

## Div III qualifying cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Four matches of the Third Division qualifying were held at different venues of the city yesterday.

Talent Hunt CA dumped Gulshan Youth CA by 90 runs at the Dhamondi Club ground, Dhaka Cricket Academy beat Joarder Printers by 47 runs at the Uttara Friends ground, ACC Blue won over Nawabpur Youth Club by 23 runs at the Residential Model School ground and Azam Waker CC handed a 56-run defeat to Kafrul CC at the same venue.

## ESPN-STAR

FROM PAGE 13  
the money for title sponsorship from this particular series," added Mamun.

A BCB official said that at first ESPN-STAR Sports had asked the Board to name the title sponsors for the series but then made a complete U-turn by claiming that the BCB was contract-bound to declare it as the title sponsor.

"The BCB can not claim the full sponsorship money as there were some complicated clauses in the contract. The Board usually earns 150 thousand US dollars from selling title sponsorship but it stands to get half of that amount from the India series," he explained.

India are scheduled to arrive in Dhaka on December 7 to play two Tests and three ODIs against the Tigers.

Mamun also clarified that the title-sponsorship argument was not related to a proposed triangular series involving Bangladesh, India and another country by 2006. ESPN-STAR Sports will sponsor that tournament and Bangladesh as hosts will receive US\$1.2 million as bonus money when it takes place.

Sources said that the Board had already received lucrative offers from two leading Indian companies -- TATA and Videocon -- about title sponsorship.

ESPN-STAR Sports' five-year contact with the BCB worth 11.5 million dollars for telecasting rights of Bangladesh's home series' expires in 2006. The Board has reportedly received the whole amount in installments already.

## Third defeat

FROM PAGE 13  
Bangladesh went down 17-27 at a breather against the World champions.

Bangladesh, who conceded a 28-44 points defeat in Ahmedabad on Tuesday and 39-44 points defeat in Ajmer on Thursday, will play their fourth match against the same opponents in Bhopal on Sunday.

## Shamim returns

FROM PAGE 13  
league match to encourage the players and Musa received a VCD player as recognition of his performance in the opener.

Earlier, title sponsor Green Delta Insurance Company Limited's chairman Nurul Absar declared the ten-team meet open in a simple ceremony.

Mohammed Sporting Club will take on War Club in today's first match (1.15pm) while Mariner Youngs Club face Sonali Bank in the other match (3pm).

## ICC withdraws

FROM PAGE 13  
Siddhartha Shankar Ray by his side at a New Delhi hotel, participated in Thursday's three-hour teleconference with Castle, who conducted the meeting from his base in New Zealand.

Indian cricket board chief Jagmohan Dalmiya and coach John Wright joined in the hearing. Lloyd hooked in from the United States and ICC lawyer Urvasi Naidoo from London.

The Indian captain was happy at the decision and the whole process as such.

"I thank the Indian board for backing me and Mr. Castle for giving me a patient hearing," he said in Calcutta before the final Test.

"Winning this match is very important for the team as the first match was drawn. I am now now looking forward to the Test with hope of winning the series," said India's most successful Test captain.

Ganguly would have missed the second and final Test against South Africa and also the first Test against Bangladesh in Dhaka from December 9 if his appeal had been dismissed.

Castle, a judge and arbitrator on the Court of Arbitration for Sport, had the power to increase, decrease or amend the penalty or otherwise substitute his own decision for that of Lloyd's.

Ganguly had been fined twice before this year in similar circumstances, in Sydney and Karachi.

His appeal cited frequent hold-ups caused by injuries to players and the ball getting wet because of excessive dew in the day/night match in Kolkata on November 13.



Scene from yesterday's Dutch-Bangla First Division Chess League engagement between Leonine Club and Titas Club at the federation hall room.

## India under pressure

Cricket

AFP, Kolkata

India go into the second and final Test against South Africa at the Eden Gardens here from Sunday with the pressure to win the series very much on the home side.

India, who lost a recent series 2-1 to give Australia their first Test series win in India in 35 years, struggled in the first Test at Kanpur on a pitch that offered little to bowlers.

South Africa, here with an inexperienced side and widely considered the underdogs, dented India's pride by not only salvaging a draw but taking the first innings lead.

"South Africa have gained a lot from the draw in Kanpur. They have shown that they are a tough opposition and won't be the ones to go down easily," India's coach John Wright conceded on Friday.

