

Pegasus on top despite loss

SPORTS REPORTER

Young Pegasus stayed on top of the First Division Cricket League table despite suffering their second defeat yesterday when they crashed to edge Gazi Tank by 63 runs at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium.

After 16 matches, Pegasus remained on 28 points, level with Parrex who have a match in hand. Both Pegasus and Parrex have already confirmed their promotion to next year's Premier League.

In reply to Gazi Tank's modest 221-eight, Pegasus skittled out for 158 as spinner Murad Khan took five wickets for 50.

In the day's other match at Dhaka University ground, Uttara Sporting Club (298-7) survived a scare to edge Cricket Coaching School (294-9) by four runs.

Kadamtala's first win

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Kadamtala Sangsad earned their maiden win in the Rahman Foundation Second Division Football League defeating Uttar Baridhara Club 1-0 at the Bir Shreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur on Sunday.

Mahub nestled the lone goal in the 70th minute.

Kadamtala earned six points while Baridhara three after five rounds.

In the day's other match, Sunrise Sporting Club shared points with Karwan Bazar Pragati Sangha in a goalless draw at the same venue.

Sunrise raised their collection to seven points compared to Pragati's five.

Shirin champ in qualifier

SPORTS REPORTER

Sharmin Sultana Shirin emerged champion in the 27th National Women's Chess Championship qualifiers which concluded at the Bangladesh Chess Federation hall-room yesterday.

Shirin drew with Samiha Sharmin Shimmi in the seventh and final round yesterday as nine players finished level on five points. After progressive score broke the ties, Shirin was followed by Masuda Begum, Zakia Sultana, Tanima Parveen, Shimmi, Kishwara Shirin Evana, Mahmuda Haque and Arifa Khatun Moni who all made it to the final rounds.

Ninth-placed Mahfuza failed to reach the finals where defending champion Shamirha Akter Liza, IWM Rani Hamid, Syeda Shabana Parveen and Nazrana Khan Eva have direct entry.

The finals will begin on February 8.

SET accolade for Inzamam

PTI, London

Pakistan captain Inzamamul Haq piped top Indian stars Sania Mirza and Viswanathan Anand to win the International Sports Personality of the Year 2005 award, instituted by Sony Entertainment Television (SET).

Inzamam, one of the finest batsmen in world cricket, was awarded for his super run of form since the beginning of 2005.

"Inzamam has averaged an unbelievable 94 runs in Tests and over 50 in one-day internationals and magnificently captained the Pakistan side that beat India and England in the recent Test series," said a citation.

Over 800 dignitaries including Keith Vaz, former minister for foreign and Commonwealth office, former Indian wicketkeeper batsman Farooq Engineer, and the channel's Indian Idol winner Abhijeet Sawant attended the award ceremony held at the Hilton Hotel in Park Lane.

Former England cricket captain Nasser Hussein won the Lifetime Achievement Award.

Ganguly gets

FROM PAGE 12 be a part of the one-day side... There is going to be a lot of cricket in the next one year till the World Cup... And I am sure my opportunity will come."

Frustrating

FROM PAGE 12 Top 10 batsmen: Steve Tikolo (867 runs, DOHS), Rashed Hanif (696, Brothers), Sandeep Sharma (615, Mohammedan), Al Shahrar (562, Sonargaon), Nasiruddin Faruque (539, Victoria), Akram Khan (532, DOHS), Jaffar Quraishi (530, Victoria), Javed Omar (509, Biman), Manjarul Islam (485, DOHS) and Mohammad Ashraf (481, Sonargaon).

Top 10 bowlers: Abdur Razzak (40 wickets, DOHS), Jaffar Quraishi, 32, Victoria), Mosharrar Hossain (28, Victoria), Mohammed Rafique (27, Sonargaon), Tapash Baisya (27, Sonargaon), Arafat Sunny (24, Brothers), Mohammed Sharif (24, Brothers), Mahbubul Alam (23, Sonargaon) and Sabbir Khan (21, Mohammedan).



PHOTOS: AP/AF

CONTRASTING FACES: Cameroon's Samuel Eto'o (L) is frustrated after missing a penalty while Ivory Coast's Didier Drogba celebrates after converting the last spotkick during their African Nations Cup quarterfinal at the Military Stadium in Cairo on Saturday.

Little Eto'o, super Tito

Cameroon, Tunisia knocked out in penalties

REUTERS, Cairo



Nigeria and Ivory Coast reached the African Nations Cup semifinals after marathon penalty shootouts against Tunisia and Cameroon respectively on Saturday.

Nigeria and Ivory Coast will meet in the last four in Alexandria on Tuesday while hosts Egypt play Senegal.

