

Management RU soccer champs

RU CORRESPONDENT

Management became champions in the inter-department football tournament of Rajshahi University beating Islamic History and Culture 5-0 at the university stadium on Wednesday.

Jahirul struck twice while Mahirul, Khalil and Parvez scored one goal apiece for the winners.

Khulna soccer

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Khulna

Balaka Sporting Club defeated Dumuria Tarun Sangha 4-1 in the National Bank Second Division Football League at the Khulna Stadium yesterday.

In other match of the day, Sumon Smrity Sangsad defeated Young Muslim Sporting by one goal to nil.

Rafique Smrity Sangsad take on Bidyut Kendra Young Men's Club while Challengers' Soccer Club play Young Brothers' Union in today's matches.

Mini b'ball

BSS, Dhaka

Freaks beat Black Panthers 10-8 in the first Mini basketball tournament at the Dhanmondi Basketball Gymnasium yesterday.

In the other games, Dhaka Bulls defeated Raiders 14-12 and Dhaka Lakers prevailed over Black Cats 14-10.

FedEx squash

SPORTS REPORTER

Twelve games were settled in Group A of the FedEx Squash Open yesterday.

The winners on the second day of the meet, which is being participated by 80 players, are Tanvirul Hossain, Tanvir, Ershad, Dulal, Nini Sattar, Rocky, Shahid Chauhan, Shireen Chauhan, Karim, Swapan, Raju and Iqbal.

Pay dispute worsens in NZealand

AFP, Wellington

A pay dispute involving New Zealand's top cricket players was deadlocked here Thursday with a possible strike threatening the start of the summer season and a tour by India.

The Cricket Players' Association (CPA) are demanding a player payments pool of 7.2 million NZ (\$3.4 million US) dollars while management, New Zealand Cricket (NZC), are offering 4.7 million dollars.

Both sides went into mediation Thursday supervised by a government Department of Labour mediator but NZC chief executive Martin Snedden told reporters no deal was reached.

"That's where the discussions finished," Snedden said.

India arrive here early in December for a two-Test, seven one-day international tour which sports media here say could now be hit.

Snedden gave a firm no when asked if the lucrative tour was under threat but it appears NZC and the Cricket Players' Association is now no longer talking.

He said the issue was increasingly harming the image of New Zealand's top summer sport.

"It's damaging the whole reputation of cricket. It's been a very tiring process," Snedden said.

It was evident the situation is moving into a stand-off with NZC demanding the right to talk one-on-one with each of the 100-plus CPA players and the union deferring any decision on that.

Snedden said NZC wanted to get their message directly to players, reflecting his lack of confidence in CPA.

Bangar a team man

Cricket

REUTERS, Calcutta

Opener Sanjay Bangar, who produced a patient and well crafted 77 in the third Test against the touring West Indies, said he was happy to have contributed to the team despite missing a deserved century.

"I was disappointed not to score a hundred, but I don't regret anything," he told reporters after his effort helped pull India out of trouble to 275 for six at the close of day one.

The 30-year-old batsman has focused on preserving his wicket by giving up attractive shot-making to boost a side of stroke-players such as Sachin Tendulkar and opener Virender Sehwag.

Bangar stayed on for well over five hours during his 201-ball effort which helped India rally from 165 for four at tea after their top four batsmen had gone cheaply.

"They were bowling a good line and it was a slow wicket. My role was to bat on," he said referring to a four-pronged pace attack which stuck to a nagging line.

He was dismissed late in the final

session with a tired drive to cover when he seemed set for his second Test hundred, but by then he had revived the innings with Vangipurappu Laxman (48).

Bangar made a late Test entry



SANJAY BANGAR

last year after prolonged good showing with bat and ball for national champions Indian Railways but said he was still fine-tuning his game.

"I have to work on my footwork, on putting away the bad balls more

consistently," the unassuming player said.

Bangar has won praise from skipper Sourav Ganguly and coach John Wright for his commitment as an opener, a perennial problem area for India since Sunil Gavaskar retired in the late 1980's.

His invaluable 68, another patient effort, had also laid the foundation of India's series-leveling win in the third Headingley Test during their 1-1 draw in a recent four-match series in England.