"We haven't been winning in the recent past and a win here would be welcome," he said. "The kind of batsmen we have, we are always a dangerous side and capable of bouncing back strongly."

The former New Zealand opener was in favour of turning tracks but was disappointed at the pitch offered for the first Test.

"India have some fine spinners and batsmen who play spin beautifully, so it is not at all a bad idea to play on tracks that help turn," he said. "The pitch at Kanpur was too slow to be dangerous."

Makeshift opener Andrew Hall proved to be the surprise package as he scored 163 to help South Africa to 510-9 declared after winning the toss.

Paceman Makhaya Ntini then took three quick wickets on the last day as India were all out for 466 before the match meandered to a draw with South Africa batting out the last two sessions.

"I thought our team did a fine job," said South Africa coach Ray Jennings.

"We adapted to the conditions very fast and surprised the home side by putting pressure on them."

Their skipper Graeme Smith was hoping the team would continue the good work.

"I am expecting a turning track here. But the boys are confident after

drawing the first match and hope to do well again," said Smith, who took over from Shaun Pollock after last year's World Cup.

The Indian team had yet to decide on their composition.

"We went in with three spinners in Kanpur but my personal opinion is that we should play two. However, that is something we will have to decide after a meeting tomorrow," said Wright.

South Africa have a fine record against India and won both Tests on their last tour here in 2000 under the late Hansie Cronje.

But two of their most experienced players, opener Herschelle Gibbs and spinner Nicky Boje withdrew from the ongoing tour fearing detention by police over match-fixing, which was being probed for four years.

Others like Gary Kirsten, Allan Donald and Jonty Rhodes have retired while wicket-keeper Mark Boucher and all-rounder Lance Klusener were not selected.

South Africa have won seven of 15 previous Tests between the two teams and lost two with the remaining six drawn.

## Langer does the talking

Cricket

AFP/REUTERS, Adelaide

Justin Langer frequently likes to remind his close friend and Australian Test opening batting partner Matthew Hayden that he is the aggressor while Hayden is the blocker.

"I keep telling Haydos (Hayden) he's the blocker and I'm the aggressor. I can't believe he's playing one-day cricket and I'm not," Langer said with a smile.

Langer, widely regarded as a more reserved batsman than the dashing Hayden, made the quip after the pair posted their 13th century partnership in 69 Test innings to become the third-highest scoring partnership in Test cricket.

The pair have now scored 4,049 runs in partnerships since coming together as opening batsmen during the 2001 Ashes series in England.

Only West Indian opening pair Gordon Greenidge and Desmond Haynes (6,482) and Sri Lankans Marvan Atapattu and Sanath Jayasuriya (4,159) have scored more in partnerships than the Aussie duo.

So close is their bond that Langer can good-naturedly chide his batting partner about their batting styles.

"He knows how I feel about this and enough is said... my bat's doing the talking," said Langer.

"He can be the blocker and I'll be the aggressor, over and over again... how many times do I have to do it?"

Langer scored his 20th Test century and third on the Adelaide Oval as Australia powered to 327 for three at first-day stumps in the second cricket Test against New Zealand on Friday.

Langer batted all day in sweltering heat and brought up 1,021 runs for the year to be unbeaten on 144 in 367 minutes including 19 boundaries. Hometown hero Darren

Lehmann was not out 28.

"While you're playing the game statistics do mean a lot. I was talking to (former Australian Test captain) Steve Waugh a few months back and the one thing he said was that statistics mean nothing in retirement," Langer said.

Langer, a martial arts black belt, said his mental strength had been tested during his six-hour stint at the crease.

"I started cramping just after lunch. That probably affected my concentration for a short period there," Langer said.

"I don't believe it was one of my best hundreds. It was more of a gritty innings."

"In terms of footwork and balance it was an excellent innings, but probably not as free-flowing as I've played before."

Asked how he felt about reaching the milestone Langer said: "It means hopefully I'll get a game next week."

## Aussies in command

FROM PAGE 13

68 off 79 balls with 11 fouls.

Ponting, who dominated a 103-run second-wicket stand with Langer, was quickly followed by Damien Martyn who cut Wiseman to Stephen Fleming at slip for seven leaving the home side at 261 for three.

The Kiwis, thumped by an innings and 156 runs in last week's first Gabba Test, set the tone for a largely uneventful day when new-ball bowlers Chris Martin and James Franklin were caned in their opening overs.

