

JFA Cup football Baten slams six goals

SPORTS REPORTER

Abdul Baten slammed a double hattrick as Feni recorded a massive 6-1 victory over Narsingdi in the final round of the JFA Cup Under-16 football tournament at the Bishreshtha Shaheed Mohammad Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

Musharraf netted the consolation goal for the losers.

In the other match, Meherpur edged Sirajganj 3-2 at the same venue. Shahabuddin struck twice and Ripon scored one while Hittler scored both the goals for Sirajganj.

Ponting ponders using protector

AFP, Melbourne

Australian skipper Ricky Ponting said Thursday he will consider wearing a guard to protect his thumb in a bid to play a role in the Test cricket series against India.

Ponting, who has missed the first two Tests in the four-match series on the sub-continent, broke his left thumb while fielding during Australia's six-wicket loss to England in the ICC Champions Trophy semifinal at Edgbaston.

He flies out on Friday in the hope of playing in the fourth and final Test against Sourav Ganguly's Indians in Bombay, starting on November 3.

"I'll test things out when I first get there. The first couple of days when I get there I'll just go pretty easily with catching and fielding drills," Ponting told reporters here on Thursday.

"I just want to get used to the feeling of the ball back in my hands again and take it pretty slowly.

"But I have had some protective guards made for fielding, if I'm not overly confident but I've still got another two weeks until the fourth Test comes around and by then I should be confident with it."

Australia lead the series 1-0 after winning the opening Test in Bangalore and drawing the second Madras Test after rain washed out the final day's play last Monday.



PHOTO: AFP
Sri Lanka's Dilhara Fernando looks back after his middle stump was uprooted by Pakistan fast bowler Shoaib Akhtar (L) on the second day of the first Test in Faisalabad yesterday.

New ball pleases Akhtar

Cricket

REUTERS/AFP, Faisalabad

Pakistan fast bowler Shoaib Akhtar played down the importance of his five-wicket haul in the first Test against Sri Lanka on Thursday.

The express pacer said he was delighted to open the attack with the new ball.

"I love to bowl with the new ball, it's pleasurable and it's nice and I am more effective with the new ball.

"I enjoyed taking the wickets and bowling with the new ball. But the match is not over as yet and there is still a lot to be done yet," he told reporters after completing figures of five for 60, his ninth Test five-wicket haul.

"I will not be satisfied until the Test is over and we can win it," added the 29-year-old.

"Mohammad Sami and I are looking to score around 70 or 80 runs more on the third day. We need

a sizeable lead because the pitch is good for batting," he said.

Shoaib and Sami were batting together at the close of play with Pakistan on 256 for eight after bowling out the Lankans for 243.

The world's fastest bowler, famously known as the Rawalpindi Express, has been a controversial figure of late.

When Pakistan lost to archrivals India for the first time on home soil in April, Akhtar was made a scapegoat and subjected to a medical inquiry to probe allegations he faked injury.

And when he was used as a first change bowler in the recently concluded tri-series one-day tournament, which also included Zimbabwe, he proved less effective and many believed he was not happy at being used as "a stock bowler."

But 28-year-old Akhtar denied he sulked at his team's strategy.

"Sometimes you have to do for the team -- if the captain asks you to bowl first or second change I am

ready to do it, and moreover, when the team needs it," said Akhtar, who now has 130 wickets in 33 Tests.

"I am glad to have my rhythm back and would want to take more wickets to see my team win this Test," he said.

But Akhtar admitted it would be a hard task for the bowlers in the second innings.

"This pitch is going to be a batting paradise and now it's our job to push them hard and get them out for a low score in the second innings," he said.

Akhtar praised Sri Lankan all-rounder Thilan Samaraweera's century but said Pakistan gave away too many loose runs after having humbled the visitors to 9-3 early on the first day.

"He (Samaraweera) played very well, but he was vulnerable in the beginning and we should have got him out earlier."

Thilan delighted at away ton

Cricket

AFP, Faisalabad

Sri Lankan all-rounder Thilan Samaraweera Thursday hit his first hundred away from home, buoyed by the fact it was done facing what he called world's best attack.

"I am very happy at scoring my fourth hundred and that too against the world's best attack with Shoaib Akhtar and Mohammad Sami," Samaraweera told reporters.

"It was my second time facing Akhtar so it's nice to have notched a hundred against such a menacing bowler."

The 28-year-old from Colombo hit a laboured 100 to save Sri Lanka's blushes after they were rocked by Akhtar and reduced to 9-3 on the opening day of the first Test here on Wednesday.

