

## Awesome Abahani

SPORTS REPORTER



Saiful Islam Khokon slammed his second hattrick as hot favourites Abahani Kriba Chakra recorded the biggest win of the season with a 7-3 thrashing of Dhanmondi Club in the Western Union Premier Football League at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

Khokon might have missed his partner Maxim, who had to sit out the match due to suspension, but his scoring boots did not stop talking against a side that has over the years been considered as a bogey team for Abahani.

Khokon set the picture of where the match was eventually heading for with a double strike in the first-half including a 90-second minute goal and completed his second treble midway through the second session.

The nimble attacker, who scored the first hattrick in his side's opening match against Dhaka Wanderers, now leads the individ-

ual scorer's list with seven goals.

Abahani's Brazilian forward Sandro scored the second hattrick of the night, putting behind the four-match disappointment. During this period he could manage to score only one.

The biggest victory in recent times also confirmed a pompous return to winning ways for the league leaders after a frustrating goalless draw against Badda Jagorani in the previous game. The sky blues now lead the table with 10 points, two points clear from holders Mohammedan Sporting Club.

The defeat on the other hand left Dhanmondi glued to the bottom of the ten-team table with only one point from five outings.

Although Dhanmondi suffered most in the battle of neighbours, but Kennedy and Donald had the satisfaction of scoring once each against their old club. Both Kennedy and Donald were regular faces for Abahani in the last few seasons.

Dhanmondi also had the misfortune of playing with ten men for

the last 21 minutes after defender Prodeep got the marching orders for punching his Abahani counterpart Hasan without the ball in the 69th minute.

But that was nothing to do with a rampant Abahani, who took a 3-0 lead in the first-half. In fact the sky blues scored all those goals inside the first 12 minutes and it was none but an evergreen Masud Rana, who created the opportunities.

Considered the country's best left wing back, Masud Rana lobbed an intelligent free-kick to Parvez, who drove a low cross from the left hand side of the post that Khokon made no mistake to tap in.

It was again Masud Rana, who sent in a curling cross from the left to an unmarked Nikolai. The Russian, playing in his first League match, pushed the ball up for Khokon to score his second goal in the seventh minute.

Masud Rana then perfectly executed a plot from a set piece that Sandro finished clinically.

Prodeep scored the first goal for Dhanmondi shooting home a

rebounder in the 53rd minute, but Sandro widened the gap again four minutes later.

Kennedy struck the second goal for Dhanmondi in the 58th minute from a penalty, which was awarded after Abahani defender Osamanu handled the ball inside the forbidden zone.

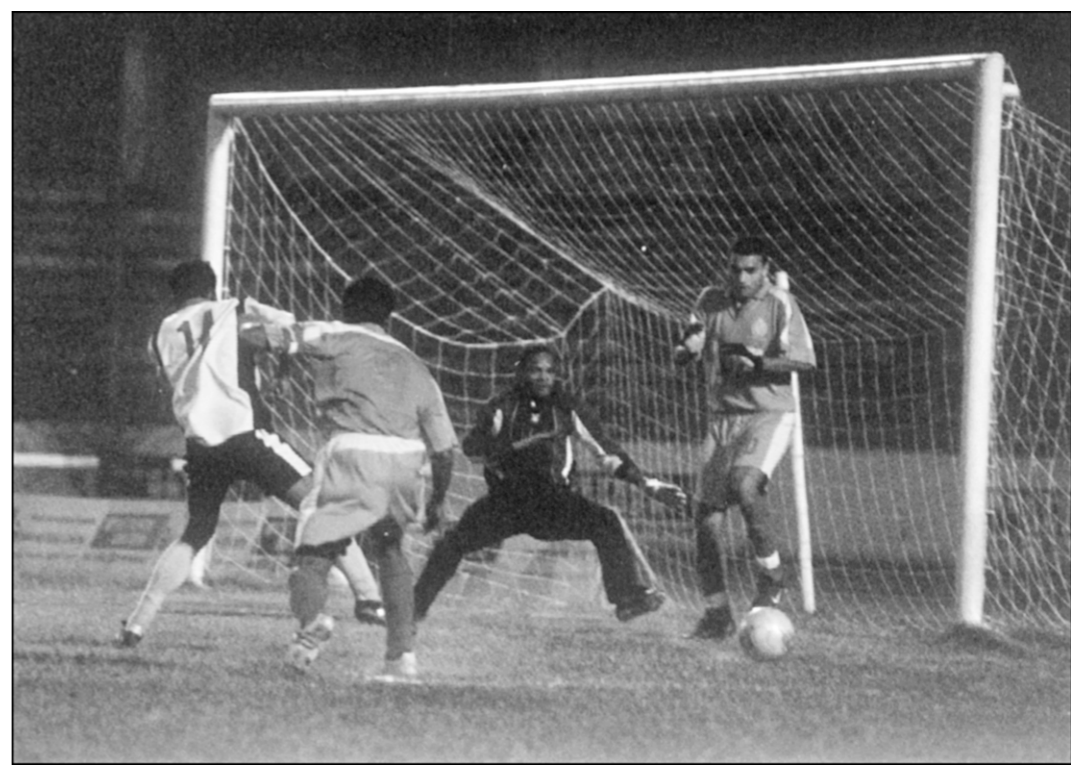
Khokon scored his third goal in the 73rd minute and Parvez made it 6-2 after nine minutes with a sublime left-footer from the top of the box that crashed into the net after hitting the crossbar.

