

Masuda upsets Tanima's cart

Sports Reporter

An unheralded Masuda Begum recorded an upset win over former national champion Tanima Parvin in their sixth round engagement of the 17th national women's chess championship at the NSC chess room yesterday.

Masuda, one of the four qualifiers in the final round of the 9-round Swiss league meet, with this sensational victory put a spoke in Tanima's smooth sailing in her bid to regain the title.

Tanima, one of the two rated players in the fray, who was strongly poised with four wins from her first four matches, with this shocking defeat lost her solo lead following her disappointing show in the last two engagements.

The bespectacled youngster from Chittagong, who lost her first half point against Jahanara Haq Runu in their fifth round match on Sunday, now jointly share the top slot along with veteran Rami Hamid, both having collected four and a half points each.

In this round Masuda, playing with black pieces, took full advantage of a suicidal move from Tanima and enjoyed an upperhand till her more illustrious opponent surrendered after 39 moves.

With this win, Masuda joined last year's runner-up Babi in the second slot, both collecting three and a half points.

Meanwhile, reigning champions Nipa, who was going through a lean patch, recorded a morale-boosting victory over Zakia Sultanah to raise her collection to three points from six encounters.

BCCB makes them play at night

Sports Reporter

A day-night cricket tournament involving the six Premier league outfits is expected to begin at the Dhaka Stadium from April 20.

Bangladesh Cricket Control Board (BCCB) has almost finalised the necessary arrangements for holding the tournament to mark the 25th anniversary of our independence.

Champions Mohammedan Sporting Club along with Bangladesh Biman, Brothers Union, Kalabagan Krira Chakra and Warri Club have confirmed their participation while Abahani Krira Chakra, one of the two most crowd-pulling outfits in local sports, is expected to confirm their participation within the next few days, disclosed a reliable source.

Nat'l youth cricket results

The first phase of the 16th national youth cricket championship began at different venues yesterday, featuring three walkovers in the inaugural day, reports UNB.

Five teams — Munshiganj, Dinajpur, Barisal, Pabna and Patuakhali DSAs — won their respective matches to reach the second round.

Munshiganj recorded a massive 135-run victory against Narsingdi in a Zone F match played at the Dhaka Stadium.

BRIEF SCORES
MUNSHIGANJ DSA: 289 for 9 in 45 overs. Iqbal 60, Mushtaque 66, Shamaptha 24, Majedur 21, Shaheen 20. Extras 41.

NARSINGDI DSA: 154 all out 44.5 overs. Jhantu 45, Ratan 45, Extras 35. Shamaptha 3/19, Kawser 3/33 and Masud Rana 2/16.

In a Zone B match at Pabna, Dinajpur earned a narrow one-wicket win over Jharkhand.

BRIEF SCORES
JHARKHAND DSA: 174 for 9 in 45 overs. Munna 56, Lebon 24, Manju 17, Extras 34. Monir 2/27, Pantha 2/28 and Shimul 2/28.

DINAJPUR DSA: 175 for 9 in 42.3 overs. Manik 43, Zakaria 25, Shimul not out 16, Extras 34, Nuruzzaman 3/37 and Bijon 2/28.

Pabna DSA got walkover against Panchagarh in a Zone A match at Dinajpur. Patuakhali DSA got walkover over Meherpur in a Zone C fixture at Barisal and Barisal DSA got walkover against Jhalukathi at Jharkhand.

Forty-nine teams split into six zones are taking part in the first phase of the meet.

Diego dashes Boca's hope

BUENOS AIRES, Apr 15: Diego Maradona missed a first half penalty and then hobbled off injured as Boca Juniors lost their unbeaten record in the Argentine Clausura championship at the weekend, reports Reuter.

Maradona, who limped off before half-time with a knee injury, saw his 23rd minute penalty hit the post in the game away to Newell's Old Boys, the team where he made his comeback after the first of his two worldwide bans for drug abuse.

In almost the very next move, Hernan Franco scored the only goal of the game for lowly Newell's, who had not won any of their four previous matches.