"When I walked in with the team having lost three quick wickets, I decided to play it out and had some good partnerships with Sanath Jayasuriya and Jehan Mubarak which worked well," said Samaraweera.

Brought in as an off-spinning all-rounder, Samaraweera hit a century

in his debut Test against India at Colombo three years ago. His stubbornness on the field has made him an invaluable member of the Test side since.

He racked up two centuries and three fifties in his first nine innings, batting at number seven, giving him the astonishing average of 87.16, and he helped his side win nine successive Tests.

"Of course, it's also great to have scored a century outside Sri Lanka because people had started saying I scored all my hundreds at the Sinhalese Sports Club ground in Colombo," he said.

With 97 overnight, Samaraweera reached the three-figure mark with the very first ball of Day Two on Thursday. But he miscued a hook off a rising Akhtar delivery shortly afterwards to be caught out for 100.

Samaraweera, whose elder brother Dulip also played for Sri Lanka, refused to be compared with other cricketers.

"I have not modelled my batting on anyone, but I have always idolised my skipper Marvan Atapattu, Kumar Sangakkara and Sanath Jayasuriya," he said.

Vanuatu to host EAP Cup in '05

AFP, Sydney

Vanuatu will host the East Asia Pacific (EAP) Cricket Cup next year, the International Cricket Council (ICC) announced Thursday.

The ICC said the EAP Cricket Cup, to be held over a nine-day period in September-October, will act as a ranking event for the EAPs affiliate member countries and will form part of the ICC's World Cup Qualifying Series.

Six countries will be competing in the EAP Cricket Cup to qualify for the 2007 ICC World Cup in the West Indies.

They include Japan, Tonga, Indonesia, Samoa, Cook Islands and Vanuatu. Japan and Indonesia will be competing for the first time in a regional cricket tournament in the Pacific Islands.

The EAP Cricket Cup, with specific dates to be announced early next year, will have a round robin format, followed by finals, the ICC said.

Just a tribute

FROM PAGE 13

Or the famous lines on his supposed bowling strategy ahead of a Test. "I'll just bowl. Let them hit me if they can. I know nothing about pitches."

That's Rafeique for you. Simple, unsophisticated, uncomplicated. Yet some people have questioned his commitment and fitness. Ludicrous!

How many players will you find who will never say no? Who will bowl over after over without ever complaining? Who will walk back to his run-up and run in with the same intensity every time while younger, more muscular teammates would appear as if they were carrying the weight of the world on their shoulders? There's just one man in the Bangladesh side who comes to mind. Thank you champion.

SERIES SALAD

FROM PAGE 13
Boys of Day Whatmore can feel that it is a small improvement.

"There are lot of positives in Bangladesh's performance and definitely we are improving if we consider what happened against New Zealand in 2001," said a BCB official

Bangladesh lost their first Test at Hamilton by an innings and 52 runs and suffered a similar innings and 74-run defeat in the second Test at Wellington.

While the officials can claim some satisfaction, fans on the hand voice their frustration after seeing the home bowlers being sent to the cleaners by the lower half of the Kiwi batting.

"I love cricket but of course I would never watch this kind of boring match. I just came here to kill my time while I was fasting," he said.

Chess Olympiad Both men and women beaten

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh men's team lost to Switzerland 3-1 in the sixth round game of the 36th Chess Olympiad at Calvia in Spain on Wednesday.

Grand Master (GM) Ziaur Rahman drew with his counterpart Victor Korchnoi and International Master (IM) Enamul Hossain Rajib shared points with FM Severin Papa, IM Reefat Bin Sattar was beaten by GM Joseph G Gallagher and IM Abdullah Al Rakib went down to GM Florian Janini.

The women's team also lost to Dominican Republic 2-1.

Nazrana Khan Eva won against Gissel Bourret, International Women Master Rani Hamid was beaten by Kenia Jose Polanco and Zakia Sultana lost to Mercedes De La Cruz.

The men's team earned 12 points while women's team got 6.5 points.

Indo-Pak ODI in Kolkata confirmed

REUTERS, Faisalabad

Pakistan and India will play a one-day international in Kolkata on November 13 to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Board of Control for Cricket in India.

Pakistan Cricket Board chairman Shaharyar Khan said on Thursday the match would be followed by a game between the national champions in both countries.

He said captain Inzamamul Haq would lead the side and most of the leading players had made themselves available for the match despite the onset of Ramadan, the Muslim month of fasting.