Langer cover-drove Martin's first ball for four and followed up with a three off the next. He plundered four boundaries to take 18 off Franklin's opening over.

Langer claimed two more fours off Franklin's third over, both crisp cover-drives to career to 31 and forced Franklin temporarily out of the attack.

He again feasted on the disappointing Franklin with four fours in his 14th over late in the day again forcing him out of the attack with figures of 0-84.

Wiseman totted away for 2-56 off 14 overs with Vettori taking 1-74 off 28 over, but medium-pace Jacob Oram was outstanding in the testing conditions with 0-25 off 15 overs.

### SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the first day of the second Test between Australia and New Zealand at the Adelaide Oval on Friday:

AUSTRALIA: First innings	Runs
Langer not out	144
Hayden and b Wiseman	70
Ponting stp McCullum b Vettori	68
Martyn c Fleming b Wiseman	7
Lehmann not out	28
Extras: (b-3, lb-3, nb-4)	10
Total: (For 3 wks in 90 overs)	327

Fall of wickets: 1-137, 2-240, 3-261

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Martin	19	4	82	0
Franklin	14	2	84	0
Oram	15	5	25	0
Vettori	28	6	74	1
Wiseman	14	3	56	2

Toss: Australia  
Umpires: Steve Bucknor (WIN) David Shepherd (ENG)  
Match referee: Mike Procter (RSA)

## Daily Star

FROM PAGE 13  
Defending a modest total, The Daily Star was let down by Australian-trained Ashfaq Wares Khan and a veteran Towfik Elahi who gave too many runs away to allow Bhorer Kagoj off the hook.

The only solace for the Star faithful was the bowling of rookie pacer Shariful Islam who missed a hat-trick by a whisker.

Bipul of Bhorer Kagoj, who hit 32, was adjudged man-of-the-match.

In other matches, Abas News Agency beat Dinkal by two wickets, Channel-i ousted The Bangladesh Observer by four wickets, Naya Diganta knocked out The Independent by 20 runs, New Nation defeated Banglabazar by 54 runs while UNB beat BTV by five wickets.

Earlier, State Minister for Youth and Sports Fazlur Rahman inaugurated the 17-team meet. Bangladesh Cricket Board president Ali Asghar, title sponsor Transcom Beverages Limited's general manager Khurshid Irfan Chowdhury and DMD Golam Morshed were also present.

## Windies

FROM PAGE 13  
development of the Region, I felt it was essential to have this matter resolved in the most amicable way possible."

Ramnarine has received support for his stance against the WICB from Tim May, the chief executive of the Federation of International Cricketers' Association.

"It is ridiculous to suggest that players should agree to give away the right for third parties to use their image and attributes for advertising and promotional purposes without any financial consideration," he said.

"(They are) conditions that no group of players or player association could possibly accept."

## Leonine take

FROM PAGE 13  
points in their first round games, also swept their second round boards against their respective rivals to manage second and third position respectively.

Muktijoddha, featuring two GMs and one International Master, outplayed Rajshahi Daba Unnoyan Sangstha to secure 7.5 points while the national flag carrier defeated Friend Chess Power to increase their tally to seven points.

In the other matches, Bangladesh Ansar beat Destiny 2000 3.5-1.5, Narayanganj City Chess Club beat Kamalpur SKKS 2.5-1.5, Farashganj SC beat Mohakhali Prodig Sanga 2.5-1.5, Star Vision Chess Team beat Anushillan DKC 3-1 and Dhaka University Chess Team beat Sonali Bank Sports and Recreation Club 2.5-1.5.

## Magpies through

UEFA CUP

AFP, Paris

Newcastle United booked their place in the last 32 of the UEFA Cup on Thursday but the latest round of group matches was overshadowed by another depressing outbreak of racism on European terraces.

Lee Bowyer, Shola Amobi, Craig Bellamy and substitute Laurent Robert were all on target as Newcastle beat French side Sochaux 4-0 to register their third successive win in Group D.

However, racist taunting aimed at Partizan Belgrade's black players overshadowed the Serbian side's 2-2 draw against Lazio in Rome to plunge the game in Europe into another race shame.

Cameroon striker Pierre Boya, who scored twice in a bad-tempered Group E clash, came in for the worst treatment from a large section of Lazio's supporters with almost every one of his touches in the first half greeted with monkey-like grunting.

This latest episode of racial abuse came a week after Spanish fans taunted England's black players at a friendly international in Madrid.

