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Did U Know?

Only two Test matches have ever been tied. The first one - Australia versus West Indies, and the second - Australia versus India. West Indies once beat Australia by 1 run.



What to Watch

ESPN

Australia v New Zealand
2nd ODI
Highlights at 9:00 am
UEFA Champions League
Celtic v AC Milan
Repeat at 2:30 pm
Football Crazy
Football Magazine
Live at 5:00 pm
Sportscentre
Sports News
Live at 8:30 pm

STAR Sports

Tiger Cup 2004
Vietnam v Cambodia
Live at 3:55 pm
Sportsline
Sports News
Live at 8:00 pm

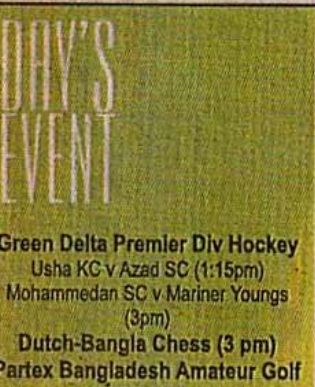


Talk Turkey



Steve Harmison

(England fast bowler)
"The West Indies and New Zealand have seen the best of me. South Africa haven't, but I hope they will on this tour."
On his prospects in the upcoming Test series in South Africa.



Green Delta Premier Div Hockey
Usha KC v Azad SC (1:15pm)
Mohammedan SC v Mariner Youngs (3pm)
Dutch-Bangla Chess (3 pm)
Partex Bangladesh Amateur Golf

Security beefed up at the BNS

SPORTS REPORTER

Multiple security arrangements have been taken in and around the Bangabandhu National Stadium (BNS) for India's series against Bangladesh.

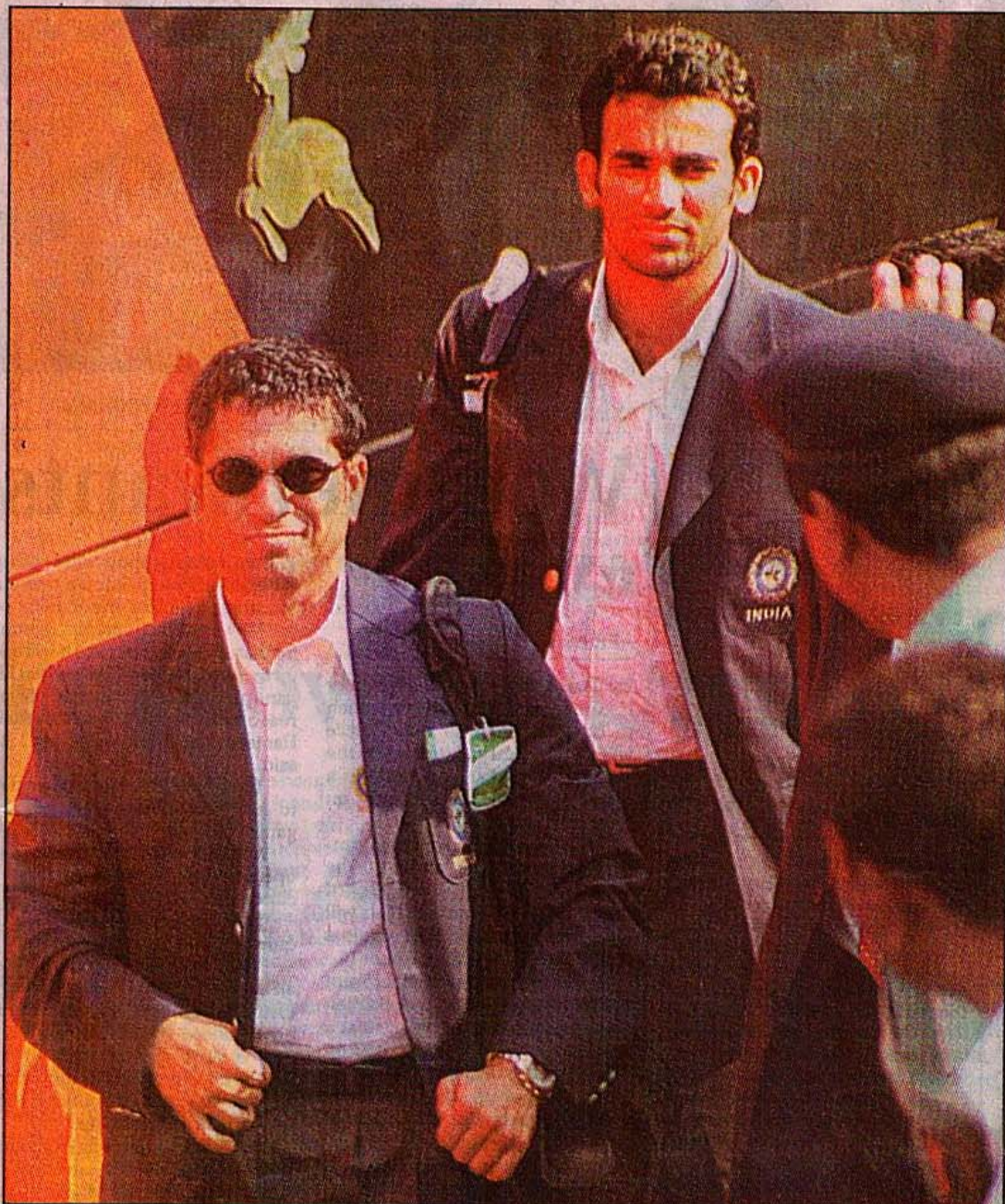
India's arrival in Dhaka was delayed by a day after a so-called Islamic militant group threatened to kill the members of the touring team.

