

Russel officials punished heavily

SPORTS REPORTER

The B. League committee suspended Sheikh Russel Krira Chakra's official in-charge of team affairs Mosharraf Dewan and assistant manager Habibur Rahman Manu for three and two years respectively for assaulting referee Munaf Sarker after last week's match against Arambagh.

This comes after the club's decision to suspend both the officials for lesser periods.

The two officials would be persona-non-grata at all stadiums during tournaments of the Bangladesh Football Federation.

Russel's ball-boys Sayeed and Kamal have been banned at all venues for life for same reason. The BFF has also recommended the club to sack the pair.

The committee, which fined the club Tk 50,000 for failing to control the situation, hailed their players including Moroccan midfielder Ighir Mohamed for trying to stop the assault and save the referee.

Pakistan Academy champs

SPORTS REPORTER

Pakistan Academy snatched a five-run win against Bangladesh Academy from the jaw of defeat to win the triangular series title yesterday.

The visitors, defending a fighting total of 237 all out in exactly 50 overs at the BKSP, bowled out Bangladesh for 232 to have the last laugh.

The home side looked set to beat Aaqib Javed's side for the second time in the competition when opener Junaid Siddiquee and Rokibul Hossain were batting with scores on 112-2 after just 19 overs.

However, the middle order lost their way after Nadif Chowdhury's run out as paceman Najaf Shah wrested the initiative away with the quick wickets of Mahmudullah Riyadh (0) and Farhad Reza (2).

Bangladesh lost four wickets in the space of 16 runs to slump to 165-8 but skipper Mehrah Hossain's efforts in a 97-ball 75 kept them alive before the left-hander, who hit seven fours, was run out in the penultimate over after adding 51 runs with Kamrul Islam for the tenth wicket.

Earlier, Junaid gave a perfect start despite early losses as the explosive left-hander smashed 11 boundaries and a six to score 69 off 63 balls.

Najaf finished with 3-37 from ten overs while former Pakistan international Junaid Zia was also economic with his medium pacers, grabbing a couple for 34 from 9.5 overs.

In the morning, the inserted Pakistan were steadied by solid top-order batting but could not amass a huge total as Riyad's off-spin produced five wickets for 42 from ten overs and left-arm Mehrah grabbing 4-57. Opener Afaq Rahim topscored with 55 off 62 balls featuring 11 shots to the ropes.

Sri Lanka Academy were the other team involved in the competition.

SCORES IN BRIEF

Pakistan Academy: 237 all out in 50 overs (Rahim 55, Latif 31, Naem 13, Manzoor 22, Yusuf 19, Alam 21, Sarfaraz 24, Junaid 18 n.o., Anwar 9, Maqbool 13, Najaf 0, extras 12, Farhad 1-49, Riyad 5-42, Mehrah 4-57).

Bangladesh Academy: 232 all out in 48.5 overs (Kayes 6, Junaid 69, Nazim 1, Rokibul 33, Mehrah 75, Nadif 13, Riyad 0, Farhad 2, Sahagor 0, Enamul 3, Kamrul 8 n.o., extras 22, Najaf 3-37, Anwar 1-51, Junaid 2-34, Rahim 1-33).

Munna puts

FROM PAGE 17

them at the end of the ninth week. Yellow cards: Ghansah, Hassan Al Mamun (Muktijoddha) and Ramjan (Arambagh).

TEAMS

MUKTIJODDHA: Titumir, Hassan Al Mamun (Parvez), Rajani, Ghansah, Titu, Brahman, Arman (Maruf), Arman Aziz, Munna, Alfaz (Enamul) and Moni.

ARAMBAGH: Mitul, Ramjan, Biketi (Sumon), Akram, Monu, Sharif (Ridon), Iddi, Zuku, Domenic, Nicodemus and Tabith (Ritu).

Referee: Abdul Hannan.

Aussies' 'tour

FROM PAGE 17

lanky 37-year-old paceman or naming a park in his honour.

"Australia's victory at the Cricket World Cup against Sri Lanka yesterday was nothing short of brilliant," The Australian said in its editorial.