Worse was to come for Boca when defender Fernando Gamboa was shown the red card for treading on a rival as the two fought for a loose ball.

Boca missed a golden opportunity to take a clear lead in the tournament, the second of the two championships held in the Argentine season, and are level on points at the top with "upstarts" Lanus and Esudantes.

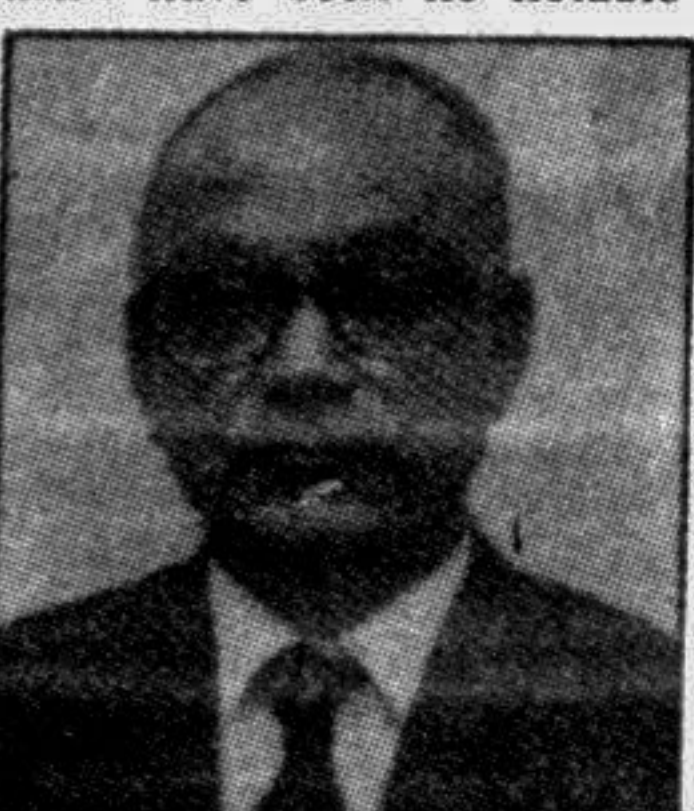
FEDERATION feedback

Bangladesh Badminton Federation

Shuttlecock politics?

A Star Special

Bangladesh Badminton Federation (BBF) easily symbolises how politics can play foul in our local sports arena. Irregularities, unfair means, and grouping are currently common in the Federation and among some players, creating animosity among players and Federation officials. As a result, there have been no notable



MOJOBUR RAHMAN

badminton activity in the country for the last two years or so, though the BBF officials claim that they have arranged all the routine tournaments during the period.

Now who can be held responsible for this? When will the air clear so that our boys and girls can once again play badminton in a sporting environment?

Who knows!

Presently, there is a distinct gap between the shuttlers and the Federation officials creating a near-deadlock situation with each party blaming the other.

It all began in the February

said, "I have been targeted in this regard. Their (players) request was not accepted by BBF and I had no individual role in it." Dana also questioned the wisdom of the agitating players who are putting the blame squarely on her, a joint secretary, when there is a president, Vice President, General Secretary, etc in the BBF.

After the negative response from BBF, the players went for greater movement against the officials. In a press conference held on March 11, 1995, the players made several demands including the removal of all the BBF officials immediately.

The BBF reaction further frustrated the players as it issued show cause notices to eight male and six female shuttlers of the country for breach of discipline. And, after an inquiry the BBF on October 22, 1995 suspended three national players, Rana and Shakil, the

pointments and till the filing of the report late Saturday, he avoided this reporter.

