

Column One SPORTS TALK



Ajit Wadekar
(Indian cricket's chief selector)
"He is an exciting cricketer."
About new all-rounder
Laxmi Ratan shukla.

Boost sports WHIZZ KID

COMPETITION FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN
Competition-111

Tick the Correct Answers
Post to The Daily Star
Win attractive prizes

Competition closes at 8 pm
Feb 22 '99 and draw shortly
afterwards

- Who was the man-of-the-match in the first Indo-Pak Test?
Afridi Tendulkar Saqlain
- How many Tests has Mark Taylor played?
102 103 104
- South Africa won the Test series against West Indies
4-1 3-1 5-0
- How many centuries have so far been scored in the Janakantha League?
29 30 31
- Who clinched the sub-junior chess title?
Rakib Rafiq Tuhin

Name

Class Roll No.

School Address

Phone: (if any)

Div I cricket

Young Cricketers' Club and Dhanmondi Club earned massive win in their respective matches of the Metropolitan First Division cricket league yesterday, reports UNB.

At Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium, Young Cricketers registered their second win beating Uttara SC by 102 runs after collecting 240 for 8 in the stipulated 50 overs.

Skipper Lallu hammered an unbeaten 79 off 114 balls with six boundaries while Ashique contributed 41 off 87 balls.

Pakistani players Kazim and Firoz claimed two wickets each for 33 and 39 runs respectively.

In reply, Uttara SC were bundled out for 138 in 44.2 overs.

Ullash made highest 40 off 75 balls that included two boundaries.

Bipul picked up three wickets for 24 while Rajib took two for 12.

At Mirpur City Club ground, Dhanmondi Club outplayed Lalmitia Club by 7 wickets.

Opting to bat first, Lalmitia were all out for 113 runs in 49 overs.

Opener Bablu made 34 off 80 balls with three fours while Rubayet added 21.

Masud picked up three wickets for 20 while Jawad took two for 16.

In reply, Dhanmondi Club reached their winning target of 114 runs losing three wickets in 28.2 overs.

Opener Shetu scored 40 off 77 balls with three boundaries while his partner Anisul added 23.

One down batsman Imran played another notable innings making 26 runs off 31 deliveries with three hits across the rope.

Shimul picked up two wickets for 20.

Sunday's matches: Azad SC vs City Club (Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium), and Gopibagh FA vs Dhaka Wanderers Club (Mirpur City Club Ground).

Khulna cricket

KHULNA, Feb 20: National Welfare Association trounced KKSP Club by seven wickets in the Belayet Hossain Foundation and Silver Line Group First Division cricket league at the local stadium here today, reports BSS.

National Welfare won the toss and put KKSP in to bat who were eventually all out for 113 runs.

In reply, National Welfare reached their target for the loss of three wickets.

Cricket humbled in Calcutta Pakistan beat India

CALCUTTA, Feb 20 (Reuters/Internet): After fresh trouble and in a near-empty ground, Wasim Akram and fellow paceman Shoaib Akhtar bowled Pakistan to a 46-run victory over India in the inaugural match of the Asian Test championship on Saturday.

The victory was overshadowed by more disruption from angry spectators that halted play for over three hours.

Most were evicted by police after fans threw missiles, oranges and empty water bottles into the Eden Gardens ground for the second successive day.

Barely 500 spectators of the 55,000 remained to watch the end as all stands, except the pavilion and the press box, were emptied on the order of senior police officials.

The triumph was sweet for Pakistan and came hours ahead of a historic handshake between prime ministers of the two countries after a scheduled trip by Indian leader Atal Bihari Vajpayee across the Wagah Border to Lahore.

Trouble broke out as India were on the verge of defeat, recalling memories of 1996 when the Calcutta crowd created trouble in the World Cup semifinal which India conceded later to Sri Lanka.

Resuming at an overnight 214-6, India lost the remaining four wickets on the last day for just 18 runs, falling well short of the victory target of 279.

Saurav Ganguly, who was on 23 overnight, was out after adding just one run, caught at slip off the bowling of Akram in the second over of the morning.

Akram soon got the wicket of Javagal Srinath, caught brilliantly by wicketkeeper Moin Khan for three.

Shahid Afridi took a spec-



ANWAR ... m-o-m



SRINATH ... m-o-m

ties and stones aborted their efforts.

Eventually, after three hours 20 minutes, play resumed after police emptied almost all the stands.

The end was swift with Akhtar uprooting Venkatesh Prasad's stumps within seven minutes to give Pakistan their triumph.

Officials, led by the Calcutta-based world cricket chief Jagmohan Dalmiya, hurriedly organised a post-match ceremony in which Pakistan opener Saeed Anwar and Indian seamer Javagal Srinath were jointly named men of the match.