Donald scored the third goal for Dhanmondi a minute before the long whistle. But it was Sandro, who completed a memorable night scoring his third goal from a penalty with the match already into its injury time.

Red card: Prodeep  
Yellow card: Khokon (Abahani) and Maruf (Dhanmondi).

TEAMS

ABAHANI KC: Nizam (Munna), SEE PAGE 14 COL 5



Abahani's Saiful Islam Khokon (2nd from L) pushes in his hattrick goal against Dhanmondi in their Western Union Premier Division Football League encounter at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.



### Did U Know?

The record for the most Olympic medals ever won is held by Soviet gymnast Larissa Latynina. Competing in three Olympics, between 1956 and 1964, she won 18 medals.



### TALK TURKEY



### VVS Laxman

(Indian star batsman)  
"I would like to dedicate this hundred to my parents, who have been a great source of inspiration for me."



### What to WATCH

- ESPN**  
South Africa vs West Indies  
Third Test, Day Four  
Live at 2:25 pm  
Sportscentre Hindi  
Sport News  
Live at 9:30 pm
- STAR Sports**  
Australia vs India  
Fourth Test, Day Four  
Live at 6:00 am  
Sportsline Tonight  
Sport News  
Live at 8:00 pm

**Star WHIZZ KID COMPETITION 204**  
Tick the correct answers, post to The Daily Star  
Win attractive prizes  
Competition closes at 8 pm  
Jan 16, 2004 and draw

- Who clinched the Leonine Grand Masters chess title?  
Zia Reefat Rakib
- Who won the Pepsi Nat'l volleyball women's crown?  
BJMC Army Navy
- Who won the European footballer-of-the-year award?  
Nedved Owen Zidane
- Who became World Youth football champions?  
Brazil Holland France

Name .....  
Class ..... Roll No. ....  
School Address .....  
Phone: (if any) .....



**Western Union Premier Football League**  
Brothers Union vs Dhaka Wanderers (3:00 pm)  
Muktijoddha vs Arambagh (5:00 pm)  
Venue: Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium  
**Nat'l Cricket League**  
Rajshahi vs Chittagong (Day-3)  
Venue: Cricket Garden, Rangpur  
Barisal vs Sylhet (Day-3)  
Venue: Sylhet Stadium  
Dhaka vs Khulna (Day-2)  
Venue: Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium  
**Patron's Trophy (Day-1)**  
Bangladesh A vs PIA  
Venue: Quaid-e-Azam Park, Karachi



Dhaka's Mehrab Hossain plays and misses one off the bowling of Abdur Razzak Raj (not in picture) of Khulna on the opening day of their four-day Ispahani Tea National Cricket League fixture at Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium yesterday.

## Wickets tumble everywhere

The Day Two. No play was possible on Saturday at the Rangpur Cricket Garden.

**DHAKA VS KHULNA**  
Openers Al-Shahriar and Mehrab got Dhaka off to a flying start the league leaders decided to bat.

The pair added 142 runs before left-arm spinner Abdur Razzak Raj trapped Al-Shahriar lbw. He also had Mehrab caught behind.

That opened the door for left-arm new ball bowler Russell to be unleashed on the rest of Dhaka's batting order. They quickly lost their remaining eight wickets for only 67 runs.

The 19-year-old pacer from Jessore finished with career-best seven for 55 in 26 overs while Raj ended up with three wickets for 73 runs.