"But while the team soared to ever greater heights, the Cup itself sank to new lows, with a farcical final that saw players, umpires, commentators and organisers literally groping in the dark."



President of AB Bank Kaiser A Chowdhury (L) speaks during a press conference announcing their "Ticket Sponsorship Rights" partnership with BCB for the next two years at a local hotel yesterday.

'Woolmer was poisoned'

Cricket

AFP, London

Murdered Pakistan cricket coach Bob Woolmer was poisoned before being strangled, rendering him powerless to fight back against his killer, the BBC will say in a programme on Monday.

According to the broadcaster's flagship investigative show Panorama, preliminary drug tests revealed a substance in Woolmer's body that would have weakened him.

Woolmer, 58, was found dead in his Kingston hotel room on March 18, the day after cricketing powers Pakistan crashed out of the World

Cup in an upset loss to minnows Ireland.

The officer leading the investigation, Jamaican Deputy Police Commissioner Mark Shields, told programme makers that it would have been difficult to strangle a man the size of Woolmer, who is six-feet-two-inches tall.

"It's difficult and it's rare," Shields said.

"A lot of force would be needed to do that."

"Bob Woolmer was a large man and that's why one could argue that it was an extremely strong person, or may be more than one person, but equally the lack of external injuries suggests that there might be some other factors and that's what we're looking into

at the moment."

Though the final results of toxicology tests are expected to be handed to Shields and his colleagues next week, they are likely to confirm the preliminary findings, according to Panorama.

Woolmer's death led to a fevered round of speculation as to the motive for the murder. The most common theory is that his killing was linked to match-fixing and illegal betting in cricket.

Some 30 police investigators are working full-time on the Woolmer case and more than 100 witness statements have been taken.

Scotland Yard, Pakistan detectives as well as Interpol have been drafted in to help the investigation.

Arsenal let Fulham

FROM PAGE 20

Baptista has only scored three league goals for Arsenal and it was easy to see why. If the Brazilian's shooting had been more accurate he could have had a hat-trick within 20 minutes as he squandered another chance created by Fabregas.

But Arsenal's habit of dominating teams without killing them off has been a recurring problem this season and, once again, they showed they are yet to discover a killer instinct.

Fulham were completely overwhelmed, but the Gunners were unable to find a way to beat Antti Niemi for a second time.

Hleb teed up Fabregas just inside the area, but the Spaniard's low shot was palmed away by Niemi. Then Adebayor's powerful header from Clichy's cross was arrowing towards the top corner until Niemi plunged to his right to push it clear.

Adebayor then showed great dexterity to trick Zak Knight but, with just Niemi to beat, he blazed high and wide.

Fulham's Danish midfielder Claus Jensen, making his first Premiership appearance since December, finally brought his moribund side to life with a low drive that skimmed wide.

They pushed forward with increasing belief without really threatening to score until Lehmann gifted them an equaliser in the 78th minute.

The Germany goalkeeper made a complete hash of his punch as he raced off his line to challenge the head-hungry Helguson for a deep cross. The ball fell to Davies on the edge of the area and he looped a perfectly-placed shot over Toure and into the net.

Clint Dempsey and Michael Brown both wasted chances to put Fulham ahead before Adebayor capped a thrilling finale.

Fabregas's 84th minute pass

released Adebayor and he surged past Philippe Christanval before curling a superb strike into the far corner.

Gilberto wrapped up the points with three minutes to play when he stroked home a penalty after Moritz Volz had clumsily brought down Hleb.

AB Bank

FROM PAGE 17

to print less than the expectation and there is also some accommodation problem in Mirpur," defended Ali Hossain, member secretary of ticket and seating committee.

The bank will start selling tickets through its following Dhaka city branches: Motijheel, New Elephant Road, Kakrail, North South Road (Bongshah), Nawabur Road, Dhammondi, Rokeya Sarani, Mirpur, Gulshan, Uttara.

In Chittagong, the tickets will be available at Agrabad, Station Road, CDA Avenue, Jubilee Road and port connecting branches.

