

Rajshahi sports

From Our Correspondent
RAJSHAH, Nov 27: Naohata Sporting Club and Tiger Sporting Club won their respective matches of the sixth Bir Sreshthya Captain Shaheed Mubuddin Jahangir Smriti Gold Cup cricket tournament at the Western Railway playground today.

In the first match, Naohata defeated Banesar Surjodoy Cricket Club by 16 runs. Winning the toss, Naohata batted first and went all out collecting 130 runs in 24.3 overs.

In reply, Banesar made 114 losing all the wickets in 24.2 overs.

In the other match, Tiger Sporting Club got walkover in absence of the opponents Upasahar Cricket Coaching Centre.

HANDBALL

Friends Sporting Club and Modern Boxing Club won their respective matches of the Rajshahi First Division Handball League at the AHM Qamruzzaman Divisional Stadium today.

In the first match, Friends Sporting defeated Morning Star 11-7. Modern Boxing Club beat Green Star Club 15-7 in the other match of the day.

KABADI

Jagrata Sangha emerged champions beating Raj Sporting Club 21-6 in the Rajshahi First Division Kabadi League at the local gymnasium today.

SOCCER

Rajshahi blanked Lalmonirhat DSA 10-0 in the Rajshahi Divisional interdistrict football tournament at the AHM Qamruzzaman Divisional Stadium today.

Parore puts NZ on top

EAST LONDON, South Africa, Nov 27: New Zealand wicketkeeper Adam Parore hit an unbeaten century as his team took command on the second day of their three-day match against the Border provincial team at Buffalo Park Sunday, reports AFP.

Replacement pace bowler Andrew Penn took five for 38 as Border were bundled out for 73, then Parore made an unbeaten 101 before New Zealand set the home side an impossible victory target of 424.

When bad light stopped play Border were 36 for two in their second innings.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at the close of play on the second day of a three-day match between Border and the touring New Zealand at Buffalo Park on Sunday:

NEW ZEALAND: First innings 311-4 dec (C McMillan 76 not out, N Asile 69 not out, C Spearman 56, M Richardson 45).

BORDER: First innings

Asile c Sinclair b Penn	1
Mitchell c Parore b Tulley	2
Love c Sinclair b Penn	2
Pope c Spearman b Walker	1
Wilkin c Spearman b Penn	1
Strydom lbw b Walker	18
Garnett c Asile b Penn	1
Makalima b Penn	6
Graham b Walmsley	0
Matomela lbw b Walker	0
Zondeki not out	0
Extras: (nb-2)	2
Total: (All out in 27.1 overs)	73
Fall of wickets: 1-1, 2-3, 3-24, 4-37, 5-61, 6-65, 7-67, 8-68, 9-73	

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Tulley	9	1	22	1
Penn	12	3	38	5
Walker	5	1	13	1
Walmsley	1	1	0	1

NEW ZEALAND: Second innings

Parore not out 101.
Spearman retired hurt 57.
Sinclair not out 25.
Extras: (lb-1, nb-1) 2.
Total: (For no wicket dec in 47 overs) 185.

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Zondeki	10	1	40	0
Graham	12	4	31	0
Matomela	6	0	33	0
Love	12	0	60	0
Strydom	7	1	24	0

BORDER: Second innings

Suggen b Tulley 15.
Mitchell c Spearman b Walmsley 11.
Pope not out 1.
Wilkin not out 2.
Total: (For 2 wickets in 13 overs) 36.

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Tulley	7	2	19	1
Penn	5	1	17	0
Walmsley	1	1	0	1

Perth passes Test test

PERTH, Nov 27: The controversial wicket area at the WACA Ground in Perth has been given a clean bill of health for Australia's attempt at cricketing history this weekend, reports AFP.

WACA curator Richard Winter said he was confident of producing a "genuine cricket wicket" for Friday's second Test against the West Indies despite problems earlier this month.

