

Nat'l sub-jr chess in Jan

SPORTS REPORTER
The 23rd National Sub-Junior Chess Championship organised by the Bangladesh Chess Federation will start from January 3 at NSC chess room.

Alec doubtful

REUTERS, Melbourne
England wicketkeeper-batsman Alec Stewart has a bruised hand and is yet to prove his fitness for the fourth Ashes Test against Australia starting on Thursday.

Rain the winner

Football
Rain brought a premature end to the three-day tour match between Pakistan and South Africa A at the Pietermaritzburg Oval on Monday as the game petered out into a draw.

Mashrafe,

FROM PAGE 13
In the series against the West Indies that's why I felt in pressure. I failed to play my natural game that affected my performance," he explained while talking to reporters yesterday.

SA's chance at hand

Football
South Africa will topple Australia for the first time at the top of the world Test championship if they beat Pakistan in their two-Test series starting in Durban on Thursday.

The tearaway from Narail came back in the squad after a year's absence due to injury. "I'm completely fit now. I can generate my old pace and my run-up is the same but I changed my bowling action as suggested by TA Shekhar of India," Mashrafe said who set a target to bowl at a speed of 140 km-per-hour.

Khaled Mahmud the experienced campaigner is optimistic of playing in his second World Cup though he was ignored in the home series against the West Indies.

He is one of the four cricketers in the list of 20 who represented Bangladesh in England three years ago. The others being the present captain Khaled Mashud, left-arm pacesman Monjurul Islam and slow left-arm bowler Mohammad Rafique.

Waqar warns 'em

FROM PAGE 13
balls without adding a run as Charl Langeveldt struck twice in the first over of the day.

Cricketers' camp

FROM PAGE 13
been selected for the camp from a 30-man preliminary squad: Khaled Mashud (captain), Habibul Bashar, Javed Omar, Al-Shahriar, Ehsanul Haque, Sanwar Hossain, Khaled Mahmud, Monjurul Islam, Mohammed Rafique, Mushfiqur Rahman, Hannan Sarker, Mohammad Ashraf, Tushar Imran, Anwar Hossain, Mohammed Anwar Hossain (wicketkeeper), Tareq Aziz, Taposh Baishya, Alok Kapali, Mashrafe-bin Mortuza and Talha Jubair.

'Aus on different level'

Football
But Botham said that England had a chance to establish themselves as the world's "second-best" side.

And he maintained that England, already 3-0 down in the best of five Test series, could do worse than start their recovery this week at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG).

England great Botham, who produced some of his finest performances against Australia, said the victories over the Lankans proved that "Nasser Hussain's team are nowhere near as bad as everyone in Australia has been telling them."

"These Aussies are so far ahead of everyone else that the rest of us are competing for the right to be regarded as the second best team in the world," the legendary all-rounder insisted.

"I don't think there's any disgrace in admitting Australia play cricket on a different level at the moment and they are as dominant now as Clive Lloyd's West Indian side were 20 years ago. Those are facts of life."

But Botham said that England had a chance to establish themselves as the world's "second-best" side.

And he maintained that England, already 3-0 down in the best of five Test series, could do worse than start their recovery this week at the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG).



IAN BOTHAM
"One of my fondest memories as a player was the week England clinched the Ashes, inside barely three days, at the MCG in 1986-7,"

Botham said. "There really is nothing like putting one over the Aussies in their own back yard, at their biggest stadium," said Botham, who pointed out that England were the last visiting team to enjoy a Test victory on Australian soil when Alec Stewart's side won in Melbourne four years ago.

Botham also said that novice pacesman Stephen Harmison, Jimmy Anderson, and Simon Jones (when he regains fitness after sustaining a tour-ending knee injury while fielding in the first Test at Brisbane) were "three reasons to be cheerful about the future of English cricket".

And he said they could help the country mount a real challenge for the Ashes in 2005 where England will be looking for their first series win in nine against Australia.

"Just think -- in nine months, they may even be established as part of the world's second-best team."

"Second-best is never good enough, of course, but at least it would be a stepping stone towards giving the Aussies a better run for their money in 2005."

TOP SCORERS

Leading scorers in the English Premiership after the weekend matches:

- 11 - James Beattie (Southampton)
10 - Alan Shearer (Newcastle)
9 - Thierry Henry (Arsenal), Gianfranco Zola (Chelsea)

Resuming on 91 for two, they lost two wickets in the space of three balls without adding a run as Charl Langeveldt struck twice in the first over of the day.

