

BKSP Cup hockey semis today

SPORTS REPORTER

The semifinal line-up of the North Bengal CA Third BKSP Cup Invitational International Under-18 Hockey Tournament were finalised yesterday.

BHF (Bangladesh Hockey Federation) Red face Punjab National Bank in the first semifinal while BKSP Red meet with BHF Green in the second semi filled for today at the BKSP hockey ground.

On Monday's matches, Punjab routed Sri Lanka 10-0, BHF Green defeated BKSP Green 2-1 and BKSP Red beat BHF Red 2-1.

Gaibandha soccer

OUR CORRESPONDENT

Sammonay Sangha defeated Gaibandha Coaching Centre 2-1 in the final match of the Kishore (Under-16) football league at the Gaibandha Stadium yesterday.

Shafiqul and Sultan of Sammonay Sangha netted one goal each while Rion reduced the margin for Gaibandha Coaching Centre.

HK cricket fans

FROM PAGE 12

and we will have to correct in the final," David said, adding the pressure was on Sri Lanka since they will be expected to win at home.

TEAMS
SRI LANKA (from): Marvan Atapattu (captain), Sanath Jayasuriya, Upul Tharanga, Kumar Sangakkara, Mahela Jayawardene, Tillakaratne Dilshan, Russel Arnold, Dilhara Lokuhettige, Upul Chandana, Chaminda Vaas, Nuwan Zoysa, Farveez Maharoof, Muttiah Murali-tharan, Dilhara Fernando, Lasith Malinga.

INDIA (from): Rahul Dravid (captain), Virender Sehwag, Saurav Ganguly, Vangipurappu Laxman, Yuvraj Singh, Mohammed Kaif, Suresh Raina, Venugopala Rao, Jai P Yadav, Mahendra Dhoni, Anil Kumble, Harbhajan Singh, Irfan Pathan, Zaheer Khan, Lakshmi-pathy Balaji, Ashish Nehra.

Tri-series final

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TEAMS
MOHAMMEDAN: Biplab, Nazrul, Odaf, Hassan, Kaiser (Rony), Munna, Arman Aziz, Asad, Faisal (Mintu), Alfaz and Donald.

RUSSEL KC: Biplab, Aminul, Jahirul, Pradeep, Yusuf Khan, Hanif, Egir, Rachid, Tanvir, Majid and Bulbul (Yusuf).

Referee: Abdul Hannan.

Black and Whites

FROM PAGE 12

by 29 runs before his dominating 118 at Old Trafford featuring six sixes (still an Ashes innings record -- Flintoff's 73 contained five) set up a 103-run victory.

But if Flintoff does not yet have Botham's record, he shares the former England skipper's relish for appearing on the big stage, his love of competition and almost boyish delight in his own skills.

And Botham believes that Flintoff may yet have the same capacity for influencing matches with sheer individual brilliance.

"For a couple of years now Flintoff has been English cricket's great entertainer -- but now he is turning into a great winner too."

"When he plays as he did at Edgbaston, England's dream of



Did U Know?

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



Michael Kasprovic

(Austrian paceman)
"I turned up expecting to have plenty of coffee and tea, and cake -- and end up playing in a Test match." On his inclusion in the team for the second Test after Glenn McGrath got injured.



Action from Monday's match between Punjab and Sri Lanka in the North Bengal-CA Third BKSP Cup Invitational International Under-18 Hockey Tournament at BKSP.

Keep it up, says Vaughan



AFP, Birmingham

England captain Michael Vaughan warned his side to keep their focus after they levelled the Ashes series with a dramatic two-run win over Australia in the second Test at Edgbaston.

England's victory, the closest in 308 Tests spanning 128 years between the old rivals, squared the current campaign at 1-1.

But with the third Test starting at Old Trafford on Thursday, Vaughan said it was vital England made the most of their recovery from last month's 239-run first Test defeat at Lords.

"I asked the boys before this game 'Could we show some character and bounce back from Lord's?'" It is fantastic that we have done that and now we have to try for something similar in Manchester," Vaughan said after England won with more than a day to spare.

"The most important thing now is to take this momentum into the third Test and start well again on Thursday at Old Trafford," Vaughan also told reporters after Sunday's thrilling fourth-day climax.

"I don't think we would have come back from 2-0 down against a team like this," Vaughan, looking to become the first England captain in nine series and 18 years to win the Ashes, admitted.

England all-rounder Andrew Flintoff assured himself of a hero's welcome at his Lancashire home ground after his man-of-the-match display at Edgbaston.

The 27-year-old fast bowler and hard-hitting batsman took seven for 31 and made vital scores of 68 and 73, the latter innings particularly crucial as he shared a pivotal last-wicket stand of 51 with Simon Jones.

"I've not seen a better all-round

regaining the Ashes looks more like a reality."

England, who last won the Ashes in 1986-87, when Botham again played a key role, have lost their last eight Test series against Australia but will arrive at Old Trafford, Flintoff's home ground, for the third Test starting Thursday with renewed belief.

Throughout England there are cricket fans, some of whom who weren't even born in 1981, who can recite verbatim the television commentary preserved on the video 'Botham's Ashes'.

Twenty-four years is a long-time between tapes but, if Flintoff carries on like this, some families won't have to think very hard about what to get their cricket-mad relatives for a Christmas present.

Meanwhile, England's dramatic victory was called into question by Australia's media on Monday.