The violence marred an otherwise peaceful month-long tour by Pakistan for their first Test series on Indian soil in 12 years followed by the opening match of the Asian Test championship.

Pakistan return home on triumphant note after being forced to share the short two-

SCOREBOARD

Final scoreboard of the Asian Test Championship match between India and Pakistan which ended on Saturday:

PAKISTAN: First innings 185 (M Khan 70; Srinath 5-46).

INDIA: First innings 223 (S Ramesh 79; S Akhtar 4-71; W Akram 3-65)

PAKISTAN: Second innings 316 (S Anwar 188 n.o.; Y Youhana 56; Srinath 8-86)

INDIA: Second innings (overnight 214 for six)

Famash Iw b Saqlain	40
Laxman c Youhana b Saqlain	67
Dravid c Moin b Akhtar	13
Tendulkar run out	9
Azharuddin c Youhana b Saqlain	20
Ganguly c Mahmood b Akram	24
Mongia lbw b Akhtar	16
Kumble c Afridi b Akhtar	3
Srinath c Moin b Akram	2
Prasad b Akhtar	3
H Singh not out	0
Extras: (b-10, lb-9, nb-18)	37
Total:	232

Chittagong lift DC Cup title

CHANDPUR, Feb 20: Chittagong DSA emerged champions of the first Divisional Commissioner Cup cricket tournament beating Comilla DSA by four wickets at the local stadium today, reports UNB.

Batting first, Comilla made 193 all out in 39.3 overs.

Sunny scored highest 36 and Sutu made 25.

Ripon of Chittagong picked up three wickets for 41.

In reply, Chittagong reached their winning target of 194 in 47 overs losing six wickets.

Raja and Masum contributed 24 runs each while Ripon scored 22 not out.

Hasan bagged three wickets for 36.

Ripon of Chittagong was adjudged man-of-the-match for his all round performance while Hasan of Comilla as man-of-the-tournament.

State Minister for Planning Dr Mohiuddin Khan Alamgir was the chief guest on the occasion and distributed the trophies.

Chittagong Divisional Commissioner Mohammad Sakhatat Hossain was present as special guest.

BRIEF SCORES

COMILLA DSA: 193 all out in 39.3 overs (Sunny 36, Sutu 25; Ripon 3/41).

CHITTAGONG DSA: 194 for six in 47 overs (Raja 24, Masum 24, Ripon 22; Hasan 3/36).

Srinath not going to Lanka

CALCUTTA, Feb 20: National selectors yesterday decided to rest pace spearhead Javagal Srinath and inducted young left-arm seamer Ashish Nehra for India's second match of the Asian Test Championship against Sri Lanka to be held in Colombo from February 24 to 28, reports PTI.

Leg-spinner Anil Kumble was named vice-captain of the squad, announced by the secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) J Y Lele here.

"Srinath has a shin pain in both of his legs and we have decided to rest him for the Test against Sri Lanka," Lele told reporters.

The inclusion of the 21-year-old Delhi seamer Nehra in place of the injured Srinath was the only change in the 14-member squad.

"Nehra is a promising left-hand fast bowler and we have decided to try him out," chairman of the selection committee Ajit Wadekar said.

Srinath, he said, would not get a rest for almost three weeks as the final of the championship is slated to be held at Dhaka from March 12.

"Srinath needed a rest badly. If we don't rest him now, he may not be able to play in the World Cup," Lele explained.

Asked whether any other names were considered for the vice-captaincy, Wadekar said Saurav's name came up for discussion. "He is still quite young and may get his chance later," he said.

On whether the additional responsibility of vice-captaincy would put additional pressure on Kumble, Lele said, "We don't think so."

Lele said the 19 shortlisted Indian players for the forthcoming World Cup would be announced on February 28 in Mumbai.

TEAM

Mohammad Azharuddin (capt), Anil Kumble (vice-captain), Sachin Tendulkar, Rahul Dravid, Saurav Ganguly, Sadagoppan Ramesh, VVS Laxman, Nayan Mongia, Venkatesh Prasad, Laxmi Ratan Shukla, Harbhajan Singh, Sunil Joshi, Ashish Nehra, Hrishikesh Kanitkar.



Riot police drive the unruly Eden Gardens crowd out of the stadium to bring things under control. —Internet photo

Calcutta Clippings

CALCUTTA, Feb 20: Pakistan skipper Wasim Akram lashed out at the local press today, holding it responsible for the unruly behaviour of the Calcutta crowd at the Eden Gardens here today.

"It was the press that contributed to this," Akram told reporters after Pakistan beat India by 46 runs in a match in which angry spectators interrupted play for nearly three hours on Saturday and 46 minutes on Friday.

"Whatever has happened today it is only because of you people and your reports. You have said that Shoaib objected to this. Why should I do that? If a team fails for only one man, that is our bonus," said an angry Akram while pointing towards the India reporters during the post-match press conference.

