

Sport

Elliott's bat warns Kiwis

SYDNEY, Oct 22: Australia Test opener Matthew Elliott hammered a warning to New Zealand ahead of next month's first Test with an unbeaten century for Victoria in the Sheffield Shield today, reports Reuters.

At close of play on the first day against New South Wales, Elliott was 145 not out after adding 296 runs in an unbroken third-wicket partnership with Laurie Harper, who remained unbeaten on 153.

The pair came together with the score on 68 for two before Elliott took control to guide the visitors to a daunting 364 for two at North Sydney Oval.

Elliott underwent minor knee surgery after returning from a successful Ashes tour to England during the northern hemisphere summer and only returned to club cricket on Saturday.

He reached his century, which came of 186 balls, with a four and a six off consecutive balls from veteran off-spinner Greg Matthews.

The New South Wales bowling attack, which featured Test fast bowler Glenn McGrath, endured another dismal day after surrendering 650 runs in the drawn game against Queensland last week.

Both McGrath and Elliott appear certain to line-up in the first Test against New Zealand, starting at Brisbane's Gabba on November 7.

Agrani dump Dhanmondi

Sports Reporter



Agrani Bank recorded their second successive win in the 18th Damal Smriti cricket tournament when the last year's runners-up handed a thumping 105-run defeat on Dhanmondi Club at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium yesterday.

Mushfiqur Rahman scored a dazzling 71 off 100 balls embellished with seven fours as the bankers, electing to bat after winning the toss, piled up a huge 208 for seven in the stipulated 50 overs.

While Pakistani Shahid Iqbal, who shared an enterprising 68 runs for the sixth wicket with Mushfiq, remained unbeaten on a cracking 47 off 56 balls which included a quarter of firm hits across the rope.

In reply, Dhanmondi were bundled out for a meagre 103 in 45.1 overs in the face of some accurate bowling from new-ball bowler Khurshid and Sumrit, who evenly shared six wickets between them.

Besides, Iqbal, who made the early breakthrough by dismissing Dhanmondi opener Taj, finished with two for 18 runs in his seven nagging overs to complete a savoury day's cricket.

Away at the Mirpur City Club ground, Ajax Sporting Club got off to a sound start defeating Orient SC by 44 runs.

Batting first, Ajax rattled up

a commanding total of 211 for nine in the allotted 50 overs with one-down Rawnak blazing his way to a strokeful 85. In his 115-ball vigil Rawnak clouted

four sixes and five boundaries. Rawnak apart, Asif (23) and Bhola (21) were the other 20-plus contributors in the Ajax total.

In reply, Orient could muster only 167 for nine before exhausting their quota of 50 overs. Only Tapu, who batted with purpose against an ever-increasing run-rate which was more than four per over at the onset, scored a defiant 37. While Mr Sundries with a hefty 38 stood the highest contribution in the Orient total.

Meanwhile, at the Dhanmondi Club ground, Bangladesh Boys pulled off an upset five-wicket win over Azad Sporting Club.

In a low-scoring affair, Bangladesh Boys, chasing a modest Azad total of 155 in 50 overs, rattled to victory scoring 157 in 39.2 overs and with half of their wickets in hand.

Labbu, who bagged a long tail, scored an unbeaten 35 off 32 balls to steer Boys to their first win after the Gopibag out-fit lost half of their wicket for 96 runs in 27.4 overs. In his whirlwind innings Labbu clubbed a quartet of fours and a sixer to complete a resounding day of success with both the willow and leather. Labbu had earlier captured two wickets for 31 runs in his nine over.

But it was Sayed, the Boy's new-ball bowler, returned most successful with four for 29 in his nine overs.

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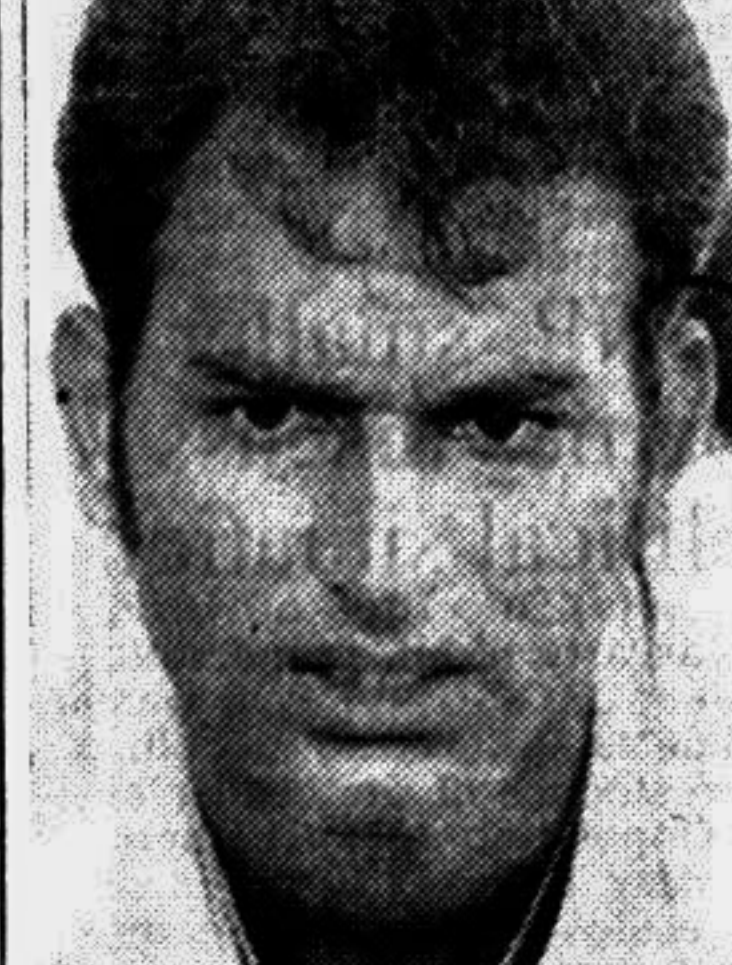
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Sohail drafted into squad