With two days to go before the start of the first Test, the organisers have already installed close-circuit TV cameras at the entrances of the VIP galleries.

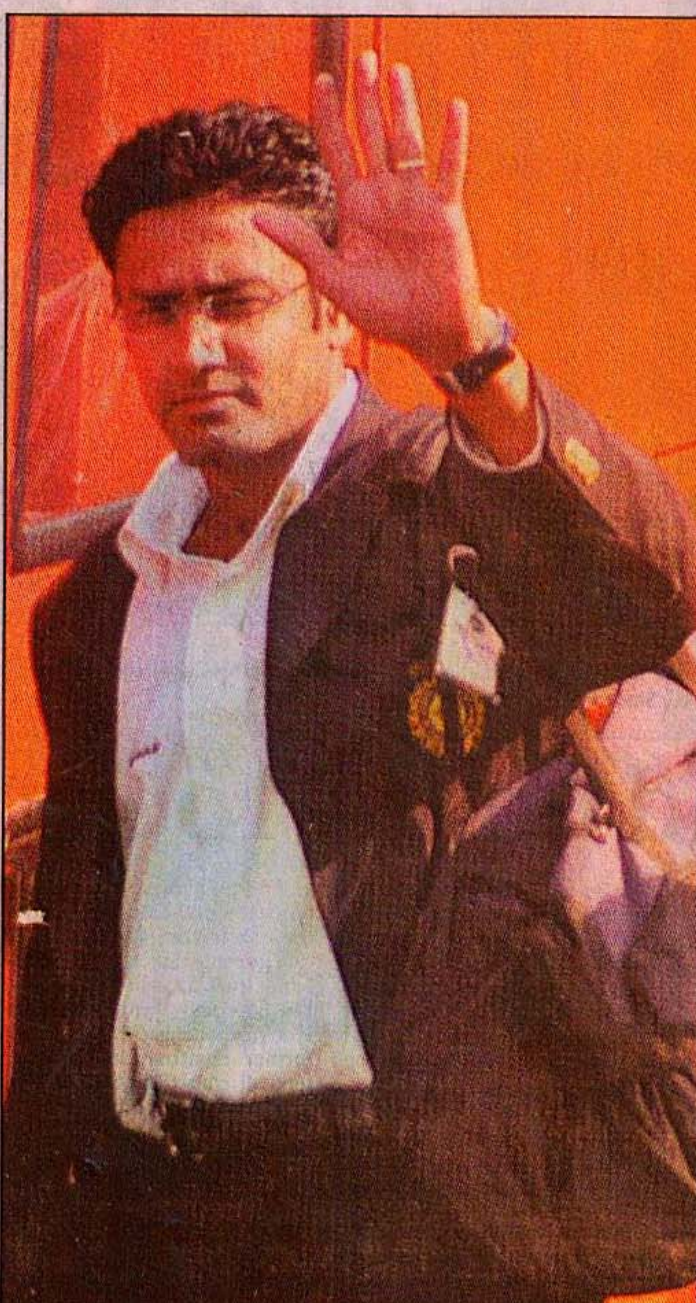
This is for the first time such measures have been taken. There will be metal detectors at every gate also.

