

Nat'l chess Four lead the board

Four players were jointly leading the preliminary round of the 26th National Chess Championship with seven and a half points after tenth round matches at federation room yesterday, reports UNB.

They are — IM Abdullah Al Rakib, Abu Sufian Shakil, Sheikh Nasir Shiplu and Arifuzzaman Sikdar.

Six players — Enamul Hosain Rajib, Saifuddin Lavi, Khandaqir Aminul Islam, Anisuzzaman Mallik, Arman Hossain Monir and Shawkat Hossain Pallab — followed the leaders with seven points.

The eleventh and last round will be held today (Sunday) from 3 pm.

Meanwhile, the first open tournament of Dhaka Chess Festival-2000 organised by recently formed Prof Abdur Razak Chess Club will be held from Thursday at Dhaka Dabba Ghar on Green Road.

Interested players have been requested to contact Dhaka Dabba Ghar office or Bangladesh Chess Federation office before 8 pm on February 23.

Acme Div II cricket

Gulshan Youth Club and Old DOHS won their respective matches in the Acme Second Division Relegation League at different city venues yesterday, reports UNB.

Gulshan Youth defeated Progoti Sheba Sangha by 63 runs at the UPL ground.

Opting to bat first, Gulshan Youth were all out for 185 runs in 36.3 overs.

In reply, Progoti Sheba were bundled out for 122 runs in 37.4 overs.

At the Mirpur Outer Stadium ground, Old DOHS beat CCS Blues by 46 runs.

Old DOHS made 238 for nine wickets in stipulated 40 overs after putting in to bat first.

In reply, CCS Blues managed 192 runs in 40 overs for nine wickets.

M'singh cricket

MYMENSINGH, Feb 19: Mukul Fouz Red earned a one-wicket victory over Shaheed Ratan Sangsad in the nail-biting match of the Beg Rime Premier Division League here today, reports UNB.

Batting first, Shaheed Ratan scored 187 for all in 45 overs with Jony making 61 and Lalat 44.

Shimul and Sajjad took two wickets each for 19 and 35 runs respectively.

In reply, Mukul Fouz reached the target of 188 runs with one wicket in hand in 42.3 overs.

Samaranch in Bangkok

BANGKOK, Feb 19: International Olympic Committee (IOC) president Juan Antonio Samaranch met Thai sports officials today, three weeks after Thailand said it was bidding for the 2008 Summer Games, reports AFP.

Samaranch who arrived in Thailand late Friday night, visited an indoor stadium in Bangkok to observe a game of sepak takraw which is reportedly being considered as an Olympic demonstration sport.

Takraw players try to propel a ball over a high net with their feet. The sport, which is similar to volleyball, is especially popular in southeast Asia.

Samaranch was later due to fly by helicopter to present King Bhumibol Adulyadej with the Lalaounis Cup at a seaside summer palace in Hua Hin.

The cup recognises services to the Olympic movement.

Thailand joined the race for the 2008 Games just before the bid deadline last month and is shaping up as a rank outsider against front-runner Beijing and eight other cities, including Paris.

Samaranch is due to hold talks with Thai Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai and other officials and will also meet executives from Thailand's Olympic Committee Sunday.

Mighty club

From page 13
a Pakistani player, Badal said.

When Badal was still pondering on finalising his foreign players, Athar Ali Khan gave the true picture of a team, the leadership of which is likely to be bestowed upon him.

"It should have been better had they announced a captain before. If that had happened he could have done the homework of motivating the side. It is also a bit disappointing the way the practice is going now," said Athar Ali yesterday.

The players are not giving their 100 per cent in the practice. Some are not even regular. This should not be the approach of any professional player," said the veteran right-hander.

The 36-year-old opener, who is about to take up the most demanding job after long ten years when he inspired Brothers Union to lift the title way back in 1990-91 season, was not even sure of the regular eleven.

"I only know that young opener Rashedul Haq is a good player. Nahid looks impressive with the bat and his agility in fielding. Hannan failed to impress me. I have bated against Monjurul in the nets. He is really a quality bowler. Rahul is a good all-rounder," said Athar.

"Definitely we are capable of surprising other teams. And I'm looking forward to taking Mohammad to a position where they wanted to be", rounded off the tall right-hander.



