

Nat'l schools cricket

UNB, Dhaka

New Model High earned a huge 121-run victory over Saint Judges International in the Standard Chartered Grindlays 19th National Schools Cricket tournament at the Dhanmondi Club ground yesterday.

Brief score: New Model High - 220 runs (Raihan 59, Rajib 44, Zitu 36, Iqbal 3/35 and Tanjim 2/16).

Saint Judges - 99 all out in 23.5 overs (Raihan 3/2, Arman 3/6 and Abir 2/8).

At the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium, Pragoti High beat Bangladesh International School by seven wickets.

Brief score: Bangladesh International - 149 for 9 in 37 overs.

Nasir 34, Ahmed 28.

Pragoti High - 153 for 3 in 19 overs (Hasan 2/25 and Al Amin 2/28).

At the PIG ground, National Bangla High defeated Rabeya Pre-cadet High by 25 runs.

Brief score: National Bangla High - 200 for 8 in 35 overs (Rubel 48, Shaon 23, Jony 22, Anjad 2/31, Sujon 2/52).

Rabeya Pre-cadet - 175 all out in 34.3 overs (Sunny 38, Nazrul 34, Shaon 4/30, Rawnak 2/36 and Rubel 3/42).

At the Mirpur Outer Stadium, AK High beat BIT by 93 runs.

Brief score: AK High - 227 all out in 31.1 overs (Masum 77, Saiful 57, Rony 26, Masum 4/22).

BIT School - 134 runs in 34.1 overs (Sabir 37, Shaheen 5/55).

United for umpires

INTERNET, Karachi

Pakistan and India will put it to the International Cricket Council (ICC) sub-committee meeting in Melbourne on February 7 that their officials should be given more international appointments.

Sunil Gavaskar, India's representative, will be making the same point on behalf of Indian umpires and match referees.

Despite the differences between India and Pakistan at a political level, which filters through to cricket, the two countries will be submitting a joint proposal on this issue.

The feeling in the sub-continent is that, despite there being a decline in the overall standard of officiating, Indian and Pakistan officials are not receiving their fair share of appointments when compared to English, Australian and South African officials.

Another point that Pakistan and India will be raising is that umpires and match referees should receive a standard fee.

Another feather in Brazil's cap

REUTERS, Ecuador

Brazil beat hosts Ecuador 3-0 on Sunday to win the South American under-20 Championship but their title was marred by allegations of unsporting behaviour throughout the tournament.

Two first-half goals by Everton and one by his striking partner Adriano sank the home side and allowed Brazil to finish top of the six-team final stage with 13 points from five games.

Adriano and Everton finished as joint top-scorers with six goals each but, despite their success, Brazil made few friends.

They finished with one of the worst disciplinary records after receiving five red cards in the competition.

Their performance was also marred by allegations by Paraguay that three Brazilians attacked one of their players in the tunnel following a match last week, knocking him to the ground breaking his nose.

The South American Football Confederation (CSF) gave a public warning to Brazil, who denied the accusations, but took no further action.

Brazil qualified for the world under-20 championship which will be held in Argentina in June, along with third-placed Paraguay, fourth-placed Chile and fifth-placed Ecuador.

Sharjah meet

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had no option but to abide by the wishes of the government.

"I can understand the disappointment, but the board cannot overrule the government," he said.

The two countries last played each other during the Asia Cup in Bangladesh in May last year.

Both India and Pakistan took part in an ICC Knockout tournament in Kenya in October, but did not play each other.

The Vajpayee government, however, allowed Pakistan to undertake a tour of India in 1999 despite protests from the Hindu fundamentalist leader Bal Thackeray.

Two of the three Tests on that tour passed off peacefully, but the third at Calcutta was marred by crowd violence, forcing police to vacate the stands to allow the match to be completed.



England opener Marcus Trescothick, who scored an unbeaten century yesterday, here misses a sweep shot.