It will be Pakistan's first visit to India since early 1999 when they played three Tests and took part in a triangular one-day series.

There has been a gradual thaw in political relations between the rival neighbours and this year India visited Pakistan for a full series for the first time in 14 years.

Deisler drowns in depression again

AFP, Berlin

German national coach Jurgen Klinsmann promised to give midfielder Sebastian Deisler all the time he needs to recover after the Bayern Munich star suffered a minor relapse of depression.

Deisler, 24, was readmitted to the Max-Planck-Institute for Psychiatry in Munich on Tuesday after jetting back from Turin where Bayern were due to face Juventus in the Champions League.

"We have to be careful with him," Klinsmann said in an interview with newspaper Die Welt. "Sebastian will progress at his own pace and Felix Magath (Bayern coach), Uli Hoeness (Bayern general manager) and myself will accept that."

"We know that Sebastian has good people around him and will be well looked after."

Oliver Bierhoff, Klinsmann's assistant, claimed it was vital that the former Hertha Berlin midfielder was not put under any pressure.

"We can not put any pressure on him whatsoever," explained Bierhoff. "We just have to wait for him to recover and show him he has our full backing."

Back in November 2003 Deisler was diagnosed with depression and the playmaker was forced to sit out six months of last season and Germany's disastrous 2004 European championships in Portugal.

He looked to have completed his recovery after making his international comeback against Brazil on September 8 but some poor recent displays have rocked his fragile self confidence.

"It is a shame that I could not prevent the pressure from getting to Deisler," explained Bayern chief Magath. "It

was important that he had time to stabilise. He wants too much too soon."

Savouring

FROM PAGE 13

was had work and I had to really graft because the slow bowlers kept a tight line. So, I had to wait for the odd bad ball to punish," said McCullum.

The right-hander however praised the hardworking Bangladesh bowlers.

"Bangladesh have two good spinners and Tapash Baisya also swung the ball around and his reverse swing impressed me a lot. But I think if you can groom two more good pace bowlers it would be a much better attack," he suggested.

But he warned that it would be a difficult job for Bangladesh to survive on the fourth and fifth day especially against left-arm spinner Daniel Vettori.

"Bangladesh batsmen will face tough task to survive against Daniel on a wearing pitch that is getting slower and more unpredictable," he observed.

Captain asks Lee to wait

Cricket

AFP, Melbourne

Skipper Ricky Ponting on Thursday urged discarded Test pace bowler Brett Lee to stick at it and work towards getting back in the Australian team for the domestic Test cricket series later this year.

Lee is on the outside looking in after missing out to Michael Kasprovicz for the current four-Test series in India.

The 27-year-old Lee, rated one of the fastest bowlers in world cricket, had his career interrupted by ankle surgery earlier this year and has been working his way back to full fitness.

Ponting, who leaves on Friday to rejoin the Australian team in India after recovering from a broken thumb, said Lee faced a struggle to regain his spot.

"Unfortunately, he's not getting a

crack at the moment but we've got a lot of Test matches to play in Australia this summer and I'm sure he'll play a part in those," Ponting told reporters here.

"He's been out of the side for a long time and the guys who have been in the side when he's been out have done very, very well.

"Michael Kasprovicz has been absolutely outstanding in both forms of the game since he's been back in the side.

"Jason Gillespie has recently been picked in both World XI teams and Glenn McGrath has obviously been bowling very well at the moment.

"Someone's always going to be unlucky -- Brett's the unlucky one at the moment."

Australia have five Tests lined up against Pakistan and New Zealand at home during the November-January period and Lee will be looking to add to his 139 wickets in 37 Tests.

Ponting said Lee remained upbeat and was continuing to work hard on his bowling and in the gym in India.

"We all knew with Brett that the more bowling he did and better physical shape he got in over the next few weeks, his bowling was going to improve dramatically," he said.

"By all accounts he's bowling very, very quick over there at the moment.

"He's busting to get out there and have a go, but there's some tough selections to come up.

"Once again it's always hard work to pick an Australian team.

"At any time there can be three or four guys who can feel they are unlucky not to be in the side and at the moment Brett's probably one of those."

Henman felled in Madrid

Tennis

AFP, Madrid

Mid-mannered Tim Henman flung his racket in anger late in the final set on the way to a 6-4, 4-6, 6-2 upset at the hands of Ivan Ljubicic at the 2.42-million-euro Madrid Masters on Thursday.