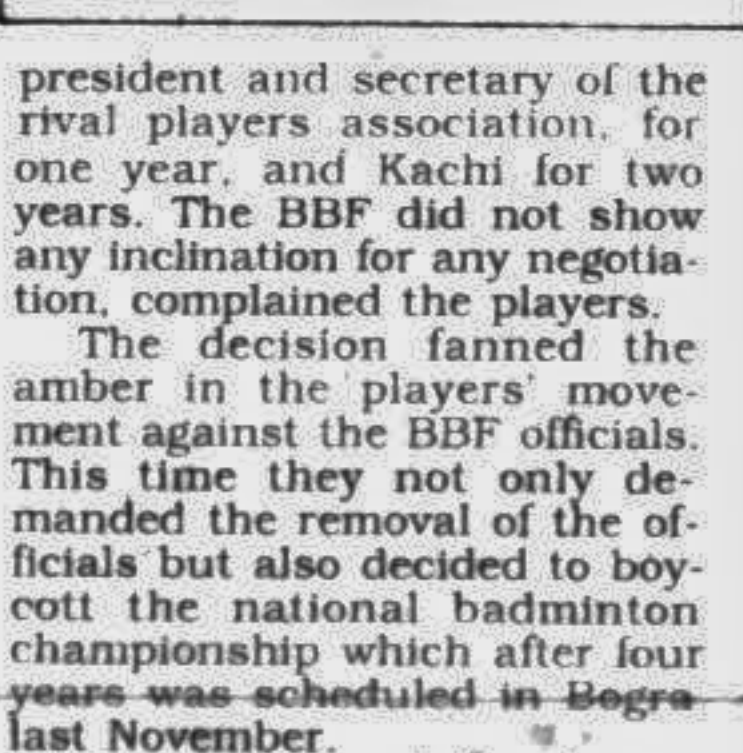
C Treasurer: Mustafa Maksudur Rahman was a vice president of the National Bank. According to reliable sources, he was involved with financial irregularities in the bank. But that didn't bother him or NSC as he kept his post intact in



MOBINUDDIN AHMED

the Federation with the blessings of the former president. He is still holding the post.

D Joint Secretary: Qamrunnahr Dana, the person whom the players consider chiefly responsible for the present condition of badminton in Bangladesh, is one of the key figures in our badminton arena. She was once the leading female shuttler of the country. After her retirement she turned an organiser for Mohammedan Sporting Club. In the 1992 Bangladesh Games, she played four roles at a time — joint secretary of BBF, secretary of the tournament committee, member of the fixture



QAMRUNNAHAR DANA

of 1995 when leading badminton players of the country sent a letter to the BBF president with a request of forming a six-member (four male and two female) national team instead of three (two and one) for the Asian Badminton Confederation Championships which was scheduled for April in the Chinese capital city of Beijing.

The logic behind their request was a privilege given by Bangladesh Biman to its own players. Biman gives free tickets to any of its players selected for a sporting trip, either official or by personal initiative. The players were certain that among the six, four players would be from Biman. So, naturally the Federation will not have to incur extra expenditure for them. The hosts were also prepared to bear local expenses of upto eight players.

The BBF contention was that players should not dictate matters relating to national selection. Nevertheless, the BBF requested the players to join the selection trials, saying it would in the meantime consider the players' proposal.

As far as the leading players of the country are concerned, the Federation could have easily fulfilled their demand had they taken the matter sportingly. Instead the demand was turned down by the BBF saying that the decision was already finalised in this regard and they had no scope of altering that. There was a single hand behind the turn-down. She is Ms Kamrunnahr Dana, former national eves' champion and the present BBF joint secretary who is also the women's secretary of Mohammedan Sporting Club. The players also said that to counter their movement against the BBF, another players' association has been formed with Dana's husband former national champion Hashem as the president.

But, talking to The Daily Star, Dana said she didn't do anything on her own. Whatever decision has been made, it was taken by the federation. She

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Some solace for Muster

LISBON, Apr 15: Austrian Thomas Muster, who lost his world number one ranking to Pete Sampras won the Estoril Open for the second straight year when he beat Italian Andrea Gaudenzi 7-6, 6-4 on Sunday, reports Reuter.

Muster, who lost just one set on his way to the final of the Estoril clay court event, wasted two set points before taking the first set in a tie break which he won 7-4.