'Pressure on Lanka'

INTERNET REPORT, Colombo

Andrew Caddick is preparing himself for another tour of frustration on Sri Lanka's slow wickets knowing the soaring reputation of England's attack could be their biggest weapon in the forthcoming Test series.

The fast bowler was perhaps the most disappointing of all England's seamers during the recent victory in Pakistan, claiming only three wickets in the three-Test series with the wickets nullifying his normally threatening pace and bounce.

He is expecting more of the same when they face Sri Lanka in the first Test at Galle on February 22, confident in the knowledge that England can out-bowl their opponents should they take the unusual step of providing fast and bouncy surfaces.

But although the first half of the winter was not the most productive for him personally, he believes the seamer's efforts in ripping through West Indies last summer following by the batting line-up's unexpected success against Pakistan's spinners before Christmas will put Sri Lanka in a quandary.

"I would expect them to produce a good wicket," he explained. "I don't think they will forget what our spin did to Pakistan and I don't think they can allow our batsmen to dominate theirs."

"Pakistan were scared of our attack and they thought we'd be scared of their spin attack and that didn't work - we've got a good pace attack now and we're just developing a good spin attack."

"Sri Lanka would be silly not to be scared of our attack. We have got pace, bounce and movement and I think it will be an interesting series and the pressure is on them as the home side just like it was for Pakistan. We've got nothing to lose."



ANDREW CADDICK

we're on a confident winning streak and if we can continue that in the first class matches leading up to the Test and demonstrate the development we've made during the last 18 months then I'm sure we'll do well."

To repeat their success in the next two months, though, England will have to fend off an even more skilled spinner in Muttiah Muralitharan and give greater help to Ashley Giles, who claimed 17 wickets in the series and carried the main responsibility for making inroads into Pakistan's line-up.

"It was a bit annoying not taking more wickets but that's Pakistan - some of the greatest bowlers have been there and not taken wickets so I expected that," he claimed.

"I think myself, Darren Gough and Craig White did our job even before we got there by making them produce spinning, low and flat wickets, I look at it that I'd done my job by them producing the wickets they did."

"The number one thing I have learnt over the last 18 months is to be patient. There are times when Nasser calls on you to try something but I'm now not that sort of a bowler."

"I'm trying to be a bowler who shuts up one end which needs to be done on these sorts of wickets. My job is to maintain pressure from one end and if that means taking no wickets for 10 runs off six or seven overs then so be it."

Nevertheless, England will need a greater wicket-tally from both him, Gough and White to ease the burden on Giles and recalled off-spinner Robert Croft and add to the pressure building on Sri Lanka following their convincing defeat in South Africa recently.

"This winter's a spinner's winter and our job is to take the pressure off them by taking a couple of wickets," he stressed.

"We've got two very good frontline seam bowlers in Darren and Craig and my job on these tours is to be consistent, hopefully take wickets but mainly being consistent and creating pressure."

"Because of the wickets out here, you tend to go into one-day mode, keep your discipline and try and be consistent and maintain a good line and length."

"Hopefully they will make all the mistakes and I'm used to bowling in long spells and I would have thought we will be able to use the other two in short, fiery spells."

Radebe reconsiders

Football

AFP, Johannesburg

South Africa captain Lucas Radebe has changed his mind and decided not to retire from international football.

But the talismanic figure who also skips English Premiership club Leeds United will not be seen in the black, white, green and gold colours of Bafana Bafana (The Boys) very often.

Constant club-versus-country clashes led injury-prone Radebe to hint two weeks ago that he would abandon a national team he has represented 63 times and concentrate on his club career.

However, a series of meetings with South Africa with government and football officials when he returned for a World Cup qualifier against Burkina Faso convinced 'Rho' retirement was too drastic a move.

"I still dream of leading my country at the 2002 World Cup finals in Japan and South Korea," said the player who enjoys pop-idol status among South Africans of all races and ages.

But a deal struck between Leeds and a South African Football Association (SAFA) delegation led by president Molefi Oliphant in mist-shrouded Yorkshire gives first option to the Premiership side when dates clash.

