

Zia's second draw

SPORTS REPORTER

Grand Master Ziaur Rahman lost half a point in the Professor Abdur Razzaq 28th National Chess Championship when International Master Abdullah Al-Rakib held him to a draw in the eighth round on Thursday.

In a keenly contested match which continued for more than five hours, Zia played with whites against the Slav Defence of Rakib and tasted his second draw of the meet after 57 moves.

Zia, however, kept his top slot intact having raised his tally to seven points out of a possible eight.

Rakib remained half a point behind in second position.

Five Master Enamul Hossain Rajib is in the third with six points.

In the eighth round, Rajib, playing with blacks, beat Saifuddin Lovelu after 34 moves.

Rajib needs another two points from the remaining three games to earn his final IM norm.

In the other matches, Grand Master Niaz Mursheed beat Syed Ruhul Kabir Shiplu, Sheikh Nasir Ahmed beat Syed Ejaj Hossain, while Abu Sufian Shakil and Tayeb Rahman Sumon shared points.

IM Reefat-bin-Sattar earned a walkover against Shawkat Hossain Pallab.

Points table: 7 points Zia; 6.5 points Rakib; 6 points Rajib; 5.5 points Niaz; 5 points Nasir, Shakil; 4.5 points Reefat; 2.5 points Shiplu; 2 points Sumon, Lovlu; 1.5 points Ejaj and 0.5 points Pallab.

Today's matches: Rakib v Ejaj, Shakil v Zia, Rajib v Sumon, Pallab v Lovlu, Shiplu v Reefat and Nasir v Niaz.

Cullinan faces GCB hearing

REUTERS, Johannesburg

Darryl Cullinan will meet with officials of the Gauteng Cricket Board (GCB) on Saturday to discuss the procedure of an inquiry into his refusal to play for South Africa.

Cullinan, 35, was recalled to the South Africa team for the second Test against Australia at Newlands starting on Friday, but withdrew from the squad over contractual disputes with the United Cricket Board (UCB) of South Africa.

"We will decide on Saturday what the process in this matter shall be," Mohammed Jaibhay, GCB vice-president told Reuters.

"We are looking at setting-up a commission of inquiry into his conduct as a result of his refusal to play for South Africa.

"We need to hear from the player and also look at all the facts and keep an open mind before we decide exactly how to proceed."



Grand Master Ziaur Rahman (L) and International Master Abdullah-Al-Rakib concentrate during their eighth round encounter on Thursday.

A lot at stake for SA

Cricket

REUTERS, Cape Town

A new-look South Africa side go into the second Test against Australia at Newlands aiming to restore lost pride after four consecutive defeats.

All-rounder Andrew Hall, fast bowler Dewald Pretorius and left-handed batsman Graeme Smith all win their first caps in Cape Town after captain Shaun Pollock was forced to pull out on Tuesday with a side strain.

"Pride is a good starting point for us," Smith said. "We have lost our last four Test matches and the guys all want to rectify that. We don't have anything to lose."

Mark Boucher will again captain the team in Pollock's absence but Darryl Cullinan misses the match after withdrawing over a contractual dispute with the South African cricket board.

Putting three debutants on the side could leave South Africa seriously exposed to a fearsome Australian side.

After winning the first Test in Johannesburg by a massive and 360 runs, the Australians are looking to force home their advantage and claim the series to secure their status at the top of the world Test rankings in what will be leg-spinner Shane Warne's 100th Test.

But South Africa's new blood are determined to put up a strong showing.

"It's a very proud moment in my career," said Hall, whose 18-match one-day international career includes a famous night under the Colonial Stadium roof in Melbourne in 2000 when he batted, bowled and donned the wicket-keeping gloves in the same game.

"I've spoken to a couple of the other new guys as well and everybody feels the same -- we're really going into this Test match with a lot of pressure on us but as youngsters we all feel that we can do something."

"It may be just be raising the enthusiasm level and making sure our team really enjoys the cricket we are playing."

Hall has the kind of mental fortitude South Africa desperately need to loosen the hold Steve Waugh's team have over their closest rivals. Four years ago he was shot at several times from point blank range in a Johannesburg robbery but escaped with only minor injuries.

"I think my psychological strength is a major asset. I've shown in the past that I've got what people here in South Africa call a 'back-street boy' attitude -- I really fight for where I want to get, and I think that's a big attribute in a situation like this," he said.

"In a Test match there's a lot of time, there's a lot of fighting and you have to keep coming hard. You can't back down for a second because that just gives the other side the advantage."

TEAMS

SAOUTH AFRICA: Mark Boucher (captain), Herschelle Gibbs, Gary Kirsten, Jacques Kallis, Ashwell Prince, Neil McKenzie, Graeme Smith, Andrew Hall, Paul Adams, Makanya Ntini, Dewald Pretorius.

AUSTRALIA (from): Steve Waugh (captain), Matthew Hayden, Justin Langer, Ricky Ponting, Mark Waugh, Damien Martyn, Adam Gilchrist, Shane Warne, Brett Lee, Jason Gillespie, Glenn McGrath, Stuart MacGill.

Umpires: Steve Bucknor (West Indies), Rudi Koertzen (South Africa).

Next match: March 10, Guwahati.

South Africa: Mark Boucher (captain), Herschelle Gibbs, Gary Kirsten, Jacques Kallis, Ashwell Prince, Neil McKenzie, Graeme Smith, Andrew Hall, Paul Adams, Makanya Ntini, Dewald Pretorius.

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Spanish Cup Deportivo do the partying

Football

AFP, Madrid

Deportivo La Coruna upset the form book to beat Real Madrid 2-1 and lift the Spanish Cup for just the second time in their history on Wednesday.