Bangar also made a slow 55 during his 201-run opening stand with Sehwag in the first Bombay Test. Sehwag went on to make 147 to win the accolades after India registered their first innings victory over the Caribbean side.

In Calcutta, Bangar did not score a run for long periods especially in the afternoon which produced only 67 runs in 25.3 overs, but said his job was to anchor the innings.

Bangar also said he never lost patience opening the batting with the explosive Sehwag.

"It is all about partnership," he said. "That is what batting is all about."

Jones has to shake 'em up

Cricket

AFP, Brisbane

England are hoping explosive young paceman Simon Jones can repeat the chaos inflicted on Australian batsmen by Frank Tyson on the 1954-55 and John Snow on the 1970-71 tours.

England last won the Ashes in 1986 and Welshman Jones has been brought on tour for one reason -- to shake up Australia's highly-rated batsmen.

Jones brings the one thing that can rattle any batting order -- raw pace.

But the 23-year-old Glamorgan speedster differs markedly from other express pace bowlers in his almost dawdling run-up before being capable of producing speeds in the high 140kph (90mph) range.

His languid approach to the wicket has caught many batsmen unawares.

Jones stunned West Australian batsman Chris Rogers with his opening delivery of the tour in the one-day match against an ACB Chairman's XI at Lilac Hill.

Jones ambled up and sent down the ball to Rogers, who prodded a catch to gully but stood dumbfounded for a moment, perplexed at how such a casual could be generated from such a pace run-up.

"The run up is a bit of a jog in really, and then there's an explo-

sion at the crease which I've always done," he said on Thursday.

"It does surprise a lot of batsman to see me lope in and it does take them by surprise."

Australian Test opener Justin Langer said it was difficult to adjust to.

"It is a bit like playing club cricket, this bloke just dawdles in and then just lets them go, he's a different



SIMON JONES

style of bowler," Langer said.

"He's got a bit of pace, again he's probably a little rusty having not played too much cricket, but it's amazing how much he generates with that run up," Langer said.

"That's something for us to look at and be wary of."

Jones put himself in the selection picture for the first Ashes Test in Brisbane starting next Thursday with a five-wicket haul on a flat

WACA pitch against Western Australia.

But he also warned the Australians he was only bowling at 85 to 90 per cent full pace in the tour match.

"My fitness has come along a hell of a lot in the last week and a half," he said.

"I bowled a little bit quicker (on Wednesday) but generally it was just 85 to 90 per cent (full pace)."

The son of former England paceman Jeff Jones, who toured Australia in 1965-66, has only played the one Test in which he suffered a side strain against India at Lord's in July.

There was a remarkable statistical coincidence between father and son. Jeff Jones took 5-59 for England against Western Australia, all five wickets falling on the third day of the match in 1965.

Thirty seven years later Simon Jones claimed 5-78 against WA, with all five wickets coming on the third day.

Jones said he used to bowl with a much longer run-up but found it counter-productive.

"I did have a long run-up of about 27 paces but I'd be pretty tired after about three overs so I decided to cut it down with Jeff Hammond the Australian coach who came down to Glamorgan," he said.

"Cut it down to half and bowled with the same pace so I didn't see the point really (of a long run-up)."

AAB reunion at BKSP today

SPORTS REPORTER

The first reunion of the Alumni Association of Bangladesh Krira Shikhhka Protishthan (BKSP) will be held on the BKSP campus in Savar today.

The day-long programme starts at 8 in the morning. Former teachers, students, coaches and officials of the country's lone sports institution will participate.

Div I handball

UNB, Dhaka

Satirtha Sporting Club, Dhanmondi Club and Victoria SC won their respective in the Bata Metropolis First Division Handball League at the court next to Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Satirtha crushed Mansoor Sporting Club 15-4 after dominating the first half 8-2 in the day's first match. Dhanmondi outplayed Surjodoy Krira Chakra 15-6. Victoria defeated Bhratritra Sangha 15-6.

Today's mtches: Prime Sporting Club v Dhanmondi Club and Satirtha Club v Bhratritra Sangha.

Harwood turns hero on debut

REUTERS, Melbourne

Victoria fast bowler Shane Harwood became only the third Australian to claim a hatrick on his first-class debut as the home side took control of a four-day match against Tasmania.