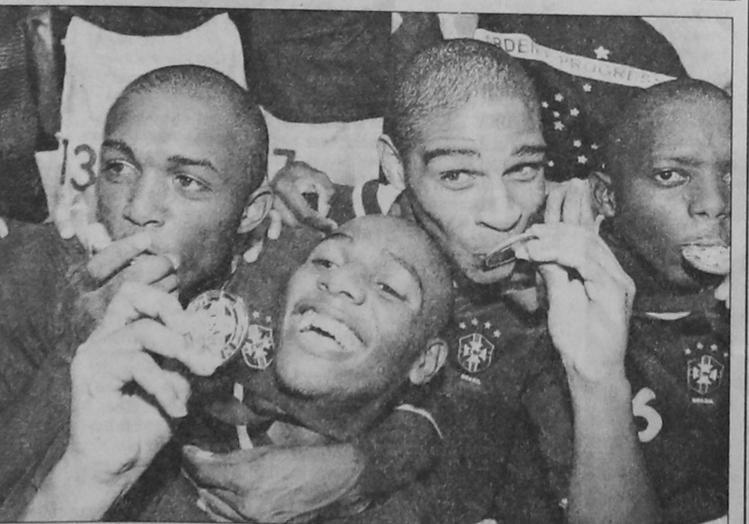
This rules the central defender who began his career as a goalkeeper out of World Cup qualifiers away to Malawi on February 25

and at home to Group E pacemakers Guinea two weeks later.

World Cup fixtures in Europe will, ironically, free Radebe to travel for an African Nations Cup qualifier on March 24 against minnows Mauritius - the one match in a hectic programme when Bafana probably do not require his services.

SAFA is hoping to switch the clash with Guinea - which could decide who qualifies for the 32-nation World Cup tournament - to March 24 and find a fresh date for the Mauritius fixture.

Playing World Cup and Nations Cup qualifiers simultaneously has heightened club-versus-country disputes, with South Africa due to play nine more matches in the two competitions by the end of July.



Brazilians (L-R) Malcon, Leonardo, Adriano and Leilton having party after winning the South American Under-20 Football Championship in Guayaquil, Ecuador on February 4.

Trescothick cracks ton

AFP, Sri Lanka

Tall left-handed opener Marcus Trescothick thumped an unbeaten century, but England's middle-order collapsed to spin on the first day of their opening two-day tour match against a BCCSL Colts XI here on Monday.

Trescothick made exactly a hundred before retiring to give his teammates a knock in the middle. But they were disappointed and were dismissed for 252 shortly before the close.

By stumps the Colts XI comprising mainly of under-19 players and schoolboys had replied with 22 for no loss.

Trescothick hit 15 fours and one six in his 154-ball innings sharing a second wicket stand of 129 with skipper Nasser Hussain who made 38.

England's other left-hander Graham Thorpe scored 32, but the rest of the batting collapsed to spin with the last eight wickets going down for the addition of 84 runs.

Laxman named India A skipper

AFP, Bombay

Test star Venkatsai Laxman will lead India A against Steve Waugh's Australian team in the opening match of the seven-week tour, cricket officials said here on Monday.

The three-day match will be played at the Vidarbha Cricket Association Stadium in Nagpur from February 17-19, two days after the tourists land in India.

The 14-man home squad includes 11 players who have played for India at senior level and remain in contention for the three Tests and five one-day internationals against the Australians.

A key selection is that of wicketkeeper Nayan Mongia, who is aiming to return to the Test squad after being cleared of match-fixing allegations by federal investigators.

Australia have just two warm-up matches before the first Test starts at the Wankhede Stadium in Bombay on February 27.

INDIA 'A' SQUAD

Sadagopan Ramesh, Shiv Sundar Das, Venkatsai Laxman (captain), Dinesh Mongia, Hemang Badani, Mohammad Kaif, Nayan Mongia, Debashish Mohanty, Ashish Nehra, Rahul Sanghvi, Harbhajan Singh, Balaji Rao, Gagan Khoda and Javed Zaman.

