

D'mondi, Khelaghar win

Sports Reporter

Dhanmondi Club and Khelaghar Samaj Kalyan Sangha began their 19th Darnal Smriti cricket tournament second round campaign with successes at different city venues yesterday.

BRIEF SCORES

Dhanmondi Club: 231 for 4 in 50 overs (Shetu 93, Imran 36, Anis 33, Azim 31 n.o., Saad 2/57)
Young Pegasus: 180 for 9 in 50 overs (Mustakim 41, Russell 40, Bidyut 33, Dikens 2/18, Tareque 2/32)
Result: Dhanmondi Club won by 51 runs.
Young Cricketers: 171 all out in 49.1 overs (Khokon 44, Moinuzzaman 34, Adil 24, Lal 3/22, Raju 2/22, Rana Jr 2/25)
Khelaghar SKS: 172 for 9 in 49.3 overs (Shakil 50, Tony 31, Raju 23, Suroj 3/38, Ripon 2/33, Lovit 2/32)
Result: Khelaghar SKS won by one wicket.

On the opening day of the six-team second round, Dhanmondi Club recorded a comprehensive 51-run win over Young Pegasus at the Bangladesh National Stadium.

Opener Shetu scored a brilliant 93 after Dhanmondi electing to bat on a batsman-friendly track, piled up a huge 231 for four in 50 overs.

After a slow 77-run opening partnership with Anis (33), Shetu shared a 91-run second wicket stand with one down Imran (36).

Shetu was within sight of a well-deserved century when Mustakim bowled him off the last ball of the 45th over.

During his nearly three-hour vigil, Shetu faced 137 balls and hammered nine boundaries.

Shetu's departure with the scoreboard on 180 in 45 overs, signalled the slog overs for the Dhanmondi batsman. They smashed 51 runs in the final five overs with a whirlwind 31 off 16 balls by Azim. It contained a quartet of fours.

In reply, Young Pegasus were restricted to 180 for seven in their share of 50 overs with middle order Mustakim scoring highest 41. Number nine batsman Russell (40) and opener Bidyut (33) were the other notable batsmen.

Dhanmondi's new ball bowler Tareque and Dikens shared four wickets.

Khelaghar posted an exciting one-wicket victory over Young Cricketers at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium.

Chasing a modest Young Cricketers' total of 171 in 50 overs, Khelaghar rode on a patient 50 from middle order Shakil to reach their target for the 10th of nine wickets and three balls remaining.

One-down Islam contributed 31 while Raju chipped in with 23.

Earlier, put into bat, Young Cricketers were all out for 171 in 49.1 overs. Khokon top scored with 44 while Moinuzzaman added 34.

Windies A 238

GEORGETOWN, Guyana, Dec 2: West Indians A lost their last two wickets for the addition of just eleven runs Wednesday after India A bowled them out for 238 less than an hour into play the day before, reports AP.

It was the opening session of the second day of their second and final four-day Test in the Indians' Caribbean tour at Georgetown's Bourda Cricket Ground in Guyana.

Wicketkeeper Wayne Phillip added just four runs to his overnight score of eight not out before he was dismissed by left-arm leg-spinner Rahul Sanghvi off a catch by Murali Karthik. West Indian speedster also did not last long, run out after a mixup with Phillip.

The Indian openers were off to a flying start, smashing 50 without loss. However, the Indian captain Gagan Khoda was forced to retire hurt on 18 after being struck in the groin area by West Indian pacer Goldwyn Prince. The score was 41 without loss.

Prince has troubled all the Indian batsmen, generating good pace from his pacid Bourda track ideal for batting.

The not out batsmen are Jagdish Arun Kumar on 25 and S Siram on six.

The Indian half-century came off 9.4 overs in just 53 minutes.

Shield cricket

UNDATED, Dec 2 (Internet Report): An unbeaten century from skipper and opener Jamie Cox helped Tasmania make a steady start to their Sheffield Shield cricket match with South Australia here Thursday.

Cox scored 139 not out as Tasmania consolidated to 255 for six after being sent into bat. Cox's century came off 243 balls with nine boundaries and included partnerships of 44 with Michael Divenuto and 94 with Andrew Dykes.

In Melbourne, Western Australia and Victoria were locked in a tight battle for first innings points after the second day of their match at the MCG.

Western Australia ended the day at 251 for six, 42 runs short of first innings points after Victoria were earlier bowled out for 292.

