

BKSP clinch Jr meet

UNB, Dhaka

BKSP took top position in the 23rd National Junior Athletics Championship as they secured 22 gold, 12 silver and six bronze medals at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Hosts Dhaka finished a distant second having secured 3 gold medals while Rajshahi was in third position with a gold and a silver medal each in the meet that concluded at the newly-laid athletics track at the big bowl.

Shabnam Nahar of BKSP emerged as the fastest woman of the meet after she won the gold in 100m of the under-18 girls' event.

LGRD Secretary Nazrul Islam was the chief guest at the closing ceremony of the two-day meet and distributed the prizes.

A total of 305 athletes from 41 teams competed in the two-day meet for the 40 gold medals that were at stake.

Puma powers Farashganj

UNB, Chittagong

Farashganj edged past Chittagong Mohammedan by a single goal in the day's only B. League match at the MA Aziz Stadium yesterday.

Nigerian recruit Opara Luxon Puma scored the winning goal for Farashganj in the 24th minute of the match on a cloudy afternoon.

With this result, Farashganj have secured 20 points from 17 matches while Chittagong Mohammedan remained at 19 points, having played 16 matches.

BCB wait on

FROM PAGE 17

first Test captain, later coached the national side as well as Worcester-shire.

He was sounded out by the Bangladesh board this June to be their national coach but at that time Houghton was reluctant to take up the job as he had relocated his family to England from Zimbabwe.

Superstar trio

FROM PAGE 17

Sharma, Piyush Chawla, Harbhajan Singh, Ramesh Powar, Rajesh Pawar, Niranjan Behara, Aniruddh Srikanth, Praveen Kumar.

SRILANKA

Mahela Jayawardene, Kumar Sangakkara, Dilruwan Perera, Upul Tharanga, Sanath Jayasuriya, Avishka Gunawardene, Mahela Udawatte, Tillakaratne Dilshan, Chamara Kapugedera, Michael Vandort, Jehan Mubarak, Thilina Kandamby, Chamara Silva, Farveez Maharoof, Chaminda Vaas, Ranga Dias, Dilhara Fernando, Ishara Amarasinghe, Lasith Malinga, Nuwan Kulasekera, Nuwan Zoysa, Akalanka Gangagama, Dilhara Lokuhetigge, Muttiah Muralitharan, Hasantha Fernando, Malinga Bandara, Kaushal Lokurarachchi, Gayan Wijekoon, Upul Chandana, Damnika Prasad.

Lured by Anfield

FROM PAGE 20

reached an agreement to sign French striker Djibril Cisse.

The 25-year-old spent last season on loan with Marseille, but remained a Liverpool player.

West Ham were rumoured to have made an approach but he now looks likely to sign a four-year deal with the Mediterranean giants, who have also signed out-of-contract Anfield colleague Boudewijn Zenden.

The inevitable

FROM PAGE 20

He was quickly two sets in front with another love service game as the tie began to slip away from Gasquet whose problems were compounded by requiring treatment on his left ankle during the changeover.

Federer broke to lead 4-3 in the third set with a screaming down-the-line backhand and then moved to 5-3 on serve.

Gasquet clung on to trail 4-5 but the Swiss master wrapped up the tie with a pinpoint forehand in the 10th game after 1hr 44min of one-sided action.

Chelsea unity

FROM PAGE 20

was here then I'm sure he'd be saying "I'm happy at where I am," Kenyon said.

Kenyon also insisted that Arjen Robben, Frank Lampard and John Terry - the trio who have still not signed new contracts - will not be sold. "We've had no offers for any of our players and if we did we would reject them," Kenyon said. In the case of Robben, at least, that resolve will be tested.

Kenyon was speaking at the opening of Chelsea's new 30m pounds, 140-acre training complex in Cobham, Surrey, and said the construction confirmed Abramovich's commitment to the club. One of the more hi-tech features of the facility is finger-print recognition that allows players access into the changing areas.



PHOTO: STAR

Papia Rani of BKSP flies to the girls' long-jump gold in the 23rd National Junior Athletics Championships at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Venus back to glory

FROM PAGE 17

the end and play my match but the world number one on grass is definitely Venus, so congratulations to her."

Williams, 27, picked up where she had left off against Sharapova and Kuznetsova with an immaculate start to the final played in bright sunny conditions at the end of a fortnight blighted by grey skies and rain.

After holding her own serve to love, she capitalised on a nervous opening service game by Bartoli to claim a break and soon had moved smoothly into a 3-0 lead.

But the one-sided contest many in the Centre Court must have feared at that stage did not materialise.