Pakistan clawed their way back into the match on Sunday by inducing a South African middle order collapse where the hosts slumped from 150 for two to 206 all out.

Australia will still be No 1

REUTERS, Melbourne
Australia Test captain Steve Waugh believes his side will remain the best in world cricket even if South Africa are officially awarded top ranking by the International Cricket Council (ICC).

The ICC released a statement on Tuesday explaining that South Africa could overtake top-ranked Australia on the ICC Test Championship Table if Shaun Pollock's side win their upcoming two-Test home series against Pakistan.

South Africa would improve their series points average from 1.53 to 1.59 and overtake Australia (1.54) who have held the top ranking since the table was introduced last year.

"Everyone knows who the number one side is so I don't really see that as a big issue," Waugh told a news conference in Melbourne on Tuesday.

"If they happen to take the mace off us then congratulations to them but I think everyone knows who the number one side is."

Australia play England in the fourth Ashes Test starting in Melbourne on Thursday.

Waugh's side have already retained the Ashes by comfortably winning the first three Tests.

Lord's outfield newly laid

AFP, London
Work to install a new outfield at Lord's Cricket Ground has been completed, its owners Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) said Monday.

According to MCC, the 1.25 million pounds (1.99 million dollars) project has been completed on time and on budget.

The aim of the new 100,000 pounds (159,000 dollars) irrigation system and 18,000 square metres of fresh turf is to reduce the amount of playing time lost to rain.

The English climate's notoriety for wet weather is unlikely to change much before the start of next season but delays brought about by rain were exacerbated by the old, slow-draining, clay-based outfield.

All 17,000 tonnes of the old surface have now been removed, a process which began in September with the sale of turf from a ground known to enthusiasts around the world as 'the home of cricket'.

The turf sale raised 35,000 pounds (55,650 dollars) which will be invested in youth cricket through the MCC Foundation.

Lord's outfield newly laid

AFP, London
Work to install a new outfield at Lord's Cricket Ground has been completed, its owners Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) said Monday.

According to MCC, the 1.25 million pounds (1.99 million dollars) project has been completed on time and on budget.

The aim of the new 100,000 pounds (159,000 dollars) irrigation system and 18,000 square metres of fresh turf is to reduce the amount of playing time lost to rain.

The English climate's notoriety for wet weather is unlikely to change much before the start of next season but delays brought about by rain were exacerbated by the old, slow-draining, clay-based outfield.

All 17,000 tonnes of the old surface have now been removed, a process which began in September with the sale of turf from a ground known to enthusiasts around the world as 'the home of cricket'.

The turf sale raised 35,000 pounds (55,650 dollars) which will be invested in youth cricket through the MCC Foundation.

MCC deputy chief executive David Batts said Monday: "We're very pleased with the progress of this important and extensive project."

Premiership Spurs overcome Manchester City

AFP, London
Glenn Hoddle won the battle of the former England coaches here at Maine Road on Monday as his Tottenham team came from behind to beat Kevin Keegan's Manchester City 3-2.

City, who dominated the first half, took a deserved lead through captain Steve Howey.

But headers either side of half-time from recalled duo Chris Perry and Simon Davies turned the match Tottenham's way before substitute Gus Poyet sealed victory by nodding home six minutes from time.

City substitute Ali Benarbia set up a rousing finale with a superb injury time curler but it was all too late for Keegan's men.

Tottenham endured a frantic final five minutes after Germany international Christian Ziege was sent off after twice getting yellow-carded for kicking the ball away.

But they survived to move up into seventh place in the English Premiership table while City stayed twelfth.

Rifles lift Top Four v'ball

BSS, Dhaka
Bangladesh Rifles clinched the Victory Day Top Four Volleyball Championship defeating Bangladesh Air Force 15-18, 25-20, 10-15, 26-24 in the final yesterday.

Asit Kumar of BDR was adjudged man-of-the-final, while best player's award went to Ramesh Chandra of Bangladesh Air Force.

Australia will still be No 1

REUTERS, Melbourne
Australia Test captain Steve Waugh believes his side will remain the best in world cricket even if South Africa are officially awarded top ranking by the International Cricket Council (ICC).