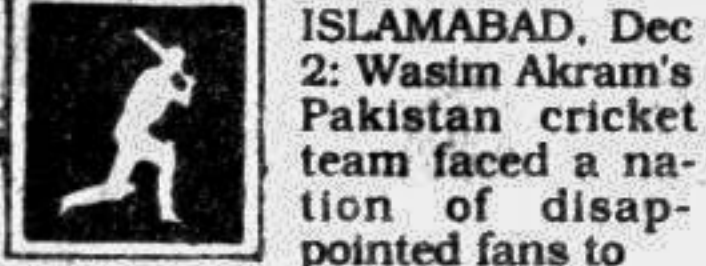
WA had been cruising at 229 for three but lost Damien Martyn for 72. Rob Baker for 37 and Michael Dighton for a duck in the last hour.

Earlier Brad Williams took less than 20 minutes to wrap up Victoria's innings with the former Victorian quick finishing with 5-79 as Victoria added just eight runs to their overnight total of 284 for eight.



Pakistan cricket captain Wasim Akram upon his arrival at the Lahore airport early yesterday. — AFP photo

Pakistan come home



ISLAMABAD, Dec 2: Wasim Akram's Pakistan cricket team faced a nation of disappointed fans today after returning home from a battering in the Test series in Australia, reports AFP.

The team looked tired as they stepped off their plane at Lahore late Wednesday, after a flight delayed for five hours. Officials and a handful of fans were there to greet them.

"I will give no pretext over the defeat but we lost to a better team, a super fit and more professional side," said Pakistan team manager Yawar Saad.

Pakistan lost all three Tests in Brisbane, Hobart and Perth as well as two one-day fixtures and a first-class game against Western Australia. Their only win of the tour came in the four-day game against South Australia at Adelaide.

The clean sweep left home fans disgruntled as the trip had been billed as the "revenge series" after Steve Waugh's Australia downed Pakistan to lift the greatest prize in the game — the World Cup held in England in June.

"The basic difference between the two teams was bowling. The Australians exploited our weaknesses and the conditions while our bowlers erred in line and length," Saad said.

The much-vaunted Pakistan bowling attack performed miserably in the series with express bowler Shoaib Akhtar taking six wickets at 67.67 runs per wicket and Wasim Akram five at 55.00.

In comparison Australian spearheads Damien Fleming grabbed 18 at 22.00 and Glen McGrath 14 at 28.00.

"I have become a joke among my friends as I took two weeks off from the office just to see my players in action to take revenge from Australia. They thoroughly disappointed me," said one fan, Mohammad Javed.

"It was not even a fight and they gave away the second Test from a winning position. They were just bulldozed by professionals," he said.

Vice captain Moin Khan and off-spinner Saqlain Mushtaq did not arrive with the team and will return within a few days.

Coach Richard Pybus, who is widely tipped to be replaced, also accompanied the team. Pybus, an Englishman, has been under fire in cricketing circles for his "lucrative" contract since his appointment.

The Pakistan manager criticised the umpiring and said two crucial decisions at Hobart discouraged his team.

"Had those two decisions gone our way we would have fought hard in the last Test," Saad said, referring to the Justin Langer caught behind decision turned down by Australian umpire Peter Parker and a close leg before shave of Adam Gilchrist.

Saad toned down a row about Akhtar's bowling action, after accusations he was a "chucker" were raised.

"It was media campaign and we are sad that it happened when the tour started and when it finished," he said.

The Pakistan team will return to Australia later this month to feature in a one-day triangular tournament involving hosts and arch rivals India.

Laver favours France

BRISBANE, Dec 2: Rod Laver believes the noisy home crowd will tip the scales in France's favour in the Davis Cup final against Australia on Friday to Sunday, reports AFP.

"I'd like to see Australia win and I feel it's even money if you put both teams in a neutral location," the Australian legend said here.

"But I've played quite a lot in France and the crowd participation in an indoor stadium will produce a lot of noise and a lot of pressure."

"I don't know how Lleyton (Hewitt) or Mark (Phillipoussis) will hold up," he added.

British bookmakers Ladbrokes have installed Australia a clear favourite at 7-4 on, with France 5-4, but the best-of-five match is being played on a clay court in the 10,000-seat Acropolis Exhibition Centre in Nice.

And Australia will have to shake off their lack of form on clay to win Australia lost their last two Davis Cup final appearances — both on clay — in Germany in 1993 and the United States in 1990.

Only one of Australia's 26 Cup wins has been scored on clay — the 3-2 victory in the US in 1964.

Laver said the final could hinge on whether Australia could win one of the first two singles rubbers.

"Because that will give Australia a lot of confidence and then France will start to wonder a bit," he said.

France, who pit Cedric Pioline and Sebastien Grosjean against Phillipoussis and Hewitt in the singles, are seeking a ninth Cup success to make them equal third with Britain behind the United States (31) and Australia (26) in Davis Cup records.