The nervousness that had afflicted Bartoli in the opening games dissipated and she rallied to level things up at 3-3 with the help of an overcooked Williams forehand which handed her

a fifth game break of serve.

From then there was little in it until Bartoli double faulted at 4-5 and 15-30 to hand her opponent two set points.

She managed to save the first one but there was nothing she could do on the next one when Williams rifled a forehand down the line, followed it in and clinched the set with a swinging backhand volley from mid-court.

Williams pressed home her advantage with a break in an exhilarating second game of the second set, claiming it at the third attempt with a fine backhand down the line after Bartoli had saved an earlier break point by coming out on top at the end of a 21-stroke rally.

With the match slipping away from her at 0-3 down in the second, Bartoli opted for a medical break to have a footie-strapped.

That prompted Williams to seek treatment on her left thigh and the

result was an interruption of play that lasted 11 minutes.

If Bartoli's goal had been to upset her opponent's rhythm, she appeared to have succeeded as the French player won the first game after the restart to love.

But normal service was resumed on Williams's next service game and, at 1-4 down, Bartoli's resistance evaporated. Another break gave Williams the chance to serve for the match.

A stinging cross-court backhand clipped the outside of the line and gave her two match points. Bartoli saved the first but there was nothing she could do about the unstoppable serve that Williams hammered down on the second to end the contest after one hour and 30 minutes.

Gayle, Morton lead WI

FROM PAGE 17

full, 10-over allocation. Liam Plunkett (three for 59) and James Anderson (two for 51) shared the wickets between them.

West Indies total was made without a major contribution from left-hander Shivnarine Chanderpaul.

A thorn in England's side, having averaged over 148 and batted for more than 24 hours during the hosts' 3-0 Test series win, Chanderpaul made 116 not out in West Indies 61-run victory in the second one-day international at Edgbaston where he sustained an ankle injury.

Chanderpaul was out for 33, his first dismissal this series, when he slogged Plunkett and Kevin Pietersen, running back some 20 yards from mid-wicket, took a well-judged catch.

Marlon Samuels, who'd made 77 during a stand of 175 with Chanderpaul at Edgbaston, then exited for nine when, trying to run

Plunkett to third man, he flat-footedly guided the ball to wicketkeeper Matt Prior and West Indies were 108 for three.

Prior, though, missed a tougher chance when, standing up, he dropped Morton, on four, off a thin outside edge against medium-pacer Mascarenhas.

By then Gayle had completed an unusually patient 85-ball fifty.

But in sight of a hundred he popped a return catch to Plunkett.

Bravo though maintained the momentum with a dashing 24 ball-innings.

Morton went to fifty by pulling Broad for four. He followed that up in the same over by driving Broad, off the backfoot, for a superb straight six.

SCOREBOARD

First innings scorecard in the third and final one-day international between England and the West Indies at Trent Bridge on Saturday: **WEST INDIES**

Gayle c and b Plunkett 82

DS Smith c Bell b Anderson 13
Chanderpaul c Pietersen 33
Plunkett 10
Samuels c Prior b Plunkett 9
Morton not out 82
Bravo b Anderson 42
DR Smith not out 4

Extras: (b-5, lb-6, w-9, nb-4) 24
Total: (For 5 wkts in 50 overs) 289
Fall of wickets: 1-16, 2-93, 3-108, 4-193, 5-285

Did not bat: Ramdin, Powell, Rampaul, Edwards

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Anderson	10	0	51	2
Plunkett	10	0	59	3
Broad	9	0	71	0
Panesar	6	0	28	0
Mascarenhas	8	0	28	0
Collingwood	7	0	41	0

ENGALND: Cook, Prior, Bell, Pietersen, Collingwood, Shah, Mascarenhas, Plunkett, Broad, Panesar, Anderson
Toss: West Indies.
Umpires: Brian Jerling and Mark Benson.

Sven glad to be back

FROM PAGE 20

and cup double, Eriksson believes he is right to be confident about his ability to turn City's fortunes around.

"I have never worked in the Premier League before so I don't know if I have to prove myself or not," he said. "I know what I've done in the past and I am looking forward to an exciting job and an exciting season."

"Every time you are a coach, you have pressure whatever team it is. I hope I will have a big pressure as that means I am at a big football club. "Manchester City is a big club. It is the Premier League - I think it is the best league in the world and if you get an opportunity to work in it you should take it and I did."

Eriksson revealed that he had turned down several offers of employment over the last year in the hope that a club of City's size would eventually come along.