With the match finishing just before lunch on the fourth day when Michael Kasprovic gloved a Steve Harmison short-pitched delivery down the leg-side to wicketkeeper Geraint Jones, Australian newspapers were able to provide coverage on Monday.

While they said the match probably produced the best finish in the history of Test cricket, several also chose to highlight television replays that suggested Kasprovic should not have been given out.

"As if the most compelling Ashes Test of recent times needed a further twist of drama, doubt emerged in the immediate aftermath of England's landmark two-run win as to whether the final wicket was legitimate," wrote Andrew Ramsay in the Australian.

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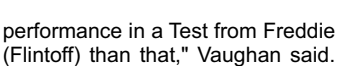
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Klinsmann to get all the help from church

AFP, Frankfurt

Lifting the 2006 World Cup on home soil is the dream for German football fans and the evangelist church has offered to provide a priest to help Jurgen Klinsmann's team achieve their goal.

"We are ready to offer the players and the management spiritual assistance for the World Cup," explained Hans-Georg Ulrichs, the official evangelist church World Cup priest.

"The DFB (German Football Federation) and the German management team have been informed of our offer. We would be delighted if the World Cup helps to revive the relationship between the German national team and the church."

Klinsmann may see religion as a good omen with predecessor Helmut Schoen using a church representative the last time Germany hosted the World Cup back in 1974.

West Germany went on to win the tournament defeating a Johan Cruyff-inspired Netherlands team 2-1 in Munich.

In the 1990 World Cup West Germany's manager Franz Beckenbauer also elected to have a member of the church accompany his team in Italy and they won the trophy again.

Thai wives beware!

AFP, Bangkok

One out of 40 punters in gambling-mad Thailand say they would sell themselves or their partners to pay for illegal bets on football.

In a nation that wagers on everything from kick-boxing to fighting fish, the opening of the English Premier League this weekend has Thais digging into their pockets and ready to have a go, according to a new study.

But 2.5 percent of gamblers said they're ready to take more drastic action to raise their stakes, the Assumption University-ABAC poll said.

"The estimate is that about 1.38 million people plan to bet and the betting total will be as high as 7.6 billion baht (184.5 million dollars) a month," pollster Srisakdi Charmonman said.

When asked how they would respond if they didn't have enough cash, 43 percent said they would borrow -- and 2.5 percent claimed they would prostitute themselves or their partners.

And it's not all just for love of the English game.

The poll found that 35.1 percent said they will bet on Italian football while 32.2 percent indicated they would wager on Spanish matches.

Emphatic BD A

FROM PAGE 12

While Steve Harmison was enjoying the glory with England at Edgbaston, there was no joy for his 19-year-old brother, Ben, as he was bowled first ball and sent down five overs for 51 runs.

Earlier, the visitors had begun with a first-wicket stand of 209, of which the Nafees made 132 before his fellow left-hander, Mehrab Hossain Jr, fell for 59 in the 40th over.

Nazimuddin hit three sixes in making 28 off seven balls before skying Harmison's brisk medium pace to midwicket, where the bowler gratefully claimed the catch himself.

The match was the last one day fixture for the A side who are scheduled to play two more three-day

SCOREBOARD
Final scoreboard on the second day of the first Test between Zimbabwe and New Zealand at the Harare Sports Club on Monday:

NEW ZEALAND: First innings 452 for 9 declared (Vettori 127, McCullum 111, Fleming 73; Mahwire 3-115, Mpofo 2-100, Streak 2-102)

ZIMBABWE: First innings
Ferreira c McCullum b Franklin 10
Taylor run out (Styris) 5
Ebrahim lwb b Franklin 0
Masakadza lwb b Franklin 0
Wishart b Bond 0
Carlisle not out 20
Taibu lwb b Martin 5
Streak c McCullum b Martin 0
Mahwire lwb b Martin 4
Cremer c Martin b Vettori 1
Mpofo c McCullum b Vettori 0
Extras: (b-4, lb-3, w-1, nb-6) 14
Total: (All out in 29.4 overs) 59
Fall of wickets: 1-9, 2-9, 3-10, 4-11, 5-28, 6-46, 7-46, 8-51, 9-53

Bowler O M R W
Bond 5 1 11 1
Franklin 5 0 11 3
Martin 10 1 21 3
Styris 7 4 9 0
Vettori 2.4 2 1 2

ZIMBABWE: Second innings
Ferreira c Fleming b Franklin 16
Taylor c Vettori b Franklin 8
Ebrahim b Martin 0
Masakadza c and b Vettori 42
Wishart c Fleming b Bond 5
Carlisle c Fleming b Bond 0
Taibu c Fleming b Martin 4
Streak lwb b Vettori 3
Mahwire not out 4
Cremer c J Marshall b Vettori 3
Mpofo st McCullum b Vettori 0
Extras: (b-8, nb-6) 14
Total: (All out in 49.5 overs) 99
Fall of wickets: 1-5, 2-14, 3-53, 4-76, 5-80, 6-84, 7-90, 8-90, 9-99

Bowler O M R W
Bond 11 8 10 2
Franklin 10 2 19 2
Styris 2 0 3 0
Martin 8 5 16 2
Vettori 13.5 4 28 4
Astele 5 0 15 0

Result: New Zealand won by an innings and 294 runs.

British press

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England had saved the series from anti-climax and "virtually guaranteed further hardly bearable suspense before the destiny of the Ashes becomes certain."

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Zimbabwe suffer

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