In the second set both players broke serve but Muster, grunting from the huge effort he put into every shot, had an easier time against the 22-year-old, 36th ranked Italian.

The 28-year-old Austrian, who beat Spaniard Alberto Costa in last year's final, felt he had worked very hard to beat Gaudenzi.

Enqvist ends Byron's dream

NEW DELHI, Apr 15: Top seed and world number nine Thomas Enqvist of Sweden quelled a late rally from third seed Byron Black of Zimbabwe on Sunday to win the Indian Open, reports Reuter.

Enqvist, 22, fired 18 aces as he held service throughout the match to prevail 6-2, 7-6 (7-3) in 75 minutes.

It was the eighth title of his career and the first this year and it denied Black his maiden ATP Tour victory.

Black, having lost the final at Adelaide three months ago, was swept off his feet by Enqvist whipping forehand strokes.

"I served unbelievably well and it fetched me a memorable win" Enqvist said. "This is the first time I've won a title dropping a set in the entire tournament."

Crusade against dress code!

PESCARA, Italy, Apr 15: Star player Sabrina Moretti has declared war on Italy's table tennis federation over her right to play in an alluring body-stocking, reports AFP.

Judges at a national top 12 tournament here this weekend have been scandalised by the 27-year-old's skin-tight outfit, and ordered her to change into something more respectable.

The trouble started when Moretti, sixth in the national rankings, appeared for a pre-match warm-up on Saturday in a lurid orange body stocking — to the delight of an expectant horde of newspaper and television reporters.

When the judges intervened, the Italian grudgingly added a pair of shorts and a see-through silk top.

"It's a matter of principle," Moretti insisted. "I will continue to fight this everytime because I want the rules changed."

Moretti insisted that the body-stocking is more comfortable to play in, is more fashionable and also brings in more spectators.

Sino natants reign supreme

BANGKOK, Apr 15: China emerged overall champions with a total of 15 golds, 13 silvers and 7 bronzes in the fifth Asian Swimming Championships concluded here today, reports AFP.

Japan finished runners-up with a total tally of 13 golds, 20 silvers and seven bronzes. Far behind were South Korea with 2-2-12, Thailand with 2-1-1 and Uzbekistan fifth with 1-1-4.

Five Asian records were broken on the fourth and last day of the fifth Asian Swimming Championships.

In the women's 200-metre individual medley event, China's Wu Yanyan clocked 2 minutes 15.14 seconds to win the gold, breaking the championships' record of 2:16.61 set by Lin Li of China in 1992.

In the women's 50-metre freestyle contest, Li Jingyi of China took the gold with time 25.21 seconds, breaking the record of 24.98 set by Yang Wenyi of China in the third meet in 1988.

The men's 50-metre freestyle gold was won by Chinese Jiang Changji, who finished in 22.89 seconds, rewriting the meet record of 23.09 set by Singaporean Ang Peng Siong in 1986.

Chinese Wang Yiwu captured the gold in the men's 200-metre breaststroke contest with a time of 2:17.00, smashing the record of 2:18.04 set by Kenji Watanabe of Japan in the fourth championships in 1992.

The last record was shattered in the women's 4x100-metre medley relay. The Chinese quartet took the gold at 4:08.97, breaking the record of 4:09.13 set by China in 1992.

Olympic v'ball qualifying results

SEOUL, Apr 15: Japan overpowered South Korea 15-3, 15-9, 15-0 to take a 3-0 lead in the first round of Olympic volleyball preliminaries here on Sunday, reports AFP.

It was South Korea's first defeat against two wins.

In another final preliminary match in Seoul, China beat Australia 15-9, 15-10, 15-11 for their first win against two losses. Australia have three losses.



Thomas Muster of Austria plays a forehand return against Andea Gaudenzi of Italy during their final match of the Estoril Open in Lisbon on April 14. Muster won 7-6 (7-4), 6-4. —AFP/UNB photo

Sampras back at No 1

HONG KONG, Apr 15: American Pete Sampras jumped back to number one in the world thanks to a hard-fought 6-4, 3-6, 6-4 victory over defending champion Michael Chang in the final of the Hong Kong Open on Sunday, reports Reuter.

