

Rating chess

SPORTS REPORTER

International Master Enamul Hossain Rajib led the table with 6.5 points after the seventh round game of the Shahjalal Bank International Rating Chess tournament at the Bangladesh Chess Federation Auditorium yesterday.

Shafiq Ahmed and Moniruzzaman Khan were jointly in the second position with 5.5 points each.

Following are the seventh round games results: Rajib beat Arman, Shafiq beat Ranadev, Lavlu beat Chapal, Uten beat Sohel, Amir beat Main and Mostafa beat Aminul. Monir got walk over against Amin.

Rios, Sanchez face-off

AFP, Vina Del Mar

Chile's homegrown Marcelo Rios was due to meet unseeded Spaniard David Sanchez in the final of the 345,000-dollar ATP tournament here on Sunday.

Third seed Rios defeated Argentina's Gaston Gaudio, also the top seed, 6-3, 6-2 on Saturday to set up the final against Sanchez, who beat fellow Spaniard Albert Montanes 7-6 (7/4), 3-6, 6-1 in the first semi-final.

This is the fourth time Rios has reached the final at this event but he has never been champion.

Warne instigated?

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take, it's important to learn from it."

Warne said he was extremely ignorant in his younger days.

"I'm not saying I know everything now but I know a hell of a lot more -- and I'm enjoying it," he said.

"It's only been in the last 18 months that it's started to happen but I'm finally feeling like I'm Shane Warne again."

If found guilty this week 33-year-old Warne faces a possible two-year ban from cricket, a blow that would almost certainly kill off his international career.

An adopted

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switch on a radio.

"My wife rang on the way home and said, 'Are you listening to this?' and I said no and she told me that I was being silly.

"We kept driving and she rang me again and said, 'Turn on the radio, he's on 96'.

"I got home when he was on 106 and watched the end of his innings.

"But my wife taped it and I'm going to lock myself in the school hall put it on the big screen, put the lights down and watch it by myself -- and she is happy for me to do that.

"Now that is a true Valentine's gift."

CUP DIARY

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**DOT BALL CLUB**

A group of 20 'entrepreneurs' have begun a new trend. Instead of holding up '4' and '6' placards when a boundary is struck, they hold up yellow placards with a large, black dot on them whenever no run is scored. They are statisticians who have worked out that in 90 per cent of one-dayers it is the team that bowl most dot balls who win. They have even gained official sanctioning from Bacher, who said: "In a game that traditionally prides itself on statistical data, it is surprising that the dot ball has, until now, not been accorded the recognition it deserves."

India

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came down heavily on captain Saurav Ganguly, who has been struggling with form, scoring just 128 runs in his last 10 one-dayers.

"I have to enter a formal protest against the television coverage of Saurav Ganguly at the crease. TV should not be allowed to do any replays of Saurav's batting, or playing, or switching, or whatever he is doing after he wins the toss."

Ganguly had perished caught behind trying to get to a wishful ball, something he has been seen doing often in recent matches, and new sensation Virender Sehwag too had followed in the same manner.

"It is embarrassing to watch the Indian captain go back and forth, back and forth when the ball is in some other district. In fact these TV sadists should be ordered to show Saurav only in fast forward mode," Akbar wrote.

"Sehwag, I think, has got his priorities right. He knows that obedience works. If the Boss can convert a wide into a catch, well, so can he. Can't upstage the Boss."



**GrameenPhone Premier Cricket League**  
**Victoria SC v Brothers Union**  
Venue: BNS  
**Mohammedan SC v Uttara SC**  
Venue: FCS

League resumes today



SPORTS REPORTER

Leaders Victoria Sporting Club take on Brothers Union Club at the Bangabandhu National Stadium in one of the day's two matches as the GrameenPhone Premier Division Cricket League resumes today after a weeklong Eid break.

The other fixture pits title aspirants Mohammedan Sporting Club against an emerging Uttara Sporting Club at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium.

Although Victoria -- also the defending champions -- have an all-win record in their four matches, they have so far collected 20 points. Since one of their wins was against the BCB Development Squad, they got only two points from that match. Generally a team earn six points from a win.

Brothers on the other hand have been having a rough ride in the

League so far as they have won only one game out of four.

Both Mohammedan and Uttara are in the second position along with City Club and Abahani with each having 18 points.