The ICC released a statement on Tuesday explaining that South Africa could overtake top-ranked Australia on the ICC Test Championship Table if Shaun Pollock's side win their upcoming two-Test home series against Pakistan.

South Africa would improve their series points average from 1.53 to 1.59 and overtake Australia (1.54) who have held the top ranking since the table was introduced last year.

"Everyone knows who the number one side is so I don't really see that as a big issue," Waugh told a news conference in Melbourne on Tuesday.

"If they happen to take the mace off us then congratulations to them but I think everyone knows who the number one side is."

Australia play England in the fourth Ashes Test starting in Melbourne on Thursday.

Waugh's side have already retained the Ashes by comfortably winning the first three Tests.

Lord's outfield newly laid

AFP, London
Work to install a new outfield at Lord's Cricket Ground has been completed, its owners Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) said Monday.

According to MCC, the 1.25 million pounds (1.99 million dollars) project has been completed on time and on budget.

The aim of the new 100,000 pounds (159,000 dollars) irrigation system and 18,000 square metres of fresh turf is to reduce the amount of playing time lost to rain.

The English climate's notoriety for wet weather is unlikely to change much before the start of next season but delays brought about by rain were exacerbated by the old, slow-draining, clay-based outfield.

All 17,000 tonnes of the old surface have now been removed, a process which began in September with the sale of turf from a ground known to enthusiasts around the world as 'the home of cricket'.

The turf sale raised 35,000 pounds (55,650 dollars) which will be invested in youth cricket through the MCC Foundation.

MCC deputy chief executive David Batts said Monday: "We're very pleased with the progress of this important and extensive project."

WORLD FOOTBALL BRIEFS

Football
AFP
World football briefs on Tuesday:

CRAGNOTTI TO STEP DOWN

Rome
Sergio Cragnotti has confirmed he will resign as president of financially-stricken Serie A club Lazio after 11 years in charge.

The cash-strapped Rome outfit held a shareholders meeting late Monday where it was agreed



SERGIO CRAGNOTTI
Cragnotti would quit as soon as a new board of directors was in place.

"The deal is ready to go through," he said. "Only red tape is holding it up, but everyone is in agreement."

Several local banks have agreed to loan the troubled Italian First Division club around 45 million euros to ease its debts, but only if new directors are appointed.

Lawyer Ugo Longo, a Lazio shareholder, is believed to be the main candidate to temporarily take charge when Cragnotti finally leaves.

Cragnotti said his fondest memories at Lazio were winning the Italian title in 2000 and the European Super Cup a year earlier.

"Winning the Scudetto in 2000 was fantastic, as was beating Manchester United to lift the European Super Cup," he added.

"I only hope that Lazio can enjoy further success because their fans really do deserve it."

Lazio are currently second in Italy's Serie A despite their cash

crisis which has prevented them from paying their players' salaries for almost four months.

ARMY CALLING RIISE!

London
Liverpool defender John Arne Riise has been called up by the Norwegian army early in the New Year after a mix-up over his deferment application, the Sun reported Tuesday.

National service is still compulsory in Norway, but deferments are usually granted in special circumstances such as employment abroad.

But in Riise's case his mother Berit failed to send the letter requesting deferment in time for the November 25 deadline and he has been told to report for duty on January 8.

Riise's mother told the paper: "One year away from Liverpool could destroy his next 10 years."

"I think everyone is aware of the situation and I don't think the goal for the Norwegian military is to destroy people's lives."

"When he does eventually come home for good he will do his duty."

The Sun quoted a Norwegian army colonel as saying that it was still possible for Riise to request postponement if he had a good enough reason.

SA's chance at hand

REUTERS, Durban
South Africa will topple Australia for the first time at the top of the world Test championship if they beat Pakistan in their two-Test series starting in Durban on Thursday.

Australia, who also held the one-day rankings, are universally regarded as the world's best team, underlining the point by beating the South Africans 5-1 over six Tests last season.

South Africa captain Shaun Pollock said: "Australia are playing very well at the moment, but the fact that we are in the running for the championship is recognition that we have played well and been successful in different conditions around the world."

"It would be good to have our picture taken with that trophy."

The International Cricket Council rankings are based on results since May 1996. In the intervening period South Africa have won series in India and Pakistan, drawn another in Sri Lanka, and won a rubber in the West Indies.