Sampras trailed Austrian Thomas Muster in the world rankings by just 72 points at the start of the week.

Under the ATP Tour's complex rankings system, which awards points in relation to the importance of a tournament and the quality of the opposition, Muster will lose points from his ranking when the new list comes out on Monday.

"That win puts Sampras back to number one, no doubt about it," said ATP Tour spokesman Steve Casey after the Hong Kong final.

Top seed Sampras, who had struggled on the way to the final, raised his game against compatriot Chang but was still

pushed all the way by the local favourite.

Sampras won the first set with almost casual ease but



PETE SAMPRAS

Chang, famed for his fighting spirit, came into the net when he broke Sampras to love for a 4-2 lead and he held on to win the set 6-3.

Both players hit several aces and some blistering ground strokes in the deciding set and the match went with serve until Sampras upped the tempo at 5-4. He earned a match point with some sizzling passing shots and won the match with a volley after a six-stroke rally at the net.

"Michael played really well and the match came down to a couple of points," said Sampras, who won 43,000 dollars.

Sampras said he was pleased to be number one again.

"Certainly it is nice to leave Hong Kong back on top," said Sampras, who first reached the top spot in Hong Kong in 1993 when he won the title.

"But it is the end-of-the-year rankings that matter. I hope I can come back to Hong Kong next year still as number one."

Chang, winner of the Hong Kong Open crown in 1994 and 1995, said he was beaten by a better player on the day.

Spirlea outplays Pierce

AMELIA ISLAND, Florida, Apr 15: Eighth-seeded Romanian Irina Spirlea showed athleticism, Patience and judgement in winning a 6-7 (7-9), 6-4, 6-3 victory over seventh-seeded Mary Pierce of France in the final of the 450,000 dollars Baush and Lomb Championship Sunday, reports Reuter.

The 22nd-ranked, 22-year-old Spirlea's 79,000 dollars victory, her third tournament title, will move her into the 18th spot on the WTA rankings today in her third full year on the women's tour.

It has been in the last six months that Spirlea has improved her game, learning to step into the court and take an aggressive posture during a match.

"I've played like this before, but I was not always believing I can do it," Spirlea said after the two hour, 22 minute match.

"I was always thinking 50-50 I can do it. Now, I'm there on every point and I don't get down if I miss a point."

Pierce's new guru-brad Gilbert, the full-time coach of Andre Agassi, arrived at Amelia Island for the final.

It was Gilbert's first time seeing Pierce play a match live — they had only practiced together in the past — and he refrained from talking about his new pupil until spending more time with her at the French Open.

"Brad told me at the beginning of the week if I made it to the finals he would come," said Pierce, who earned 31,000 dollars as runner-up.

"That's all I thought about during my semifinal match. It was very exciting and I was very inspired he was there, just disappointed that I couldn't pull it off."

The 14th-ranked Pierce came into the match with a 2-0 career edge over Spirlea and seemed on track for a 3-0 lead after taking the first-set tiebreaker. But the 5 foot, 9 inch (1.75 metres) Spirlea was mentally tough on-court and always had an answer for Pierce's power game.

"I played okay today, but not as good as the last two days," Pierce said. "She (Spirlea) wasn't afraid and was ready for every point. She has a good serve, good forehand, good backhand and moved around a lot better than I thought she would."

Pierce, who moves up one notch to 13th in the computer rankings, took an early 3-0 lead in the first set, but Spirlea recouped the break on her fourth break point in the fifth game.

Spirlea had two set points in the first-set tiebreaker, losing the second opportunity by double faulting. From 6-7, Pierce won the final three points of the tiebreaker.

"It was not easy. I had two set points in the tiebreaker," Spirlea said. "I had two set points in the tiebreaker, Spirlea said. 'I said, okay, this one

is gone, but I still have two more sets."