National discard Al-Shahriar, who hit a match-winning 61-run knock against the same opponents in the limited-overs match, smashed 92 off 157 balls that featured eleven fours and three overboundaries.

His fellow right-hand partner Mehrab made 57 off 138 balls with

seven hits to the fence.  
In reply, Khulna were 2-1 at stumps.

Neeayamur Rashid Rahul took the wicket sending Sajjadul Hasan to Naimur Rahman at slip.

**SYLHET VS BARISAL**  
Four batsmen narrowly missed to score half-centuries but their efforts still helped Sylhet to smelt victory against Barisal at the Sylhet Stadium.

Number eight batsman Mohammad Rana was the top-scorer with 47 off 92 balls while Golam Mabud (45), Rezaul Haq Nayeem (43) and Golam Mowla (40) were the other notable scorers.

Tariqul captured seven wickets conceding 116 runs in 43.3 overs but Sylhet piled up the runs after resorting on 101 for one.

**CHITTAGONG VS RAJSHAHI**  
Title contenders Chittagong were all out for 104 runs after put into bat by Rajshahi.

Spinner Saifullah started the carnage sending back Masum-

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## Shahriar wants to roar back

ability. And I'm now trying to improve my fitness level, for which I faced a lot of criticism," said Shahriar after the first day of Dav Whatmore's camp.

The selectors in an effort to assess the player sent him along with other Test caps to Pakistan as part of the Bangladesh A team. It was a wise decision as Shahriar made runs aplenty on the tour.

The highlight of the trip was a magnificent 218 against Defence Housing Authority (DHA) in the first four-day. He rates that knock as the best of his career.

"The Pakistan tour gave me immense confidence that a return to the national team was possible. I want to continue in that way if I get the nod," he said talking to The Daily Star Sport.

Besides Shahriar, Hannan Sarker is the other specialist opener in the

"I feel that I'm at the peak of my

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## India to cross the border in March

one-dayers.  
The last Test series between the nuclear-armed South Asian rivals was held in India in 1999, when Pakistan undertook a tour despite threats from Hindu fundamentalists.

India refused to allow any bilateral cricket against Pakistan in 2000 following rising tensions over disputed Kashmir, although the arch-rivals played in multi-nation events such as the World Cup in South Africa last year.

A recent thaw in relations saw the revival of cricket ties in November last year, when an Indian under-19 team toured Pakistan for a four-nation tournament.

A second-string Pakistan side led by all-rounder Shahid Afridi also played in a triangular tournament for A sides here last month.

The announcement came as the leaders of India and Pakistan met on the sidelines of a South Asian summit in Islamabad amid hopes of

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## India include Rohan for tri-series

AFP, Calcutta  
Rohan Gavaskar, son of legendary opening batsman Sunil Gavaskar, was on Sunday named in the Indian squad for the upcoming triangular tournament in Australia.

The middle-order batsman replaces the injured Mohammad Kaif for the tournament, which also features Zimbabwe.

Kaif was ruled out because of a thumb injury sustained in a recent tri-series here featuring second-string sides from Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

Rohan has been a prominent player on the domestic circuit, scoring 4,913 runs in 81 first-class matches, and leads Bengal in the national Ranji Trophy championship.

The 27-year-old is considered a utility player as he also bowls left-arm spin in first-class and domestic one-day matches.  
The tournament gets under way at Melbourne on January 9.



Australia captain Steve Waugh trudging off the field after being dismissed for 40 in his side's first innings on the third day of the fourth and final Test against India in Sydney yesterday.

## Australia endangered

pitch that was expected to turn more over the final days.  
Kumble had taken 4-103 off 31 overs, while young pacer Irfan Pathan was the surprise packet claiming the key wickets of Waugh and Gilchrist.

At the close, Australia were 342 for six and still 164 runs from the follow-on target of 506.

The Australians are under threat of losing a first-ever home series to India and their first home-series defeat since going down 2-1 to the West Indies in 1992-93.

At stumps, Simon Katich was unbeaten on 51 with Brett Lee yet to score.  
"We still have to get four wickets and the wicket is going to get harder as the game goes on... I think we have a very good chance to win," Kumble said.

India batted on into the third day further building their imposing first innings to a record 705 for seven before Ganguly declared with Sachin Tendulkar reaching his highest first-class score.  
Australia began bullishly after India's monumental total with



National cricket team members (L-R) Hannan Sarker, Mohammad Selim and Tapash Baisya run in front of the bleep test device during a practice session at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

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