The WACA Ground created history earlier this season when a one-day match between Western Australia and Queensland was abandoned after just five overs because of the unpredictable state of the wicket.

But Winter described this as a "one-off" because of unfavourable weather conditions, saying Australian skipper Steve Waugh could rely on a good deck for his team's shot at a world record 12th consecutive win.

"It's all looking pretty good at the moment and it should be a genuine cricket wicket from the WACA with some pace and bounce during the first couple of days," Winter said Monday.

"It will be nice and flat with an even grass cover and it will test out the techniques of the top order batsmen."

Grant leads the fightback



NAGPUR, India, Nov 27: Grant Flower hit an unbeaten 91 as Zimbabwe made a determined bid to stage off defeat in the second cricket Test against India here on Monday, reports AFP.

The tourists, facing India's mammoth first innings score of 609-6, recovered from a top order slump to post 359-6 by close of the third day's play.

Zimbabwe resume on Tuesday needing only 51 runs with four wickets in hand to avoid a follow-on and save themselves from possible defeat in back-to-back Tests.

Flower came to the crease after rookie off-spinner Sharan Deep Singh had created a stir in Zimbabwe's ranks with two quick wickets after lunch to make it 166-4.

Flower, sporting a bald pate, retrieved the situation by adding 96 for the fifth wicket with elder brother Andy, and 62 for the sixth with Dirk Viljoen.

Having bagged a pair in the first Test in New Delhi, the right-hander returned unbeaten with 12 boundaries and three sixes.

With him at the crease was captain Heath Streak on 16, having put on a valuable 35 runs for the seventh wicket with Flower.

Zimbabwe scored 300 runs in a day after half-centuries from Guy Whittall, Stuart Carlisle and the Flower brothers on the easy-paced pitch that has been a bowlers' nightmare so far.

Whittall and Carlisle put on 101 for the second wicket to lift Zimbabwe from their overnight score of 59-1 to 153-2 at lunch.

Whittall, promoted to open the innings after batting at number six in the first Test, made 84 with the help of 12 boundaries.

Carlisle, who made 51, was dismissed 20 minutes before lunch when Ajit Agarkar held a return catch which ballooned from the bat off the batsman's boots.

It was a lucky break for the Indians who, like the tourists, struggled to keep runs in check on the firm wicket at the Vidarbha Cricket Association ground.

Zimbabwe took advantage of the easy batting conditions to hammer 94 runs from 28 overs in the two-hour morning session.

Sharandeep, the 21-year-old debutant, slowed Zimbabwe's progress by removing Alistair Campbell and Whittall in successive overs soon after resumption.

Kept away from the firing line for 42 overs, the Punjab had made an immediate impact when he was brought on by skipper Saurav Ganguly for two overs before lunch.

He bowled four maidens in a row either side of the break, before striking in his seventh when Campbell was snapped up a gully by Sadagopan Ramesh for four.

Whittall added just four runs to his lunch score of 80 when he was caught at leg-slip by Rahul Dravid.

Sharandeep conceded just five runs in his first eight overs before the Flower brothers launched into him.

Andy Flower hoisted a six over square-leg, while Grant took 14 runs in an over, including a six over the long-on fence.

Andy, whose unbeaten 183 and 70 in the first Test failed to stop India from securing a seven-wicket win, was caught behind off Agarkar after tea for 55.

Wicketkeeper Vijay Dahiya

then brought off a superb head-high catch to end Viljoen's tenure at the crease.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the third day of the second Test between India and Zimbabwe at the Vidarbha Cricket Association ground on Monday:

INDIA: First innings 609-6 dec (S Tendulkar 201 not out, R Dravid 162, S Das 110).

