

Inter-club tennis gets underway

SPORTS REPORTER

The 2nd Dhaka Bank Independence Day Inter-club tennis tournament began at the Dhaka Club tennis complex yesterday.

Ten clubs including hosts and organisers Dhaka Club are taking part in the event, sponsored by Dhaka Bank. The other teams are: Officers Club, Customs Club, Gulshan Club, Uttara Club, Narayanganj Club, Engineers Club, Cadet College Club, Gulshan Youth Club and BDR Officers' Mess.

Dhaka Club president Selim Bhuiyan and Dhaka Bank chairman Abdul Hai Sarkar jointly inaugurated the weeklong meet.

Shooter Mobarak dies in Singapore

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Pabna

Former national shooter Mobarak Hossain Ratna, also a member of the National Shooting Federation executive committee, died of cancer at a Singapore hospital yesterday. He was 50.

Ratna, a skeet shooter who won a team gold in the SAF Shooting Championships in New Delhi in 1997, took part in many international events.

Chairman of Universal Group of Pabna, Ratna who hailed from Dilapur village of Pabna Sadar upazila, left behind his wife, five daughters and a host of relatives to mourn his death.

His dead body is expected to be flown in from Singapore today.

Sri Lanka A in

FROM PAGE 17 left-hander Warnapura sent the rival attack for a leather hunt hitting 21 boundaries in 291 balls.

SCORES IN BRIEF

SRI LANKA A: 335-2 in 90 overs (Vandort 10, Udawatte 5, Warnapura 177 not out, Samarawera 129 not out, extras 14, Nazmul 2-57).

Hannan leads

FROM PAGE 17 Mabud 22, Kapali 141, Maola 22, Saif 90, Rezaul 0, Ijaz 13, Hasibul 61 n.o., Nabil 0, Rashedur 4, extras 22, Ariful 2-65, Arafat 2-64, Tariqul 1-120, Monir 2-76, Arman 1-46).

BARISAL: First innings 184-4 in 52 overs (Imran 8, Hannan 95, Faruque 6, Raqibul 47 n.o., Humayun 0, Shahin 21 n.o., extras 7, Rashedur 1-17, Kapali 2-48, Nabil 1-43).

SA focused

FROM PAGE 20 coach Peter Drinnen said his team relishes the challenge of playing the number one team in the world.

"We are excited by the challenge and both Australia and South Africa in our group provide us with two real challenges," said Drinnen, a former Queensland wicketkeeper who took over as coach last year.

"South Africa have been playing tough cricket for the last year. But we have to think about what we are doing and we need to pose a stronger challenge than we did against Australia," said Drinnen, whose team lost to Australia by 202 runs.

TEAMS

SOUTH AFRICA (from): Graeme Smith (capt), Jacques Kallis (vice-capt), Loots Bosman, Mark Boucher, AB de Villiers, Herschelle Gibbs, Andrew Hall, Justin Kemp, Charl Langeveldt, Andre Nel, Makhaya Ntini, Robin Peterson, Shaun Pollock, Ashwell Prince, Roger Telemachus.

SCOTLAND (from): Ryan Watson (captain), John Blain, Dougie Brown, Gavin Hamilton, Majid Haq, Paul Hoffmann, Douglas Lockhart, Ross Lyons, Neil McCullum, Deward Nel, Navdeep Poonia, Glenn Rogers, Colin Smith, Fraser Watts.

Umpires: Asoka de Silva and Mark Benson.

Death silences

FROM PAGE 17 on Monday, saying it was "very sad that he died after a very poor performance by the team, and his life didn't end on a happy note."

Pakistan Cricket Board chairman Nasim Ashraf said Woolmer had "always termed Pakistan as his home."

Former captain Javed Miandad, whom Woolmer replaced as coach in 2004, said he believed "Pakistan's shocking defeat against Ireland has a lot to do with his death." Another ex-skipper, Asif Iqbal, agreed.

In the city of Lahore, Humaira Waheed, a cricket fan and a teacher for handicapped children, said Woolmer's death "confirms he was committed to the Pakistani cricket team."

"Being a true coach, he could not bear the shameful defeat of his team at the hands of Ireland and, as such, collapsed in his room. However, his death has made everyone sad in Pakistan."

Arsalan Rafiq, a medical doctor in Lahore, said that "nobody in Pakistan will be happy at his death".

"His services for the Pakistani cricket team will be remembered for a long time," Rafiq said.