But he rejected a suggestion that the new post gave him an

opportunity to make a point to those behind the critical mauling he received in the aftermath of Germany 2006.

"I'm not made like that. I don't feel that I have to have revenge or things like that," he said. "I know myself. I know what I've done in my years in England and outside England. You cannot take that away from me. I want to be judged on football results, I want to be judged as a football manager. It's good to feel the stress. It's good to feel the pressure. I feel much better then."

His enforced sabbatical had, he said, only increased his appetite for the game.

"You can be quite sure that I still have the same hunger, especially when you are living one year without football," he said. "That is the most stressful time I have had in my life."

Eriksson expects to make a number of changes to the playing staff at City but would not reveal how much of a transfer budget

new owner Thaksin Shinawatra, the former Thai premier, had made available.

"I don't think I should care to speak about money," he said. "I can promise you will see new faces in the squad and the team when the Premier League starts. Let's wait until the middle of August and you will see. It's a big, big club and I think a lot of football players around the world would like to play for Manchester City, especially as they know this club will be bigger and bigger."

God Save

FROM PAGE 20

celebrated the big Wimbledon tennis wins for Marion Bartoli (defeated Justine Henin) and Richard Gasquet (defeated Andy Roddick) with the headline "Wonderful Marion, Fabulous Richard."

L'Equipe reproduced the front page inside it's Saturday edition, but this time returning to the French language.

Laxman, Dipu off to fine starts

SPORTS REPORTER

Laxman Lal and Dipu Lal won their respective first round matches in the Dhaka Open Tennis competition at the Ramna Tennis Complex yesterday.

On the third day of competition, American Club's Laxman beat Zakir Hossain of Uttara Club 7-5, 6-4 while Dipu Lal of Nordic Club trounced Mazharul Islam of NTC 7-5, 6-2.

In the boys' under-16 singles event, Mofazzel Hossain thumped Rezwanul Haq 6-0, 6-0 while Biplob, Sajjad, Delwar, Rahim, Tanvir, Junaid, Nabil, Nuruzzaman and Hasibul won their respective matches in the under-13 competition of the tournament.

Eves preparing well for ACC meet

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh women's cricket team, preparing for the first ever ACC women's cricket tournament, notched up their second consecutive victory when they beat hosts Thailand by seven wickets at the Patana School ground in Bangkok yesterday.

Chameli Khatun tamed in a stellar performance as she took two wickets and then struck 21 off 22 balls.

After winning the toss, Thailand were restricted to only 51 for nine in their stipulated 30 overs with Thilana Samnarin making the highest 7 runs.

Champa Chakma of Bangladesh grabbed four wickets conceding just five runs in her five-over spell while Tihti Rani Sarker took two for seven, apart from Chameli's two wickets.

In reply, Bangladesh easily reached their target of 52 runs in 15.5 overs, losing 3 wickets with Chameli contributing 21 while another 16 runs came from the extras.

Earlier, in the first practice match, visiting Bangladesh eves registered a 90-run victory over Thailand in Bangkok on Friday. Bangladesh women's team will leave the Thai capital for Malaysia on Monday (July 9) to participate in the eight-nation Asian Cricket Council (ACC) Women's Cricket Tournament that begins in the Malaysian city of Johor Baru on July 11.

In the ACC meet, Bangladesh have been pencilled in Group B with United Arab Emirates (UAE), Singapore and China, while Group A consists of hosts Malaysia, Hong Kong, Nepal and Thailand.

Bangladesh will play UAE in one of the two opening day matches on July 11.

In the remaining Group B matches, Bangladesh women play against Singapore on July 13 and China on July 15.

A mother

FROM PAGE 17

exceptionally proud of my sons' success in cricket even that of Arjuna's. I am a mother, a very simple mother, who wanted to see her children happy in their life. And my only desire in life is to do everything in a fair way," said the delighted mother.

"My father was a school headmaster and my mother was also teacher. My parents were middle-class people and they were not affluent but they didn't bother about money. They were very particular about the fair amount of money. We were asked not to do incredible things but study well and lead the life in a fair way. I tried to inject these values in my children," she added.

During her hour-long chat with two Bangladeshi reporters, Nandani was more interested to talk about the values in life rather than cricket, although she is still a great fan of the game.

Nandani had to rise before dawn everyday to take her sons to Colombo from a place 21km away where she lived and said that Anand College played a big role in making her boys successful in life.

Nandani had to do all the hard work, as her husband Reggle Ranatunga was busy with politics.

"I never liked politics but what I always believed in my life is not to interfere with anybody's desire," she said adding that her main mantra is to lead a simple life.