DRU cricket postponed

The inter-house cricket tournament of Dhaka Reporters' Unity (DRU) which was scheduled to begin today, has been postponed for lack of convenient playground, says press release.

A fresh date will be announced in due time.

Goodbye Bubka

REUTERS, Ukraine

Sergei Bubka, the world's greatest pole vaulter, closed the final chapter of his record-breaking career on Sunday at a farewell meeting in his hometown.

The Ukrainian legend watched from the VIP box as a capacity crowd of 5,000 crammed into Duzhba Sports Palace for the Sergei Bubka invitational meet.

He was awarded the country's highest honour - the Hero of Ukraine medal - by President Leonid Kuchma.

"This is a very difficult day for me and I almost have tears in my eyes," said Bubka during the five-hour meet.

"I am only beginning to realise that from now on I will never step on the track for another jump."

"My career as an active sportsman has come to an end, but that doesn't mean that I'm going away," said the 37-year-old.

"At this moment I'd like to say kind words to those who took me into their hearts along the way, who helped perfect my mastery of the sport."

"I want to thank my mentors, my loved ones and my countrymen." Bubka won an unprecedented six straight world titles and the 1988 Olympic gold medal.

He received congratulations from prince Albert of Monaco, IAAF president Lamine Diack and AC Milan striker Andriy Shevchenko, who sent messages via a giant television screen.

"For me he (Bubka) was and still is a true role model of Ukrainian sports," said Shevchenko. "He is the face of Ukrainian sports, a real sports genius."

During a laser show Bubka's silhouette went over an imaginary bar at 6.15 metres - the height of the world indoor record he set in the same arena eight years ago.

Trying to beat heat

Aussies may rely on two spinners

Cricket

AFP, Perth

Australia's cricketers are set to wear ice vests during their forthcoming three-Test tour of India, captain Steve Waugh revealed Monday.

Designed to beat the extreme heat and humidity on the sub-continent, they will match the Australian uniforms so they will hardly be noticeable on the field.

Australian players are keen to prevent a repetition of the Test in Madras during the 1986-87 tour to India, when batsman Dean Jones became so dehydrated during an innings of 210 that he was rushed

tubing that cover the torso - developed from similar ones worn by Australian Football League (Australian Rules) footballers during pre-season tournaments when weather conditions can be dangerously hot.

Australian fast bowlers Glenn McGrath and Brett Lee wore the vests in a trial run during Sunday's nail-biting one-run win in the Carlton tri-nation series one-day match against Zimbabwe here.

The temperature in Perth soared to 35 degrees Celsius (95 Fahrenheit) during the game.

McGrath, who promises to be one of Australia's trump cards in India, said the vests were a great help, especially during long bowling spells.

Waugh said the vests would also be used if the side encountered any hot days during this week's Carlton series finals against the West Indies.

"We'll also take them over there (to India) and see if they work," he said.

"We've got two lead-up matches and if they make the guys cool down and feel better about themselves we'll probably use them."

McGrath said Waugh's plan to blitz the Indians with pace meant the new ball bowlers would have a heavy workload.

McGrath said he welcomed the opportunity to become accustomed to the vests before the tour to India which begins on February 27 in Mumbai.

"I am used to a dry heat in Australia," he said. "India has a humid heat, and the vests will really help if you can wear them for an over or two to cool down."

Meanwhile, leg-spinner Shane Warne and off-spinner Colin Miller are likely to be the only two slow bowlers Australia take on the tour of India.

Chairman of selectors Trevor Hohns said Australia would probably take a 14-man squad, which would mean leg-spinner Stuart MacGill misses out.

"If we can it will be 14, but we have the option of 15," Hohns said Monday.

"I guess it's a matter of whether we take an extra bowler but we'll confer with the captain and coach."

MacGill has taken 75 wickets in 16 Tests, including 16 in four matches during Australia's recent 5-0 whitewash of the West Indies



SHANE WARNE

to hospital with severe dehydration and exhaustion.