Last Sunday Birmingham City striker Dwight Yorke was abused by a Blackburn Rovers supporter as he warmed up on the sidelines with his fellow substitutes during an English Premiership match.

Real Madrid's Champions League match against Bayer Leverkusen on Tuesday at the Bernabeu stadium was also marred by racist chanting by Bayer's Brazilian defenders Roque Junior and Juan the target of abuse from Real's Ultra SR hooligan element during the 1-1 draw.

Lazio have been fined before because of racist chanting from their supporters and could face sanctions from European football's governing body UEFA.

Boya gave Partizan a 2-0 half time lead before Paolo Di Canio and Simone Inzaghi pulled Lazio level.

Inzaghi saw a first half penalty saved by Partizan keeper Ivica Kraljic.

Rangers went top of Group F with a hard-fought 3-0 win at home over Austrian champions Graz AK.

Robbie Neilson's last-gasp goal against Basel in Switzerland gave Hearts' hopes of remaining in the tournament a huge boost.

Dennis Wynn gave the Edinburgh club the lead but Cesar Andres Carignano grabbed a late equaliser.

But the Group A match took another twist when Neilson grabbed the winner with just one minute remaining Middlesbrough's hopes of making the next stage suffered a setback when they lost 2-0 in Spain to Villarreal in Group E.

## Preview: Serie A

### It's now or never for Inter

AFP, Rome

Anything but a victory at home to league leaders Juventus on Sunday will virtually extinguish Inter Milan's already slim title hopes.

While Inter host the 27-time Italian champions at the San Siro, second-placed AC Milan face a tough encounter away to Chievo.

With the highly-regarded Roberto Mancini installed as coach at the start of the season and a host of big name signings in a summer of frantic transfer activity, Inter were heavily backed to claim their first Scudetto since 1989.

But despite being the only team in Serie A still without a defeat, 10 draws in 12 matches have left them a massive 15 points adrift of Juve in seventh place.

## FIXTURES

(all 1400 GMT kickoff unless stated)  
Saturday: Livorno v Udinese (1700), Siena v Roma (1930)  
Sunday: Atalanta v Reggina, Bologna v Lecce, Brescia v Palermo, Chievo v Milan, Inter Milan v Juventus (1930), Lazio v Cagliari, Messina v Fiorentina, Sampdoria v Parma

Brazilian striker Adriano, who was suspended for the match against Werder Bremen on Wednesday which Inter unsurprisingly drew, will lead the attack, while Mancini will give a late fitness test to Argentine midfielder Juan Sebastian Veron.

Juventus, who along with the two Milan clubs have reached the knockout stages of the Champions League, will be without their captain Alessandro Del Piero.

The Italy international has a high strain and so Uruguayan striker Marcelo Zalayeta, scorer of the only goal in Tuesday's 1-0 victory at home to Ajax, will play alongside Zlatan Ibrahimovic up front.

Livorno, who have propelled themselves up to a respectable ninth place thanks to a five-match unbeaten run, host third-placed Udinese on Saturday.

On the same day, struggling Roma, without even the consolation of a UEFA Cup league following their 2-0 Champions League defeat to Dinamo Kiev on Tuesday, visit second from bottom Siena.

Regarded as one of the favourites for the title at the start of the season, Roma are just one point clear of the relegation zone in 15th place.

Buoyant after their Italian Cup third round, first leg victory against Juventus last week, bottom club Atalanta entertain Reggina in Bergamo on Sunday.

## Preview: Primera Liga

# Barca frighteningly good

Football

AFP, Madrid

Getafe goalkeeper Sanchez Broto called in sick on the morning of last week's match against Albacete and few would blame him if he phones in again on Saturday with Barcelona the opponents later in the day.

Sanchez Broto will have the job of trying to stop the Spanish league leaders improving their scoring average of two goals a game, with African Player of the Year Samuel Eto'o topping the first division scoring charts with 10 goals.

"Our thoughts are with Sanchez Broto," joked Getafe midfielder David Cubillo.

"But this is a game we can have some say in. We've got much to win and little to lose so we might as well have a go. The key to having some success against Barcelona will be to neutralise Xavi."

Xavi Hernandez is having a stunning season for Barca and the playmaker is many pundits' early choice for the Spanish player of the season.

Barcelona will travel to Madrid's southern suburb fired up to show that they can find the net regularly after they were thwarted by Celtic's defensive tactics in their 1-1 draw in the Champions League on Wednesday.

