

BDR retain Nat'l Bank v'ball title

Sports Reporter

Bangladesh Rifles retained the National Bank Premier volleyball league with a convincing 3-0 sets win over Titas Club in the final league engagement at the Mirpur Indoor Stadium yesterday.

In an otherwise one-sided affair, the Riflemen who had an enviable record against the utility servicemen in their last seven final engagements since 1987, made no nonsense of a serious business winning the first set 15-9.

The BDR spikers then took the second set 15-10 before completing the Titas rout.

Deciding set 15-3. It was BDR's seventh league title since their emergence in the top flight way back in 1987.

Besides, it was a record eight time clash of the two heavyweights in local volleyball since 1987 where Titas won only twice against BDR's six.

ROLL OF HONOUR

Year	Champions	Runners-up
1972-73	Wari Club	Sonali Bank
1973-74	WAPDA SC	WAPDA SC
1974-75	Wari Club	WAPDA SC
1975-76	WAPDA SC	Wari Club
1976-77	WAPDA SC	Wari Club
1977-78	Dikusha SC	WDB
1978-79	WAPDA SC	WDB
1979-80	Not held	Not held
1980-81	WAPDA SC	WDB
1981-82	WDB	Wari Club
1982-83	Wari Club	BDR
1983-84	Not held	Not held
1984-85	Wari Club	BDR
1985-86	Not held	Not held
1986-87	BDR	Titas Club
1987-88	BDR	WDB
1988-89	BDR	Titas Club
1989-90	BDR	Titas Club
1990-91	Titas	Club BDR
1991-92	Not held	Not held
1992-93	BDR	Titas Club
1993-94	Titas Club	WDB
1994-95	BDR	Titas Club
1995-96	BDR	Titas Club

Zimbabwe to tour SL in Sept

COLOMBO, June 20: Zimbabwe have agreed to end a drought in Tests for cricket's limited-overs champions Sri Lanka by playing two matches here in September, an official said Thursday, reports AP.

The Zimbabwe Cricket Union has confirmed their participation after the Singer World Series one-day tournament in Colombo from Aug 24-Sep 9, said Tryphon Miranda, Secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in Sri Lanka.

India, Australia and hosts Sri Lanka are the other nations playing in the Singer tournament.

The venues for the Tests which will be from Sept 11-15 and 18-22, have not yet been decided, said Miranda.

The two countries have played only three Tests, in Zimbabwe in 1994, all of which were drawn.

Sri Lankan cricket board officials have blamed bad planning for the lack of Test matches, with no other five-day games lined up for 1996. Sri Lanka last played a three-Test series in Australia, in January, and had none planned until a two-Test tour of the West Indies next April.

Zimbabwe were approached after board officials went to Australia recently in a vain effort to persuade the Australian team to play two Tests during their visit to Colombo in August.

Sri Lanka, who were been consistently snubbed in their requests for a five-Test series in England over the past decade, are lobbying with the International Cricket Conference for Test playing nations to play each other an equal number of times in Tests.

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The triumphant Bangladesh Riflemen who clinched the Premier league title out playing Titas Club 15-9, 15-10 and 15-3 in the final at the Mirpur Indoor Stadium yesterday.

—Star photo

Czechs' chilling relief



LIVERPOOL, June 20: The Czech Republic qualified for the quarter-finals of Euro '96 in sensational fashion on Wednesday after Russia appeared to have stolen their thunder in a memorable Group C game at Anfield, reports Reuters.

The Czechs, 2-0 ahead after just 19 minutes, looked to have blown their chances when Russian substitute Vladimir Beschastnykh rifled home a 25-metre shot in the 85th minute to put his side 3-2 ahead.

But just as it seemed Portugal's opponents in Birmingham on Sunday would be Italy, Czech substitute Vladimir Smicer raced on to a through ball and beat Russian goalkeeper Stanislav Cherchesov to salvage a 3-3 draw.

The Czech players had to wait for a few seconds before learning of Italy's goalless draw against Germany, but their solitary point proved just enough to spark joyful mid-pitch celebrations.

The Czechs hit the woodwork on four occasions, but still came close to disaster in a second-half which contained more twists than the average detective novel.

Russia had played the first 45 minutes like a side who had already packed their bags for home, but two substitutions at the interval transformed the game and at one stage threat-

ened to lift them back into the qualifying equation.

It took only four minutes for substitute Alexander Mostovoi to make an impact, heading home Dmitry Kokhlov's cross from close range and the Russians were level five minutes later.

Defender Omar Tetrade made a rarer foray into the Czech box and although his intended ball to Radimov failed to yield dividends, he was quickest to react to the rebound to register his first in-

ternational goal in his 26th appearance.