A total of 13 teams including the BCB Development (Under-19) Squad are taking part in the first round from where top six teams will

POINTS TABLE						
Teams	M	W	L	T	B	Pts
Victoria SC	4	4	0	0	1	20
City Club	3	3	0	0	0	18
Abahani KC	4	3	1	0	0	18
Uttara SC	4	3	1	0	0	18
Mohammedan	4	3	1	0	0	18
Orient SC	4	2	2	0	0	12
Brothers	4	1	3	0	0	6
Surjo Tarun	4	1	3	0	0	6
Biman	4	1	3	0	0	6
Y Pegasus	3	1	2	0	0	6
Kalabagan	4	0	4	0	0	0
Indira Road	3	1	2	0	1	2
Dev Squad	3	1	2	0	0	0

No one else to blame



INTERNET, Melbourne

Australian fast bowler Glenn McGrath believes teammate Shane Warne brought his potential cricketing downfall upon himself and should have known the risks of taking a pill containing unknown substances.

McGrath said the Australian team was always kept well-informed about drugs and that given his experience, Warne was naive about accepting a pill from his mother.

As Warne awaits his hearing with the Australian Cricket Board's anti-doping committee after testing positive to a banned diuretic, McGrath endorsed captain Ricky Ponting's comments that Warne had acted without thinking.

"As much as the boys are right behind Warney 100 per cent, for someone of his experience, he should have known the risks,"

McGrath wrote in a News Limited column.

"I'd have to agree Shane was a little naive not to get the tablet checked.

McGrath said the Australian players were well aware of the penalties for taking banned substances and knew to thoroughly check anything they took.

"Given what's happened in the past with (state cricketers) Graeme Rummans and Duncan Spencer both being suspended (for banned substances), you should know the consequences of anything you are taking," he said.

"We talk about drugs before the start of every season and a guy from ASDA (Australian Sports Drug Agency) comes out and has a bit of a chat so it isn't like we aren't all well informed.

"Getting things checked is just part and parcel of what we do.

"At the end of the day and as much as the whole team is 100 per cent behind him, Shane has brought this on himself."

McGrath said Warne was lost for

More clarity, please

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they would wear black armbands during the event.

"In doing so we are mourning the death of democracy in our beloved Zimbabwe," the statement said.

Hussain said he had read in the newspapers that some Zimbabwean players did not want England to go to Zimbabwe and he wanted to hear it "from the horse's mouth".

When England were in Australia he asked team mate Ronnie Irani to speak to Andy Flower, as his Essex captain.

Irani reported that Flower had been changing his mind all winter, first thinking England should play in Zimbabwe, then that they should boycott the game.

"If the Zimbabwe players weren't sure, how could we make a judgment?" said Hussain.

"When I spoke to Flower on the phone recently, he said that he had his own decision to make, and we now know what that was -- to issue the statement he did on Monday with Henry Olonga."

Hussain said he had seen a Channel 4 documentary on Zimbabwe and, by chance, met the director of the programme just before the February 8 World Cup opening ceremony in Cape Town.

"Face to face I asked him if the situation in Zimbabwe justified my throwing away not only four points but, in effect, the most important six weeks of our cricketing lives.

"He clarified what he thought was going on, about people being starved on account of the party they had voted for. He stated even worse atrocities and felt we were doing the right thing."

Hussain added: "Obviously as captain, I had a part in preparing the players' statement, released by

words when he told his teammates he had tested positive and that the team was in "shock and huge disappointment" on receiving the news.

Meanwhile, a top Australian sports lawyer has remarked that Warne's "vanity" could be used to counter his doping charges, as his looks are not explicitly linked to his on-field performance.

Warne has long been the butt of jokes from the media and opposition fans over his sometimes sizable girth.

After a lay-off for a shoulder injury, the 33 year-old master leg-spinner made a remarkable recovery to be available for the Australian World Cup squad. Having recovered from the injury, Warne was sensationally sent home for taking a banned diuretic contained in a slimming pill.

According to Aussie lawyer Michael Rowe, who is also chairman of Tennis Australia's anti-doping committee, the desire to show off his slim-side could get this on himself."

McGrath said Warne was lost for

Richard Bevan, managing director of the Players' Cricket Association, about the political, moral and safety issues involved.