Frank Rijkaard's team had a day away from it all together on Thursday but the Dutch coach will have told his players that they should not let up against the newly-promoted side.

To add to Getafe's difficulties, if facing the wizardry of the likes of Ronaldinho and Ludovic Guly was not enough, they will be without their suspended midfielder Diego Rivas.

Barcelona top the Spanish first division with 29 points from 12 games and have a seven point advantage over their bitter rivals Real Madrid, who play host to Levante on Sunday.

Real are desperate to get back to winning ways after going down 3-0 to Barcelona in the Nou Camp last



Barcelona's Brazilian superstar Ronaldinho (L) shakes hands with his Dutch coach Frank Rijkaard as his mother Miguelina watches in Barcelona, Spain on November 25 after he was handed over a trophy for being the best Latin American player in the Spanish Primera Liga.

Saturday and then being held by 1-1 by Bayer Leverkusen in the Champions League on Tuesday.

"The dressing room is down at the moment," admitted Real's Ivan Helguera.

"The result in Barcelona was a big blow to our morale but we've still got options of winning the league and we are still in the Champions League so I don't think we can talk of chaos."

Levante, coached by former Real Madrid player Bernd Schuster, knows that the 29-times Spanish champions are often at their most dangerous when they seem to be in decline.

"Almost every player on their side can turn the game around. They are capable of scoring two goals in five minutes. Winning in the Bernabeu is more difficult than almost anywhere else," warned Levante striker Jesule Barbadilla.

Real medical officials said on Thursday that Zinedine Zidane was doubtful for Sunday's match as the World Player of the Year was still suffering from back problems sustained against Bayer.

Ironically, Zidane's problems could ease those of Real coach Mariano Garcia Remon.

## Preview: Premiership

# Fergie sniffs a chance

Football

AFP, London

Sir Alex Ferguson is a past master at sensing when his Premiership title rivals might be vulnerable to the psychological equivalent of a little off-the-ball dig with the elbow.

So it is safe to assume that the bullish tone emanating from Old Trafford this week was not entirely unrelated to the way both Arsenal and Chelsea's form has dipped of late.

Manchester United are still nine points adrift of leaders Chelsea and seven behind Arsenal.

But Ferguson believes that gap could have been significantly reduced by the end of the year, provided his side make the most of the opportunity represented by a six-match run that starts with Saturday's trip to second-from-bottom West Brom.

The Hawthorns appointment is followed by clashes with Southampton, Fulham, Crystal Palace, Bolton and Aston Villa, and Ferguson, bolstered by his side's advance to the Champions League knockout phase in midweek, clearly believes maximum points are there for the taking.

"We had a bonus last weekend with both Arsenal and Chelsea conceding goals in the last 10 minutes," the Scot reflected.

"Them dropping points is a big boost to us. We've still got a bit to go, but what we are trying to do at the

moment is get a consistent run of victories.

"It is absolutely imperative that we win our matches against the teams in the bottom half of the league. If we win these matches, by the time the New Year comes around we will hopefully be much, much closer."

Chelsea followed up last weekend's draw with Bolton with a goalless draw with Paris Saint-Germain in midweek, the return of Didier Drogba from injury marred by a thoroughly lacklustre display from Jose Mourinho's men.

Arsenal are not in action until Sunday, when they face Liverpool at Anfield in an encounter that is shaping up as a battle of the walking wounded.

Liverpool could scarcely be in worse shape with injuries having deprived them of the striking talents of Djibril Cisse, Milan Baros, Vladimir Smicer and, since the midweek defeat in Monaco, Luis Garcia.

Winger Harry Kewell is almost certain to be drafted in as an emergency striker while Spanish defender Josemi will also miss the match through suspension.

The only consolation for Rafael Benitez is that Arsenal are facing similar problems as they seek to finally shake off the hangover that has blighted their performances since they lost 2-0 to Manchester United on October 24.

Jose Antonio Reyes (knee) and Thierry Henry (achilles) are both serious doubts, although Wenger

## FIXTURES

Saturday (kick off GMT): Athletic Bilbao v Racing Santander (1700), Getafe v Barcelona (1900), Espanyol v Atletico Madrid (2100)  
Sunday: Real Betis v Villarreal (1600), Deportivo La Coruna v Real Sociedad (1600), Malaga v Albacete (1600), Numancia v Real Zaragoza (1600), Osasuna v Sevilla (1600