Sri Lankan skipper Sanath Jayasuriya (L) receives the LG one-day series trophy after the third and last match against Pakistan at Lahore yesterday. —AFP photo

Black Caps blown away



AUCKLAND, Feb 19: Australia easily despatched a rusty and aimless New Zealand in a one-day cricket match here today, reports AFP.

The day-night game barely needed the lights as the whole game ended in just under 55 overs as the setting sun over Eden Park ensured the 33,000 spectators got an early night.

Australia polished off New Zealand's supposedly strong batting line-up for a dismal 122 with the first ball of the 31st over.

The tourists then reached their winning target at a good clip, off 24.4 overs with five wickets down. Tour replacement Matthew Hayden scored his second consecutive half-century to see them home.

It was a chilling reminder to New Zealand, coming off five straight one-day wins over the West Indies, that they were playing the form team of world cricket.

Aside from the no-result in the first one-dayer in Wellington on Thursday, Australia have now won 10 consecutive one-day matches.

Their world-class bowling attack caused New Zealand problems, but it was also poor shot selection by the home batsmen which contributed to several wickets.

Glenn McGrath and Brett Lee opened their tours with fiery spells, McGrath ending with three for 33 of 8.1 overs as well as having two confident caught behind appeals against Stephen Fleming turned down early on.

Man-of-the-match Brett Lee took three for 21 off seven accurate overs, while Shane Warne took two for 35 off 10 overs and Shane Lee chipping in with two for 27 off five.

Australia fielded brilliantly, with Brett Lee taking a memorable one-handed catch on the fine leg boundary to dismiss Chris Cairns for one.

Right from the fourth ball of the match when Craig Spearman edged an attempted off-drive off McGrath to Australian wicketkeeper Adam Gilchrist, New Zealand were in trouble.

It didn't help when their form batsman Nathan Astle was deceived by a fast outswinger from Brett Lee — his first delivery of the tour — making it none for two after 1.1 overs.

Only Roger Twose and Craig McMillan showed any spine, with Fleming, Cairns, Chris Harris and Adam Parore all falling cheaply to leave New Zealand 81 for seven after 21 overs.

Twose survived the early barrage but was bowled by Warne on 25, while McMillan took the Australians on confidently, hitting five fours and a straight six off Shane Lee in scoring 35 off 49 balls.

He had almost run out of partners when he edged a wide ball from Brett Lee to Gilchrist.

Daniel Vettori added 35 for the ninth wicket with McMillan — the highest partnership of the innings.

Cairns and Vettori both claimed early wickets. Cairns having Mark Waugh caught behind for two and Vettori having Gilchrist caught on the mid-wicket boundary by Roger Twose for 10.

It could have been 36 for three when Andrew Symonds edged Cairns between wicket-

Australian fast bowler Brett Lee jumps for joy after dismissing Nathan Astle during the second one-day international in Auckland yesterday. —AFP photo

won us the game," he said. "Our opening bowlers have again done a great job. They've taken early wickets in the last six or seven games and we're playing good all-round cricket."

New Zealand captain Fleming had no excuses but said there was a long time to go in the series.

"We coped a lot of pressure and didn't handle it very well," Fleming said.

"It's one game out of the summer though and we can't get hung up."

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the limited-overs cricket match between New Zealand and Australia at Eden Park on Saturday:

AUSTRALIA

M Waugh c Parore b Cairns 2

Gilchrist c Twose b Vettori 10

Symonds c Styris b Vettori 33

Hayden c Vettori b Wiseman 50

Bevan c Cairns b Wiseman 8

S Waugh not out 4

Martyn not out 8

Extras: (lb-6, w-6, nb-4) 8

Total: (For five wickets in 24.4 overs) 123

Fall of wickets: 1-13; 2-17; 3-

62; 4-98: 5-112.

Bowler O M R W

Cairns 5 0 39 1

Vettori 10 1 37 2

Styris 4 0 21 0

Wiseman 5 0 21 0

McMillan 0 4 0 4

Result: Australia won by five wickets, lead series 1-0.

Man-of-the-match: Brett Lee

SHANE WARNE

Nightingale said.

Warne then asked why they were laughing and abused them, the boys told police.

"It was disgraceful behaviour by an international cricketer."

Nightingale said Warne asked for the camera, and when

the boys refused he told them he would get a security guard to escort them out of the ground.

A guard turned up and Warne grabbed Daniel's bag and put it over his shoulder.

