

A full house (L) at the Rangpur Stadium enjoy the match between Dhaka Abahani and Panchagarh Brothers Union yesterday.

Abahani

FROM PAGE 13 Pranotosh, Ujjal, Khokon and Colly Barnes.

Tait joins Durham

Promising Australian fast bowler Shaun Tait has signed for English county cricket club Durham.

The 21-year-old, included in the Australian squad for the recent Test series against Sri Lanka, will replace Shoib Akhtar who was recalled to Pakistan for the Asia Cup earlier this month.

The Adelaide-born cricketer took 33 first-class wickets for South Australia last season.

Rifles, Army

FROM PAGE 13 Division Kabadi League at the outer stadium court yesterday.

Rifles crushed Sonali Bank RC 70-27 after leading the first half 19-16. Army recorded a 32-29 win over Bangladesh Police. The winners led the first half 13-12.

TODAY'S MATCHES

Bangladesh Rifles v Bangladesh Police (4pm) Bangladesh Army v Sonali Bank (5pm)

Star Whizz Kid Competition 215. Tick the correct answers, post to The Daily Star. Win attractive prizes. Competition closes at 8 pm August 6, 2004 and draw shortly afterwards.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues and a solution key at the bottom.



PHOTO: STAR

India win a cliffhanger

A Virender Sehwag-inspired India qualified for the Asia Cup final with a thrilling four-run win over Sri Lanka in a super league match here Tuesday despite a blistering 130 from Sanath Jayasuriya.

Sri Lanka needed four to tie the scores off the last ball from left-arm seamer Zaheer Khan, but a dot ball halted the hosts' run chase at 267-9, tantalisingly drifting of India's 271-6 in the day-night game.

It was a sterling comeback by Zaheer after having been hammered for five fours in one over by the left-hander Jayasuriya, who cracked one six and 14 fours in his 18th century and the second in as many matches.

Sehwag returned to form at the right time with a superb all-round performance, top-scoring with 81 and then claiming three wickets, including those of Jayasuriya and Tillakaratne Dilshan (39) at crucial stages.

By winning, India also knocked fierce rivals Pakistan out of the tournament, setting up a return clash with Sri Lanka in the final on August 1.

Sri Lanka finished their super league engagements with 13 points from three matches, followed by India (12/3). Pakistan (5/2) will meet winless Bangladesh with nothing to play for in a match Thursday. A win would earn them a maximum of six points, still leaving them behind India.

"We knew we could win the game if we (could) get Jayasuriya out," said man-of-the-match Sehwag, who scored his first half-century in nine matches before delivering penetra-

tive bowling spells. "I tried to bowl at the right spots. Fortunately, it clicked. While batting, I just wanted to spend time in the middle as I had not scored runs in previous matches," he said.

Jayasuriya had earlier threatened to steal the show and upstage Indian skipper Sourav Ganguly (79) and Sehwag, who had put on 134 for the second wicket.

The Sri Lankan opener blitzed boundaries early in his innings, adding 103 for the sixth wicket with Dilshan after the hosts had been reduced to 134-5.

Sehwag, however, swung the match in India's favour when he bowled Dilshan and then held a return catch to account for Jayasuriya in the 48th over.

It was a gamble to bring Sehwag on at that stage," said Ganguly. "But I had confidence in him as he had bowled well in his first spell. It was good that we fought till the end, but we are still not playing our best cricket."

Sri Lankan skipper Marvan Atapattu said his team had had a chance to win the match with Jayasuriya in the middle.

"We had a big chance till the last moment," he said. "It was good to see Sanath back to his big-scoring ways and I hope he continues with the same form in the final. But we did well to restrict them to 271 after the Sehwag-Ganguly stand."

India posted a healthy total thanks chiefly to the Sehwag-Ganguly second-wicket partnership, with Yuvraj Singh chipping in later with a brisk 46-ball 50.

Ganguly and Sehwag had set the stage as they made the most of an under-strength Sri Lankan attack,

but not before surviving close calls. Sehwag was let off after being put down first by Mahela Jayawardene in the slips and then by Avishka Gunawardene in the covers.

Ganguly got the benefit of the doubt from TV umpire after a diving Jayawardene had claimed a catch in the deep.

Sri Lanka were without star off-spinner Muttiah Muralitharan and left-arm fast bowler Chaminda Vaas.

SCOREBOARD Scoreboard of the Asia Cup super league match between Sri Lanka and India at the Premadasa Stadium in Colombo on Tuesday.

Table with columns: Bowler, O, M, R, W. Includes names like Pathan, Zaheer, Harbhajan, Sehwag, Kumble, Tendulkar.

Windies legends mostly batsmen

BBC ONLINE, undated

An awards ceremony marking 75 years of West Indies cricket named the five greatest Caribbean players of all time.