ISLAMABAD, Oct 22: Former Test opener Aamir Sohail has been included in the 13-member Pakistan squad for the third cricket Test against South Africa, cricket officials said Tuesday, reports AFP.

The selectors have retained Saeed Anwar as captain of the Pakistan side for the crucial final match starting Friday in Faisalabad, they said.

The series has remained undecided after the first Test at Rawalpindi ended in a draw and the second at Shikharpur was



abandoned due to rain. Sohail returns to the national team after missing the Sahara Cup in Canada and a three-match one day home series against India.

TEAM

Saeed Anwar (captain), Ali Naqvi, Aamir Sohail, Ijaz Ahmed, Muhammad Wasim, Inzamam-ul-Haq, Moin Khan, Wasim Akram, Waqar Younis, Azhar Mahmood, Mushtaq Ahmed, Saqlain Mushtaq and Shahid Nazir.

Abahani muddle thru'

Sports Reporter



Abahani Krira Chakra moved into the second round of the 18th Damal Smriti cricket tournament when the holders recovered their second successive victory against Victoria Sporting Club at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

Although Abahani squeezed past Victoria by 26 runs, it was the underprepared pitch at big bowl which made life difficult for the batsmen of both winners and losers. On the dicey pitch where ball not only kept low but occasionally tended to shoot, the two sides managed to score only 288 runs at the expense of 17 wickets. But apart from Timir's in-swing, which beat Rokan fare and square, most of the other sixteen wickets became the victim of a virtual minefield.

With the tricky wicket playing foul, Abahani posted a struggling total of 157 for seven in their share of 50 overs. Thanks to a fighting 28 by lower-order batsman Iqbal and a gutsy unbeaten 22 from number nine batsman Monju, the popular Dhanmondi outfit managed to muster a fighting total after losing half of their wickets for only 73 runs.

In reply, Victoria were all out for 131 in 47.2 overs. But in an eventful match, marked by a ten-minute layoff in the second session when umpire Nadir Shah ruled himself unavailable after getting his left eye a bit sore, it was Victoria who were at one stage set to pull off an upset win.

Although the mediocre Premier Division outfit helplessly watched their two foreign recruits -- Pakistani Amir Wasim and Indian Mohammad Ahmed -- perishing cheaply while dealing with two low and devilish

deliveries, Victoria recovered from a poor start of 40/3 to a reassuring 74 with one-down Moniruzzaman and Rinku putting on 47 runs for the fourth wicket.

Moniruzzaman scored 13 off 17 balls before being caught at mid-off of the bowling of spinner Naimur Rahman in the 28th over. But the real rot started when a menacingly poised Rinku succumbed to yet another low delivery in the

34th over.

The young right-hander, who scored a strokeful 35 off 47 balls, gave Abahani a real scare when he pulled off Naimur for two huge sixes in successive overs before being bowled by left-arm spinner Gem.

Albeit Mohammad Ali scored 20, the second highest score in the Victoria total, the "extremely watchful" batting of the robust right-hander only helped Abahani to take the match away from Victoria, who were at one stage required 62 runs from 99 balls with half of their wickets in hand.

In his painfully sedate 46-ball stay at the crease, Ali, who came into bat at number six, not only played out the overs without any purpose but also ran his wily partner Ekram out. He was eventually out in the 46th when right-arm Abahani

seamer Zakir had him in front of the wicket.

Zakir then went on to capture the wicket of Jashim in the same over, evaporating the hopes of a win for Victoria, who lost their last four wickets for only seven runs.

Earlier, Abahani skipper Akram Khan, who won the toss in the morning, in a surprise move opted to bat first. And later on, Akram probably cursing himself for the decision as five of the Abahani batsmen returned to the dressing room with the scoreboard reading at 73 in 30.1 overs. Opener Azam scored a plucky 14 while his left-handed partner Partho chipped in with a run-a-ball 12.