Nigeria goalkeeper Vincent Enyeama saved three penalties in their shootout and one during the match as the Super Eagles beat holders Tunisia 6-5 after a 1-1 draw.

Ivory Coast and Cameroon, renewing a rivalry from the World Cup qualifiers, took their shootout to 24 kicks before the Elephants won 12-11 following another 1-1 draw.

After each player had taken one kick, Cameroon striker Samuel Eto'o, the tournament's leading scorer with five goals, stepped up for the second time and fired over the bar.

Didier Drogba (nicknamed Tito) then converted for the jubilant Elephants, who lost both World Cup qualifiers to Cameroon but still made it to Germany after the Indomitable Lions slipped elsewhere.

"We proved we deserve to be in the World Cup," Ivory Coast coach Henri Michel told reporters against

the backdrop of a mixed zone fight -- an almost daily occurrence at the tournament.

"Although Cameroon beat us twice in qualifying, we proved we are the better team in this game."

Cameroon coach Artur Jorge would not discuss his future.

"The future belongs to God," said the Portuguese coach, amid scenes of utter chaos.

Ivory Coast and Cameroon's scrappy match in Cairo briefly burst into life in the first five minutes of extra time.

Bakary Kone rifled home for Ivory Coast in the second minute after Emmanuel Eboue's shot crashed against the bar.

Cameroon hit back immediately. Geremi Fotso Njitap also hitting the bar before substitute Alberto Meyong Ze slotted home the equaliser.

The first 14 penalties were all converted before Ivory Coast goalkeeper Jean-Jacques Tizie saved Alioum Sadiou's effort for Cameroon. However, Tizie was judged to have moved and Alioum converted there-fore.

In an increasingly good-natured shootout during which rival players mingled and chatted in the centre circle both goalkeepers also scored before Eto'o finally missed.

In the other quarterfinal, Nigeria went ahead in the fifth minute when 18-year-old striker Obinna Nsofor,

making his first start, scored from just inside the area.

Tunisia, whose niggly approach, gamesmanship and play-acting has blighted a tournament that has otherwise been played in an excellent spirit, were awarded a controversial penalty nine minutes later.

Zied Jaziri tumbled over theatrically as replays suggested no contact was made and, although he celebrated the decision, Enyeama saved the penalty from Brazil-born full back Clayton.

Three minutes into the second-half Karim Hagui stole in behind the defence to head home the equaliser.

A bad day for the tournament's marksmen was complete when Brazilian-born Francieleudo dos Santos, who has scored four goals for Tunisia, limped off, effectively ending their potency as an attacking force.

But despite creating chances, Nigeria could not find a winner.

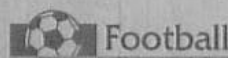
They then missed two of their first three penalties as Tunisia keeper Ali Boumnijel saved from Joseph Yobo and Yusuf Ayila hit the bar.

But Enyeama saved successive kicks from Adel Chedli and Slim Bengachou leaving the scores level at 2-2 after four kicks each.

The next seven penalties were all converted before Enyeama made his third save, this time from Riadh Bouazizi, to put the defending champions out of the tournament.

SERIE A

Record Roma thrash Parma



AFP, Rome

Amantino Mancini scored twice as Roma matched their club record seven straight Serie A wins with a 3-0 win at Parma on Saturday.

The result also kept them in fifth place as they chase an outside hope of European football next year.

Roma had numerous chances to open the scoring in the first half especially through Francesco Totti and two close drives from Olivier Dacourt but they had to wait until the second half before they broke through.

Totti had two close-range efforts saved by Parma keeper Matteo Guardalben but Mancini was on

hand to slot the ball home from six yards.

Parma were unlucky not to equalise on 67 minutes when a diving header from Fernando Couto came off the post.

It was a costly miss as Mancini quickly extended his side's lead.

The Brazilian sprung the offside trap on Totti's pass and placed a perfect lob over the helpless goalkeeper.

Totti was again involved in the third goal, as his pass over the top of the defence found Perrotta, whose lob landed in the far corner of the net.

Earlier Saturday, Albanian international Erjon Bogdani scored his fourth goal in two games, as Siena came from behind to earn a point against Ascoli in a 1-1 draw.

Bogdani, who grabbed a hat-trick last weekend in the 3-1 win over Palermo, was on hand to rescue his side just before half-time.

Siena thought they had scored on 37 minutes with a Roberto D'Aversa diving header, but it was correctly disallowed for offside when Tomas Locatelli's cross came in.

Instead, it was Ascoli who took the lead in the 38th minute when goalkeeper Marco Fortin's clearance was put back into the centre by Fini for Gianluca Comotto to score from six yards.