The 28-year-old from Ballarat in rural Victoria blasted through Tasmania's middle order, taking four for 49 from 14 overs, as the visitors reached 146 for seven at the close on day two at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

Resuming on their overnight 258 for five, Victoria made 353 for nine before captain Shane Warne declared with opener Jason Amberger unbeaten on 172 in just over eight hours, including 16 boundaries.

Amberger had shared a 142-run stand for the sixth wicket with former Australia under-19 captain Cameron White, who was first out on Thursday for 56.

In reply, Tasmania reached 108 for three, including 39 from opener Jamie Cox and 46 from Michael Dighton, before losing four quick wickets.

Harwood bowled Australia one-day all-rounder Shane Watson for four and finished his 11th over by trapping fellow debutant Graeme Cunningham leg before wicket for a duck.

Wicketkeeper Sean Clingeffer was then bowled for nought with the first ball of Harwood's next over, and Daniel Marsh fell to Warne shortly before the close for 26.

Bob's worry

AFP, Paris

Australian coaching guru Bob Brett on Thursday lamented a prevalence of what he sees as short-sighted coaching techniques in the modern game which prefers power to subtle skills.

Accepting that the modern game has to apply business principles at the highest level Brett says there is an inherent danger that the sport could suffer as a result.

"There's too much (emphasis) on power. The problem is serve and volley is dead in coaches' eyes -- that's the problem," insisted Brett, former mentor of top stars such as Boris Becker and Goran Ivanisevic.

"It's important to teach the idea that going to the net is an important part of the game."

Certainly players cast in the attacking mould of a Pat Rafter are a dying breed and Brett feels his calling is to work within the framework of his elite tennis academy on the eastern outskirts of Paris, where he teaches players as young as eight.

Mauresmo won't have surgery

AFP, Paris

World No 4 Amelie Mauresmo said Thursday that she had decided against an operation on her injured right knee which had forced her to pull out of the season-ending Masters tournament in Los Angeles.

Mauresmo said that she had been advised to let the swelling on the knee subside and then undergo a sequence of injections to treat the damage to her cartilage.

If that was successful she would be able to resume training by the end of November.

Mauresmo had to send a medical certificate to the WTA saying that because of the injury she was unable to fly and therefore would be unable to take part in the Masters.

The lack of a medical certificate would have seen her hit with a 250,000 dollars fine.

The French player said that she hoped the injury would have no long-term consequences for her career which has seen her rise to a best-ever fourth in the world behind the Williams sisters and Jennifer Capriati.

She has been told to learn to live with the pain and to be very careful about her schedule.



Safin to go to Shanghai

Tennis

AFP, Paris

A politically non-committal Marat Safin snaffled a place at next month's season-ending Masters Cup in Shanghai with a 6-3, 6-2 win over Argentine David Nalbandian which also moved him into the last 16 at the 2.828 million dollar Paris Masters Series.

But the rest of the players behind Safin in the race for Shanghai enjoyed mixed fortunes.

Spanish fourth seed Juan Carlos Ferrero is still in the hunt but fell here in straight sets, 6-2, 6-3, to Thailand's Paradorn Srichaphan, who is relishing his spell in the limelight after winning in Stockholm last Sunday.

The 23-year-old from Bangkok is racing up the standings and even if Shanghai is beyond his reach, this win and his success in Sweden, which followed a first career title at Long Island, are pushing him towards the top 15, which no Asian has achieved to date in the men's game.

The genial 1m 85 star said he would not let growing fame go to his head and having now reached his initial career goal of the top 20

vowed to stay loyal to his roots.

"I'm still going to live there -- that's my home," he said when asked if he might outgrow Bangkok.

"The heat in Bangkok has helped me with my game," he asserted, adding he would certainly not be dropping his father Chanachai as coach either.

"He got me here," he said -- as if outraged at the thought.

Safin, who took just 63min to beat Wimbledon finalist Nalbandian, joined Lleyton Hewitt and Andre Agassi at the prestigious Chinese jamboree from November 12 to 17 before he comes back to Paris for the Davis Cup final against France on November 29.

"It's easy to play in Paris -- it's such a beautiful crowd," laughed the Muscovite -- who nonetheless doesn't expect as many cheers as he got Wednesday when he turns out for his country, who have never lifted the trophy.