ZIMBABWE: First innings

Whittall c Dravid b Sharandeep	84
Rennie run out	19
Carlisle c and b Agarkar	51
Campbell c Ramesh b Sharandeep	4
A Flower c Dahiya b Agarkar	55
G Flower not out	91
Viljoen c Dahiya b Zaheer	16
Streak not out	20
Extras: (lb-6, nb-1, nb-3)	20
Total: (For 6 wickets 108 overs)	359
Fall of wickets: 1-43, 2-144, 3-165, 4-166, 5-262, 6-324	

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Srinath	22	4	78	0
Zaheer	21	3	78	1
Joshi	21	6	55	0
Agarkar	21	7	54	2
Sharandeep	22	7	70	2
Tendulkar	1	0	7	0



Grant Flower of Zimbabwe sweeps on the third day of the second Test against India yesterday. -AFP photo

Sponsors concern for WI



BRISBANE, Nov 27: West Indies cricket officials are concerned sponsors will abandon their side if a disastrous losing streak continues, reports AFP.

With the tourists heading for another likely defeat in the second Test in Perth starting on Friday, team manager Ricky Skerritt is worried their woeful form could drive sponsors away.

The Caribbean tourists were humiliated by an innings and 126 runs in two and a half days in the first Brisbane Test as the Australians, who are chasing an historic 12th consecutive Test victory this week.

The West Indies have plummeted from cricket's pinnacle, but are still drawing crowds, with almost 50,000 at the Gabba over the three days.

Four days before the Perth Test, WACA officials say almost

80 per cent of corporate boxes are sold out, with a crowd of between 16,000 and 20,000 expected on the first day.

Skerritt said the Windies can't keep riding the wave of popularity of stars, Brian Lara and Courtney Walsh, without sponsors asking questions.

"We haven't had any approaches, but the reality is this team has to do better than it's doing," Skerritt said.

"It's been strange that even with our losses we have continued to ride the wave of the legacy of West Indies cricket and the fact that we have Brian Lara and Courtney Walsh in the team continues to have a certain aura to it."

"However, we have to show that West Indies cricket is on a recovery path and if not, sponsors are going to ask questions."

Fast food outlet KFC — owned by multi-national company Collins Foods Interna-

tional — has sponsored the Windies on their last two tours of Australia.

Global communication giant Cable and Wireless has sponsored the team at home for almost 20 years, but is in the midst of a world-wide shake-up.

The Windies have no worldwide sponsors and could struggle with local free-to-air television refusing to show the first sessions of the Australia Tests live because of lack of commercial interest.

Collins Foods Group marketing director Pam Martin said KFC was not committed to a long-term sponsorship, but was content to ride the team's popularity in Australia this summer.

"We don't see it as having any negative impact and there have been no discussions to have a long term commitment," she said Monday.

Watch out for Brett



BRISBANE, Nov 27: Australian wicketkeeper Adam Gilchrist said today he expected Brett Lee to bowl some of the fastest deliveries ever recorded when the second cricket Test starts against the West Indies in Perth on Friday, reports Reuters.

The Perth wicket is regarded as one of the fastest, bounciest tracks in world cricket.

Gilchrist said Lee was a "lethal weapon" and would give former Australian fast bowler Jeff Thomson's record of 160.45 kmh (100 mph) a shake.

Lee's best is 156 kmh recorded in South Africa in April. He broke the arm of Gilchrist's Western Australian teammate Jo Angel in an interstate game in Perth last season and made his Test debut against India in Melbourne in December, taking wicket with his fourth ball.

There was a genuine fear factor last year in Perth. I was genuinely concerned for our batsmen," Gilchrist told reporters on Monday.

Australia beat the Windies in the first Test by an innings and 126 runs in Brisbane on Saturday.

Stockholm Open stays at home

STOCKHOLM, Nov 27: Thomas Johansson kept the trophy at the 800,000-dollar Stockholm Open firmly in home hands for another year as he dominated Yevgeny Kafelnikov 6-2, 6-4, 6-4 to lift the title Sunday, reports AFP.

day, taking less than three days to dismiss them for 82 and 124 with Lee taking 4-64.

"I just wish they had a speed camera there," Lee said in The Sunday Age.

Lee added on Monday: "I will be over there trying to bowl quick but we have to focus on line and length and not breaking records."

