

Inter-club players' transfers Abahani rule day two

 Hockey

SPORTS REPORTER

Defending Premier League champions Abahani came alive on the second day of the three-day hockey players' transfers (Premier and First Division) yesterday.

After big guns Mohammedan, Usha and Mariners dominated the opening day, Abahani signed seven new stick wielders.

Abahani also retained the country's number one custodian Russel Khan Bappi as well as top players like skipper Nakib, Faruque, Rajib and Shahidullah Titu. The list also included former national captain Alamgir Alam, who has been wearing the Sky Blue shirt for over a decade.

Abahani's biggest catch was young striker Russel Mahmud

Jimmy, the top scorer of the recently concluded Under-21 Challenge Cup hockey tournament. BKSP lad Jimmy, son of national coach Abdur Razzak Sona Mia, joined Abahani from Azad Sporting.

Abahani also recruited national playmaker Musa Mia from archivals Mohammedan, a move that has separated the Mia brothers Musa and Issa for the first time in the history of domestic hockey. The Faridpur duo has always featured in the same team but Issa has chosen Mariners over the Black and White tent this season.

Khurshid Alam, who had been living in England since 2001, returned to Abahani after missing two and a half years of the local scene. The ex-national defender last played for Usha.

The other recruits for the Sky-Blues were young goalkeeper Soh

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Dhaka top shooters

SPORTS REPORTER

Dhaka Rifle Club emerged champions in the three-day National Shooting Championships that ended at the National Shooting Complex in Gulshan yesterday.

Dhaka won only a bronze medal on the final day but Toufiqur Rahman Alo's fantastic treble in pistol events earlier in the meet helped them top the table with five gold, one silver and one bronze. Country's ace female shooter Sabrina Sultana won the other two golds for the club in the rifle events.

There were two golds up for grabs on the final day and Kushtia Rifle Club's Shobuzzaman got one

of them. The leading marksman in the meet won the 50m rifle three position finishing just ahead of Mohammed Anwaruzzaman of Narayanganj Rifle Club. Shueb scored a total of 1125 points compared to Anwar's 1119.

Veteran Saiful Alam Chowdhury's hopes of winning a gold in this event ended in bronze. The 1995 SAF Games gold medalist scored 1115 points.

Shoaib's second gold enabled Kushtia Rifle Club to finish runners-up with a haul of three gold, one silver and two bronze medals.

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The football referee's whistle was introduced in 1878. Prior to this the official had to rely on waving a handkerchief.



Maria Sharapova (Wimbledon champion)

"I am so happy that I could defend my title in Tokyo. I played some really great tennis this week. I really showed my fans that I am the Wimbledon champion. It's just a great feeling to win here."



TEN Sports

Triangular Cricket Series
Sri Lanka vs Zimbabwe
Live at 10:30 am
Repeat at 1:00 pm

ESPN

Sportscentre
Live at 8:30 pm

STAR Sports

Sportsline
Live at 8:00 pm

IFA Shield Final

Mohonbagan vs MRFC (Myanmar)

Repeat at 8:30 pm

Sonargoan Hotel sponsors Test series

SPORTS REPORTER

The upcoming Test series between Bangladesh and New Zealand will be named the Pan Pacific Sonargoan Test Cricket Series, Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) confirmed at a press conference at the Sonargoan Hotel yesterday.

The first Test of the two-match series will be played at the Bangabandhu National Stadium from October 19 while Chittagong will host the second Test from October 26 at the MA Aziz Stadium. But the BCB refused to disclose the amount of money that the five star hotel has paid to win the title sponsorship right citing it as 'confidential'.

The Pan Pacific Sonargoan Hotel signed a deal just weeks ago with the Board as its official hospitality partner for next 19 months, agreeing to provide accommodation at a lower rate.

"We will get free accommodation for the Test series besides they will a

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PHOTO: AFP

STUNNING DEBUT: Debutant Michael Clarke gets a ride on the back of legendary teammate Shane Warne after the first Test victory against India at Bangalore yesterday. Clarke, who made his Test debut in the game, became the man-of-the-match for his hundred in the first innings.

Gilchrist thrilled Ganguly stays positive

REUTERS/AFP, Bangalore



told reporters after his side clinched a 217-run victory with more than a session to spare.

"We played really well and had to do really well everything we planned to do," he added.

