

Rajib, Rakib share lead

SPORTS REPORTER

International Masters Abdullah Al Rakib and Enamul Hossain Rajib shared the lead in the Destiny International Rating Chess Tournament after the second round at the Bangladesh Chess Federation hall-room yesterday.

Rakib beat FM Mehdi Hasan Parag and Rajib beat Abdul Maleq to secure maximum two points while Grand Master Ziaur Rahman, FM Sheikh Nasir Hossain, Minhazuddin Ahmed Sagar, Debaraj Chatterjee, Enayet Hossain and Delwar Hossain followed them with 1.5 points each in the premier division.

On the other hand, thirty players shared the lead with two points in the primary group.

Bangladeshis to train at Tata again

UNB, Dhaka

A nine-member Bangladesh team with five athletes and four boxers are expected to leave Dhaka for India within a week to take higher training at Tata Sports Academy at Jamshedpur.

The two-month camp will be a follow up training programme for local athletes after a three-month training of another Bangladeshi team at Tata Academy in last year.

The athletics team include two coaches the boxing team have one coach.

Tata Sports Academy will provide food and accommodation during their stay in India while the Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) will bear the travel cost and pocket money.

The team: (Athletes) Masudul Karim (Bangladesh Army), Mohon Khan (BKSP), Al Amin (Bangladesh Navy), Golam Ambia (coach-Bangladesh Army) and Rafiqul Islam (coach-Bangladesh Navy) and (boxers) Mohammad Ali Mithu (Bangladesh Rifles), Nazim Hossain (Bangladesh Army), Mashru Rahman Kajal (Bangladesh Ansar), Kazi Shahadat Hossain (coach).

Borowski hints

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to speak out. "It's a difficult situation if Miro isn't happy to stay here and wants to leave," said Borowski in Kicker after it emerged on Sunday Bayern have made Bremen an offer for the vastly experienced striker.

"He can't just be given away, but if the Bayern offer is right, he should be allowed to leave."

Bayern have splashed out this summer for French midfielder Franck Ribery and Italian striker Luca Toni, but have failed to qualify for the Champions League next season and Borowski says a switch to Bayern would make no sense for Klose.

"From a football point of view, a switch to Bayern doesn't make much sense because he'll miss out on playing in the Champions League," said Borowski, with Bremen qualifying for the Champions League after finishing third in the Bundesliga.

Bayern have tabled a multi-million euro bid for Klose, who is also being chased by French side Lyon, and his sale would be good business for the north German club who will make nothing if he leaves when his contract expires next June.

But Bremen manager Klaus Allofs insisted on Monday, Klose is still part of their plans for next season.



PHOTO: AFP

San Lorenzo's Ezequiel Lavezzi celebrates after scoring a goal against Arsenal during Argentina's first division match at the Nuevo Gasometro Stadium in Buenos Aires on Saturday. San Lorenzo won the match 4-2 and were crowned champions.

Harmison's perception

Cricket

AFP, Manchester

England quick Steve Harmison said he bore the ultimate responsibility for sorting out his own game after returning to some sort of form in the ongoing third Test against West Indies.

Harmison, who three years ago was ranked the number one bowler in world cricket, had a poor tour of Australia during England's recent 5-0 Ashes series thrashing and for much of this campaign has been embarrassingly wayward.

During this series England announced the appointment of former South Africa spearhead Allan Donald as a bowling consultant, on a five-week trial basis.

The match here at Old Trafford is the first time he has had a chance to work with England's quicks and Harmison, 28, was noticeably more accurate Sunday on his way to figures of two for 70 in 22 overs.

"I felt comfortable. Before, the harder I tried, the more I was chasing things, the more they went horribly wrong. That's life."

He added: "Liam's battling as well -- the one thing you'll see from all of us, is that we're giving everything we've got."

"There are so many people giving you so much advice, so many people saying you've got to relax and it'll come easy and think natural."

"But you think it's easy for you to say, it's not you that's got to bowl that ball."

Unsurprisingly, West Indies coach David Moore took a different view. "It was not out. It was the correct decision, no issue."

and now need 154 more runs to win on Monday's final day.

"You're your own best coach and if you can't see it, you can't let it go, can't feel it, well anybody can say it to me, but I'm not going to believe it if I can't see it," said Harmison.

Nevertheless, he said he had gained some useful advice from working with Donald. "He's more of a talker than a computer man. We've talked about a number of things but he's not here just to work with me."

Reflecting on his performance Sunday, Harmison said he's been particularly happy with a fine opening spell that saw him take one wicket for 12 runs in eight, hostile and accurate, overs.

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"I've got experience to fall back on," said Harmison, now in his 53rd Test. "I was in that position on Friday, and I was battling with myself as

much as anybody. You've got to somehow get through it and come back stronger."

"Liam's a fine bowler -- he will come back stronger. Hopefully he'll do it tomorrow (Sunday)."

Plunkett almost got a wicket that would have done wonders for his morale when all-rounder Dwayne Bravo, who went on to make 49, edged the seamer to the bowler's Durham colleague Paul Collingwood at gully.