The number of police personnel to guard the stadium has been doubled from the usual 400 with members of the Bangladesh Rifles and the Dog Squad supporting them.

It is also expected that the shops at the BNS and adjacent areas will be closed during the matches to reduce movement of people. The fans will not be allowed to take water bottles with caps on, apples, oranges, cucumbers, banana, flammable items, glass bottles and matchboxes.



FINALLY THEY ARE HERE! (L-R) The great Sachin Tendulkar looking relaxed before boarding the team bus at the ZIA International Airport, followed by pacer Zaheer Khan, while leg-spin ace Anil Kumble waves to the fans on arrival of the Indian cricket team in Dhaka yesterday.



PHOTOS: ANISUR RAHMAN

Kapali shines again

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

A sparkling 89 by Alok Kapali throttled Victoria Sporting Club to snatch an exciting two-wicket win over fellow title contenders Bangladesh Biman at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium yesterday.

Green Delta Premier Cricket League champions Victoria, who lost to promoters Agrani Bank in the first round, have now won three consecutive games but Biman

suffered their second defeat in a row after two wins.

Meanwhile, Pakistani batsman Zahoor Elahi maintained his form with the bat as Old DOHS recorded their third win in four rounds with a 73-run defeat of Young Pegasus.

In the day's other match, Orient Sporting Club defeated Indira Road Kriha Chakra by six wickets.

BIMAN-VICTORIA
Chasing Biman's modest 186-8, Victoria overhauled the target with exactly one to spare to wipe out distant memories of a poor start to the league.

National team discard Kapali, who came to the wicket at 28-2, lost partners at regular intervals before finding an ally in wicketkeeper Mohammad Salim who contributed 39 during a 98-run stand for the sixth wicket.

Fresh from his swashbuckling 75 in the previous game, Kapali, who faced 173 balls in his two-hour match winning knock, saw Victoria tie the score before being caught by Biman captain Sanwar Hossain off Humayun Kabir.

The right-hander's 89 was featured with three fours and a six. He

SEE PAGE 14 COL 1

Green signal for Chittagong?

CU CORRESPONDENT

India's visit to Chittagong to play the second Test and a one-day international against Bangladesh looks almost certain after the Indian security team expressed its satisfaction over safety measures in the port city yesterday.

The security team, headed by India's IGP for VIP Security Yashovardhan Azad, inspected all the possible places where the Indian cricketers will be going.

Arriving in Chittagong at around 12 noon, the team visited Hotel Agrabad, the dressing room, players' lounge, outfield and gallery of the MA Aziz Stadium, the venue of the matches.

The security team also called on the Mayor of Chittagong City Corporation ABM Mohiuddin Chowdhury and Commissioner of Chittagong Metropolitan Police.

Although the security team did not confirm the trip, it reportedly expressed satisfaction over the security measures and gave green signal to the local organisers, said a source.

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Hogg headlines

Cricket

AFP, Sydney

Adam Gilchrist and Darren Lehmann provided the runs as Australia squeezed past never-say-die New Zealand by 17 runs to send the Chappell-Hadlee Trophy cricket series into a decider at the Sydney Cricket Ground on Wednesday.

Gilchrist clobbered 60 off 48 balls and Lehmann with a spirited 52 ensured the Australian total reached what looked an unassailable 261 for seven. But the Kiwis went down fighting for their total of 244 off 47.1 overs.

The result levelled the best-of-three series and took it to a decider at the Gabba in Brisbane on Friday.

The Australians, who relinquished a flying start in Melbourne to lose the opening game by four wickets on Sunday, had the Kiwis on the ropes but the Black Caps refused to give in with a record ninth-wicket stand of 70 between Kyle Mills and Daniel Vettori.