Henman, normally calm under fire, let his frustration rip in the third round disaster when he hammered his stick down as his Croatian opponent took a 5-2 lead late in the third set.

The former Bosnian war refugee claimed victory a game later with a concluding break as Henman's chance for glory this week in Spain evaporated in one hour, 58 minutes.

The Briton was given the top seeding this week in the absence of the world's top four players -- Roger Federer, Andy Roddick, Guillermo Coria and Lleyton Hewitt.

The bitter loss was the third in four meetings for Henman against Ljubicic, who improved to 33-21 on the season.

Henman and his 29th-ranked opponent got stuck into battle from the start, with neither man able to dent the other's defences.

The opening set stayed on serve into the tenth game, when Ljubicic,

holding a 5-4 lead, got the first look at a break.

One of Henman's 17 unforced errors in the set gave the Croatian a set point, with the British top seed salvaging the first with a lucky reflex volley.

But a net cord bounce which went Ljubicic's way on the next point reversed Henman's brief good fortune. The challenger claimed the set after 44 minutes when Henman went wide down the line.

Henman stayed the course in the second, finally earning his first break point of the afternoon in the seventh game, earning the 4-3 lead on a netted return.

With some momentum finally on his side, the top seed reacted, squaring the match at one set each as he converted on the first of two set points.

The remainder of the Madrid top four were going into action later, with second seed Andre Agassi facing fellow American Vince Spadea, Marat Safin taking on Stefan Koubek and David Nalbandian playing Thai Paradorn Srichaphan.

On Wednesday, holder Juan Carlos Ferrero suffered a 6-3, 6-1 setback against a Peruvian with a bad ankle, crashing out listlessly in his opening match.

The wipeout in the second round left the former world number one gasping at his rollercoaster ride



PHOTO: AFP
Briton Tim Henman is about to make a return against Croatian Ivan Ljubicic in the Masters Series in Madrid yesterday.

Sharapova in qtrs

Tennis

AFP, Zurich

Wimbledon champion Maria Sharapova had to fight off a strong challenge from Daniela Hantuchova before reaching the quarterfinals of the 1.3-million-dollar WTA event here on Wednesday.

It took her one hour 47-minutes to claim a 6-4, 7-5 victory but the Russian had to save two set points as she recovered from 2-5 in the second set.

Both players served extremely well and produced some fine aggressive baseline play, but they were also both guilty of making a large number of errors.

Slovakia's Hantuchova was erratic as she went for too big a shot, and Sharapova became careless and her shrieks became louder as she appeared to tire in the final stages.

The opening set went to the 17-year-old Russian on a single break of serve as she took a 3-2 lead and resisted two break points in the next game. The second set then took 66 minutes as the momentum swung from one player to the other.

Sharapova played just one poor service game, as two consecutive double-faults helped Hantuchova break to lead 4-2. But the Slovak was unable to serve out the set at 5-3, making a backhand error on break point.

Sharapova then had to save two set points at 5-4, but after struggling to hold serve she edged ahead 6-5 by winning a marathon

11th game on her sixth break point, and then served out to love.

"When you play her you know it's going to be a good match. It's never going to be easy, and I just managed to get through," said Sharapova.

"I thought I served well until those two double-faults, and when the time came I broke her."

Ana Ivanovic won her first main draw match at a WTA event to set up a second round clash with Venus Williams.

She fought back from 1-5 in the final set to defeat Tatiana Golovin of France 7-5, 6-7, 7-6, saving two match points as her frustrated opponent served for victory three times.

From Serbia and Montenegro, the 16-year old has won all 31 Challenger tour matches she played this year, and was runner-up in the Wimbledon junior final.

Sixth seeded Russian Vera Zvonareva was upset by Australia's Alicia Molik, losing 6-3, 5-7, 6-2.

Molik, who is enjoying the best season of her career and always looked self-assured against Zvonareva, could have sewn up the match in straight sets after holding two break points to lead the second set 3-0.

Having lost that opportunity, Molik allowed her opponent to level at 2-2 and Zvonareva then broke for the set when the Australian overhit.

Molik's greater power again became the dominant factor in the deciding set, and she twice broke Zvonareva to love, to lead 3-2 and 5-2.