Instead of folding to Pierce's barrage of power shots, Spirlea stepped up to the challenge and negotiated the court cleverly. The smallest shot she used against Pierce during the day was a backhand drop shot which kept Pierce, who doesn't cover the court quickly, constantly on the run.

The second set saw Pierce serve until the final game when Pierce sprayed a forehand wide at 15-40 to lose the set.

Spirlea broke out to 4-1 in the final set and Pierce could never rebound. After double faulting on her first match point at 40-15 in the ninth game, Spirlea forced Pierce into hitting a backhand cross-court wide to end the match.

Larsen aiming higher

HERNING, Denmark, Apr 15: World-ranked two Paul-Erik Hoyer-Larsen admits he has taken a big gamble in his preparations for a record-equaling third successive win at the European badminton championships, starting on Tuesday, reports Reuter.

With the Olympic Games in Atlanta his main priority, the Dane took a break after winning last month's All-England championship and he reckons he is well below his best form.

His frailty was evident in a surprise defeat by Dutchman Jeroen Van Dijk in the team event on Saturday.

Steeb in a cold sweat

TOKYO, Apr 15: Britain's power-server Greg Rusedski used his best weapon to the full to beat Carl-Uwe Steeb of Germany in the first round of the Japan Open tennis on Monday, reports AFP.

Rusedski, who marked the fastest serve on the tour last season, powered his way to a 6-2, 6-1 win.

Rusedski, ranked 47th against Steeb's 72nd, converted four out of nine break points and permitted the German to hold only three service games.

Steeb had only one break chance throughout the match at 30-40 in the fifth game of the first set, only to see the Briton's ace flash past his side.

The million dollar hard court tournament started quietly with top eight seeds, led by world number one Pete Sampras, fellow American Michael Chang, and Thomas Enqvist of Sweden, receiving first-round byes.

Sampras, who became world number one for the first time in April 1993 by winning the Japan title, regained the top ranking by beating Chang in Hong Kong Sunday, while Enqvist captured the Indian Open in New Delhi.

Fourteenth seed Bernd Karbacher became the first ranked player to fall, losing to fellow German Hendrik Dreckmann 2-6, 4-6, while 16th seed Tim Henman of Britain went down to American Jeff Tarango 1-6, 4-6.



Christian Laettner (C) of Atlanta Hawks tries to score under challenge from two New Jersey Nets defenders during an NBA fixture in East Rutherford NJ on April 14. The Hawks won 99-90. —AFP/UNB photo

Betis baffle Atletico

MADRID, Apr 15: League leaders Atletico Madrid's 1-1 draw against Betis in Sunday's 36th round left

no room for error in the season's last six games and heightened suspense in the First Division, reports AP.

Visibly tired from the mid-week King's Cup final, which they won, Atletico players dragged on the pitch as 50,000 spectators energetically cheered them.

Afonso Perez converted a corner kick in the last minute of the first half to put Betis ahead. But Atletico's Francisco

Javier "Pirri" Morri hit back seconds later with a header into that out-of-reach spot in the upper right hand corner of the net.

The draw's one point gives Atletico 74 points, just three ahead of second place Barcelona the week before the leaders must play the traditional powerhouse on Barcelona's turf next week.

Barcelona stumbled also in their run for the title Saturday when they tied Racing Santander 1-1.

Other results were: Tenerife 4, Salamanca 0; Albacete 2, Compostela 1; Real Sociedad 5, Valencia 2;

Sporting Gijon 0, Oviedo 1; Espanyol 4, Rayo Vallecano 2; Celta 1, Zaragoza 1; Deportivo la Coruna 2, Merida 1; Valladolid 1, Athletic Bilbao 1.

Real Sociedad 5, Valencia 2; Al Real Sociedad, three first-half goals by Luis Perez Paskual and one by Rumanian forward Gheorghe Craioveanu gave the home team a 4-0 lead over third place Valencia by halftime.

Deportivo la Coruna 2, Merida 1; Brazilian forward Bebeto scored his 23rd goal of the season and second goal of the game on a 68th-minute penalty kick, lifting Deportivo to 2-0.