

## 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 jaws 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 Siddique and Rokib Hossain were batting with scores on 112-2 after just 19 overs.

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

Bangladesh lost four wickets in the space of 16 runs to slump to 165-8 but skipper Mehrab 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.

Najah 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 Mehrab 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, Naeem 13, Manzoor 22, Yusuf 19, Alam 21, Sarfaraz 24, Junaid 18 n.o., Anwar 9, Maqbool 13, Nafaj 0, extras 12, Farhad 1-49, Riyad 5-42, Mehrab 4-57).

**Bangladesh Academy:** 232 all out in 48.5 overs (Kayed 6, Junaid 69, Nazim 1, Rokibul 33, Mehrab 75, Nadir 13, Riyad 0, Farhad 2, Sahagir 0, Enamul 3, Kamrul 8 n.o., extras 22, Nafaj 3-37, Anwar 1-51, Junaid 2-34, Rahim 1-33).

## Munna puts

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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, Brahim, Arman (Maruf), Arman Aziz, Munna, Alfaz (Enamul) and Moni.

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

**Referee:** Abdul Hannan.

## Aussies' tour

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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.

## 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 Bentil 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 that they are not interested to keep Sanchez or Parodi unless they perform miracles in the remaining three matches of the firstleg.

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

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wanting to lose," reflected the Bulgaria 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.

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

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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.

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."

"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 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."

"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."

PHOTO COURTESY

## Speed sorry for sad end

APP, Bridgetown



Malcolm Speed apologised Sunday for the "very sad way" the finished amidst

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.



STEVE BUCKNOR

"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 why 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

spoken to them (the officials) and they are at a loss to try to explain.

"I can only say it's similar to the situation where you are sitting at home and the answer to a quiz question on TV looks very simple and you just lose your train of thought when you are in that heated, pressure situation."

Crowe, a former New Zealand batsman, suggested Saturday that South Africa's Koertzen had initiated the sequence of events that led to the final's bizarre conclusion and Richardson said: "I think that's quite correct."

He added: "What worries me, as the guy ultimately responsible for how match officials perform is that we get ourselves into a pressure situation and we are not able to cope with it."

"That's what it's about, whether you are playing or officiating."

"Everybody knows, you all know, certainly as players once we got to 20 overs (in the second innings), we all used to rub our hands and say 'tomorrow's off'. I'm sure you think the same way and the umpires do as well, fully enough. It just went a bit cloudy."

Speed insisted no member of the five-man playing control team faced instant dismissal but Richardson said: "Malcolm has said we are not going to over-react but we are certainly going to take it very seriously and look at how it could have happened."

## Captain

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Bashar captain

for repaid for his good form soon. I hope he will get back his place in the national side for a long period," explained Faruque.

In reply to a question, the former national skipper admitted that the vulnerable opening spot is a huge problem for the team and hinted that they simply had no choice but to continue with veteran Javed Omar.

"It's a big problem although we

had been trying different pairs for the last four years. Why we go back to Javed time and again: the answer is we are yet to get the right combination," he defended.

Faruque said that he will prefer a

sporting wicket in the coming series

as it will help the players cope with any condition anywhere.

"You saw how our batsmen struggled in bouncy wickets at Barbados. It

might not be possible to produce and

maintain same kind of pitches in our

country but if we at least make a

sporting one than our batsmen can be