Pakistan gain

FROM PAGE 13

Jayasuriya c Kamal b Sami 38
Sangakkara c Farhat b Akhtar 2
Jayawardene c Moin b Sami 0
Samaraweera c Sami b Akhtar 100
Mubarak c Inzamam b Sami 34
Kaluwitharana c and b Kaneria 4
Vaas c Youhana b Akhtar 22
Herath not out 33
Fernando b Akhtar 0
Malinga b Sami 1
Extras: (lb-3, nb-6) 9
Total: (All out in 81.4 overs) 243
Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-6, 3-9, 4-77, 5-142, 6-147, 7-180, 8-237, 9-242

Bowler O M R W
Akhtar 19 3 60 5
Sami 21.4 5 71 4
Razaq 15 5 33 0
Kaneria 18 3 53 1
Malik 8 1 23 0

PAKISTAN

Hameed c Mubarak b Fernando 58
Farhat c Mubarak b Malinga 11
Kamal c Jayawardene b Fernando 17

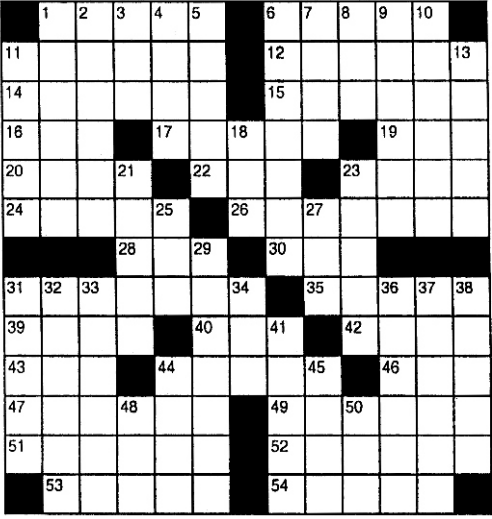
Inzamam c Malinga b Herath 32
Youhana c K'tharana b Herath 17
Malik run out 48
Razaq c Jayawardene b Vaas 39
Moin b Jayasuriya 5
Sami not out 2
Akhtar not out 6
Extras: (b-6, lb-4, nb-11) 21
Total: (For 8 wks in 77 overs) 256
Fall of wickets: 1-28, 2-94, 3-109, 4-134, 5-188, 6-227, 7-246, 8-248
To bat: Kaneria

Bowler O M R W
Vaas 22 5 56 1
Malinga 10 1 50 1
Fernando 16 0 65 2
Herath 24 4 66 2
S'weera 1 0 5 0
Jayasuriya 4 1 4 1

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	40 Recipe measure	54 Pin-setter's place	11 Grumpy companion
1 Ray type	42 Mrs.		13 "It's a great — be alive!"
6 Limber	Shake-spear	DOWN	18 Bookie's fee
11 Stocking seller	43 Snoop	1 "Some Like It Hot" star	21 Frome or Hawke
12 Nephew of Charlemagne	44 Pick up the check	2 Alt	23 Diadem
14 Horn	46 100 yrs. Nova Scotia	3 Goose egg	25 Qly.
15 Quartz or opal	47 Sleeping sickness	5 Imposing setup	27 Say it's OK
16 Grand —	48 More carrier	6 Collec-tion of weapons	29 The un-explained
17 Expert	49 More risque	7 Enter	31 Originate
18 Demure	51 Because of this	8 Under the	32 Off the slate
20 Skin opening	52 Hardly 6-Across	9 Secular ing item	33 Roguish banter
22 Feminine side	53 They provide shade	10 "Play it again!"	34 Seek restitution
23 Acerbic			36 Urge
24 Busy-body			37 Another
26 Advocate of Copernicus			11-Down
28 Pineafire letters			38 Chesapeake Bay cape
30 Grazing area			41 Anorak
31 Chides			44 Despot
35 Actress Van Devere			45 Incredible
39 Unyielding			48 Ball-bearing item
			50 —

Solution time: 27 mins.
EQUAL HIG SOU GLIMB ALE JOU GAPES ONAOUTS IDEALS MARE OAR RUE SEDER PREP GRAILL SEKSAME TRUINE CANAT AMER PERKY GISS BOO ALOE BECKER UMPTIEN ELATE SIE RED ELGIN ERR ATA TEEM



CRYPTOQUIP

B J F B P J S F R F X S W J .
X Z Z O D J I J P O V J M F D J
J P J M X I F J R M J B Z L P F .

Q I L B Z W M L P P O M Z L P P J R Q S !
Yesterday's Cryptquip: IF YOU OWN A LARGE COLLECTION OF GREAT SHOES, COULD YOU SAY YOU'RE WELL-HEELED?

Today's Cryptquip Clue: J equals E

The Cryptquip 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.