Bogdani equalised when he redirected a Paolo Foglio corner kick with his knee to send the goalkeeper the wrong way.

Aussies out run Proteas



AFP, Sydney

South Africa failed to overhaul Australia with what would have been a world-record score, falling 57 runs short of their giant target in the triangular series match at the Sydney Cricket Ground on Sunday.

The Australians, led by a blistering onslaught from opener Adam Gilchrist, had set the tourists what would have been a world-record limited-overs chase after posting their highest score against the Proteas of 344-6.

In reply, the South Africans made 287-6, only faint hopes of victory fading when wicketkeeper-batsman Mark Boucher tucked his bat under the arm after a sparkling 76 from 83 balls.

South Africa must now beat Sri Lanka in the final qualifying match in Hobart on Tuesday if they are to reach the best-of-three finals against Australia starting on Friday.

Gilchrist laid the platform for Australia's huge tally, spanking an incredible 14 boundaries on his way to 88 from 66 balls before skying a shot to Boucher off the bowling of supersub Clark Langeveldt.

The introduction of slower bowling on the spin-friendly wicket helped calm the rampant run rate after his dismissal.

But even that was not enough to stop the Australians who's previous best one-day score against South

Africa was 330-7 in Port Elizabeth in 2001-02.

Even worse for the Proteas was the discouraging fact that the highest successful run chase by any team was 332-8 by New Zealand against Australia last December.

Gilchrist had dominated the inexperienced attack from the outset, bringing up his half century with a boundary through long-off on just 32 deliveries.

His eventual dismissal marked a welcome relief for South Africa, but by then Australia had already reached 138-2 at the start of the 19th over.

Gilchrist was well supported by captain Ricky Ponting with 72 from 61 balls, while Damien Martyn clocked 79 off 75 and Michael Hussey 47 from 33.

Ponting said Gilchrist's knock had given his side the momentum. In reply the South Africans started woefully with captain Graeme Smith's nightmare run continuing as once again speedster Brett Lee had him caught behind for just six runs.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard in the triangular series limited-overs match between Australia and South Africa at the Sydney Cricket Ground on Sunday: AUSTRALIA

Gilchrist c Boucher b Langeveldt 88

Katich c Kemp b van der Wath 11

Ponting c Gibbs b Botha 72

Symonds c Hall b Smith 7

Martyn run out 79

Clarke c Rudolph b Hall 27

Hussey not out 47

Extras: (lb-4, w-8, nb-1) 13

Total: (For 6 wks in 50 overs) 344

Fall of wickets: 1-65, 2-138, 3-168, 4-203, 5-263, 6-344

Did not bat: Lee, Bracken, Clark, Hogg

Super-sub: Hopes for Katich

Bowler O M R W

Van der Wath 10 0 76 1

Zondeki 4 0 42 0

Hall 10 0 69 1

Langeveldt 6 0 49 1

Smith 10 0 52 1

Botha 10 0 52 1

SOUTH AFRICA

Smith c Gilchrist b Lee 6

Dippenaar c Hussey b Clark 27

Gibbs c Gilchrist b Symonds 46

Boucher c Hopes b Symonds 76

Kemp c Bracken b Hogg 28

Prince run out 25

Rudolph not out 31

Van der Wath not out 37

Extras: (lb-7, w-2, nb-2) 11

Total: (For 6 wks in 50 overs) 287

Fall of wickets: 1-7, 2-52, 3-105, 4-172, 5-199, 6-236

Did not bat: Hall, Botha, Langeveldt

Super-sub: Langeveldt for Zondeki

Bowler O M R W

Lee 6 0 31 1

Bracken 9 0 51 0

Clark 10 0 70 1

Hopes 5 0 35 0

Symonds 10 0 42 2

Hogg 10 0 51 1

Result: Australia won by 57 runs.

Man-of-the-match: Adam Gilchrist.

Toss: Australia.

Umpires: Peter Parker and Aleem Dar.

Scolari reaffirms English interest

AFP, London

Portugal coach Luiz Felipe Scolari, who guided Brazil to their fifth World Cup success in 2002, put his name firmly in the frame to replace Sven-Goran Eriksson as England manager.

Scolari, whose contract with Portugal ends after the 2006 World Cup finals in July, said on Sunday: "Yes I would like the job."

"England have a fantastic national team. But it is not for me at this moment. I am very happy in my job with Portugal."

"But when I finish my contract in July I will be free."

Scolari set out his credentials in an interview Sunday with BBC Radio Five Live.

"I am a good coach and a man of the world. Portugal are a better team now than before."

"I am happy in any country. I have worked in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Japan and Brazil."

"If I want to go to England, I need to learn the language better and know more about the job."