Changes afoot

FROM PAGE 20

Hatem Tabrabeli and DeMarcus Beasley.

Eriksson has reportedly told Thaksin that he needs at least ten new players to make City competitive and a transfer fund in the region of 50 million pounds (100 million dollars).

The Thai tycoon, who has lived in exile in England since being deposed by the military in a bloodless coup last year, announced on Friday that he had acquired 74.03 percent of the shares in City and declared his takeover offer unconditional. Once he has acquired 75 percent of the club, Thaksin can delist it from the Stock Exchange, which he intends to do. If he reaches 90 percent he can force other shareholders to sell to him and become the sole owner.

Irfan back to rhythm



INTERNET, undated

The strong thuds of pacer Irfan Pathan's legs at the MRF Pace foundation is nothing new these days.

The Baroda speedster, who landed in the city a few days ago, is close to getting back his rhythm and add the old bite back into the Indian pace attack.

Pathan, who was touted as one the most exciting prospects in recent times, found himself struggling off late, with his bowling losing its pace and swing. According to experts working on him, he has rediscovered both again.

But what really went wrong? "So many things have happened. When you play a lot of cricket, there's always the possibility of something going wrong with your action," he told in an interview.

"In fact, even when I was bowling well, I had this thing in the back of my mind. That something was wrong. But by the time I understood it, it was slightly late."

The 22-year-old, who made his Test and ODI debut in Australia in the 2003-04 series, soon found himself on top of the world. A little while later, he made

a mark with the bat too and was soon batting at important positions, including right at the top of the order.

Did his batting responsibilities distract him in any way? No, says Pathan. "A lot of people say this, but I do not agree with that. In fact, it increased my capabilities and helped me emerge as a better cricketer."

Pathan stresses batting pressures never bothered him. "I tried to give my best in batting too. As I said, it helped me become a good cricketer. But I don't want to be known as an all-rounder. I want to be known as a bowler, who can bat really well. Anyway, this has never burdened me. I enjoy batting too."

Is he open to criticism? Did it hurt while he was down? "A lot of people have said not-so-nice things about me."

I respect that. At the end of the day I'm the one who is going to bowl and play. So I think I am the best judge of myself. Obviously you need people to tell what's wrong and what is right. But what you think is also important."

Pathan's big problems started in 2006, after the highs in Australia and Pakistan. He was sent back from the tour in South Africa and was dropped for the subsequent tour to West Indies

too. He was brought back for the World Cup but didn't play a single match in an abortive campaign. He is not with the team currently in England, after playing a handful of One-dayers in Ireland.

Is he out of the lean patch? If so, how? "Everyone goes through these phases. I'm not the first one to go through this, now will I be the last one. I got myself motivated by talking to my former gurus and my family members."

Dennis Lillee had recently said that Pathan would make an all-rounder in the years to come. "It's a pretty good feeling a legend like him makes such observations. I respect that."

How will he take criticism?

"A lot of people have something nice to say, and lot's others have some bad things too. I do not go too much into all those things. If I get affected by the nice things, I will get affected by the not-so-nice things too."

Pathan says he is now ready for action after correcting the flaws in his bowling action during the training stint here.

"Everything is going well. I am working on my routines well. My fitness level is high. I am bowling well and even played a game in which I bowled 17 overs."

Meet the new nations



CRICINFO, undated

As the ICC family expands to 101 countries, here is a look at the four newest Affiliate Members who were elected at the annual conference last month:

CAMEROON

Cricket doesn't stand much of a chance of forging a stranglehold on a country so crazed by football. Or does it? Cricket in Cameroon is most certainly on the up, with a national league competition now in place -- and the formation of their first cricket federation (Fecacricret) in 2005. Much of the work has been done by the British high commissioner's embassy in its capital, Yaounde, providing equipment and logistics. Indeed, in May this year, the British high commissioner to Cameroon, Syd Madicott, was kitted out for a match in order to help publicise the game. And they have plans for expansion, too, with their president, Victor Agbor Nso, promising to bring the game to other towns in the country. Agbor Nso has also organised teaching seminars for coaches, administrators and umpires.

FALKLAND ISLANDS

Cricket's second most southerly outpost is more familiar with penguins than pavilions and lbws. But they were warmly welcomed into the ICC's ever expanding bosom, in spite of possessing just one proper pitch: a synthetic wicket laid in 1985 at Mount Pleasant Airfield Oval, about 30 miles outside the country's capital, Port Stanley. Around Christmas each year, the

island hosts the South Atlantic Ashes, a match between teams representing the governor of the country and the Commander of the British forces. However, though the Falklands Cricket Association was formed in 2001 in an attempt to better organise the set-up, a lack of funds has prevented their expansion.