Collingwood claimed the catch but Bravo stood his ground and on-field umpires Billy Bowden and Aleem Dar, after consulting one another, ruled the ball hadn't carried.

Harmison said the decision should have been handed over to the third umpire although, in this case, replays suggested the on-field officials had made the correct call.

"Colly was adamant he caught it," said Harmison. "And if the best fielder in the world says he's caught it, I tend to believe my best mate. If the fielder says he's caught it, we have to look to the third umpire."

"We've got the technology, so why not use it?"

Nafees, however, can take inspiration from his captain Mohammad Ashraful, who believes it is a matter of time that the left-hander would get back among runs.

"I don't think there is a big problem in his batting. It's just a matter of time to see Nafees return to form," said Ashraful, who was excited as the team managed to get some batting practice yesterday in the centre wicket at the Mirpur Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium despite heavy overnight rain and overcast conditions.

Hockey team to play in Asia Cup

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh will take part in the 7th Asia Cup Hockey tournament to be held in Chennai, India from September 1-9.

Bangladesh Hockey Federation joint secretary Khwaja Rahmatullah told yesterday that they would begin the preliminary camp with the players who represented Bangladesh in the last Asian Games in addition of selections from the ensuing National Championship that begins on June 20.

He said the camp is likely to begin this month.

Bangladesh finished seventh in the last Asia Cup in Malaysia.

Rahmatullah added that the federation is trying to bring a foreign coach before the Asia Cup.

"The federation president Chief of Air Staff Air Marshal Shah Mohammad Ziaur Rahman has already approached the South Korean Ambassador regarding this matter and he (Ambassador) assured our president to find a solution," he said.

Former national players Abdulla Piru and Mahbub Harun are likely to guide the national team if no foreign coach is available.

New EC of BSJWC

SPORTS REPORTER

Nasimul Hasan Dodul was nominated president and Masudur Rahman general secretary of the Bangladesh Sports Journalists and Writers Community (BSJWC) at its annual general meeting on Sunday.

Outgoing president Monwar Haque, who ran the organisation for ten years, presided over the AGM.

The other members of the executive committee for 2007-09 are:

Saifur Rahman Chowdhury, Main Uddin Tareque (vice-presidents), Asif Iqbal (joint secretary), Sumon Baki (office secretary), Shafiqul Islam Shamim (publicity secretary) and Mahmudul Hasan (member).

Time to stand

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"People are talking too much about my form because I raised their expectation with my performance. I am little bothered with my position in the national team because I am only 21. It is too early to be scared about my future. Experience is a factor in Test cricket and one can only mature at 27 or above. Actually this lean patch gave me a chance to reassess my position and I am enjoying it," said Nafees who does not think that he is under pressure.

He also dismissed the whispers that some disturbance in his personal life has hampered his performance.

"It's not true. Honestly speaking I am now leading a sound and stable life. Interestingly I performed well when I was in trouble."

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Nadal a satisfied

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the best preparation. But if I don't succeed I will still go home happy for trying to do what I could."

Nadal admitted that the first set of Sunday's final, which he won after Federer failed to convert any of his 10 break points, was crucial.

"It was important to win the first set. I knew that Roger would have to win three more and in a long match I would have had more of an advantage," said Nadal.

Despite his third successive title, the 21-year-old Spaniard said he had the utmost respect for Federer.

Real want

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Beckham's spokesman, however, insisted the player had "no intention" of turning his back on Los Angeles Galaxy.

Beckham is on the verge of picking up his first trophy since he joined Real in the summer of 2003.

Real, who have only lost one of their last 17 league games, are on top of La Liga and only need to beat Real Mallorca at home next Sunday in the final game of the season to secure their 30th Spanish championship.

Beckham's return to form over the second half of the season, despite also missing six weeks through injury, has been instrumental in their revival.

Asia keep it clean

Cricket

AFP, Chennai

was stumped by Dhoni while attempting a big shot off Rafique.

Man-of-the-match Dhoni brought off two more stumpings to account for Steve Tikolo and Mark Boucher, this time off Indian off-spinner Harbhajan before Kemp and Pollock gave a big scare to Asia with their big-hitting.

Asia were earlier reeling at 72-5 following Kenyan Peter Ongondo's triple strike, but Sri Lankan Jayawardene and Indian Dhoni came to their team's rescue with robust knocks in hot and humid conditions.

Jayawardene hammered two sixes and nine fours in a 106-ball knock for his 10th century in one-day internationals before falling in the closing overs.

Dhoni (139 not out) and Jayawardene (107) put on 218 for the sixth wicket, as Asia posted a challenging 331-8 before restricting Africa XI to 318-7 in an exciting day-night match to complete a 3-0 sweep.

The previous best for the sixth wicket in one-day internationals was 165.

Skipper Justin Kemp posed the main threat to Asia's total with a blazing 76-ball 86 with seven sixes, but his team's hopes virtually ended when he was bowled by left-arm spinner Mohammad Rafique (4-65) in the 46th over.

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