Perth curator Richard Winter said on Monday he was confident his wicket would provide pace and bounce in the first few days of the Test.

Lee, 24, said his performance for New South Wales

against Western Australia last season was "the quickest I've ever bowled."

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INSTANT IMPACT: Tore Andre Flo (C), Rangers' new record signing scoring against Celtic in the Scottish Premiership at Glasgow on November 26. -AFP photo

Kramnik-Kasparov

rematch unlikely

MOSCOW, Nov 27: The world chess champion Vladimir Kramnik said Sunday that he does not plan for a rematch between him and his predecessor Garry Kasparov, reports AFP.

"Rumours of a re-match between me and Kasparov are groundless," Kramnik said in an interview aired on the Ekho Moskvy radio.

The 25-year-old champion said he has "obligations" toward the Brain Games and would defend his crown against any winner of the qualifying rounds scheduled for next year.

The re-match could be possibly staged only if the Brain Games fails to organise the tournament, now planned for 2002, Kramnik added.

Kramnik put an end to Kasparov's 15-year domination of the game early this month, but Kasparov, one of the most admired chessmasters in history, said he would attempt to win the title back.

Kramnik also said he would like to help in setting up a "comprehensive system of the World Chess Championships" in case the Brain Games and the international chess federation FIDE "find common ground."

Besides Kasparov, Kramnik said he would be interested in playing against India's Viswanathan Anand, who has "good chances" in a FIDE championship, he added.

Kramnik, Kasparov's former pupil and protégé served as his second when Kasparov took on Anand five years ago.

Germans adore MJ

MUNICH, Nov 27: Double Olympic 400 metres champion Michael Johnson has been voted sportsman of the year in a poll organised by German television, reports AFP.

The 33-year-old American, who holds the world records for 200 and 400 metres, confirmed to the ARD television station who organised the competition that he would not be taking part in next year's World Championships in Edmonton, Canada.

He said he wanted to give serious thought to how he would spend the last few months of his career.

Viewers of the television station voted veteran kayak Olympic gold medalist Birgit Fischer, Germany's woman athlete of the year.

The surprise winner of the Olympic 800 metres, Nils Schumann, won the men's national honour, while the team award went to the Olympic cycling team pursuit gold medalists, Robert Bartko, Daniel Becke, Guido Fülst and Jens Lehmann, who set a world record in winning the Olympic title.

Franz Beckenbauer, the current president of football giants Bayern Munich and World Cup-winning captain as a player in 1974 and as coach in 1990, was inaugurated into the Hall of Fame.

Scottish Premiership Rangers rout Celtic

GLASGOW, Nov 27: Rangers beat bitter Glasgow rivals Celtic 5-1 at Ibrox Sunday to close the gap on the Parkhead side and re-launch the race for the Scottish Premier League title, reports AFP.

Reigning champions Rangers, who were thrashed 6-2 by Celtic at Parkhead earlier this season, handed the league leaders their first league defeat of the season to close the gap on Martin O'Neill's men to 12 points. Rangers also have a game in hand.

Rangers move up to third on 32 points from 16 games, five behind second-placed Hibernian, who like Celtic have played one game more.

Captain Barry Ferguson gave Rangers a half-time lead with a cool finish but Swedish international Henrik Larsson levelled the scores with a close-range header 11 minutes after the interval.

Record signing Tore Andre Flo, who arrived from English Premiership club Chelsea in a 12 million pound (£17 million dollar) deal earlier this week, restored Rangers' lead four minutes later.

Dutch international Frank de Boer netted a third after 63 minutes with a far post header before Italian Lorenzo Amoroso, also with his head, increased Rangers' lead.



INSTANT IMPACT: Tore Andre Flo (C), Rangers' new record signing scoring against Celtic in the Scottish Premiership at Glasgow on November 26. -AFP photo



Olympic gold medalists Jan Zelezny (R) of the Czech Republic and American Marion Jones pose with their accolades at the IAAF gala in Monaco on November 26. -AFP photo

Marion, Jan honoured



MONACO, Nov 27: American sprint queen Marion Jones and Czech javelin thrower Jan Zelezny were elected athletes of the year by the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) here Sunday, reports AFP.