"The whole world saw none of them (Shoaib and Sachin) were responsible for the collision. But you have blamed me. Is that wise?"

"You people know cricket very well but your reports which I have read today in many dailies do not speak for that," Akram said.

"You have held them (crowd) responsible for the whole wrong-doings, but I will never blame them for this because they were all pre-occupied with those reports for which the saddest thing in Test cricket happened here today," Akram added.

Bengali and English language newspapers lambasted Akram, who had been popular in India during Pakistan's recent tour.

"Akram loses India, may win Test," a banner headline in The Telegraph said.

"He could have called back Sachin Tendulkar and become a hero. But he chose to sour the goodwill generated by him and his team on this tour with one gesture he chose not to make," the paper said.

Former Indian Test crick-

From Hasan Masood

eter Dilip Vengsarkar's column in The Asian Age daily was headlined: "Sachin should not have been given out".

Vengsarkar said that in a similar circumstance English umpire Dickie Bird had given the benefit of doubt to a batsman during the World Cup in 1983.

Akram meanwhile said the introduction of neutral umpires was good and both teams should have the mentality to accept their decisions.

"You have written today that umpires were at fault in giving out to two Indian batsmen. Don't you think we're also the victim of few questionable decisions during our innings? But you did not mention those in your reports?"

On his team's triumph, Akram said all the players were eager to win this match and they did it in style.

"When we managed 185 in the first innings after losing six wickets only for 26 runs, we knew we had a very good chance in this match and thanks to almighty for the win. It was a dream that came true," said Akram.

"I also want to thank Saeed Anwar, Moin Khan and Shoaib who really helped us to win this game. Shoaib has proved that he is the fastest bowler now," Akram said.

Despite the crowd trouble here in Calcutta Pakistan manager Shahariyar Khan said his team would return to India next month and play in the tri-nation one-day international tournament along with the hosts and world champions Sri Lanka.

Meanwhile, the Indian captain Mohammad Azharuddin and coach Anshuman Gaekwad appeared very frustrated while negotiating with the press.

"This is a total mess and I will only held the batsmen responsible for the defeat," said a dejected Indian captain.

"Our bowlers, especially Srinath, brought us back in the match when Pakistan were going to take a big lead in the second innings. But the batsmen failed to capitalise on that even

after the opening pair took us to 108. I thought, at that time, we were going to get 279 quite easily. But you have seen it did not happen," Azhar said.

On the violence, Azhar termed it as the saddest episode of the Indian cricket.

"I don't want to say anything more because I've already said that in 1996 when we lost the World Cup semifinal to Sri Lanka by default, I just want they should behave, because every time we can not win. We are also human being and any day we can fail," Azhar said.

"This incident has let us down in the world of cricket and I don't know why they did that," Azhar concluded.

Azhar however tried to shift the blame to Laxman for letting off opener Saeed Anwar, who then went to score a match-winning unbeaten 188.

"I tried a catch which was somebody else's. I don't want to name the fielder," Laxman was standing beside Azhar when Anwar snickered Srinath.

This was the 107th defeat of India in Test cricket out of 324 Test they have played so far. They have won 60, drew 156 and one match was tied.

On the other hand, Pakistan posted their 73rd win in 256 Tests. They lost only 59 Tests while one was abandoned. Besides, this was the only match between India and Pakistan at the Eden Gardens that was decided. The previous four matches played here since 1952 ended in a draw.

Meanwhile, Pakistan team will return home tonight. They will take on Sri Lanka in the third match of the championship in Lahore, starting March 4. On the other hand, India will fly to Colombo tomorrow for the second match scheduled to begin from February 24. Indian pacer Javagal Srinath, who took 13 wickets in this Test, has been given rest.

Left-arm seamer Ashish Nehra will replace Srinath in the tour party. Leg-spinner Anil Kumble has been named as the deputy of Azhar despite the local press was campaigning for Saurav Ganguly for last one week.



THE PICTURE SAYS IT ALL: Pakistani players kissing the Eden Gardens turf after their victory over arch-rivals India in the inaugural match of the Asian Test Championship yesterday. —Internet photo

taular catch in the next over when Anil Kumble (16) tried to drive Akhtar on the off-side.

The crowd, disappointed by the fall of three quick wickets, then began throwing objects, forcing a halt just as they had done on Friday when they were incensed by the controversial run-out of Sachin Tendulkar.

An hour after Saturday's interruption, umpires and the players made tried to resume play but a fresh barrage of bot-

Test series 1-1 which preceded the Calcutta match.

Akram's men, who go home on Monday, will return next month for a triangular one-day series also featuring world champions Sri Lanka.

The tourists earned 17 points from the Asian Test -- 12 for an outright win and five bonus points -- in a remarkable turnaround after they were reduced to 26-6 within the first hour on the opening day.