PERU

Cricket in Peru dates back to 1859 when the Lima Cricket and Football Club was formed. Nowadays, much of the interest stems from the local Indian expats who have combined forces with the British. However, in 2005, they boasted only 25 players (considered by Wisden as "hard core...plus tourists are welcome"), and share the pitch with the footballers. The corrugated pitch makes for difficult batting, to say the least, but nevertheless they have one hotly contested fixture: India & Pakistan v Rest of the World, including one Peruvian, Jorge Pancorvo who Wisden described in 2005 as "an excellent wicketkeeper (aged 51, but still fit)". Freddie Brown, the former England captain and allrounder, was born in Lima and, in 2005, the local club had completed 15 years of play without losing a single minute to rain.

SWAZILAND

Like many smaller nations, cricket in Swaziland has so far belonged to a privileged minority: those who can afford entry into the exclusive country retreats and clubs. But in January 2005, a group of enthusiasts decided enough was enough and a new slogan was formed: "Cricket for All", designed to take the game to as many people as

possible. In 2006 they received further encouragement when the Sport Council of the government donated a piece of land to be used as their home ground. However, the country still has very few decent-quality pitches and outfields, preventing them expanding as well they might -- and a row broke out recently regarding the lack of equipment available. As much as they struggle, the Swaziland Cricket Association (SCA) continue to do their best, with their president promising to take the game to "street children" in an attempt to give them a brighter future.

Grosso signs

FROM PAGE 20

much sought after relief by a club who saw the departure of France international left back Eric Abidal to Spanish giants Barcelona.

Lyon, chasing a record seventh consecutive League One title, have also signed Nadir Belhadj from French first division rivals Sedan and Mathieu Bodmer and Kadar Keita both from Lille.

The Italian League champions Inter Milan decided to release Grosso after a below-par season and just one year at the club.

The imposing defender played 23 matches in the league last term, scoring two goals.

He will be bitterly remembered in France for scoring Italy's winning penalty in the final shootout that denied France their second World Cup success.

Grosso will be the third Italian to play for the club since it was founded following Orenzo Dito and Aridex Caligaris in the 1950s.

'Mahela was right'

FROM PAGE 17

was also pathetic. So there is no scope for us to focus on one or two people," he explained.

Young Rahim also echoed his captain's remarks about the comment made by Jayawardene.

"I don't find anything wrong in Mahela's comments. I think we are responsible in giving him a chance for making this kind of comments. What we did in the end as a team is more important than one or two individual successes," said young wicketkeeper Rahim, who made his

maiden Test half-century in a crisis moment.

"How can we expect that someone praises us after we lost the game inside three days? If we really want to give Mahela (Jayawardene) an answer, then we should improve our performance. If not, then not only Mahela, but also everyone will criticise us. What I feel is that we should bat well in the first innings if we want to play competitive cricket in the third Test," Rahim observed.

The 18-year-old stumper from

Bogra, who is all set to make his place in the side permanent for both versions of the game, expressed his satisfaction over his batting in the second innings but said that it would have been much better if he had got the hundred.

"I'm happy because I got my first Test half-century but a fifty is not good enough in Test cricket. I am looking forward to something big which will help my team a lot in the end," said the little man.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	34 Goblet feature	50 Oodles
1 Computer acronym	35 Coop collection	51 Guided
4 Roe provider	36 Down East	DOWN
8 Admitting air	37 Toes' woes	1 Arises
12 Lawyers' org.	40 Picasso contemporary	2 Sapporo sash
13 Lyricist's subject	41 Settled down	3 Seasick-ness
14 Hum-dinger	42 Young-man joke	4 Glossy
15 Hat maker	46 Stereo set	5 Gridlock noise
17 Handle	47 Jack Benny interjection	6 "Hail, Caesar!"
18 Pack of cards	48 Shock partner	7 Aachen article
19 Zoo structures	49 Yule refrain	8 Acid neutralizer
20 Enthusiast, and then some		9 Freud cohort
22 Centrifuge insert		10 Shaving cream additive
24 Protuberance		11 Abroad
25 Easy chair		
29 Work with TV?		
30 Spot on Spot?		
31 Commotion		
32 "I'm bin eln —"		

Solution time: 25 mins			
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E	T	A	L
N	O	N	E
U	P	D	A
A	M	A	Z
W	E	R	E
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C	H	E	R
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