Rates of tickets at Mirpur: Gallery - (ODI-Tk. 100), (Test-Tk. 40), Special Enclosure - (ODI-Tk. 200), (Test-Tk. 60), VIP Complimentary - (ODI-Tk. 1,000), (Test-Tk. 200), VIP Stand - (ODI-Tk. 2,000), (Test-Tk. 500), VIP - (ODI-Tk. 2,000), (Test-Tk. 500), A/C Hospitality Box - Tk. 1 Lakh (package).

Rates of tickets at Chittagong: Gallery - (ODI-Tk. 100), (Test-Tk. 40), Special Enclosure - (ODI-Tk. 400), (Test-Tk. 100), Club House (ODI-Tk. 500), (Test-Tk. 150), VIP Complimentary - (ODI-Tk. 2,000), (Test-Tk. 750), Non A/C Box - (ODI-Tk. 2,500), (Test-Tk. 800), A/C Hospitality Box - (ODI-Tk. 3,000), (Test-Tk. 1,000).

Status quo

FROM PAGE 20

wanting to lose," reflected the Bulgarian and Barcelona legend.

Juan Arango put Mallorca ahead after just 10 minutes, the Venezuelan striker finding the net with a looping left foot effort from the edge of the area.

Fernando Varela added to Celta's woes with a superb long-range strike from 20 metres midway through the first half and Maxi Lopez added Mallorca's third goal 10 minutes from time.

Reds aim

FROM PAGE 20

missing following surgery last week.

Michael Essien is available again however after missing the first leg through suspension and could be asked to fill the gap left by Carvalho's injury, although Dutch defender Khalid Boulahrouz is also an option for Mourinho following his recovery from the dislocated shoulder he suffered in February.

A sense that Chelsea's gruelling season is beginning to catch up to them was evident on Saturday as they failed to break down Bolton in the final stages of Saturday's match, which has tilted the Premiership title battle, perhaps decisively, in Manchester United's favour.

But Mourinho is confident that his players will not let their chance of grasping what he regards as the bigger prize slip through their fingers.

"I had my team-talk with them after the Bolton game," he revealed. "I wanted them to remember where we are, what we are doing and what we have to do."

"When we lost the semi-final two years ago, we beat Bolton and celebrated the title two days before."

"This time, we lose two crucial points against Bolton but maybe now we go there to win the tie and go to the final."

Abahani looking to mid-season transfers

SPORTS REPORTER

With the B. League mid-season transfer window opening in two weeks, Abahani might go for new foreign players to strengthen their attack.

The top-budgeted club remained near the top spot throughout the league but have yet to satisfy their fans despite having Argentine coach Diego Cruciani and three Argentine players.

Only defender Mariano Caporale's performance has been outstanding while his fellow midfielder Mariano Sanchez and striker Hector Parodi have had been mediocre.

The sky-blues relied heavily on Parodi to end the side's striking problem but he has scored only once as the whole team have struggled to find the opposition net.

With national striker Emily also scoring both his goals in just one match, Abahani have dropped vital points. They have netted just seven goals in as many matches.

In a latest development, two Africa-based players -- Enock Benti of Ghana and Odoch James of Uganda -- released by Brothers were seen training with Abahani for the past two days.

Both the players have already taken clearance from Brothers, who claim that both had come to play here hiding injuries. The players, reportedly, left the Gopibagh outfit due to row over payment.

Abahani officials, however, kept mum over the issue.

Other sources said that they are not interested to keep Sanchez or Parodi unless they perform miracle in the remaining three matches of the first leg.

It is expected that at least one of the two Africans would be included in the line up during the mid-season transfers, which starts after the end of the first leg on May 16.

According to the bylaws, one team can keep as many foreign imports as possible in a maximum of 23 registrations.

Barthez flees

FROM PAGE 20

"It's got nothing to do with the football or the results," Barthez told France Info radio. "What happened goes beyond the sporting realm... and without that I would have stayed with Nantes until the end."

He added: "I accepted being whisked throughout a match because that's part of the game."

