials have said both countries have demonstrated through their bids and by hosting major sports events

that they can put on a successful World Cup. Seoul was host to the 1988 Olympics.

"Soccer history should help tip the balance," said another official with the bidding committee.

South Korea has been the most successful soccer nation in Asia, qualifying for the World Cup finals in 1954, 1986, 1990 and 1994. North Korea shocked the soccer world by reaching the quarter-finals of the 1966 World Cup.

Japanese officials say their popular J-League, which has attracted stars such as Dunga, captain of Brazil's 1994 World Cup winning team, is much better than Korea's league.

The bitterness of the campaign, which has wrapped national pride around the legacy of Japan's 1910-1945 colonial rule over Korea, led the Asian Football Confederation to ask FIFA last month if the two could be co-hosts.



Borussia Moenchengladbach's hero of the night Swede Joergen Patterson (L) scrambles past a falling Markus Babbel (C) of Bayern Munich during a Bundesliga tie in Moenchengladbach on April 7. Patterson struck two goals as Borussia won 3-1. — AFP/UNB photo