When Nightingale arrived on the scene and asked for the bag to be returned, he said Warne "just stared at me..."

Nightingale then went and contacted police who took the boys, Nightingale and Warne into a room where officers told the cricketer the boys were free to go and the bag was then returned.

Inspector Greg Gilpin, officer in charge at the game, said Warne was upset and agitated about the photo but willingly gave the bag back after police intervened. No charges were laid.

Warne denied verbally abusing the teenage boys and Australian team manager Steve Bernard also said the leg-spinner had not sworn or grabbed the bag.

Warne was paid 239,000 NZ dollars (1.20,000 US) last year to quit his 40-a-day habit and wear anti-smoking patches.

Daniel said "nothing" and Shannon started laughing.

Shoaib cleared to play for Notts

LAHORE, Feb 19 (AFP/Internet): Pakistani pace demon Shoaib Akhtar was on Friday cleared to play for English county side Nottinghamshire from the end of May.

Pakistani officials said they needed Shoaib for the country's three-Test tour of the Caribbean from April 1 to May 26.

But the speedster dubbed the Rawalpindi Express had already been excused from duty in the tour to Sri Lanka in July, officials said.

"We will talk to the administration at Nottinghamshire and tell them we need Shoaib for the West Indies tour but he may escape the Sri Lanka tour in July," PCB ad hoc committee chairman General Taqiq Zia told AFP.

The tour to the West Indies is very important so we need to have the best bowling attack there," Zia said.

Pakistan have never beaten the West Indies in the Caribbean.

Shoaib was recruited by Nottinghamshire after sparkling at last year's World Cup in England.

The acquisition of the 24-year-old has sparked a wave of excitement at Notts, helping to boost membership.

Shoaib was banned by the International Cricket Council (ICC) for having an illegal bowling action in December but was subsequently allowed to play again after an ICC ruling.

Shoaib is fired up for playing in England.

Playing for the same county as two great bowlers like Sir Richard Hadlee and Clive Rice did will be a great privilege," Akhtar said earlier.

Tyson's next bout in Milan April 8

MILAN, Feb 19: Mike Tyson's second European fight is most likely to be held in Milan on April 8, Italian organisers said Friday, reports AP.

"Negotiations are in an advanced stage ... We are confident about settling the last few details early next week," said Andrea Locatelli, an official of the Milan-based Media Partners group which is trying to organize the boxing meet in Italy.

The fight would be held at Assago Forum, which can house 12,000 fans. Luisa Savarese appears to be the leading candidate as Tyson's opponent, Locatelli said.

Tyson, the former undisputed heavyweight champion, fought his first European bout in Manchester on Jan 29, scoring a second-round knockout victory against British champion Julius Francis.

Tyson has said he wants to do three more fights before challenging Lennox Lewis of Britain for the undisputed championship.

Better late than never for Gardener

MADRID, Feb 19: Britain's Jason Gardener was given a share of the European 50 metres record on Friday, two days after he ran the race, reports Reuters.

Gardener clocked 5.61 seconds at an indoor meeting in Madrid on Wednesday, equaling the European record of East Germany's Manfred Kötter set back in 1973.

The distance is not a championship event but is still contested quite regularly.

Gardener was running a 60 metres race but sophisticated electronic timing equipment was also set up at the 50 metres mark to capture an official time for the distance.

"There were problems on the night confirming the 50 metres times because Gardener changed lanes just before the start," a Spanish federation spokesman said.

The 60 metres was the last event on the night's programme and meeting officials were in a hurry to clear the arena.

"It was only when we got the photo-finish back in the Spanish federation office and examined it very closely that we saw that Gardener had run 5.61, equaling the record," the spokesman said.

Only two men — Canada's Donovan Bailey and American Maurice Greene — have ever run faster than Gardener over 50 metres.

The North American pair are joint holders of the world record at 5.56 seconds.

Gardener, clear favourite for the 60 metres title at the European indoor championships in Belgium next weekend, went to Madrid intending to break his own European 60 metres record of 6.46 seconds but on the night he was 0.02 seconds adrift.

Cuba's Freddy Mayola set a Caribbean and Central American 50 metres record after being given the same official time as Gardener.

However, Mayola was adjudged to have been behind the Briton by a few thousandths of a second at 50 metres and crossed the line after