

Column One
SPORTS TALK

Bangladesh to play in HK Sixes

Sports Reporter



Bangladesh will participate in the Hong Kong International Cricket Sixes, starting in Hong Kong from September 27.

This was confirmed by the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) yesterday following an invitation from the host Hong Kong Cricket Association on Wednesday.

Star Sports, the Hong Kong-based satellite network, will provide live coverage of the 2-day meet.

Bangladesh apart, nine Test-playing nations and hosts Hong Kong are likely to be featured in

the six-a-side tourney. But it could not be learnt whether the organisers invited the ICC Trophy runners-up Kenya, who got the one-day status along with Bangladesh this year.

In-form cricketers from the national squad, which participated in the sixth Asia Cup last month, are expected to be sent for the tournament, said BCB executive secretary Tazzeb Ahsan Saad yesterday.

The BCB, however, is also set to go for talent-hunt to select a strong national team. It has planned to call up nearly 60 cricketers next week for a selection camp. Apart from the national team, the board will pick up an A team to groom for the future. Bangladesh will participate in an eleven-day triangular cricket tournament, scheduled to be held in Nairobi from October 10.

Besides, an under-18 camp will be initiated next week. The young kids will take part in the World Youth (under-18) Cup qualifying round starting in Hong Kong next December. Bangladesh, UAE, Singapore, Fiji, PNG, Malaysia, Maldives,

Nepal and hosts Hong Kong will vie for the two Asian zone berths on offer. The 16-nation Youth Cup, which also includes nine Test-playing nations, will be held in South Africa in February next year.

Two African teams — Kenya and Namibia, two teams from Europe and one from North America will be the other participants in the Cup.

School chess

Sports Reporter

Forty-five boys and girls won their respective board as the remaining 52 first round matches of the 12th Bata schools chess tournament were held at the NSC chess room yesterday. The other seven matches of the day ended in dull draws.

The second round of the losers of the first round will begin this morning at 10 am while the winners and others who have drawn their first round matches will engage in the second round from 3 pm this afternoon.



Scene from the 12th schools chess tournament at the NSC chess room yesterday.

—Star photo

Weekend tennis

The final matches of the team event and men's single of the weekend classic tennis 1997 will be held at the Ramna National Tennis Complex today, reports UNB.

Dhaka Club will face Engineers' Club in the team event and Mymensingh Club in the men's single event.

Boost sports WHIZZ KID

COMPETITION FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN
Competition-75

Tick the Correct Answers

Competition closes at 8 pm, August 8, '97

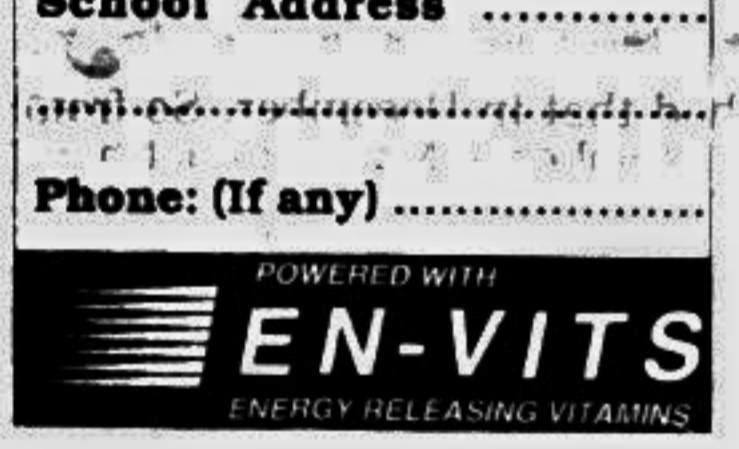
- Who is the soccer coach of AC Milan?
Sacchi Capello Tabarez
- Who lifted the Legg Mason Classic tennis title this year?
Korda Chang Wheaton
- Which is the new club of Roberto Baggio?
Bologna Atletico Vicenza
- Who won the All Sports 7th schools kabaddi title?
Millat Rilles Nawabpur
- Who scored the first hat-trick in this year's Federation Cup football?
Iqbal Al-Amin Sohag

Name

Class Roll No.