"Nothing I've heard or seen since has altered my opinion.

"The fact of the matter, though, is that the ECB and the players made their decision on safety and security grounds alone."

Hussain said the players were told by the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) that they potentially stood to lose millions of pounds if there was a major split in world cricket.

He stressed that the team were starting to get very confused because they knew they also had responsibilities to the ECB and to English cricket in general.

"We have a moral obligation, too, to our employers and the game at home," he said. "We don't want to be remembered as the people who put the nail in the coffin of our sport."

At a players meeting on February 9 Hussain said it was "decision time" and they had to make up their minds.

"At that stage the majority were saying we shouldn't go because of what might happen if people protested at the match.

"How could you live with yourself if you played a cricket match, which your government and family didn't want you to play in, and somebody got killed?"

"And how could I tell my team to risk everything by going to play in somebody else's country.

"It should not have come down to this fiasco. Politicians should continue to stand up and speak about the issues so they don't go away and something good comes out of this episode."

Namibia numbered

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the first ten overs.

Anwar, who missed the first game with an injured elbow, failed to keep a cut down and was smartly caught by Louis Burger off Bjorn Kotze for 23.

Younis Khan and Elahi put 53 for the second wicket before Younis was caught behind after making 28 and he soon saw Inzamam-ul Haq following him back to the pavilion, bowled by Deon Kotze for four.

Elahi, dropped when 38, made 63 before offering a straightforward catch to mid-wicket off Jan Burger to leave Pakistan 150 for four.

Yousuf Youhana and Rashid Latif lifted Pakistan with a rapid fifth wicket stand of 58 off 54 balls before Youhana holed out at long off after making 43.

Snyman then returned to remove Latif for 36 and Abdul Razaq for four.

Pakistan added 85 in their last ten overs with Wasim chipping in with a 14-ball 20.

Wasim was not alone in setting records, Namibia's Rudi van Vuuren becoming the first man to play in both the rugby union and cricket

Brett worse than Jonah

REUTERS, Kimberley

He'd rather try and stop giant All Black rugby winger Jonah Lomu than face Australia fast bowler Brett Lee, but Namibian doctor Rudi van Vuuren may get the chance to do both this year.

The 30-year-old, who has completed half of one of sport's most incredible achievements by representing his African country in the Cricket World Cup, now has his sights set on rugby's showpiece event in Australia later this year.

He has played for his country in both sports, helping Namibia complete a rare double by qualifying for both World Cups in 2003, and is confident of earning a place in the rugby squad.

"I should make it, injuries are the only concern at this stage," he told Reuters. "If it happens it's going to be great and I'll pat myself on the shoulder then but it's not the end of things if it doesn't happen, it's not a train smash."

It's an achievement no sportsman has ever done before, with few even coming close. Former All Black Jeff Wilson played in two rugby World Cups, and while he also represented New Zealand in cricket he did not make the World Cup squad.

Van Vuuren was part of the Namibian rugby squad that went to the 1999 World Cup, but did not play a game.

Born in Namibia but raised in South Africa where he studied medicine at Stellenbosch University, Van Vuuren turned his back on a lucrative career as a professional sportsman to return to his birthland in 1997 and concentrate on medicine.

"I would never think of myself as a professional sportsman because I like it the way it is," he said.

"I'm very dedicated to my job, I have a big passion for medicine, I enjoy what I do so I wouldn't want to be a professional sportsman."

The demands of playing two completely different sports at international level have inevitably overlapped over the years. He made his international cricket debut in Malaysia in 1997, then played his first rugby match for his country in Zimbabwe three weeks later.

"The guys from the cricket and the rugby both understand, they have a gentleman's agreement and they try to accommodate me, but it doesn't always work out and last year I had to miss the two (rugby World Cup) qualifiers," he said.

Van Vuuren opens the bowling for Namibia in cricket and bats at number 11. He plays flyhalf in rugby and thinks the games complement each other.

"Sometimes you can take that passion and aggression of rugby on to the cricket field," he said. "I don't think I'm that talented at cricket but sometimes that gives me the edge."



Canada's Joseph Harris is about to sweep one during his innings against Kenya in Cape Town on February 15.

Pre-meditated bowling



REUTERS, Centurion

Australia captain Ricky Ponting said the way his fast bowlers bullied India into submission in their Pool A match on Saturday was all part of a calculated plan.