Even when Vettori was run out with New Zealand 25 runs short Chris Harris came out to bat with an injured shoulder and a runner to keep the Kiwis in with a chance.

Mills smacked four sixes and a four in a defiant unbeaten 44 off 26 balls to give the Kiwis an outside hope of an incredible come-from-behind win before Harris was bowled by Glenn McGrath for four.

It was just New Zealand's fourth defeat in 24 ODIs this year.

Gilchrist earlier gave the Australians a rip-roaring start with an 86-run opening stand with Matthew Hayden (43) at around seven runs an over. But the Kiwis pegged back the home side with 4-8 in the middle of the innings.

Lehmann came to Australia's aid with a spirited 52 off 77 balls in a 74-run seventh-wicket stand with Brad Hogg to revive the scoring rate to five runs an over.

Bashar will love three fast men

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

For Bangladesh captain Habibul Bashar, the ideal bowling attack for the first Test against India starting tomorrow should have three specialist pace bowlers.

Talking to reporters after yesterday's training session at the Bangabandhu National Stadium, Bashar said it was entirely his personal preference considering the conditions. His views were also influenced by the fact that for the first time, the home side had the option of picking the top three pacers of the country Mashrafe bin-Mortuza, Tapash Baisya and Talha Jubair in the same XI.

"The wicket for the first Test is flat and batting friendly. But I think there will be considerable bounce which wasn't there during the Test against New Zealand. It will help genuine pace bowlers," said Bashar.

But Bashar's wish might not come true as the selectors have appeared reluctant to play Mashrafe and Talha together as both bowlers have only just returned to fitness following long injury layoffs. In all likelihood, Mashrafe will be taking the new ball in the first Test and the worrying batting could be strengthened with all-rounders Mushfiqur Rahman and Manzarul Islam.

"Mashrafe and Talha are both strike bowlers. Getting them together would be great but I don't expect them to do anything extraordinary as they are returning to the circuit after a long time. However, if

they play and can show their current form, I will be very happy.

"They will play if they are fully fit to give their best for five days. The physio will have the last word on them but I want them to be active throughout (the game) if they are included," said Bashar.

Bashar thought the lack of confidence was the main reason for the team's recent batting debacles.

"We have been working hard but that's not enough. The way to get out of this situation is to perform and show more motivation and dedication in the field. Our batsmen should realise that Test matches are not easy."

"We toured South Africa before playing our maiden Test and playing on bouncy wickets helped us get a big total. Now, we are going to play the Test after a few league matches on good bouncy pitches. It will help us again to make India's task harder."

Bashar also thought that the current India team was much stronger than the side that played Bangladesh in the inaugural Test in 2000 at the same venue. Bashar is one of the three survivors from that Test the others being left-arm spinner Mohammad Rafique and wicketkeeper Khaled Mashud.