By contrast Australia, despite a world record 16 wins in a row, have struggled on the subcontinent. They lost in India and Sri Lanka, and drew in the Caribbean as well as at home to New Zealand.

Waqar warns 'em

FROM PAGE 13
balls without adding a run as Charl Langeveldt struck twice in the first over of the day.

Spinner Robin Peterson then took three wickets to reduce the tourists to 168 for seven -- a loss of five wickets in the morning session.

Pakistan clawed their way back into the match on Sunday by inducing a South African middle order collapse where the hosts slumped from 150 for two to 206 all out.

Cricketers' camp

FROM PAGE 13
been selected for the camp from a 30-man preliminary squad: Khaled Mashud (captain), Habibul Bashar, Javed Omar, Al-Shahriar, Ehsanul Haque, Sanwar Hossain, Khaled Mahmud, Monjurul Islam, Mohammed Rafique, Mushfiqur Rahman, Hannan Sarker, Mohammad Ashraf, Tushar Imran, Anwar Hossain, Mohammed Anwar Hossain (wicketkeeper), Tareq Aziz, Taposh Baishya, Alok Kapali, Mashrafe-bin Mortuza and Talha Jubair.

Waqar warns 'em

FROM PAGE 13
balls without adding a run as Charl Langeveldt struck twice in the first over of the day.

Spinner Robin Peterson then took three wickets to reduce the tourists to 168 for seven -- a loss of five wickets in the morning session.

Pakistan clawed their way back into the match on Sunday by inducing a South African middle order collapse where the hosts slumped from 150 for two to 206 all out.

Cricketers' camp

FROM PAGE 13
been selected for the camp from a 30-man preliminary squad: Khaled Mashud (captain), Habibul Bashar, Javed Omar, Al-Shahriar, Ehsanul Haque, Sanwar Hossain, Khaled Mahmud, Monjurul Islam, Mohammed Rafique, Mushfiqur Rahman, Hannan Sarker, Mohammad Ashraf, Tushar Imran, Anwar Hossain, Mohammed Anwar Hossain (wicketkeeper), Tareq Aziz, Taposh Baishya, Alok Kapali, Mashrafe-bin Mortuza and Talha Jubair.

crisis which has prevented them from paying their players' salaries for almost four months.

DE BOER'S CAR STOLEN

Glasgow
Rangers' Dutch international Ronald de Boer had his car stolen after thieves broke into his house here in the early hours of Monday morning.



RONALD DE BOER
The thieves found the keys to De Boer's BMW X5 sports car inside his house and then drove off with the vehicle in the Mearnskirch area of Glasgow.

In an interview with Tuesday's Scottish Sun newspaper De Boer, 32, said he was relieved neither he nor any members of his family were injured in the incident.

"The keys were inside the house and they broke in to get them," De Boer explained.

"It happened very early in the morning. "It's annoying but at least nobody was hurt - that's the most important thing," he added.

De Boer joined current Scottish Premier League leaders Rangers two years ago in a multi-million-pound move from Spanish giants Barcelona.

Late on Monday, a Strathclyde Police spokesman said: "We can confirm that a 32-year-old male reported that his house had been broken into, his car keys taken and his high value, high performance vehicle was subsequently stolen."

Sajjad defies Dhaka

FROM PAGE 13
SCOREBOARD
Scoreboards on the second day of three Ispahani Mirzapore National Cricket League matches held at different venues yesterday:

CHITTAGONG: First innings (Over-night 309-4 in 90 overs)
Nafeez c Parvez b Enamul jr 15
Nizamuddin b Imtiaz 140
Afif c Nayeem b Enamul jr 24
Minhazul c Hasibul b Nayeem 105
Akram Khan c Ejaz b Parvez 27
Azam Sishir b Parvez 3
Sabbir run out 3
Ahsanullah c Nasirul b Parvez 25
Imtiaz lbw b Hasibul 2
Safiuddin not out 16
Extras: (b-2, lb-10, nb-2, w-2) 10
Total: (All out in 100 overs) 372
Fall of wickets: 1-21, 2-61, 3-91, 4-279, 5-330, 6-341, 7-342, 8-352, 9-366