School Address

Phone: (if any)



Reception

Directorate of Food accorded a reception to the ICC Trophy champions Bangladesh cricket team at the Osman Memorial Hall auditorium in the city yesterday, reports BSS.

Soccer resumes in Argentina

BUENOS AIRES, Aug 7: Professional footballers ended the two-week long strike from July 22 on Wednesday, when the Argentine Football Federation (AFF) and a television station paid up to secure the release of six players, reports Xinhua.

The six Deportivo Espanol players had announced their release from their club, but the club said the six were part of its assets despite expiration of contracts.

Eventually the AFF stepped in to promise that players could move as soon as their contracts expired after the dispute had prompted a strike.

The striking players had refused an earlier appeal by President Carlos Menem and mediation attempts by veteran star Diego Maradona, who is currently making his fifth comeback with Boca Juniors.

WC qualifier Albania to play away

TIRANA, Aug 7: World soccer's governing body FIFA said a decision on whether Albania's home World Cup qualifier against Northern Ireland on September 10 could be played in Tirana would be taken on Tuesday, reports Reuters.

Recent civil unrest in the Balkan country led FIFA to move all Albania's home Group Nine ties to Spain. Matches against Germany and the Ukraine were played there earlier in the year.

Officials of FIFA and UEFA, European soccer's governing body, visited Albania over the past two days and held talks with the country's soccer federation and the government.

"We are concerned about the overall security in the stadiums because in other respects there is no problem," Per Ravn Omdal, UEFA vice-president and member of FIFA's executive committee, said on Wednesday.

The second stage of the 1996-97 Albanian league, which was suspended in February because of the armed unrest, resumed last Saturday after the government promised adequate security in stadiums.

The new season is scheduled to begin on September 13, although many clubs have been left heavily in debt and with badly damaged stadiums.

Celebration under a cloud



COLOMBO, Aug 7: Sri Lanka's celebrations for compiling a world record total in the first Test against India were ruined today by wide-range criticism of the run-laden wicket, reports AFP.

"Such wickets kill the game," said Indian captain Sachin Tendulkar, whose team was kept on the field for three days as Sri Lanka piled up an incredible 952 for six on Wednesday.

"I don't blame my bowlers for taking the stick. They had absolutely no chance on it. It was an unequal contest between bat and ball."

The Sri Lankan media backed Tendulkar's criticism of the dead surface at the Premadasa Stadium which produced an astonishing 1,489 runs for the loss of just 14 wickets over the five days.

The widely-read Daily News called for a ban on holding Test matches at the venue "unless the wicket is relaid and made more competitive to both batsmen and bowlers."

The eventual winner was not the game of cricket but the pitch," the newspaper said, adding it was not helping Sri Lanka's aim to become the best

Test playing nation by the turn of the century.

"Pitches of this nature are not going to encourage Sri Lanka to produce match-winning bowlers," it said.

Barely 100 paying spectators watched the batting feast on the first four days, forcing organisers to throw open the gates on the final day as Sanath Jayasuriya attempted to surpass Brian Lara's individual record of 375.

Some 32,000 fans turned up on Wednesday, only to see Jayasuriya fall 35 short of the target in the fourth over of the day.

The move to open the gates was slammed by local journalists who said the expectant crowds only added to the pressure on Jayasuriya.

"The pressure got to him," one journalist said. "It was a silly gamble by the Sri Lankan board. If they want to attract crowds they should instead make wickets that produce results."

Sri Lanka's efforts at surpassing a 59-year-old record held by England, who made 903 for seven against Australia in 1938, did not go unrewarded.

The Sri Lankan cabinet today granted each player a plot of land at a place of their choice. Media Minister Mangala Samaraweera said.

Sri Lanka, the world's reigning one-day champions, have won just nine of their 75 Tests so far, six of them at home.

The second and final Test of the short series starts on Saturday at the Sinhalese Sports Club, where the wicket is expected to be more sporting.



SACHIN TENDULKAR

Sanath: Matured, motivated



COLOMBO, Aug 7: Sri Lankan opener Sanath Jayasuriya, who narrowly missed out on Brian Lara's world record Test score of 375 on Wednesday, will not be hailed as a one-day wonder any more, reports AFP.