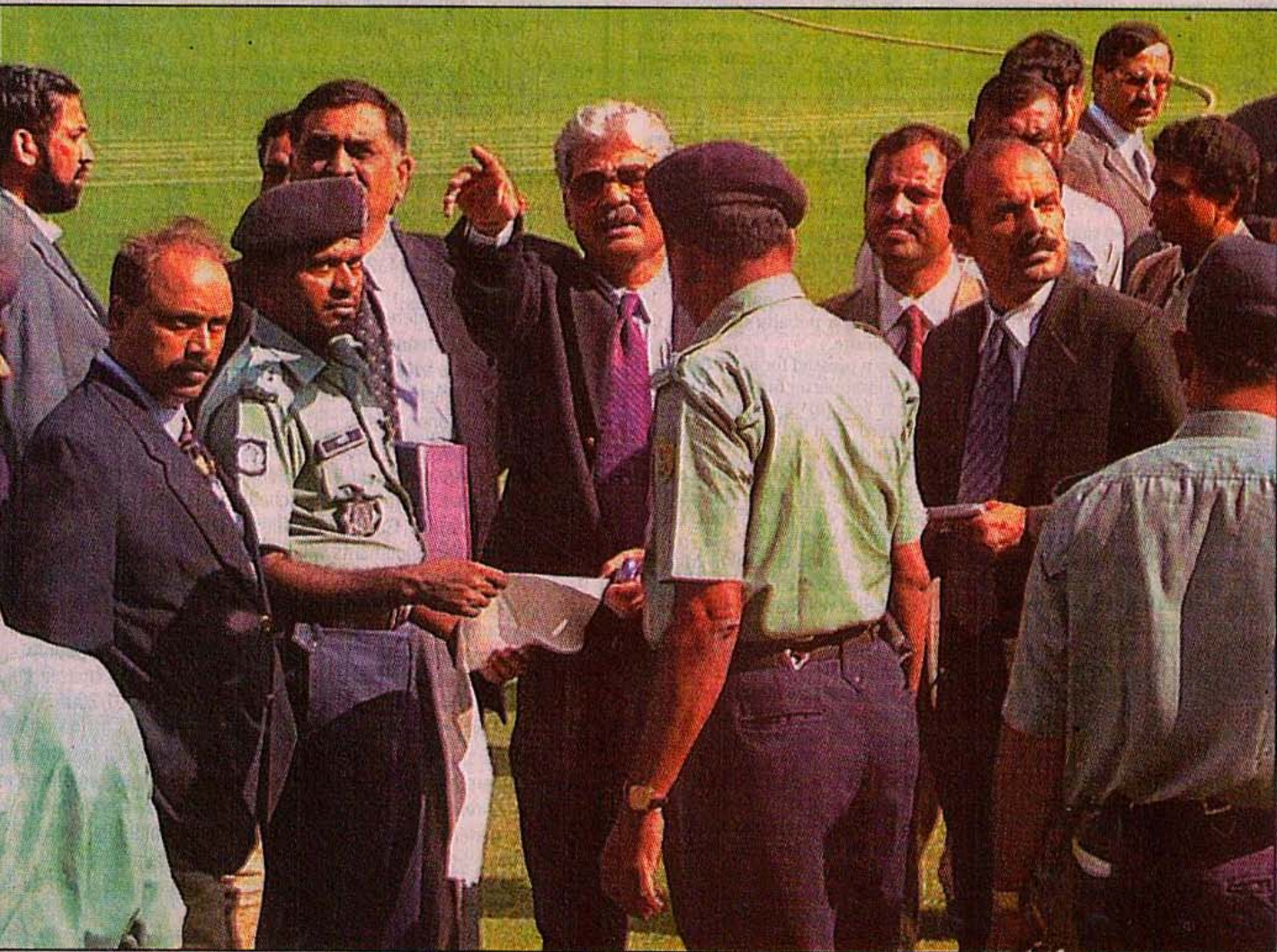
"Although batting is one of the strongest points of the Indian team, I am more worried about their bowling, especially the presence of two experienced spinners (Anil Kumble and Harbhajan Singh) could be crucial. Zaheer Khan and Irfan Pathan are also very good bowlers," added the country's premier batsman who had missed both the Tests against New Zealand in October due to injuries.

SCORES IN BRIEF

Venue: Fatullah Cricket Stadium
BIMAN: 186-8 in 50 overs (Sanwar 30, Hasanuzzaman 35, extras 38, Shahjada 2-18, Shafaq 1-37, Masudur 1-36, Sakib 3-35).
VICTORIA: 187-8 in 49 overs (Salahuddin 17, Ehsanul 12, Kapali 89, Salim 39, extras 16, Russell 1-23, Aminul 1-46, Rubel 1-29, Sharif 1-34, Humayun 2-6).
Result: Victoria won by two wickets.