Bowler O M R W
Waseleuddin 5 3 8 0
Safiuddin 21 6 53 5
Minhazul 10 3 13 0
Sabbir 16 2 66 1
Ahsanullah 19 4 58 2
Dhaka v Khulna
Venue: BKSP
Toss: Dhaka
KHULNA: First innings (overnight 121 for 2 in 46 over)
Sajjadul c Bikash b Saiful 102
Salauddin b Bikash 11
Raju c Sajjad b Mazharul 37
Jamal lbw b Fahim 27
Hasanuzzaman batting 34
Manjarul batting 22
Extras: (b-11, nb-11, w-1) 23
Total: (For 4 wickets in 93 overs) 286
Fall of wickets: 1-44, 2-121, 3-181, 4-228

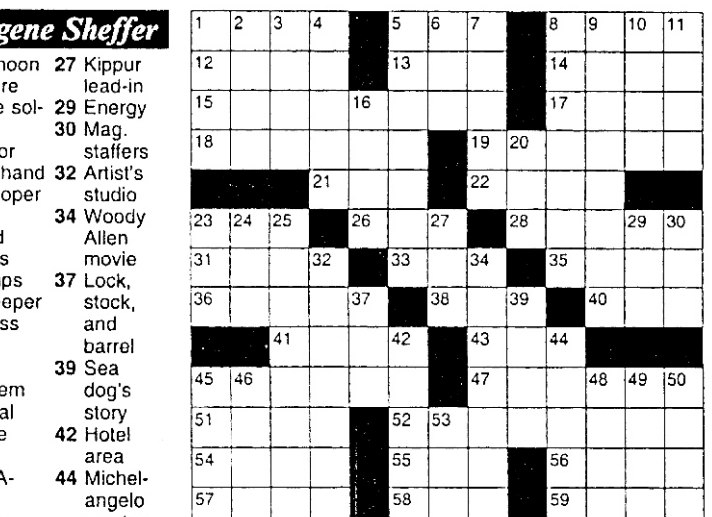
Bowler O M R W
Saiful 18 3 44 1
Bikash 16 1 52 1
Arafat 34 12 70 0
Fahim 17 1 66 1
Mazharul 8 2 13 0
Barisal v Rajshahi
Venue: DCS
Toss: Rajshahi
BARISAL: First innings 221 all out in 80.1 overs (Prosenjit 55, Sabbir

Bowler O M R W
Imran batting 30
Nanim lbw b Aminul jr 7
Nayan b Shafaq 0
Nahidul batting 0
Extras: (b-9, lb-3, w-1) 13
Total: (For 2 wickets in 20 overs) 50
Fall of wickets: 1-25, 2-30

Bowler O M R W
Shafaq 10 4 16 1
Aminul jr 10 6 22 1

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Shapely legs, slangily
5 Scott Joplin's style
8 Basic learning spread
12 Bread publicize
14 Leeway
15 Legitimate
17 - uncertain terms
18 Foolish wide open
19 With witness
21 Witness
22 Blunder
23 High stroke
25 Use a pan
28 Jack
31 Ox of puzzle-dom
33 Weep
35 Amino
36 Mr. Claus
38 Has potential
40 North Sea feeder
41 War, said Sherman
43 Siesta
45 Moonshot program
47 Whitney Houston's label
51 Patrick's "Ghost"
52 Adorned for an parade, maybe
54 Pennsylvania port
55 Bikini top
56 Reported
57 Plaintiff
58 Absolutely
59 Pointed tools
DOWN
1 Coodles
2 Coodles
3 Diner's card
23 Vegas opener
24 - shoe-string
25 Geniality
27 Kippur lead-in
29 Energy diers
30 Mag. staffers
32 Artist's studio
34 Woody Allen movie
37 Lock, stock, and barrel
39 Sea dog's story
42 Hotel area
44 Michelangelo master-piece
45 Estival quenchers
46 Condor country
48 Pack away
49 He got the point across to his son
50 Throws into the mix
53 Mined-over matter



CRYPTOQUIP

DE R SIZD AIORGI FMVNM
EVW DCL BDOFZIL NVYZS
DC CKIM AIR KVYLI VE
SDZZ WBYCI?
Yesterday's Cryptogquip: THE GEOLOGY PROF HAS REALLY POOR EYESIGHT. HE KEEPS TAKING PEOPLE FOR GRANITE.

Today's Cryptogquip Clue: Z equals L.
The Cryptogquip 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.



Members of the Daffodil family who took part in their Victory Day celebration badminton tournament at the institute's campus at Dhanmondi recently.