First half goals from Spanish internationals Sergio Gonzalez and Diego Tristan put the visitors 2-0 ahead at the break in Real's own Santiago Bernabeu stadium and they hung onto their lead, despite a goal from Raul Gonzalez early in the second half.

Into the bargain, Deportivo ended Real's unbeaten home record this season and put an end to Real's centennial dreams - the eight-times European champions celebrated their 100th birthday on Wednesday - of notching up an unprecedented treble of the Spanish league and Cup double, as well as the European Champions' League crown.

"Congratulations to Real on their centenary, I'm sorry we spoilt their celebrations," commented Deportivo coach Javier Irureta. "Perhaps now people should start to talk about us doing the treble, and we are certainly going to fight for it despite the difficulties of pulling it off," added Irureta, who has never hidden his distaste for the Spanish media's obsession with the giants of Real Madrid and Barcelona.

Sergio stunned the home supporters into silence by putting the Galicians into the lead after just five minutes.

The Deportivo midfielder picked up the ball on the edge of the area and, while Real's club captain Fernando Hierro was left almost motionless, darted into the box and slotted the ball with his right foot through Cesar Sanchez's legs.

Real nearly equalised five minutes later when Zinedine Zidane saw his header evade the outstretched fingertips of Deportivo's goalkeeper Francisco Molina, only to bounce off the cross bar.

However, Deportivo kept up the pressure on the home side, rattling them with some ferocious tackling which lead to Mauro Silva and Victor Sanchez being shown first half yellow cards.

Deportivo's aggressive counter-attacking tactics paid off further after 37 minutes.

Former Spanish international defender Cesar Martin found World Cup-bound Juan Carlos Valeron on the right side of the box.

The Real Madrid defenders clearly believed Valeron was offside and were raising their arms in protest but Valeron had timed his run to perfection and sent the ball across the face of the goal for Diego Tristan - his likely room mate in Korea - to stab home.

Result: Zimbabwe won by one wicket.

Man-of-the-match: Douglas Marillier.

Next match: March 10, Guwahati.

Raul put Real back into the game 12 minutes after the break, finishing off a move instigated by Zidane and going via Santiago Solari - who came on at half time to add bite to the attack - and Fernando Morientes for his sixth goal in the Cup this season.

Zia Smriti rout Sreepur Rising

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura

Zia Smriti Sangsad outplayed Sreepur Rising Club by a massive 112 runs in the Eco Cricket League held at the Magura Stadium on Thursday.

Electing to bat first, Zia Smriti Sangsad scored 223 before all out in 34.1 overs.

In reply, Rising Star were bundled out for 111 in 23.5 overs.

Marauding Marillier

FROM PAGE 13

	O	M	R	W
Kaif not out	10	0	53	2
Streak	10	0	68	0
Friend	10	0	68	0
Brent	10	0	68	0
Marillier	10	0	53	1
G Flower	10	0	31	1

Total: (For 6 wickets in 50 overs) 274

Fall of wickets: 1-46, 2-123, 3-171, 4-193, 5-193, 6-211

Did not bat: H Singh, A Kumble, Z Khan

Bowler

	O	M	R	W
Kaif	10	0	53	2
Streak	10	0	68	0
Friend	10	0	68	0
Brent	10	0	68	0
Marillier	10	0	53	1
G Flower	10	0	31	1

ZIMBABWE

Campbell lbw b Zaheer

Wishart b Zaheer

Friend b Zaheer

A Flower b Kumble

Carlisle c Ratra b Zaheer

Ebrahim c Ganguly b Bangar

G Flower c b and Harbhajan

Streak c Ganguly b Harbhajan

Taibu c Ratra b Bangar

Marillier not out

Brent not out

Extras: (lb-1, nb-2, w-6) 9

Total: (For 9 wickets in 49.4 overs) 277

Fall of wickets: 1-5, 2-21, 3-132, 4-186, 5-193, 6-198, 7-200, 8-210, 9-252

Bowler

	O	M	R	W
Zaheer	10	0	47	4
Agarkar	8	0	45	0
Bangar	9	0	42	2
Harbhajan	10	1	48	2
Kumble	9.4	0	70	1
Ganguly	3	0	20	0

Result: Zimbabwe won by one wicket.

Man-of-the-match: Douglas Marillier.

Next match: March 10, Guwahati.

Premiership

MU simply too hot

Football

AFF, London

Manchester United stormed to the top of the English Premiership with a convincing four goal drubbing of Tottenham Hotspur at Old Trafford in the 15th minute.

Tottenham then pulled back Paul Scholes on the edge of the penalty box.

Referee Mike Riley had no alternative but to send-off the Argentine defender and Dutch striker van Nistelrooy continued his hot streak in front of goal since his 19-million-pound summer transfer from PSV Eindhoven.

Beckham added his second in the 64th minute and van Nistelrooy made it 4-0 in the 76th when he tapped home Roy Keane's cross.

Liverpool meanwhile stayed third in the Premiership, moving a point behind Arsenal with a curling shot from 25 yards in the 75th minute against his former club.

Elsewhere, Leeds revived their own European ambitions with their first win in five home games, courtesy of a comfortable victory over Ipswich Town at Elland Road.

Leeds boss David O'Leary was thankful that goals from Robbie Fowler and Ian Harte saw his side overcome the Tractor Boys, after he predicted that failure to qualify for Europe would see a mass exodus from Leeds.

that they wanted it.

Liverpool started with strikers Michael Owen, Emile Heskey and Nicolas Anelka for the first time.

Ironically it was midfielder Danny Murphy, not any of the three forwards, who scored twice on the night.

He gave Liverpool the lead in the 32nd minute when he collected a pass from Anelka and shot past Shay Given in the Newcastle goal.