Laver said his advice to Phillipoussis would be to follow his serve to the net despite the slow clay court.

"He kicks the ball so high with his serve that it's hard to play against," he said.

"But he has to play within himself. He has to be patient and not just fire away hoping to make winners."

France Davis Cup captain Guy Forget, speaking from Nice, agreed with Laver.

"I played against Australia four times in the Davis Cup — twice at home and twice away," Forget said.

"I think the crowd made the difference each time. A lot of times it was very tight, and when you play these events and you have all these people pulling behind you all the time, it is very special."

Australia Davis Cup captain John Newcombe, believed to have had a slight edge, said, "If we get them down to nil after the first day then I don't think they could come back from that," Newcombe said.

But he agreed the venue, which should produce a lot of echo, could be intimidating.

"Our boys will just have to shut that out and concentrate on the job at hand. That's what sport and playing away from home is all about."

However, the doubles could be just as decisive.

Mark Woodbridge, reunited with Todd Woodbridge who missed the quarterfinal and semi-final through injury, will take on Olivier Delaite and Fabrice Santoro, who are 2-0 up in career meetings with the Australians.

The eventual champions have won the doubles in every final since the world group began in 1981.

"The French are a very good pair, and this is not the Woodies' best surface."

"Grass is their best surface, and their results say they're not as good on clay."

"But Davis Cup is just about one match, and you've got to try to just prepare for that one match."

Indians skittled

SYDNEY, Dec 2: India look to have some batting problems before next week's first Test against Australia after they were bowled out for just 185 on the opening day of a four-day match against New South Wales at the SCG today, reports Reuters.

The home side were 35-1 in reply at the close of play.

The Blues have so far failed to win a match in the Australian inter-state championship this season and India would have been expecting some valuable batting practice against a side missing a number of Test stars.

But on an unusually greenish SCG pitch, four of the Indian top seven were out lbw playing back to good length balls.

Saurav Ganguly was the top scorer with 38, but none of the other batsmen batted for more than two hours.

The Indians were without their inspirational captain Sachin Tendulkar but the rest failed to impress against a modest attack consisting of Brett Lee, Don Nash and Stuart MacGill.

Lee, who was 12th man for Australia in the third test against Pakistan last week, generated great pace to finish with three for 56 from 22 overs.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard on the opening day of the four-day tour match between New South Wales and India at the SCG on Thursday:

INDIA: First innings

Gardhi lbw b B Lee 15
Ramesh lbw b Nash 2
Lavman c Robertson b M 37
Dravid lbw b MacGill 21
Ganguly c Hardin b Nash 38
Kanitkar c Hayne b MacGill 0
Bharadwaj lbw b B Lee 16
Agarkar b Lee 28
Kumble not out 13
Srinath run out 0
Prasad run out 4
Extras (lb 5 lb 1 nb 5) 11
Total (All out) 185

Fall of wickets: 1-8: 2-22: 3-66: 4-88: 5-107: 6-126: 7-157: 8-168: 9-169

Bowler **O** **M** **R** **W**
B Lee 22 6 56 3
D Nash 13 4 35 2
S Lee 18 6 35 0
G Robertson 1 1 0 0
G MacGill 2 1 6 1
S MacGill 17 1 5 47 2

NEW SOUTH WALES: First innings

G MacGill not out 8
G Hayne c Kumble b Agarkar 0
C Richards not out 23
Extras (lb 4) 4
Total (For one wicket) 35
Fall of wicket: 1-0

Bowler **O** **M** **R** **W**
J Srinath 6 2 18 0
A Agarkar 3 2 2 1
A Kumble 3 1 6 0
V Prasad 2 0 5 0

To bat: M Bevan, M Clarke, S Lee, B Hardin, G Robertson, D Nash, B Lee, S MacGill.

Goals galore on Day 1

NEW DELHI, Dec 2: Former captain Pritam Rani Siwach put on display her best form scoring three and set up many a chance as India overwhelmed Malaysia 8-0 to open their account on a high note after South Korea had defeated Japan in the fourth Asia Cup women's hockey tournament opener here yesterday, reports PTI.

Pritam Rani was at her athletic best as she drew first blood in the sixth minute when a rebound from Malaysian goalkeeper Lal Ling gave her the chance to sound the boards.

Jyoti Kulkarni had staged the attack from the right flank and her shot was stopped by Ling but the ball remained in play for Pritam Rani to put India ahead.

Pritam Rani extracted advantage from the sloppy Malaysian defence as she again struck in the 33rd and 34th minutes while Suraj Lata Devi and Jyoti scored a brace each to give the Asian Games silver medalists a confident start in the continental championships at the National Stadium.