But the judging panel surprisingly left out all the fearsome fast bowlers of the 1980s in its final selection.

They chose George Headley, Sir Garfield Sobers, Sir Viv Richards, Sir Frank Worrell and current captain Brian Lara.

One former great Lance Gibbs told BBC: "Cricket, as you know, is a batsman's game, but maybe next time the bowlers will get a chance."

At a lavish function at Birmingham's Symphony Hall on Tuesday, the great and good of West Indies cricket were invited to the Scotiabank West Indian Jubilee.

The ceremony lasted nearly three hours, with video footage from the glory years of Caribbean cricket played out in front of a rapt audience.

Richards, Joel Garner, Gordon Greenidge and Sir Everton Weeskes were among the invited guests.

There were three other awards during the evening. Michael Holding's 8-92 against England at The Oval in 1976 won him the best bowling performance gong, ahead of Gibbs' 8-38 versus India in Barbados and Curtly Ambrose's 6-24 against England in Trinidad.

Lara collected the batting performance award, as he held off Greenidge and Roy Fredericks courtesy of his famous 153 not out to beat Australia in Barbados in 1999.

There was also a top one-day performance award -- with Richards' 189 not out against England at Old Trafford in 1984 beating off two fine innings in World Cup final wins by Collis King and Clive Lloyd.

Back troubles Bond again

REUTERS, Auckland New Zealand fast bowler Shane Bond has suffered a second stress fracture to his back, his manager said on Wednesday.

Bond, who has a history of back trouble, had a scan last week which revealed the problem.

"Shane is now considering the options given to him by his surgeon," his manager Leanne McGoldrick said.

"One of those is surgery and that seems his most likely option at this stage. He just wants to take a few days to think things over."

Bond suffered a previous stress fracture during the tour of Sri Lanka in May 2003.

The problem flared up again last December and the 29-year-old missed the home series against Pakistan and South Africa.

Sharapova sails, Serena crawls

Tennis

REUTERS, San Diego

Maria Sharapova, in her first match since winning Wimbledon earlier this month, powered past American qualifier Lilia Osterloh 6-3, 6-3 in the second round of the 1.3 million dollars Acura Classic on Tuesday.

"I really feel this is where I belong," the 17-year-old Russian told reporters. "The competitive spirit comes back again."

"I knew it wouldn't be easy and I just tried to be consistent. I think I did well for not playing for a while and coming off such a big win."

Top seed Serena Williams struggled to progress and needed more than two hours to down Jelena Jankovic of Serbia and Montenegro 6-7, 6-3, 6-2.

Serena's sister, Venus, pulled out of the tournament earlier in the day with a sprained wrist.

Playing in front of a sellout crowd of 6,500, sixth seed Sharapova served well and returned aggressively but often failed to find her range with her big groundstrokes.

"It was exciting," said the Wimbledon champion. "There were a few more guests asking me for tickets."

"As long as people enjoy it and bring the kids in, it's great for me to show my tennis."

Serena, beaten by Sunday's final at nearby Carson by Lindsay Davenport, was erratic against Jankovic, unable to control her groundstrokes and doing little with her return of serve.

The two players received simultaneous medical timeouts with Williams leading 3-2 in the third set, Jankovic for a stiff back and Serena for blisters on her left foot.

After a 10-minute break, Jankovic was unable to get her rhythm back while Williams played more consistently and ended the match with two booming aces.

"When I first got on court I was a bit scared because she was hitting so hard," said Jankovic. "I was afraid I was going to get hit in the face."

"The balls were going like 300-

mph. But then she wasn't hitting as hard and I knew I could play with her."

Former world number one Williams, who said after Sunday's defeat by Davenport that she was "trying to commit suicide out there", said she was "nearly" suicidal against Jankovic.

"Everyone tends to play beyond themselves against me," Williams said. "I made a lot of mistakes."

"It's boiling down to missing key shots. It's a little disgusting that I'm missing those shots but I know if I make them it will be a different story."

French Open champion Anastasia Myskina, the third seed from Russia, advanced with a 6-3, 6-4 victory over Austria's Barbara Schett.

In the day's only upset, Russian Elena Likhovtseva put out compatriot and 10th seed Nadia Petrova 6-4, 1-6, 6-4 in a first-round tussle.



Russian Maria Sharapova serves to American Lilia Osterloh during the first round of the Acura Classic in San Diego on Tuesday.

Bangladesh had better players

FROM PAGE 13 DS: Sanath Jayasuriya was one of your two guns that blazed in the 1996 World Cup. Do you think he is losing his fire, especially in one-day cricket?

AR: He has still some cricket left in him. He is a good one-day cricketer and performs well, especially under pressure. If he can be positive, Sri Lanka should have him in the side. But if he feels that he has had enough of one-day cricket, he can step down and concentrate only on Test cricket.