With man-of-the-match Jason Gillespie, Brett Lee and Glenn McGrath all in top form, India were skittled for 125, their lowest-ever World Cup total, before Australia knocked off the runs required in only 22.2 overs.

"Bowling short of a length at them was a definite plan and it worked very well today," said Ponting.

"Their players had struggled on the recent tour of New Zealand and we wanted to continue with the way they had bowled to them, fairly short and aggressive.

"The tactic was designed to unsettle the batsmen and it did it fairly well as it didn't let any of their batsmen get away from us.

"At the same time, the tactic can also give you some dot balls to build pressure so it worked both ways and it was pleasing the way all the bowlers stuck to the plans today," he added.

With that strategy in mind, Ponting gave the new ball to Lee ahead of Gillespie and was rewarded with outstanding performances from both players.

Lee produced a hostile opening burst that yielded two for 17 before finishing with figures of three for 36, while Gillespie took three for 13, one of the most economical spells in World Cup history.

McGrath, meanwhile, was his usual miserly self with one for 23 in eight overs.

"India's weakness is sheer pace and bounce and if anyone will get that out of the wicket it will be Brett Lee," said Ponting.

"I wanted him to blast out a couple of their top order and he did that, which set us up from there.

"Glenn McGrath then bowled a couple of maidens in a row just as Jason Gillespie came on and we really tightened things up against them.

"The key is that our bowling lineup is flexible and we can use them all at different times and in different situations.

"It was great to see Jason, who has been a new ball bowler for so long, come on and do a fantastic job as first change. It says a lot about him and the way he has developed, and the same is true of the way Brett performed when he opened the bowling."

The win, which was cemented by a 100-run opening stand from Adam Gilchrist and Matthew Hayden, means Australia have cruised through their first two games of the tournament, matches that were expected to be their toughest in Pool A.

With their remaining matches against the Netherlands, Zimbabwe, Namibia and England, Australia are hot favourites to qualify for the Super Six stage of the tournament unbeaten.

"We have played particularly well

in these two matches (against Pakistan and India)," Ponting added.

"We knew they might be among our toughest so we geared ourselves up to making sure we were somewhere near our best for them.

"In 1999, we made a slow start and we spoke about not wanting to do that again so we focused on doing well in these two games.

"We have done that now but we can't take things easy, we have just got to keep working and improving."

Australia's next match is against the Netherlands in Potchefstroom on Thursday.

Laila remains unbeaten

AFP, Louisville

Laila Ali, fighting in her legendary father's hometown, remained undefeated in 14 professional fights Friday, stopping Mary Ann Almager in the fourth round of their scheduled 10-round women's super middleweight fight.

Ali, daughter of boxing icon Muhammad Ali, dominated the bout over her smaller opponent, a 10-year veteran in a sport that Ali took up just three years ago. Ali finished off Almager with a right to the body that doubled her over, prompting the referee to step in. It was Ali's 11th victory inside the distance and with it she retained her International Boxing Association title.

Captain Clueless

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the next round, ordered his team to return to the drawing board to see where they are going wrong.

The captain himself had no immediate solution.

"I don't know what the reason is for the batting failure," he said. "Somehow we have to put runs on the board.

"It is time for us to get away, individually, and think how to improve."

But Ganguly rubbished a suggestion that he should drop down the batting order after struggling to score just 75 runs in his last nine one-day innings.

"I have scored all my runs at the top. As captain I am the first person to know I should score.

"It's just one of those phases where nothing is going right for me or the team. But we have done well in the past and there is no reason why we should not do better again.

Sachin Tendulkar, one-day cricket's leading batsman, is the only one to escape censure, having top-scored with 52 and 36 after being reverted to his original open-

ing slot.

But that has meant dropping Virender Sehwag to number three where he looks distinctly uncomfortable, as does Ganguly at the top of the order.

Former Indian coach Anshuman Gaekwad, here as a television commentator, said the captain will be more suited at number five where he does not have to face the new ball.

"At his best, Saurav is a champion player of pace and has scored a lot of runs as opener," Gaekwad said.

"But he is not at his best now. There is no harm if he comes down at five where he will get to play the older ball which does not swing as much."