It's a tag the 28-year-old left-hander hates. "I like to do well in every match, whether it is one-day or Test cricket," he said. "But I am not a slogger."

He proved that with a marathon innings of 340 in the first Test against India here, batting for more than two days to post a world record stand of 576 with Roshan Mahanama.

Jayantha axed

COLOMBO, Aug 7: Sri Lanka today named a 14-member squad for the second and last Test against India starting in Colombo on Saturday, report agencies.

Lankan cricket board said it was dropping spinner Jayantha Silva.

Silva was wicketless in his 39 overs, giving away 122 runs in India's first innings of 537 for 8 wickets declared.

SRI LANKA (from): Arjuna Ranatunga (captain), Aravinda de Silva, Sanath Jayasuriya, Marvan Atapattu, Roshan Mahanama, Chaminda Vaas, Romesh Kaluwitharana, Muttiah Muralitharan, Mahela Jayawardene, Ravindra Pushpakumara, Kumara Dharmasena, Ruwan Kalpage, Upul Chandana, Sajeeva de Silva.

Jayasuriya may have himself contributed to the image of a swashbuckling batsman more suited to the slam-bang world of limited overs cricket than the sedate business of five-day Tests.

He languished for six years after his international debut in 1990 before Sri Lanka's triumphant World Cup campaign

two weeks later, where he blasted the fastest century (48 balls) and fastest half-century (17 balls) in one-day cricket.

Pakistani sensation Shahid Afridi topped that with a 37-ball hundred four months later, but Jayasuriya is happier with the Test records now in his bag.

"It is a great feeling to do well in Test cricket because that is the ultimate challenge. In the end, it's your performance in Test matches that is remembered more," he said.

Jayasuriya's 340 in only his 26th Test is the fourth highest innings behind two West Indians, Lara (375) and Garfield Sobers (365 not out), and Len Hutton of England (364).

He may have fallen 35 short of Lara's individual record, but he overtook the great West Indian's tally of 730 runs in nine matches to become the leading Test scorer in 1997.

Jayasuriya now has 883 runs from just seven games, and looks certain to add to the tally in four more Tests against the friendly Indian attack before the year ends.

Sri Lanka, who begin the second Test on Saturday, are due to tour India for a three-Test series later this year.

"It was a big disappointment not to cross the 375," Jayasuriya admitted after being dismissed on Wednesday by a Rajesh Chauhan delivery that popped a little to take the edge.

"The record came to mind only after I reached 300. I felt bad because it's not everyday you get to 300. But I will get over it."

"The important thing is to keep doing well for Sri Lanka."

Argentina won last month's tournament for the second straight time in a thrilling 2-1 final against Uruguay. Commentators generally agreed that the quality of overall play was outstanding.

Blatter said this was largely due to the "decency and leadership" displayed by the coaches in Malaysia.

"For all those who have the Good of the Game at heart, Malaysia 97 was a truly invigorating experience," concluded the soccer chief.

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Pioneer soccer

Sports Reporter

Tejgaon Nabataranga Sangad, emerged Group B champions defeating Islampur Uttarari Kriya Chakra through tie-breaker (2-0) in a play-off match of the Pioneer Division football league at the Rajuk ground yesterday.

Earlier, the regulation 60-minute affair ended in a 1-1 draw.

Asad put Islampur ahead in the 18th minute while Nasir of Nabataranga Sangad equalised the margin in the 42nd minute.

In the tie-breaker, Uttam and Naser scored for the winners.

The winners will now take on Sheikh Russel Kriya Chakra, the Group D champions, in the first semifinal at the Mirpur Stadium tomorrow at 3:15 pm.

The other semifinal between Swadesh Samaj Kalyan Sangha and Surtola Right Brothers will also be held tomorrow at 4:30 pm at the same venue.