Akram made 19 and Naimur Rahman scored 13 before both becoming victims of low deliveries from Amir Wasim.

The prospect of a modest total appeared to be too ambitious when Abahani laboured to reach the three figure mark in the 41st over. But thanks to an invaluable 33 run stand for the undefeated seventh wicket between Iqbal and Monju, which turned out to be a match-winning contribution in the end.

TODAY'S MATCHES

Mohammed SC vs Surjo Tarun Club (DS)

Lalmatia Club vs Sadharan Bina KS (DCG)

Kalabagan KC vs Gulshan Youth (DCS)

Wari Club vs GMC (CCG)

Hingis to play at Sydney

SYDNEY, Oct 22: World number one Martina Hingis will defend her title at the Sydney International tournament in January along with men's champion Tim Henman, reports AFP.

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Po advances

LUXEMBOURG, Oct 22: Seventh-seeded Kimberly Po advanced to the second round of the 164,250 dollars Luxembourg Open on Tuesday when her opponent, Barbara Rittner of Germany, retired in the decisive set, reports AP.

Po bounced back after a disastrous first set and had taken control of the match at 6-6, 7-5, 4-1 when Rittner withdrew because of injury.

Slovakia's Henrieta Nagyova also advanced because her opponent was injured, reaching the second round when eighth-seeded Natasha Zvereva of Belarus withdrew at 3-3 in the first set.

In other matches, No 5 Barbara Paulus of Austria beat Nathalie Dechy of France 6-4, 6-4, and Amelie Mauresmo of France defeated Andrea Glass of Germany 6-4, 6-4.

Top-seeded Amanda Coetzer of South Africa received a bye in the opening round and opens play against Italy's Silvia Farina in the second round.

Second-seeded Irina Spilrea, ranked seventh in the world, withdrew at the last moment with a bad back.

Sampras sails smoothly



STUTTGART, Oct 22: World number one Pete Sampras showed no rust from a month long injury layoff as he brushed aside Sweden's Magnus Gustafsson 6-3, 6-4 in his opening match at the Stuttgart Open on Tuesday, reports Reuters.

Having his first outing since winning the Grand Slam Cup in September, Sampras looked confident and relaxed, needing just 73 minutes to speed past Gustafsson into the third round.

There was also no sign of any lingering effects from the inflamed shoulder that forced Sampras out of the Swiss Indoors.

"It feels pretty good," said Sampras, who lost a gripping five-set battle to Boris Becker in last year's final here.

"After the Davis Cup and Munich I could just feel it getting worse so it made no sense to push it."

"I took some time off, didn't

hit a ball for two weeks, gave it a rest and now it feels good."

"I hit the ball okay I today but I think I can play better."

The day also saw a trio of seeds fall as Spain's Alex Corretja, compatriot Felix Mantilla and another clay court specialist Austria's Thomas Muster, all lost their opening matches.

Corretja the 10th seed, who claimed his third title of the season in winning the Stuttgart Outdoors in July, was unable to duplicate that success indoors, losing 6-2, 7-6 to Swede Magnus Larsson.

Muster has also tasted vic-

tory in Stuttgart, the only indoor win among his 44 career titles coming here in 1995.

Dutchman Paul Haarhuis brought Masters bid for a second to an early end when he upset the 12th seed 6-2, 6-7, 6-2 averaging a second round loss to the world number nine last week in Ostrava.

Mantilla, near invincible on

clay this season while winning five titles, is less threatening on carpet and German qualifier David Prinosil dispatched the 14th seed 7-5, 6-4.

A semi-retired Boris Becker opened defence of his last remaining title with a 6-2, 6-4 first round win over fellow German Marc Kevin Goellner.

A third win here would also give the 29-year-old 50 career titles, tying him with Sampras.

"My mind has been pretty busy these days but the last few weeks I've tried to concentrate just on tennis," said Becker, now number 23 in the world, his lowest ranking in 12 years.

Nineteen-year-old Tommy Haas followed Becker, his David Cup captain onto the court but was unable to follow him into the next round, losing a tense three-set battle to Britain's Tim Henman 7-5, 3-6, 6-4.

Seventh seed Magdalena Gzabywska of Poland joined Van Roost in the second round with a 1-6, 6-1, 6-3 win over Canadian Rene Simpson.

The 18-year-old from Krakow, ranked 44th, used a steady baseline game to overcome Simpson, a 31-year-old qualifier.

Two other Canadians, Patricia Hy Boulais and Sonya Jeysselein, who won their first round matches.

Hy Boulais ousted Alexandra Fusat of France 6-2, 3-6, 7-6. Jeysselein, a wild card entry ranked 103rd, won the last nine games of the match to eliminate Mexican qualifier Angelica Gavaldon 3-6, 7-5, 6-0.

The 27th-ranked Van Roost played an aggressive game, boosted by the confidence she gained in winning a tournament in Indonesia a month ago and upsetting Arantxa Sanchez Vicario in Zurich last week.

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