PHOTO: STAR

Dhaka Bank first chairman, Abdul Hai Sarkar and Dhaka Club president, Selim Bhuiyan jointly inaugurate the Dhaka Bank Independence Day Inter-Club Tennis Competition 2007 at the Dhaka Club premises yesterday.

LOCAL SNIPPETS

SPORTS REPORTER

The B. League will resume today after a couple of days' break when second-from-bottom Arambagh will host Chittagong Abahani in a third-round clash at the Bangabandhu National Stadium. Arambagh -- who have yet to score -- are on one point following a draw in the second round against fellow Dhaka side Rahmatganj. The visitors, who lost their opener in Dhaka, have three points with one win -- against Khulna Abahani at home in the second round.

CHESS QUALIFIERS

Nine players maintained their winning run in the 33rd National Chess qualifiers to share lead in the table after yesterday's third round at the chess federation hall-room. The joint leaders are: Shakil, Nasir, Amin, Parag, Emon, Taibur, Javed, Debaraj and Zaker.

DIV I CRICKET

Enamul and Murad each hit 65 to steer Azad Sporting Club to a comprehensive 86-run victory against Dhaka Mariners in yesterday's Kai-Altech First Division Cricket League. In reply to Azad's 237-9, mariners skiltled out for 151 at the BKSP ground.

In the other match, Rupali bank (122-4) cruised to a six-wicket win over Bangladesh Boys (116) at the Dhaka University ground.

YOUTH SOCCER DELAYED

The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) has deferred the start of the Western Union National Youth Football Championship qualifying round, which will now start on April 4.

The original schedule of opening was March 28 but the BFF decided to delay it on request from the district sports associations.

WC QUIZ

One of the biggest web portals of country www.bracnet.net will organise a Cricket World Cup quiz contest with 500 exciting prizes including a home theatre system, a 21" colour television and a DVD player, an iPod and many others worth over Tk 1.5 lakh.

One can win these prizes just by answering two easy questions. The quiz link would be found on the homepage of www.bracnet.net. The details of this contest will be available on the website. The contest will continue until the day before the final match.

Tigers drawn

FROM PAGE 20 from September 11 to 24, although there seems to be confusion over the dates. Roweda Kandan, who is overseeing the preparations for CSA, confirmed the schedule.

Warm-up matches are slated for September 8 and 9, yet England and India do not complete their one-day series until September 8 at Lord's.

"England and India will arrive late and might just have one warm-up game," Kandan told.

Tributes flow in

FROM PAGE 17

England sweater.

"But perhaps Bob will be best remembered as one of the world's leading coaches.

"He embraced innovation and was at the forefront of many new developments in the game.

"Everyone at ECB extends our deepest sympathy to Bob's family -- we have lost a great friend."

The International Cricket Council chief executive Malcolm Speed also expressed his condolences.

"We are greatly saddened by Bob Woolmer's passing," said Speed.

"He was a great cricket man. His life was devoted to cricket. He played, coached and commented on the game all of his life."

Woolmer took over as coach of Pakistan in June 2004 and, until recently, had masterminded an upturn in the country's cricket results.

His contribution for Pakistan has been praised by the country's president Pervez Musharraf and prime minister Shaukat Aziz.

"President Pervez Musharraf and prime minister Shaukat Aziz have expressed heartfelt condolences over the tragic death of Pakistan cricket team coach Bob Woolmer," read a statement.

"In their separate messages, they said that Bob Woolmer had promoted the cause and game of cricket in Pakistan with dedication and single mindedness.

"In their messages to his family they said Bob Woolmer's services to the game will be long remembered by cricket fans."

Pakistan paceman Shoaib Akhtar did not make the squad for the World Cup because of injury.

He added: "It is a huge tragedy. We are not ready to believe this has happened.

"I am completely shattered, and what is going to happen I don't know.

"He was a very dear man, he was a great leader and it's an unbelievable tragedy."

Former Pakistan spinner Mushtaq Ahmed added: "He was a

great man, a great human being and one of the best I had come across because of his humbleness.

"He was very close to the guys, had so much passion about the game. The guys are still crying and talking about it."

Woolmer led Warwickshire to three trophies in one season in 1994 under chief executive Dennis Amiss and the pair were also team-mates during their playing days for England.

"We became very close in the England side," said Amiss.

"I phoned him earlier this week and he was fine -- upset by the results but Bob was phlegmatic, he knew there were some good days and some bad days.

"I remember he used to say: 'all I can do is prepare them, I can't do it for them on the field'."