Waugh said coach John Buchanan has had the vests - which have frozen liquid in strips of



COLIN MILLER

while Warne was recovering from a broken finger.

Australia, unofficial world Test champions, have won their past 15 Tests.

Lee's India tour elbowed

Cricket

AFP, Melbourne

Australian fast bowling sensation Brett Lee is out of this month's cricket tour of India and is doubtful of making the Ashes tour of England after seriously injuring his elbow.

Lee will have corrective surgery Tuesday after injuring the medial ligament and flexor tendon in his right elbow while fielding in Sunday's thrilling one-run win over Zimbabwe in Perth.

Selectors will Tuesday choose the team for the India tour, with Trevor Hohns saying there was no need to postpone that decision.

"There's no need for any delay, it's a bit of a surprise but life goes on," Hohns said Monday.

There will be a squad of 14 or 15 players, but Hohns would not be drawn on whether Lee's sudden absence opened the door for another paceman or possibly leg-spinner Stuart MacGill.

If it was to be a paceman, Queenslanders Andy Bichel was the likely beneficiary of Lee's misfortune, as he otherwise would probably have been left out with Glenn McGrath, Jason Gillespie

and Damien Fleming expected to be chosen.

Bichel could also make the Ashes tour beginning in late May, as Australian doctor Trevor James admitted Lee was no certainty to



BRETT LEE

recover in time.

"The Ashes tour is uncertain at this stage," James said Monday.

"The time frame for recovery would be three to six months. The three months, if you can achieve

that, makes him available, the six months probably makes him unavailable."

The elbow injury came just after Lee had recovered from back stress fractures that kept him out of the final three Tests against the West Indies in December-January.

Lee said it was "bitterly disappointing" after working his way back from the back injury.

"It's obviously a set-back but I will be trying to remain as positive as possible and I'll be looking forward to the series that follow the tour of India," Lee said.

"I'm already targeting the tour of the UK for my comeback."

The ACB said Lee's injury had no "direct" relationship to the elbow injury he had early in his career.

It was sustained when throwing the ball in from near the boundary.

He stayed on the field and had another bowling spell late in the match before going off the ground for treatment.

"That spell did not result in any further damage to the elbow," the ACB said in a statement.

Lee had a scan on the injury in Perth after the match before flying to Melbourne for more evaluation Monday.

Hingis' spot at stake

Tennis

AFP, Tokyo

The enduring rivalry between tennis legends Chris Evert and Martina Navratilova, current

world number one Martina Hingis sees her toughest opponent as Lindsay Davenport.

"We played like 23 times. You don't see that on the men's tour that the players play each other as much as we do. We play usually in the finals and we always get

there," said Hingis.

"Many times we have (competed in the finals) over the last four or five years. That makes us the two players, or the four with the Williamses (Venus and Serena), who are very now. There is such a big difference when we are really playing well from all the others."

Hingis has a 10-13 record against Davenport and has tied at 1-1 this season, beating her 6-3, 4-6, 7-5 at Sydney and losing 7-6 (7/4), 4-6, 2-6 in Tokyo Sunday, both in the finals.

Eleven out of their 23 matches went into the final set with the 1998 Chase championship final going into the fourth set.

"Martina is always trying to get better and throughout our careers we've had very tough matches. Some I win, some I lose. It's very tough to always beat her, because you have to play so well every time," said Davenport.

Hingis, the youngest player in history to become number one at 16 years, six months and one day on March 31, 1997, is constantly trying to improve her game against power hitters.



Ukrainian pole vault legend Sergei Bubka clapping to the crowd after he was presented with a bouquet during the farewell ceremony accorded to him in his hometown Donetsk on February 4.

NOTICE

Dear Crossword wizards, Owing to postal hassles we are yet to receive our next shipment of word puzzles. In the meantime we have run out of our stock and thus we are unable to publish it starting today. However, we are expecting the next consignment anytime. So bear with us till then.