Fall of wkts: 1-108; 2-134; 3-145; 4-149; 5-183; 6-190; 7-219; 8-224; 9-231.

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Akhtar	20.1	5	47	4
Akram	24	4	64	2
Mahmood	6	0	23	0
Saqlain	25	5	69	3
Afridi	4	1	10	0

Result: Pakistan won by 46 runs.

Men-of-the-match: Saeed Anwar (Pakistan) and Javagal Srinath (India).

Akram gets Channel 4's call

LONDON, Feb 20 (Courtesy: The Electronic Telegraph): Wasim Akram, the Pakistani captain, is the latest big name to be lined up by Channel 4 for their coverage of this season's Test matches.

Since their 'scoop' last autumn when they snatched the television rights away from the BBC after 40 years, Channel 4 executives have been considering a host of cricketing stars to join Richie Benaud and Mark Nicholas in the commentary box.

Wasim, the former Lancashire all-rounder, is a plum choice. Young, charismatic and a player on the world stage, he will bring a 'dressing-room' feel to his comments on the action.

He recently took the decision not to rejoin Lancashire, concerned that the daily grind of county cricket would affect his Test career. Instead, he will turn out for Smethwick in the Birmingham league, thus having the time to work for Channel 4.

Another name targeted is Dermot Reeve, former captain of Warwickshire and now coach to Somerset.

Like Wasim, all-rounder Reeve is close to the current crop of international players and his strong sense of humour will be a valuable asset.

Also joining the team is Ian Smith, the former New Zealand wicketkeeper who impressed when working for the BBC.

Add Rory Bremner to the mix and it seems that Channel 4 are looking in good shape for when they begin their coverage at Lord's in July for the second Test against New Zealand (Sky

Sports will be showing the first Test from Edgbaston).

Incidentally, Nicholas, who will host all of Channel 4's cricket output, is unlikely to be involved in the upcoming World Cup. When Nicholas was tempted away from Sky Sports last year - to be replaced by David Gower - it was thought he

would work out the remainder of his contract, which included the World Cup.

However, he has only been offered a junior role in Sky's coverage and Channel 4 were not keen that their No 1 presenter would be seen by the cricketing public to be batting down the order.

Abahani group champs

Abahani emerged Group A champions after beating arch-rivals Mohammedan 2-1 in the Cotton Group tournament yesterday, reports APB.

Mahboob Harun and Indian

national playmaker Dhanraj Pillai scored one goal each for the Dhanmondi outfit while Roni pulled one back for the Mohammedans in a see-saw affair at the Moulana Bhasani Stadium.

All three goals were scored in the second session after both sides, who fielded four foreigners each in the battle of prestige, failed to break the dead-lock in the first half.

Abahani custodian Babbi deserved more credit for their hard-fought victory as he made some tremendous saves, especially the penalty corners when Mohammedans were desperately pressed hard for an equaliser.

Veteran centre-half Harun, who scored a hat-trick in their 5-0 win against Navy in the inaugural match, put Abahani into the lead in the 55th minute with a powerful angular volley.

Left-winger Shamim set up the goal for his teammate with a deftly-splitting square pass.

Inspired by the goal, Abahani kept pressure on the rivals with the both wings and took 2-0 lead in next five minutes

when Pillai produced the fantastic goal.

Mohammedan, who earned six penalty corners, four in the last ten minutes, utilised the number five through Hasan Roni to reduce the margin in the 66th minute.

Mohammedan were also luckless as a beautiful scoop from Pakistani playmaker Tahir Zaman returned hitting the crosspiece much to the dismay of Mohammedan supporters few minutes after the goal.

Their last chance of returning to the game was evaporated by the hand of goalie Babbi who placed his hand in the final moment on a swirling volley of Tahir to foil the last penalty corner two minutes before the final whistle.

The win enabled Abahani to finish with full 6 points from three outings while Mohammedan finished runners-up with four points from three matches. Both the sides had already confirmed their berth in the semifinals.

TEAMS
ABAHANI: Bappi, Mamun, Nakib, Rabi, Harun, Rubel (Khokon), Alamgir, Gul Hussain (Miraj), Imran Yusuf, Pillai and Sabu Berki.

MOHAMMEDAN: Javed, Khokon (Rajib), Shipu, Roni, Mitul, Tahir, Khalid, Sarafat, Rana Asif, Kamran Ashraf and Ramiz.

AJAX BEAT NAVY
In the day's other match, Ajax SC beat Navy by a solitary goal with Prince striking the match-decider.

TODAY'S MATCHES
Usha KC vs Army (3:30 pm)
Azad SC vs Air Force



A mid-pitch tussle between Abahani and Mohammedan during their Cotton Group Shaheed Smriti hockey tournament at the Moulana Bhasani Stadium yesterday. Abahani won 2-1. —Star photo