India have three days to regroup before playing hosts Zimbabwe at Harare on Wednesday.

After the Namibia match next Sunday, the Indians face what could be their two most decisive games -- a day-nighter against England at Durban on February 26 before the much-awaited clash against Pakistan at Centurion on March 1.

Collective amnesia

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with the first three balls of the match.

At least they have one relatively pleasant memory of playing the West Indians. Their world-record run of 23 one-day defeats in a row ended against the men from the Caribbean in November when their meeting in Chittagong was rained off.

The road ahead, however, looks ominous for Bangladesh with their next three matches against West Indies, South Africa and New Zealand, followed by their final pool game against Kenya, which presents their only realistic chance of salvaging something from the event.

With West Indies, South Africa and New Zealand all battling for a place in the Super Six phase, any hopes Bangladesh may have had for an easier ride against their more accomplished opponents has already been dashed.

West Indies captain Carl Hooper signalled his team's intentions.

"Every match is important and we can't afford to slip up," he said.

"We're not taking anything for granted and we'll be treating this game the same as any other."

Twice World Cup champions, West Indies made a flying start with a thrilling three-run win over South Africa in the tournament opener in

Cape Town only to suffer a 20-run loss to New Zealand in their second match in Port Elizabeth.

West Indies looked to have the game in their grasp when they restricted the Kiwis to 241 for seven only to suffer a top-order batting collapse which Hooper wants to rectify against Bangladesh.

"Complacency is not a problem for us," he said.

"We want to win every game we play."

No over-docking

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overs, bowling delays in the second innings attracted only fines.

The new rule came into effect on April 1 after the World Cup.

The first tournament to adopt the rule will be the three-nation Sharjah Cup in the United Arab Emirates from April 1-10 featuring South Africa, Sri Lanka and Pakistan.

South Africa were penalised one over against the West Indies in the World Cup opener last Sunday which proved costly as they lost by three runs.

If the new rule had been in effect, South Africa would have been heavily fined, but would still have been allowed to face the full 50 overs instead of 49.

African treats

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as the odds were 10-1 for a Canadian win.

They may not have made any fans in South Africa but when it comes to sex appeal, one Bangladeshi is right up there at the top.

A recent newspaper poll of 500 Durban women decided the world's Sexy XI.

The captain was Wasim Akram, and lining up after him were Sachin Tendulkar, Zaheer Khan, Rahul Dravid, Stephen Fleming, Chris Cairns, Brett Lee, Makhaya Ntini, Corey Collimore, Craig White and would you believe it, our own Alok Kapali!

INDIA A LAB ANGLADESH!

Was it worth the trouble of watching another horror show this time at the Supersport Park? This correspondent thought to himself after Australia disposed of India on Saturday.

After seeing Bangladesh ripped apart by Chaminda Vaas a few days

earlier, the big game at the Park was a chance to get over the nightmare. But after catching an early morning flight from Durban to Johannesburg to see the cricket heavyweights, it turned out to be more of a case of disappointment.

The atmosphere at the ground was magnificent but the Indians spoiled the show with none of their high-profile names able to tackle the speed and aggression of Lee, Gillespie and McGrath.

The highly-endorsed Saurav Ganguly and Co. did achieve two things. Firstly, making one more run than Bangladesh did in their second Cup match at Pietermaritzburg and batting ten extra overs then their sub-continental neighbours.

There were also similarities in the way the two Asian teams performed. It began with master batsman Sachin Tendulkar doing the best he could with an innings high of 36. Bangladesh's best player Alok Kapali also top-scored with 34 against Sri Lanka.

At the other end of the scale the tail-enders provided fireworks. For India it was Harbhajan Singh who like Mashrafe used the long handle to carry the team to respectability. Both players made 28.

At the end of the day the majority of the 20,000 crowd including South Africans left with no happy memories.

"I am supporting the blue shirt. But, unfortunately they disappointed us," said Winnie a 50-year-old security lady at the press box.

"I'm a supporter of anybody playing against Australia," announced John Adams, a lawyer.

South Africans also supported Bangladesh when they played Sri Lanka. Australia and Sri Lanka are the two most unpopular teams in this part of the world.

The game at Supersport finished earlier than expected prompting an emergency announcement "The bar which was scheduled to re-open at quarter to four will now be open at 3pm."