"He was a great enthusiast, he loved the game. He wanted to learn, he welcomed innovation.

"He was highly respected, one of the greatest coaches the game will ever see.

"Cricket has lost a lovely man and one of the top coaches."

Woolmer brought West Indies captain Brian Lara to Edgbaston during his time in charge at Warwickshire.

Lara was in his prime and scored a mammoth 501 at county level when he and Woolmer joined forces.

"I had a wonderful relationship with Bob at Warwickshire in 1994 and our relationship continued to grow over the years even though we sat in different dressing rooms," said Lara.

"He was a very focused man with a great love for the game but what shone through was the great love he had for players under his charge. Everyone meant something to him."

Former South Africa fast bowler Allan Donald also played under Woolmer at Warwickshire and also for his country.

"He was always a calming influence on the team and if stress took his life away, I find it difficult to believe," said Donald.

"I heard on Sunday that he

suffered from diabetes, and that is another thing I wasn't aware of."

He added: "It's pretty devastating. We're talking about a person who was very close to me for the majority of my cricketing career."

Woolmer began his professional cricket career with Kent in 1968 and stayed at the club until 1984.

The Canterbury club's current director of cricket, Graham Johnson, said: "He was a fantastic analyst of the game, he was brilliant as a technical coach and he was a man who was always thinking ahead to help his team be one step ahead.

"People may remember in the 1999 World Cup he got earpieces for the captain and the bowler to keep in touch with him.

"It was outlawed -- but that was the man he was. He wanted his team to perform well and to contribute to make them play better."

Woolmer played in 19 Tests for England and led South Africa to the World Cup semi-finals in 1999. Former Test umpire Dickie Bird said: "He knew the game inside out -- that's what made him a magnificent cricket coach. I know for a fact that the Pakistan team thought the world of him."

Ireland ended Pakistan's campaign at the World Cup and their coach Adrian Birrell told BBC Sport: "I spoke to him after the game and he was totally gracious in defeat -- he made no excuses and praised Ireland's performance.

"He has made a huge contribution to world cricket."

Clive Lloyd led the West Indies to victory at the World Cup in 1975 and is the manager of the current team.

He said: "Bob was a great guy and a really great coach.

"It's sad that such a tragedy should take place in the World Cup -- I feel sad for his family."

Imran blames his protégé

PTI, Karachi

Former Pakistan captain Imran Khan today squarely blamed skipper Inzamamul Haq for the team's shock defeat to Ireland and its early exit from the World Cup, saying he failed to provide an inspirational leadership.

"I think this was one of the worst performances of the team I have ever seen in my career. It is unthinkable we should lose to Ireland," Imran said.

"A person makes his own luck. To say that luck didn't favour us is rubbish. Everyone knows that Inzamam as captain had all the authority to do what he wanted. The coach was just there to support him. So, Inzamam is in the spotlight after this defeat," he added.

Imran minced no words in demanding that Pakistan needed to appoint a new captain and coach who had vision, were aggressive and innovative in the way they played their cricket.

The cricketer-turned-politician, who led Pakistan to title win in the 1992 World Cup, said the way Inzamam, Woolmer and the selectors had approached the preparations for the tournament was a recipe for disaster.

"I am surprised at their short-sightedness. At the way they went about preparing for this tournament. The selectors were shocking.

"I couldn't comprehend them not playing Danish Kaneria against Ireland when everyone is aware that inexperienced teams face the most problems against quality leg-spin," he said.

Logie lauds minnows

AFP, Port of Spain

Ireland and Bangladesh have inspired the minnows with their surprise victories in the World Cup, says Bermuda coach Gus Logie.

Bangladesh opened their Cup campaign with a five-wicket win over former champions India here on Saturday, while Ireland stunned 1992 winners Pakistan by three wickets in Jamaica.

"These are great results for all the minnows. It should give all the players confidence going into their next games. I'm looking forward to my boys being inspired by the performances of both Bangladesh and Ireland," said Logie.

Debutants Bermuda take on India in their second Group B match here on Monday, having lost to Sri Lanka by 243 runs in their opening game. The top two sides will advance to the next Super Eight stage.

Logie was all praise for Bangladesh, saying they lifted their performance against a higher-ranked side and proved there was a place in the World Cup for smaller teams.

"It (India v Bangladesh) was a fascinating game of cricket as Bangladesh showed what can be achieved with commitment and hard work. Everybody expects a top team to knock out a small team," he said.