DS: Your World Cup winning coach Dav Whatmore has joined Bangladesh. Do you see any improvement?

AR: To be honest, for the last six months I have no idea what has happened in Bangladesh. But overall, he is a good coach and work with young cricketers. I have seen them play against Sri Lanka here. But I feel that when we played, Bangladesh had a better side and better cricketers who were more committed.

DS: You have played a lot of games at club level in Bangladesh. What are your tips for improvement?

AR: They have to get the structure right and concentrate on junior and school levels to get more players for the national team. I heard that they are spending lot of money, developing grounds. It's a good sign. Lot of countries struggled too long for winning a Test match. Bangladesh came close twice but could not finish it. You

have to have the right people to do the right job.

DS: With his 'doosra' banned, do you think Muralitharan will be the same bowler?

AR: He should reach 800 wickets. Even a thousand if he keeps fit.

DS: But the controversy goes on...

AR: He does not have a problem at all. I think our cricket board has messed it all up. When someone is reported, there is a step-by-step process to follow. The board should review someone's action before sending it to the ICC. Its technical committee then should go through it and give a report. But like idiots, our cricket board let Murali to go to Australia for very sophisticated tests. None of the other bowlers have gone through that.

DS: You are pretty harsh on the cricket board. Does it still hurt you that you have lost in the election once?

AR: No. I just wanted to prove a point. The system is corrupted. Good people will never be allowed to come in. It's a set-up of mafia. Even if the President of this country or the Prime Minister contests against one of this unknown quantity, they will still lose.

DS: Bob Woolmer has complained about the bonus point rules in this Asia Cup. Do you agree with his sentiment?

AR: They should have complained before the tournament. Personally, I don't believe in extra points. I feel if you are good enough, you will prove yourself by

winning straightaway. If there were no bonus points, teams, like Sri Lanka, would have not dared to rest key players.

DS: Is any young player in this tournament making any impression on you?

AR: Yeah, players like Irfan Pathan, Lasith Malinga have taken early wickets with the new ball. That's a success considering the low and slow bouncy wickets.

Jones skips London GP

AFP, London

Embattled triple Olympic champion Marion Jones stunned organisers of the IAAF Grand Prix due to take place here on Friday by withdrawing from the event.

The 28-year-old has been the subject of allegations that she took performance enhancing drugs which have been exacerbated by claims by her former husband CJ Hunter - who tested positive several times himself - he injected her with them during the 2000 Olympics.

Rajib in 2nd spot

FROM PAGE 13 games while FIDE Master Taibur Rahman Sumon lost the fifth round board to bag 3 points.

Lars Skard of Germany and Klyuner, Vycheslav of Ukraine were jointly leading the table with 4.5 points each.

Fischer appeal rejected

AFP, Tokyo

US chess legend Bobby Fischer's plea for provisional release from detention here pending a decision on whether to deport him has been rejected by Japanese immigration officials, a friend said Wednesday.

Fischer, 61, has been held at Tokyo's Narita airport since July 13 for violating Japanese immigration law after trying to leave for the Philippines using a passport which US officials said had been revoked.

"The appeal for release was turned down yesterday in a hearing which I attended," Miyoko Watai, president of the Japan Chess Association and a friend of Fischer's, told AFP.

"He also had a hearing a few days earlier just with immigration officials," she said. "We plan to make another appeal for his provisional release on July 30."

The chess master has been wanted by Washington since 1992 when he scooped more than three million dollars in prize money from a chess match held in former Yugoslavia, in defiance of an international embargo on the country.

He faces up to 10 years in prison in the United States if convicted.

The United States revoked Fischer's passport last December.

Watai earlier told AFP the chess master had appealed to Japan's justice minister against deportation.

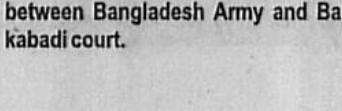


PHOTO: STAR

Action from yesterday's Premier Division Kabadi League encounter between Bangladesh Army and Bangladesh Police at the outer stadium Kabadi court.

Directorate General Defence Purchase

Ministry of Defence, New Airport Road, Tejgaon, Dhaka-1215

Re-Tender Notice

Sealed tenders are invited in local currency from bonafide manufacturers/dealers/suppliers/indentors (enlisted firm) for supply of the following item for Bangladesh "Army":

Table with columns: Ser No, Nomenclature, Date of selling (From/To), Date of opening, Currency, Tender No.

2. Tender schedule with detailed specifications/conditions will be available on payment as per I/T selling rate (not refundable) during office hour between 0800 to 1300 hours. The tender can be dropped latest by 1000 hrs and opened at 1005 hours on the specified date of opening in presence of all tenderers (if present).