"I think it's gonna be different in one month.

"Somebody has to cheer for Russia!" he laughed after joining Russian teammate Yevgeny Kafelnikov in the third round.

Earlier, British sixth seed Tim Henman and Carlos Moya of Spain moved a step closer to joining the Shanghai party -- while Andy Roddick still has hopes.

Henman beat Gustavo Kuerten's conqueror Radek Stepanek of the Czech Republic 6-1, 7-5 and Moya, right behind Henman in the ATP Champions Race, beat US hope James Blake 6-3, 6-3.

Henman and Moya received a second boost when fifth seed Jiri Novak, a key rival for Shanghai but a doubtful starter here with a groin injury, lost 6-1, 6-3 to Romanian Andrei Pavel.

Roger Federer of Switzerland is poised to snatch fifth place off Novak and also go to Shanghai after the eighth seed beat Xavier Malisse of Belgium 6-2, 6-4.

US 12th seed Roddick beat Croatia's Ivan Ljubicic 7-6, 7-6 and now meets Pavel.

Elsewhere, Australian Open champion Thomas Johansson of Sweden beat Spaniard Tommy Robredo 7-6, 6-3 to win the right to face second seed Agassi.

Johansson is looking to overtake French Open champion Albert Costa as the best-placed Grand Slam winner of the season, who will also go to China.

Frenchman Nicolas Escude beat Costa 6-1, 3-6, 6-3 and now meets Henman.

Warne counts Eng out

Cricket

AFP, Sydney

Spin-king Shane Warne believes none of the current England cricket team is good enough to make Australia's Ashes squad and is predicting a 5-0 series whitewash if the favourites fire.

"One shred of self doubt in English minds is all it will take for Australia to crush England in the Ashes series," the outspoken leg-spinner told Sydney's Daily Telegraph newspaper.

Labelling England a team unable to exert sustained pressure with either bat or ball, Warne said the Australians had the edge ahead of next week's first Test in Brisbane.

"There is absolutely no doubt in my own and every other Australian player's mind that if we play to our ability we are man-for-man better than the English," he said.

"And for our part there is complete belief we have the form and mindset to beat England.

"In truth, if the question was 'would any England player get in the current Aussie team?' the answer would probably be no," he said.

Warne said English players' declarations that they would be competitive "immediately says to me they don't believe they can beat us."

"This time England are talking more positively, but if their attitude is

not spot on they have no chance," he said.

Warne said the only reason the Australia failed to make a clean sweep of the last Ashes series was because they lost a Test due to bad weather, a brilliant innings from England batsman Mark Butcher and a sporting declaration from



SHANE WARNE

Australia's stand-in captain Adam Gilchrist.

He said Australia were "red-hot favourites" for the upcoming series and would be looking to exert their dominance from the first session.

"If we play as well as we have been and execute our plans well to their batsmen we can win the series 5-0," he said.

On the England line-up, Warne said: "England are heavily dependent on their top three batsmen --

Trescothick, Vaughan and Butcher.

"If they struggle their middle order is exposed and they'll be in trouble. They are also struggling with injuries, with Flintoff and Gough both looking likely to miss the First Test."

Warne's offered only one ray of hope to the tourists.

"If we don't play to our ability, they are a chance because the beauty of sport is its unpredictability," he said.

Asia Cup cricket

FROM PAGE 13 Emirates and Hong Kong -- who qualified as the top two among the non-Test playing nations in Asia.

The revival of the Asia Cup will be good news for both the UAE and Hong Kong, whose cricket associations stand to gain around 250,000 dollars as appearance fee from the Asian Cricket Council.

The Indian government still refuses to have bilateral cricket ties with Pakistan, but does not object to playing against their neighbours in multi-nation events like the World Cup or Asia Cup.

India will play Pakistan in the league stage of the World Cup, their first meeting since the Asia Cup clash in Dhaka in 2000.

But a scheduled Test tour of Pakistan by the Indian team in April is likely to fall through unless the government reverses its current stand.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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Solution time: 24 mins.

CRYPTOQUIP

Today's Cryptiquip Clue: K equals L

The Cryptiquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

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