Snooker team leaves for London today

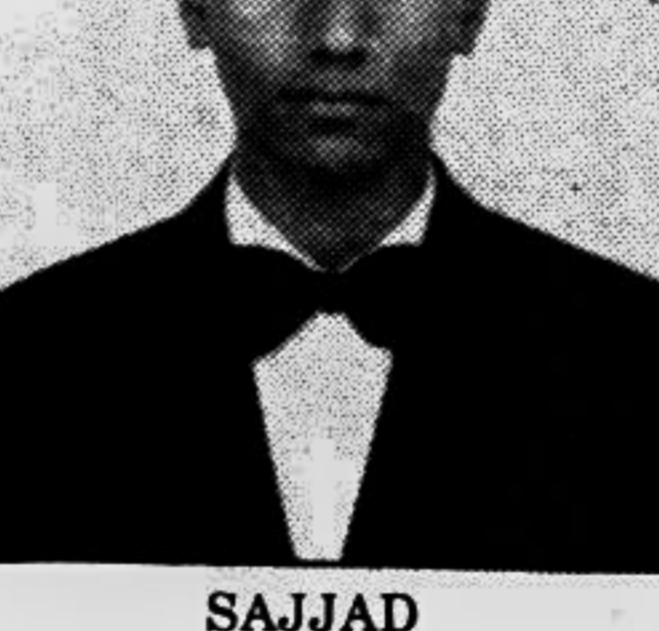
Sports Reporter

Syed M Sajjad will represent Bangladesh in the IBCF World Junior (under-21) snooker championship scheduled to be held in the Republic of Ireland from August 16 to 30.

A two-member Bangladesh team which also includes Bangladesh Billiard and Snooker Federation general secretary Syed Mahboob, will leave the city for London today.

Seventy-two players from 26 nations will participate in the meet.

On his way to Ireland, Sajjad, a member of Dhaka Club, will attend an advanced coaching programme in London under Geoff Foulds, a World Pro-



SAJJAD

fessional Billiard and Snooker Association (WPBSA) coach. The coaching programme is being sponsored by Majumder Group of Industries.

Praiseful Blatter

ZURICH, Switzerland, Aug 7 (AP): In a message overflowing with praise for players, coaches, referees and organisers, the head of FIFA on Wednesday said the recent U-20 soccer World Championships were a "truly invigorating experience."

"If it is true that in youth there is hope — then on the basis of the World Youth Championship in Malaysia, our sport can face a very optimistic future," wrote FIFA General Secretary Sepp Blatter in an editorial in the organization's magazine.

"Sometimes figures can be eloquent: 52 matches, 165 goals, an average of 3.17 per game, and only 11 reds (cards)," he wrote.

"In a tournament organized with efficiency and warmth, the capable and sensitive referees did not have to deal with a single act of violence. Seldom has FIFA's Fair Play policy been so convincingly vindicated," Blatter continued.

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"For all those who have the Good of the Game at heart, Malaysia 97 was a truly invigorating experience," concluded the soccer chief.

Niaz to take part in world meet

Sports Reporter



Grand Master Niaz Murshed will take part in the first round of the world chess championship, scheduled to begin in Netherlands from December 8.

The lone GM of the country, who earned the unique feat by virtue of becoming runner-up in a zonal competition in India in 1995, will be first ever Bangladesh to take part in the elite circle of chess.

The grand show involving 68 players from across the globe will get underway in the city of Groningen.

In the knock-out first phase, Niaz needs at least a win and a draw to secure a berth in the second round of the championship.

Up to sixth round of the tournament, the proceedings will be held in Groningen. The semifinals are slated to take place in Russia, where top two qualifiers from sixth round will be up against GM Anatoli Karпов and GM Garri Kasparov, the two undisputed icons of the hosts in the world chess.

With a lucrative cash awards of 5 million US dollars up for grab for the winners, Niaz will

get six thousand dollars as appearance money in the meet, which will be patronised by International Olympic Committee (IOC).

The two finalists will meet in Switzerland. The champion will get a cash award of 13,70,000 US dollars.



IM Mahammad Lodhi of Pakistan and Fide Master Al Hadrani Hatim of Yemen were in the second place with 2.5 points each.

In the women's section, WGM Repkova Eid Eva of Lebanon is leading the table with three points. She defeated Indian national women's champion, Anupama Gokhale in the third round. Indian IMS Vijayalakshmi Subbaraman and Saritha Reddy are half a point behind the leader.