"It's a convincing win, by 200 runs, but in these (slow) conditions I think those sort of results can come

about a bit easier than elsewhere.

"It doesn't necessarily mean a huge gap between the two teams. We have been in this position before. But I think we've got a little bit of different confidence in our team as opposed to three years ago."

On their previous tour in 2001, Australia beat India by 10 wickets in the first Test in Bombay, but went on to lose the three-match series 2-1.

Vangipurappu Laxman hit a record 281 to spark India's comeback victory in the second Test in Calcutta after being asked to follow and off-spinner Harbhajan Singh captured 32 wickets in that series.

Gilchrist said his team arrived in Bombay in 2001 after a record 15 consecutive victories, but had not contemplated defeat.

Australia are chasing their first Test series victory in India since 1969 in this four-Test affair.

"We certainly didn't know what it

was to lose a Test match three years ago at this stage.

"I'm aware of that now," he said. "It's pretty much what the whole team is thinking."

Gilchrist received a congratulatory phone call from captain Ricky Ponting, who will miss at least the first two Tests because of a thumb fracture.

He also sprang to Shane Warne's defence on Sunday after the leg-spinner fell agonisingly short of becoming Test cricket's leading bowler.

The champion spinner was hammered for 55 runs by the Indian tail before Australia carved out a 217-run win to take a 1-0 lead.

"I know a lot can be said about Warne's bowling on the final day, but I beg to differ," he said.

"His presence made a lot of difference to the side. Not to forget

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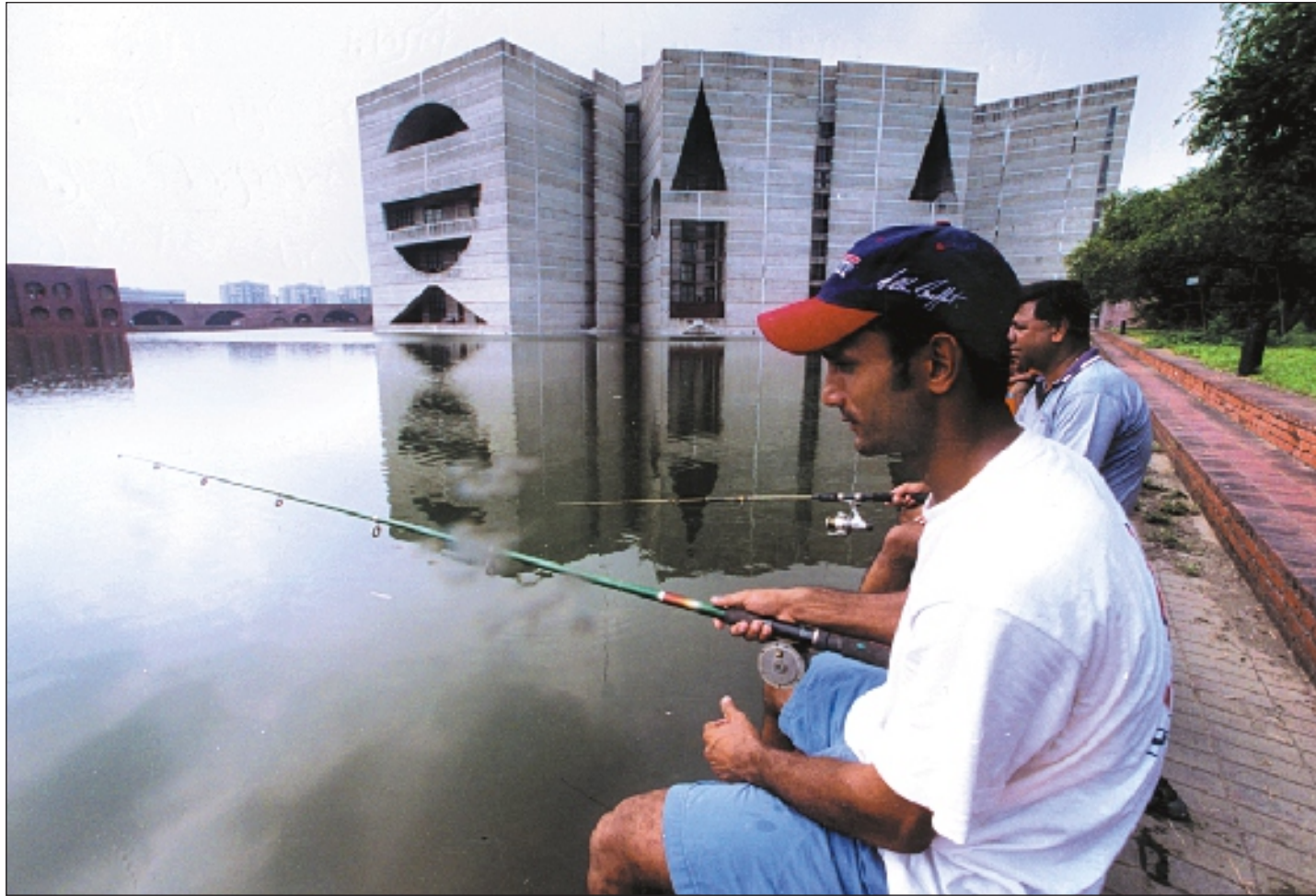


PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

CATCHING FISH FOR A CHANGE! He is more known for his stumping but Bangladesh wicketkeeper Khaled Mashud is no novice when it comes to angling too. With no practice for the Tigers yesterday, Mashud was found fishing in the Sangsad Bhavan lake.

Wagging tail can't stop Australia's victory

AFP, Bangalore



World champions Australia overcame dogged resistance from India's tail-enders to win the first Test by 217 runs on Sunday and take a 1-0 lead in the four-match series.

The hosts, chasing an improbable target of 437, slipped to 125-8 before the last two wickets added 114 runs to help carry the total to 239 in the post-lunch session of the fifth and final day.

Irfan Pathan, who hit a career-best 55, and Harbhajan Singh (42) put on a record 89 runs for the ninth wicket before last man Zaheer Khan chipped in with an unbeaten 22.

But India, depleted by the absence of the injured Sachin Tendulkar, paid the price for falling for 246 and 239 on a bone-dry wicket on which Australia made 474 and 228.

Leg-spinner Shane Warne, who began the day needing one more wicket to equal Sri Lankan Muttiah Muralitharan's world record of 532, failed to strike in 13 overs which cost 55 runs.

Jason Gillespie was Australia's most successful bowler with three for 33. Glenn McGrath, Warne and Michael Kasprovic took two wickets each.

Australia, aiming to win their first series on Indian soil since 1969, will start firm favourites when the second Test begins at the Chepauk Stadium in Chennai on Thursday.

The world champions consider

India the 'final frontier', a term coined by former captain Steve Waugh after Australia lost the last two series here in 1998 and 2001 by 2-1 margins.

India put up unexpected resistance after resuming at the overnight score of 105-6 in front of a holiday crowd of 10,000 at the Chinnaswamy Stadium.

Vice-captain Rahul Dravid and Pathan denied the Australians a wicket for the first 55 minutes after the tourists missed an early chance.

Pathan had not added to his score of seven when he edged Kasprovic to second slip where Michael Clarke failed to take the catch.

Dravid shielded Pathan from Warne for five overs, forcing the leg-spinner to switch ends to have a go at the tail-ender.

Kasprovic provided the break by trapping Dravid leg-before for 60.

The lanky Queensland seamer then bowled Anil Kumble for two to make it 125-8, but Pathan and Harbhajan defied the world champions to take the match into the afternoon session.

Their stand was India's best for the ninth wicket against Australia, surpassing the 81 by Tendulkar and Kiran More at Perth in January 1992.

Warne watched stunned as the 19-year-old Pathan hammered him for a six and Harbhajan followed with a four and a six off consecutive deliveries.

Gillespie finally broke through with the second new ball when he had Pathan caught behind by wicketkeeper and captain Gilchrist.

Gillespie then forced Harbhajan to miscue a catch to McGrath at

fine-leg to signal Australia's win.