"You now have to give credit to minnows. It shows the game is spreading. We need to understand that there are good players in associated teams. They need to be supported.

"The Bangladesh win is going to be an inspiration and I think my players will be motivated."

The Bermuda coach believed that the small teams could improve if given an opportunity to compete against big sides for long time.

Bob Woolmer: 1948-2007

FROM PAGE 17 He said on Saturday that this was the worst moment of his career.

His tenure, though, was marred by a match-fixing scandal which led to the life ban of his captain Hansie Cronje.

Woolmer was untainted personally by the episode and, after leaving the post for a second spell at Warwickshire, campaigned for Cronje's reinstatement. Cronje was killed in a plane crash in 2002.

He took over as Pakistan coach in June 2004, one of the most high profile and stressful positions in the international game.

Controversy again followed him in August 2006 when his team were accused and punished for ball-tampering during the fourth and final test with England at the Oval.

The team refused to take the field on the penultimate day after being docked five runs and became the first country to forfeit a test match.

His contract with the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) was due to run until June 2007 but it was widely thought he would not complete it in the wake of the defeat by Ireland on Saturday.

He said in a news conference that the hassles of life as a top international coach had left him questioning his future but Pakistan officials said on Sunday that he was already plotting improvements within his ageing team.

A universally popular, phlegmatic character, Woolmer had made his home in Cape Town. He leaves a wife, Gill, and two sons.

Turmoil takes toll on Pak

AFP, Basseterre



Pakistan's botched World Cup campaign ended in predictable agony after a build-up which was disrupted by off-field turmoil and controversy.

Their sensational three-wicket defeat to Ireland on Saturday was described as the "saddest" day in Pakistan's cricket history by former skipper Aamir Sohail.

"As a former captain and ex-chairman of selectors I am ashamed and appalled at this loss," said Sohail, who is here as television commentator.

Pakistan had entered the World Cup on the back of a doping scandal involving bowling spearheads Shoaib Akhtar and Mohammad Asif.

Akhtar was banned for two years and Asif for one year after both tested positive for banned substance nandrolone in November last year.

A month later, the bans were controversially lifted on appeal.

The pair did not appear at mandatory dope tests before the World Cup and were pulled out of the tournament hours before team's departure for the Caribbean on fitness grounds.

Pakistan's problems were further aggravated when all-rounder Abdul Razzaq suffered a freak accident and was ruled out with a fractured knee.

Despite the poor build-up, Pakistan showed early promise by beating Canada and world number one South Africa in their warm-up matches in Trinidad but lost their way once the tournament started.

They were in a must-win situation when they faced Ireland after losing their first match to the West Indies by 54 runs, but instead put up a disappointing show to suffer their worst-ever World Cup exit.

"It is worse than the last World Cup, more shameful," said Sohail of the 2003 World Cup during which Pakistan managed to defeat lowly ranked Namibia and the Netherlands before bowling out in the first round.

They now face Zimbabwe in their last match before heading home.

Sohail said the team had the potential to do better.

"I still believe they have the potential to do better but leaving out Danish Kaneria against Ireland, who don't know to play leg-spin, was baffling and coach Bob

unfortunate incident like this has taken one of the greats of the game out of the game.

In a statement, the 29-year-old Flintoff said: "I know that what I did on Friday night was completely wrong and I have to take full responsibility for it.

"There can be no excuses on my part. I know I shouldn't have done what I did and I have to accept the punishment.

"To my team-mates and the England supporters that I let down, all I can say is that I am extremely sorry and assure everyone that I will be giving 110 percent for England for the rest of this tournament."

Despite the controversy, Flintoff will be available for England's next group match, against Kenya, on Saturday.

"There's nothing that can repay what they did but hopefully a victory today, and us winning next Saturday and a decent run in the World Cup will be the only way we can say sorry to the supporters," Vaughan said.

Canada, a side with just one full-time professional, posted their best World Cup score of 228 for seven.

Kiwis very serious

FROM PAGE 17

gave all his squad a run-out during the Black Caps two remaining matches, said he'd received a briefing on the Africans from Andy Moles, the former Kenya coach.

Moles, who as a player was an opening batsman for English county Warwickshire, is now coaching New Zealand first-class side Northern Districts.

"We've got a fair degree of notes from Andy Moles who worked with them over an extended period so we've got a fair bit of scouting done on them."

New Zealand held England to 209 for seven, with fast bowler Shane Bond taking two wickets in four balls to get rid of dangerous Kevin Pietersen and Andrew Flintoff.