The announcement was made by HSH Prince Albert of Monaco and IAAF President Laurence Diack during the World Athletics Gala 2000 here.

Diack said: "Both athletes have shown outstanding competitive ability throughout the season, but they have also been superb role models, displaying respect for their rivals and good humour during extremely stressful circumstances."

Jones - who won this title in 1997 and 1998 - had an extremely busy 2000, and made a daring effort to capture five gold medals at the Olympic Games in Sydney.

Although she fell short of this goal, she still won three gold medals at 100m, 200m and the 4x100m relay as well as bronze in the long jump and 4x100m.

However, on top of the pressure of her quest for five golds, Jones had to cope with the news breaking during the games that her shot putter husband CJ Hunter had tested positive for steroids earlier in the season.

Jones handled the matter with great tact and charm, running to the aid of her beleaguered husband and then getting on with the business on the track.

The 25-year-old Jones, a former top-class basketball player whose decision to choose athletics has proved a masterstroke, lost her 1998 award last year to Romanian Olympic 5,000 metre champion Gabriela Szabo.

While her nomination was widely anticipated, that of Zelezny was a surprise and comes as the Czech Republic mourns quadruple Olympic gold medalist Emil Zatopek, who died Tuesday at the age of 78.

Zelezny, who wins this honour for the first time in a long and successful career, became the first man to win three consecutive Javelin titles at the Olympic Games.

PREVIOUS WINNERS

1988: Carl Lewis (USA) - Florence Griffith-Joyner (USA)

1989: Roger Kingdom (USA) - Ana Fidelia Quirot (CUB)

1990: Steve Backley (GBR) - Merlene Ottey (JAM)

1991: Carl Lewis (USA) - Katrin Krabbe (GER)

1992: Kevin Young (USA) - Heike Henkel (GER)

1993: Colin Jackson (GBR) - Sally Gunnell (GBR)

1994: Nourredine Morceli (ALG) - Jackie Joyner-Kersey (USA)

1995: Jonathan Edwards (GBR) - Gwen Torrence (USA)

1996: Michael Johnson (USA) - Svetlana Masterkova (RUS)

1997: Wilson Kipketer (Den) - Marion Jones (USA)

1998: Haile Gebrselassie (ETH) - Marion Jones (USA)

1999: Michael Johnson (USA) - Gabriela Szabo (ROM)

2000: Jan Zelezny (CZE) - Marion Jones (USA)

It was the manner of this victory - he threw 90.17 metres to regain the lead taken by Britain's Steve Backley who had thrown a superb 89.85 - which captured the imagination.

Zelezny, a 34-year-old former Czech army colonel, succeeds - last year's recipient American Michael Johnson, winner of two gold medals in the 400m and 4x400m relay in Sydney.

Zelezny's entire career has been marked by comeback and often from great adversity. A career-threatening spinal injury in 1989 has been followed by a series of operations on his throwing shoulder, most recently two years ago.

Yet still Zelezny, whose name means "Man of Iron", has always come back for more. The world record-holder showed in Sydney he was the greatest javelin thrower of all time, he also won silver in Seoul in 1988 before embarking on his gold spree.

As well as the Athletes of the Year, a number of other stars were rewarded at the Gala.

The "Inspirational Award" went to Australian Olympic torchbearer Cathy Freeman in recognition of the most dramatic winning performance in the 400m victory in Sydney.

The "Distinguished Career Award" was given to Germany's Heike Drechsler, winner of the Olympic long jump title aged 35, and Sergey Bubka of the Ukraine who announced his retirement this season, for demonstrating sustained excellence throughout long careers.

Meanwhile the "Rising Star Award" was given jointly to Australia's Jana Pittman and Saudi Arabia's Hamdan O Al