Barthez, 35, has been unsettled since joining Nantes in January and been accused on several occasions of feigning injury to avoid training.

In his 14 matches with the club, the former Marseille and Manchester United keeper has conceded 23 goals.

Rijkaard

FROM PAGE 20

season including breaking a bone in his foot in November which kept him out of action for three months.

"The only way to stop him is to foul him but I am not going to stoop to suggesting something so unsporting to my players," said Getafe coach Bernd Schuster in the wake of Barcelona's 5-2 win in the Spanish Cup two weeks ago.

On that occasion, Messi scored one goal which was reminiscent of Diego Maradona's famous strike against England in the 1986 World Cup, going more than half the length of the field and around four defenders before scoring.

However, despite Schuster's admiration and ethics, there is the widespread suspicion that some other Spanish first division coaches might not have the same standards as the German who himself suffered from some suspect tactics during his own brilliant playing career.

Lanka can

FROM PAGE 17

which eventually saw them chasing 269 off 36 overs. They managed 215-8 before losing the game in darkness.

"It is disappointing that after nearly two months of playing in the World Cup you get to the final and can't play a complete 100-over game," he said.

"I think we were only half-a-yard away from winning the World Cup. We were very close, so I think this team is capable of winning the next World Cup. There's no reason why Sri Lanka won't continue its upward curve."

Moody said it would have been very interesting had his side played the full final or even a 38-overs-a-side as was decided after the morning rain.

"I think we were on the track when chasing. Even Australia were aware what Sri Lanka were capable of doing. It would have been interesting if we had a full 38 overs or, even better, 100," he said.

"Australia are an exceptional, professional and efficient outfit and they showed that in the World Cup final. We felt we ran a close race with them yesterday. We were on target."

"We lost a couple of crucial wickets when we felt we had to be close to the Duckworth-Lewis method because of the conditions. It was disappointing given the confusion about the conditions and completion of the game."

Speed sorry for sad end

AFP, Bridgetown



International Cricket Council (ICC) chief executive Malcolm Speed apologised Sunday for the "very sad way" the World Cup final finished amidst farcical scenes.

World Cup final finished amidst farcical scenes.

Players and spectators here at the Kensington Oval, not to mention millions of television viewers were left baffled by the climax to Saturday's match which saw Australia celebrate victory twice and forced Sri Lanka to bat in pitch-black darkness on a ground without floodlights.

A team of officials including on-field umpire Steve Bucknor, standing in a record fifth World Cup final, managed to overlook a standard playing condition.

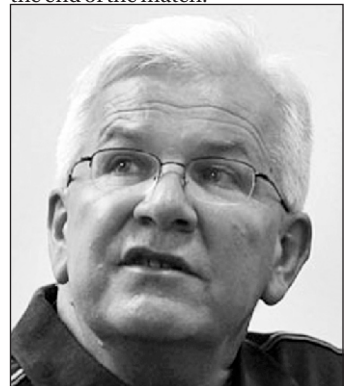
This states that once 20 overs have been bowled in both innings enough cricket has been played to have a result declared under the Duckworth/Lewis system for rain-affected games.

Instead the teams, following instructions from Bucknor and Pakistan's Aleem Dar, the other on-field umpire, came back on to bowl three more overs in gathering gloom in a match Australia then won by 53 runs under the D/L system.

Speed, flanked by ICC general manager David Richardson who oversees the sport's elite officials, told a Kensington Oval news conference here Sunday: "David and I

are here today on behalf of ICC to say to the wider stakeholders of the game that we too are very sorry this incident occurred at the end of what, on any view, had been an outstanding day of cricket.

"It was an unnecessary error, a fundamental error, it was made under difficult circumstances at the end of the match."



MALCOLM SPEED

"It was unfortunate, a very sad way to finish the World Cup. I hope we can recall the great day's cricket we had before this very unfortunate ending."

One consolation was that, with Australia well ahead, the incorrect ruling didn't affect the outcome.

Former South Africa wicket-keeper Richardson couldn't explain how a group including match referee Jeff Crowe and experienced third umpire Rudi Koertzen could make such a basic mistake.