However, the Black Caps later collapsed to 19 for three before an unbroken stand of 138 between all-rounders Scott Styris (87 not out) and Jacob Oram (63 not out) saw them complete victory with nine overs to spare.

"Sometimes bowlers bowl well and you've got to face that and you adapt afterwards," Bracewell explained.

"You don't panic and you've got to take your hat off to Jake and Scotty."

The New Zealand coach added that all his squad, including the four players who didn't face England, batsman Peter Fulton and seam bowlers Michael Mason, Daryl Tuffey and Mark Gillespie (currently battling a shoulder problem) had it in them to play significant roles at the World Cup.

"They went about their business servicing the team but they also had to prepare to play. I don't regard them as dirt-trackers."

Kenya coach Roger Harper, the former West Indies off-spinner, said he hoped his local knowledge would prove an asset.

"The advantage here is that the wicket hasn't changed much so my experience counts for something. I've been here before. I know what to expect as far as the conditions and the culture are concerned."

And as for the prospect of Kenya advancing to the Super Eights, Harper added: "Our objective is to play our best cricket in each game and if we can do that the result will take care of itself."

'Just another victory'

FROM PAGE 17

young career so far, but in the last 18 months he hasn't missed a game because of injury and that is a very good thing.

Could you talk up about the build-up to yesterday's victory after the New Zealand victory. Was there a particular strategy you went in with?

Of course. We discussed as a group how we should approach the game and we also agreed on a strategy how to respond to individual opposition players. That is normal, every team would do that. I can stress that we got a good build-up and we have done as much as we possibly could've done in the time provided in the lead-up here in the Caribbean.

Was it a particular strategy to play three left-arm spinners?

No, that's our best combination at the moment.

What has Bangladesh being doing right all these years you feel?

What have they been doing right? We've got a lot of things wrong, that's why we were ranked 10 and now we are nine. We are slowly emerging as a good side. Let's put

this in perspective: you can't jump on the bandwagon and say, "listen, Bangladesh has turned the corner," like most in the media are trying to do. Okay, congratulate us, we've done well, yes. But it is just one match, we've got to keep going. We've done a lot of things wrong, lot and lot and lot of things wrong. We are now beginning to do a few things right, so let's give us more time.

But the expectations are surely going to multiply now?

We've got to get out keep our feet on the ground. But at the same time the team is a lot better than what it was. We've had some very good judges tell us that we can surprise many and that is exactly what is happening. We've also got to keep our heads and we still got a good side -- if we play to our potential we will do okay.

The shocking demise of Manzarul Islam must've played a part in the team's emotional build-up. Could you talk about the emotions on the eve of the game?

It was horrible, horrible news. Young Manzarul Islam is still on contract; in fact, he was training with the World Cup squad of 30 players

Woolmer and captain Inzamamul Haq have to take the blame."

Sohail believed heads must roll after the disappointing result.

"The captain sacrificed some quality players before the World Cup. The captain and the coach must go just like in the past," said Sohail, referring to Pakistan's axing eight players including Wasim Akram and then captain Waqar Younis after the World Cup four years ago.

Pakistan's first foreign coach Richard Pybus also quit, accusing senior players of lacking commitment.

Despite the early exit, Inzamam and Woolmer were both non-committal over quitting.

"I apologise for the poor result," said Woolmer.

"It was just another game of cricket which we lost. I have to think about my future."

Even after the West Indies defeat there were reports of differences in the Pakistan squad, a charge denied by Inzamam.

"Once we lose a match all such baseless stories creep up. There are no differences in the team. We didn't play well and have lost and that is that," said Inzamam, who was part of Pakistan's 1992 World Cup winning team.

Press lament

FROM PAGE 20 tell the players to head home before midnight.

The Times, calling Flintoff the "people's champion," warned that he was in danger of "capsizing again" unless he gets his act together.

"Andrew Flintoff, the most popular hero in English cricket since Ian Botham, learnt an important lesson yesterday: only winners can drink themselves senseless and get away with it," it said.

"He must rediscover his professionalism quickly if England are to make any impact on the World Cup."

The Daily Mirror published what it called exclusive pictures of Flintoff's fellow players including Jimmy Anderson, Jon Lewis, Liam Plunkett and Ian Bell drinking with a number of girls.

And it quoted an England fan present as voicing disappointment at their behaviour, which came less than two days before another match.

"I watched as my heroes disgraced themselves in a marathon drinking