After a relatively good year, India are hoping to cap the season by winning the tournament and an automatic place in the 2002 World Cup.

Defending champions South Korea, fielding a below-par team, outclassed a clueless Japan 4-1 earlier in the day.

Striker Jin-Hyuk Bang took advantage of a weak Japanese defence and hammered home twice in the second half as the stronger Koreans dominated for the most part of the match.



Monaco's Argentine star Marcelo Gallardo (L) is exultant after scoring against Auxerre in their French First Division encounter at Monaco on December 1. — Internet photo

French First Division Gallardo double sinks Auxerre

MONACO, Dec 2 (Reuters/Internet): Argentine Marcelo Gallardo scored twice in the first half to give Monaco a 2-0 home win over Auxerre and a five-point lead at the halfway stage of the French championship on Wednesday.

Title favourites Monaco, opening the biggest points lead so far, have taken 36 from 17 matches against the 31 of second-placed Olympique, Lyon, Paris St Germain are third on 30 and Auxerre fourth with 29.

It was Monaco's 10th match unbeaten in domestic and European competition and former leaders Auxerre's fourth defeat in five league games.

Gallardo headed home in the 26th minute when he met Italian Marco Simone's long chest-high cross from the right at the far post. The former River Plate player struck again from the same spot four minutes before the interval.

Gallardo took a superb through ball from Ludovic Giuly on the left and, feigning to pass, beat Auxerre goalkeeper Fabien Cool with a superb curling shot inside the near post.

Monaco, who have by far the best attack with 38 goals, were superb and could have won by more than double the score.

Cool tipped a Simone free kick over the bar on the hour and only a superb save by the Auxerre goalkeeper robbed Gallardo of a hat-trick 15 minutes from time.

Auxerre barely tested France goalkeeper Fabien Barthez with two free kicks on target in his first match after thigh surgery two months ago.

Yet they could have gone in front early on if striker Stephane Guivarch had not steered the ball just wide from Steve Marlet's cross from the right.

The match, postponed from mid-October, completed the fixtures for the first half of the championship.

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Kalou saves Feyenoord

AMSTERDAM, Dec 2: Champions Feyenoord were back in business in the Dutch league after beating last year's runners-up Willem II Tilburg 1-0 on Wednesday, reports Reuters.

Feyenoord had sunk to 10th in the standings after a poor spell but victories over PSV Eindhoven on Sunday and Willem II lifted them to seventh, still nine points behind leaders Ajax Amsterdam.

Bonaventure Kalou scored the only goal with a header from a corner on the stroke of half-time.

Lowly Cambuur Leeuwarden pulled off a major escape in the last five minutes when they turned a 3-1 deficit into a 4-3 win over Utrecht.

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Italian Cup Juve sail, Lazio held

MILAN, Dec 2 (Reuters/Internet): Juventus won 3-1 at Napoli, but Italian favourite Lazio were held 1-1 by Ravenna in the two games between Serie A and Serie B sides in the Italian Cup third round, first leg, on Wednesday.

League leaders AS Roma lost 1-0 at home to Piacenza, while Cagliari defeated holders Parma 1-0 and struggling Venezia won 3-0 against Udinese.

Juventus led through Filippo Inzaghi in the 17th minute and 12 minutes later added a second with a superb chip from the edge of the penalty area by Yugoslav Darko Kovacevic.

Napoli, relegated in 1998, pulled a goal back in the 33rd minute when Juan Esnaider, handed in the penalty area and Francesco Turrini converted the spot kick.

The Naples side took the game to Juventus after the break but always looked vulnerable at the back and Kovacevic struck again 10 minutes from time with a clinical finish after good work from Jonathan Bachini.

Lazio went ahead against Ravenna thanks to a sweet left foot drive from Croat Alen Boksic in 66th minute, but a diving header from Sebastiano Vecchiola 15 minutes from time meant Ravenna, currently 11th in Serie B, travel to Rome in two weeks' time on level terms.

League leaders AS Roma face a tricky second leg at Piacenza after Gianpiero Piovani earned the visitors victory when he slotted home in the 37th minute after Ruggiero Rizzitelli's shot had hit the post.

Bottom club Cagliari, without a win in the league, enjoyed a little respite from their relegation fight with a Patrick Mboma penalty 15 minutes from time giving them a surprise home win over Parma.

A fourth minute strike from Mauro Milanese was enough for Perugia to take a one goal advantage to Fiorentina. Luciano Spallotti, re-appointed Venezia coach on Monday after just three games away from the bench, saw his side defeat Udinese 3-0. Filippo Maniero scored twice.

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