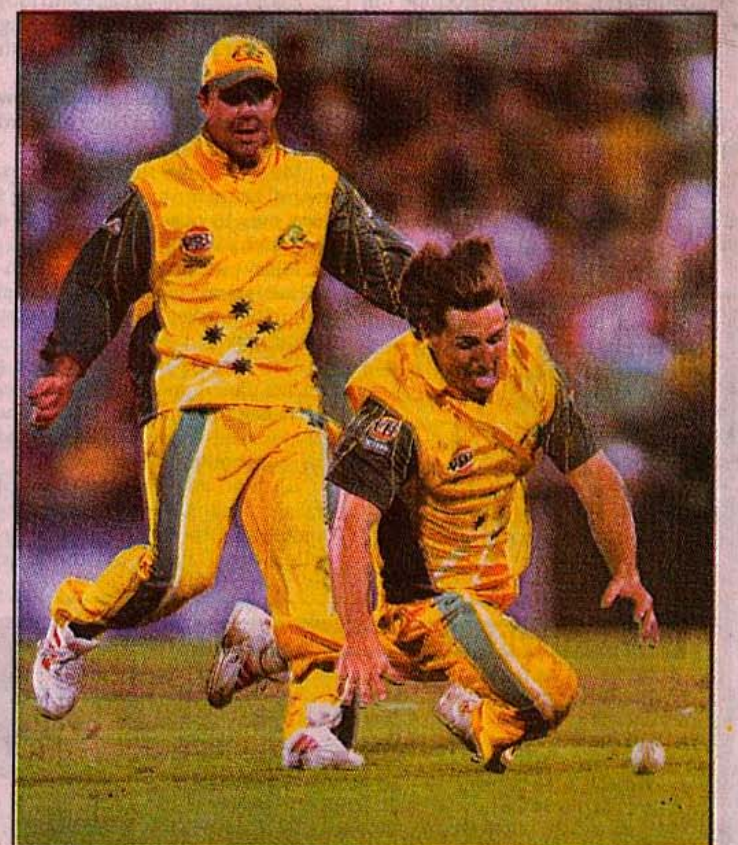
Venue: Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium
OLD DOHS: 243-8 in 50 overs (Shahin 10, Al Shahriar 30, Zahoor 91, Akram 29, extras 39, Forhad 4-34, Arif 2-55, Rezwanul 1-42, Sharifullah 1-51).
PEGASUS: 170-9 in 50 overs (Junaed 32, Arif 14, Asadul 15, Mahbub 13, Zohayer 43 n.o., extras 22, Hasibul 2-30, Enamul Jr 4-26, Enamul 1-25, Faisal 1-27).
Result: DOHS won by 73 runs.

Venue: BKSP
INDIRA ROAD: 212-8 in 50 overs (Imtiaz 18, Jahirul 15, Gahar 55, Nahidul 53, Aminul 3-36, Ismail 1-37, Sajid 4-36).
ORIENT: 213-4 in 46 overs (Masum 51, Ismail 64, Sajid 33, Feroz 35 n.o., Rashid 16 n.o., Mahbubul 1-36, Imtiaz 1-20, Gahar 1-7).
Result: Orient won by six wickets.



India's Inspector General of Police for VIP Security Yashovardhan Azad (C) takes a look around the MA Aziz Stadium during a visit to the port city of Chittagong to assess security yesterday. India are scheduled to play one Test and a ODI here.

PHOTO: STAR



HURRY BRAD HURRY! Australian bowler Brad Hogg (R) fields off his own bowling during the one-day international against New Zealand in Sydney yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Netherlands reach final

Pakistan to face-off with Spain after beating India

Cricket

AFP, Lahore

The Netherlands, seeking a hat-trick of men's Champions Trophy field hockey titles, stormed into the final where they will clash with either Spain or hosts Pakistan.

Karel Klaver scored three goals as the Dutch hammered Spain 4-2 to record their fourth consecutive win in the round-robin league and zoom to the top of the table with 12 points.

Pakistan downed arch-rivals India 2-1 in front of 40,000 scream-

ing home fans with Sohail Abbas scoring the winner with a controversial penalty stroke four minutes before the close.

Spain, stuck on nine points, need a draw in their last match against Pakistan on Friday to have another shot at the Dutch in Sunday's final at the National Hockey Stadium.

Pakistan, who also have nine points but an inferior goal difference to Spain's, must win on Friday to make the final on their home ground.

Pakistan were lucky to gain full points against India, who protested at the umpires' decision to award

the stroke when Abbas' rising penalty corner shot struck a defender.

The Indians were further angered when they claimed a penalty stroke in the dying seconds but were once again overruled by the umpires.

Saqlain Mohammad put Pakistan ahead two minutes before half-time, but India drew level through a penalty 'corner' by Sandeep Singh midway through the second session.

India's third defeat in four matches left coach Gerhard Rach fuming.

"You all saw what happened out

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