Beschastnykh's strike was a contender for goal of the tournament, but in terms of value to his country, Smicer's effort was made of solid gold.

The striker, who only appeared in the 68th minute, still had plenty to do when he received the ball just outside the area but coolly beat the goalkeeper with a low shot into the far corner.

Having beaten Italy 2-1 on the same ground last week, no-one could say the Czechs did not deserve to qualify for the final stages at the first attempt since the splitting up of the former Czechoslovakia.

They tend to be solid rather than spectacular in midfield but winger Karel Poborsky is a constant source of danger and they are capable of creating goalscoring opportunities from deep positions.

Both their headed first-half goals from Jan Suchoparek and Pavel Kuka were certainly classics, the latter a delightful looping effort from a 50-metre pass by the intelligent Jiri Nemec.

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Eng-Ind 2nd Test Honours shared on day one

Sports Reporter

The second Test match between England and India at Lord's was evenly poised at the end of first day's play with England finishing on 235 for five.

—Source: BBC

Bird bids bye

LONDON, June 20: A tearful Dickie Bird was given a standing ovation by a capacity crowd and a guard of honour formed by the England and Indian players when he left the Lord's pavilion to officiate in his 66th and last Test match on Thursday, reports Reuters.

Bird, who umpired his first Test at Lord's in 1973 was called into action almost immediately when he judged England captain Mike Atherton lbw to the fifth ball of the day from Javagal Srinath. Atherton had failed to score.

Bird had made his customary prompt arrival at Lord's for the second Test in the three match series and was met by a battery of photographers.

"I'm feeling a little bit sad, it's the last time. You can't stop age," Bird told BBC television.

Harold Dickie Bird was born in Barnsley in 1933. After a modest career as a county cricketer with Yorkshire and Leicestershire, he turned to umpiring.

Pakistanis survive an scare

VOORBURG, Netherlands, June 20: Result of one-day friendly international cricket match between the Netherlands and Pakistan on Wednesday, reports Reuters.

SCOREBOARD

NETHERLANDS				
R. Van Oosterom b Nazir	42			
E. Gouka c Moir b Mushtaq Ahmed	26			
T. de Leede c Malik b Mushtaq Ahmed	8			
B. Zuiderent b Younis	43			
K. Van Noortwijk b Akram	6			
M. Schewe c Mushtaq b Akram	0			
A. Zulfiqar not out	20			
N. Boersma lbw b Younis	0			
R. Singh run out	1			
S. Van Dijk not out	8			
Extras: (lb-14, nb-7, w-7)	28			
Total: (for eight wickets-50 overs)	182			
Fall of wickets: 1-58; 2-80; 3-134; 4-150; 5-150; 6-152; 7-152; 8-155.				
Did not bat: Edward Sleijfers				

Bowling:

	O	M	R	W
Vasim Akram	10	1	24	2
Waqar Younis	10	0	39	2
Shahid Nazir	7	0	27	1
Saqib Mushtaq	8	2	22	0
Mushtaq Ahmed	8	1	23	2
Shahid Anwar	2	0	15	0
Aamir Sohail	5	0	18	0

PAKISTAN

Saeed Anwar c Singh b Boersma	14
Shahid Anwar lbw b Van Dijk	6
Ijaz Ahmed c Zuiderent b Boersma	0
Aamir Sohail c Zuiderent b Sleijfers	59
Saim Malik c sub b Boersma	6
Vasim Akram c sub b Sleijfers	0
Moiz Khan c Schewe b Van Dijk	14
Waqar Younis c Gouka b Boersma	0
Saqib Mushtaq not out	5
Mushtaq Ahmed not out	1
Extras: (lb-14, nb-4, w-3)	8
Total: (for eight wickets-48 overs)	183
Fall of wickets: 1-20; 2-20; 3-43; 4-117; 5-123; 6-163; 7-164; 8-181.	
Did not bat: Shahid Nazir	

Bowling:

	O	M	R	W
Steven van Dijk	10	1	34	2
Hans Boersma	9	1	37	4
Bas Zuiderent	2	0	16	0
Tim de Leede	5	1	13	0
Edward Sleijfers	10	2	40	2
Ravi Singh	10	1	33	0
Ahmad Zulfiqar	2	0	9	0

Result: Pakistan beat the Netherlands by two wickets.

Sino athletes dope free

BEIJING, June 20: Every Chinese athlete chosen for next month's Atlanta Olympics has passed a dope test, the official People's Daily said on Thursday, reports Reuters.

The People's Daily quoted anti-doping official Shi Kangcheng as saying that Chinese sports officials had administered 995 dope tests from the start of the year to June 6, 35 per cent more than the same period last year.

"All Chinese athletes training for the Olympics have passed dope tests," Shi said.

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