"That could take two or three months but is not a problem for me."

"The language of the players I know very well. But it is important to communicate to the people."

Campbell back for Gunners

AFP, Birmingham

Sol Campbell will draw a line under one of the most bizarre episodes in English football's recent history by returning to training with Arsenal this week.

Gunners boss Arsene Wenger revealed after a 2-0 win over Birmingham here that the England centre-back had ended two days of uncertainty over his whereabouts and future by making contact on Friday night.

That was 48 hours after a traumatised Campbell walked out of Highbury and went missing after being substituted at half-time in a 3-2 defeat by West Ham.

"He is OK and he is focussed to come back and work out and come back into the team," Wenger said. "I don't know where he was, but he sounded fine and I am expecting to see him on Monday or Tuesday."

The centre-back has not been seen in public since his abrupt departure from Highbury, which followed uncharacteristic lapses which led to West Ham's first two goals.

Wenger said after that match that the 31-year-old had been "too much down" mentally to continue while Robert Pires later revealed that his teammate had a "big worry" in his private life.

Although the nature of Campbell's troubles remain unclear, Wenger said he would be welcomed back into the Arsenal fold with open arms.

"There is nothing to forgive," the Frenchman said. "There was no acrimony, it was just that he was not well and you have to accept that."

"There is no bad feeling at all. You can only, at that level, perform if you are in a good state and he wasn't."

Campbell's lawyer Ben Battu also confirmed his client would be back at the London Colney complex this week.

"He needed time and space to gather his thoughts," the lawyer said. "He has no personal problems whatsoever."

Bangladesh tame

FROM PAGE 12

SCOREBOARD

NEW ZEALAND

Astle c Mushfiqur b Mehrab 44

Guptill c Sakib b Nabil 28

Barnett c Mushfiqur b Nabil 0

Boorder st Mushfiqur b Mehrab 13

Ellison b Mehrab 22

Fitzgibbon c Mushfiqur b Shuvo 7

Munro c Tamim b Shuvo 6

Hira run out 22

Southee c Dollar b Shuvo 0

Donnelly st Mushfiqur b Mehrab 0

Bennett not out 0

Extras: (lb-1, lb-10, w-22) 33

Total: (All out in 45.3 overs) 175

Fall of wickets: 1-57, 2-61, 3-100, 4-115, 5-140, 6-140, 7-160, 8-165, 9-174, 10-175.

Bowler O M R W

Dollar 6 1 18 0

Kamrul 5 0 22 0

Nabil 8 1 18 2

Sirajullah 1 0 11 0

Saqib 8 0 30 0

Mehrab 9.3 0 29 4

Shuvo 8 0 36 3

BANGLADESH

Tamim b Southee 3

Raqibul c Fitzgibbon b Hira 18

Mehdi c Hira b Southee 0

Sakib b Bennett 13

Shamsur c Fitzgibbon b Donnelly 30

Mehrab not out 38

Mushfiqur c Fitzgibbon b Bennett 26

Shuvo b Munro 18

Sirajullah not out 10

Extras: (lb-1, lb-1, w-12, nb-6) 20

Total: (For 7 wks in 37.5 overs) 176

Fall of wks: 1-5, 2-5, 3-31, 4-76, 5-78, 6-123, 7-166.

Bowler O M R W

Bennett 10 0 39 2

Southee 8 1 48 2

Munro 2.5 0 25 1

Hira 8 0 31 1

Donnelly 8 0 26 1

Guptill 1 0 5 0

Result: Bangladesh won by three wickets.

PRIMERA LIGA

It's more like Real



Football

AFP, Madrid

Real Madrid crushed Espanyol 4-0 on Saturday as Brazilian World Cup star Ronaldo marked his return from injury with a goal but it was Valencia striker David Villa who grabbed the headlines with a remarkable long distance strike.

Villa registered his 14th league goal of the season in thrilling fashion.

He found the net in the 22nd minute when he spotted Deportivo La Coruna goalkeeper Jose Molina off his line and scored from 50 metres as his side avenged their midweek Spanish Cup defeat.

The 1-0 win keeps Valencia in second place to maintain the pressure on leaders Barcelona.

They are nine points behind although the defending champi-

ons can restore their 12-point lead when they take on Atletico Madrid on Sunday.

Skipper Guti and French star Zinedine Zidane, with two goals, joined Ronaldo on the scoresheet for Real who stay third, 10 points off the pace.

Real even received a standing ovation at half-time at the Santiago-Bernabeu when they opened up a 3-0 lead.

The win also kept up their unbeaten record in 2006 and represented their fourth consecutive win of the championship.

Real were also solid at the back where Alvaro Mejia and Jonathan Woodgate