SCOREBOARD

Final scorecard of the first cricket Test between India and Australia at the Chinnaswamy Stadium here on Sunday:

AUSTRALIA: First innings 474 (Langer 52, Katich 81, Clarke 151, Gilchrist 104; Harbhajan 5-146, Kumble 3-157)

INDIA: First innings 246 (Ganguly 45, Patel 46; McGrath 4-55, Gillespie 2-63, Warne 2-78, Kasprovic 2-43)

AUSTRALIA: Second innings 228 (Martyn 45; Harbhajan 6-78, Kumble 2-64)

INDIA: Second innings (overnight 105-6)

Chopra lbw b Gillespie	5
Sehwag lbw b McGrath	0
Dravid lbw b Kasprovic	60
Ganguly run out	5
Laxman lbw b Warne	3
Yuvraj c Gilchrist b McGrath	27
Patel lbw b Warne	4
Pathan c Gilchrist b Gillespie	55
Kumble b Kasprovic	2
Pathan c McGrath b Gillespie	42
Zaheer not out	22
Extras: (b-6, lb-5, nb-3)	14
Total: (All out in 87.4 overs)	239
Fall of wkts: 1-1, 2-7, 3-12, 4-19, 5-81, 6-86, 7-118, 8-125, 9-214.	

Bowler	O	M	R	W
McGrath	20	10	39	2
Gillespie	14.4	4	33	3
Kasprovic	14	7	23	2
Warne	32	8	115	2
Lehmann	6	3	14	0
Clarke	1	0	4	0

Result: Australia won by 217 runs.

Man-of-the-match: Michael Clarke.

Umpires: Steve Bucknor (WIS) and Billy Bowden (NZL)

Match referee: Ranjan Madugalle (SRI)



PHOTO: AP

GOING DOWN LIKE A PATHAN! Irfan Pathan whacks a six during his half-century in the Indian second innings at Bangalore yesterday.

Race row ZCU remains positive

 Cricket

AFP, Rawalpindi

Zimbabwe cricket chief Peter Chingoka said Sunday he hopes cricket will move forward in his country after a turmoil which led to the suspension of their Test status and a probe into allegations of racism.

"The most important thing for Zimbabwe cricket is for us to move forward, we have been at the wrong side of the rope since April this year as we were involved in matters that have taken prominence," said Chingoka, chairman of the Zimbabwe Cricket Union (ZCU).

"But finally I am glad that the inquiry on racism has been completed and the report has been

presented to the International Cricket Council," he said.

The report will be discussed at an ICC executive board meeting in Lahore, Pakistan on October 16 and 17.

The sacking of national team captain Heath Streak, who alleged racism and other problems in Zimbabwe cricket, triggered the row in April this year.

Streak was backed by 14 other white players, which forced the ZCU to appoint young Tatenda Taibu to lead a team of largely untried youngsters. Poor results against Sri Lanka and Australia led to the suspension of their Test status until January 2005.

Taibu is leading Zimbabwe in a tri-series in Pakistan which also includes Sri Lanka.

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Make or break home season

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president Ali Asghar has warned that the coming home series' against New Zealand, India and Zimbabwe will be acid tests for the Tigers.

Asghar expressed his views at a meeting where chief selector Faruque Ahmed, coach Dav Whatmore, team operations manager MA Latif Khan, BCB advisor and media committee chairman Reazuddin Al Mamun, captain Habibul Bashar and his deputy Rajin Saleh were present.

"The team's think-tank was told that it was time to give back something to the nation especially since there is a negative campaign going on against Bangladesh internationally. The meeting was arranged to make them realise the seriousness of the situation and how significant the home season is for the team," said Mamun over telephone after the meeting.

Mamun also revealed that coach Dav Whatmore sought some more time for making a mark in international level.

"We identified ODI tournaments as our main problem area and the team management was asked to sort out why we there has been collapses," said Mamun who added that the Board was satisfied with Whatmore's explanation for the failures.

Mamun also disclosed that Saleh, who had led the team in the recently concluded ICC Champions Trophy in England in absence of the injured Bashar, had told the meeting that he found commitment missing in his batsmen during the tournament.

Women's football Khulna keep afloat

SPORTS REPORTER

Khulna District Sports Association kept their semifinal hopes alive with a 2-1 win over Chittagong Division in the women's football tournament yesterday.

Shimu and Romana scored for Khulna's second win at the Dhanmondi Women's Sports Complex. They have now six points on completion of their three Group B games. Bangladesh Ansar are leading the group with six points from two matches.

In the day's other match, Khagrachari blanked Jessore Education Board 3-0 for their first win after two defeats. Debjani Tripura, Aungmrachin Marna and Craching Marna netted one goal each for hill tracts outfit. Dhaka have

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