"We've tried to come up with an explanation and we can't. We've

NAT'L YOUTH SOCCER

Seven more in zonal final

SPORTS REPORTER

Seven more teams -- Kurigram, Narayanganj, Jhenaidah, Gazipur, Comilla, Feni and Patuakhali -- reached the zonal finals of the Western Union National Youth (Under-18) Football Championship yesterday.

Apple slammed four goals to inspire Kurigram trounce Lalmonirhat 7-1. Narayanganj beat Shariatpur 2-0, Jhenaidah thrashed Meherpur 4-0, Gazipur blanked Mymensingh 3-0, Feni brushed aside Bandarban 4-0 and Patuakhali defeated Bagerhat 2-0.

Comilla also advanced to the zonal final despite a 1-1 draw with Moulvibazar.

In other matches, Kushtia drew 2-2 with Sirajganj, Narail beat Jessore 2-0, Netrokona held Sherpur 2-2, Thakurgaon and Dinajpur shared an identical draw while Habiganj dumped Brahmanbaria 5-1 with a hat-trick from Noman.

Speed's back

FROM PAGE 17

the way the World Cup has been organised may well turn out to be the watershed.

"We are not that satisfied," Shah told the newspaper. "It is becoming more and more bureaucratic. My board is of the belief that cricket is a simple, enjoyable game, but that is not how it appears at present."

"The ICC has so many staff members. It is unnecessarily employing so many people and that costs the other members. The ICC should move away from the bureaucracy and become more simplified. They should be concentrating more on the game."

Shah's comments were backed by Lalit Modi, the BCCI's vice-president, who called on Speed to be replaced by someone from Africa or Asia who "understands the problems of a majority of ICC members".

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Long-popular TV clown
5 Reuben bread
8 1950s sci-fi villain
12 Improved, as wine
13 Attila, notably
14 Stromboli spillage
15 Symbol of happiness
17 One course
18 "Of course"
19 Pismire
20 Garden invaders
21 Sibling, for short
22 Occupation
23 Tell target
26 Coin-op music-maker
30 Herr's wife
31 Eviscerate
32 Ethereal
33 Carryall
35 Actor Desi
36 Tarzan's son
37 Disen-cumber

DOWN
1 Infant
2 Look lasciviously
4 Praise in verse
5 African heaviest
6 Mongol tent
7 Conclusion
8 Fairy-tale character
9 Bowling site
10 "Metamorphoses"
11 Crazy poet
16 Naked
20 Stir-fry pan
21 Infant
2 Look lasciviously
4 Praise in verse
5 African heaviest
6 Mongol tent
7 Conclusion
8 Fairy-tale character
9 Bowling site
10 "Metamorphoses"
11 Crazy poet
16 Naked
20 Stir-fry pan

Solution time: 21 mins.

MAC **PAW** **TAIL**
ICON **ETH** **HIFI**
THAI **BOO** **ELSE**
TEXAS **POOR**
GUM **PLIANT**
PAJAMA **S** **DOLOR**
EMIR **POP** **GORE**
ATIVA **S** **PRIME**
USEFUL **PIA**
AG **AGED** **SNAKE**
AWOL **GAP** **DROP**
MEAL **TRE** **ETUI**
PETS **TIEA** **SEIO**



CRYPTOQUIP

HP WJO'DU MJQGJXUI

GJUQ GBFXHAT WJO

PFDJBHKGUBPOQU, MFR

HK "JIU IU MJRTAU

Yesterday's Cryptiquip: CLASSIC OLDI ABOUT A NEWBORN DOG THAT WAS FOUND ON TOP OF A BUILDING: "PUP ON THE ROOF"

Today's Cryptiquip Clue: W equals Y



Sadat Hossain Salim, managing director of Rupayan Housing Estate Ltd, poses along with convener of the meet Tanvir Madar, Enamul Haque and Iqbal Mahmood during the inaugural ceremony of the Rupayan Golf Tournament at Dhaka Club Golf course on Friday.