In a neck and neck fight in the Sicilian Defence, Konguvel who played with white pieces had no initiative in the opening phase but with clever and calculated moves, gained a pawn in the middle game and grew stronger then on. In fact, Konguvel was up by a pawn in an exchange and his clever manoeuvring forced Niaz to resign on the 64th move.

Australia 84/0 at lunch



TRENT BRIDGE, England, Aug 7: Mark Taylor and Matthew Elliott gave Australia a sound start in the fifth cricket Test against England at Trent Bridge Thursday, reports AP.

The left-handed pair put on 84 runs at lunch on the first day after skipper Taylor had won his first straight toss and decided to bat first on a flat pitch.

Both batsmen, Elliott in particular, survived a few anxious moments before settling down to play the leading role in stand so far.

Elliott, 49 not out, trying to gauge the pace of the pitch, twice survived confident shouts for leg before wicket off-medium paceman Dean Headley.

A couple of overs before, he nearly played on to Headley, when the ball bounced a few centimetres over the stumps.

A draw here will guarantee Australia keep the Ashes for the fifth straight time, never previously achieved by an Australian team. Australia lead the six-match series 2-1.

It was Elliott and Taylor's first double-figure stand since putting on 133 runs in the second innings in the nine-wicket defeat at Edgbaston in the first Test.

Elliott, Australia's batting find of the tour, needed 31 runs to complete 1000 first-class runs, and reached it with a boundary off fast bowler Devon Malcolm — moving from 29 to 33.

England skipper Michael Atherton used six bowlers, to

dislodge the openers, but Elliott and Taylor stayed defiant in 121 minutes together.

The two batsmen hit debutant Ben Hollis out of the attack, taking 23 runs in his three overs, 12 of them in the last, before off-spinner Robert Croft replaced him.

While Australia named an unchanged side, England made four changes.

England axed opener Mark Butcher, all-rounder Mark Ealham and swing bowler Mike Smith after the defeat at Leeds in the fourth Test. They were replaced by Ben and Adam Holoake and medium paceman Andrew.

Malcolm took the place of the injured Darren Gough, England's leading wicket-taker in the series with 16 scalps.

Adam and Ben became the first brothers to debut together in the Ashes since Dave and Ned Gregory did so for Australia in cricket's inaugural Test at the Melbourne Cricket Ground in 1877.

The 19-year-old Ben is only the second player to represent England in his teens. Brian Close made his debut at 18 years and 149 days against New Zealand in 1949.

Elliott, who has two Ashes centuries to his credit in the series, has so far hit seven boundaries off 91 balls while Taylor's knock has included three hits to the fence.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at lunch on the first day of the fifth cricket Test between Australia and England at Trent Bridge on Thursday:

Konguvel alone atop

TEHRAN, Aug 7: Former Indian national champion and International Master Ponnuswamy Konguvel humbled top seeded Niaz Murshed of Bangladesh to emerge as the sole leader with three points after the third round of the Asian zonal chess championship being held at Kobar Hotel here today, reports PTI.

IM Mahammad Lodhi of Pakistan and Fide Master Al Hadrani Hatim of Yemen were in the second place with 2.5 points each.

In the women's section, WGM Repkova Eid Eva of Lebanon is leading the table with three points. She defeated Indian national women's champion, Anupama Gokhale in the third round. Indian IMS Vijayalakshmi Subbaraman and Saritha Reddy are half a point behind the leader.

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Chittagong Area retained the title of the annual aquatic meet of the Bangladesh Army which concluded at the BKSP swimming pool at Savar yesterday, reports BSS.

Chittagong Area collected 10 gold and 10 silver medals, while the Jessore bettered the other army record in 4x100m freestyle relay taking 3 min 57.57 seconds. The previous record in the event was 3 min 59.82 seconds.

Army aquatic ends

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Five new army records were improved throughout the five-day meet. Lance Naik Abdur Razaque of the Chittagong set a new army record in 100m backstroke. He clocked 1 min 6.22 seconds as against the previous record of 1 min 8.45 seconds.

The Jessore bettered the other army record in 4x100m freestyle relay taking 3 min 57.57 seconds. The previous record in the event was 3 min 59.82 seconds.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

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