

Women storm into final

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh outplayed Hong Kong by 58 runs in the semifinal of the ACC women's cricket tournament at the PT Ibrahim Institute ground in Johor yesterday.

Opting to bat first, Bangladesh scored 100 for 7 in 30 overs. In reply, Hong Kong were bowled out for 42 runs in 23.3 overs.

Panna Ghosh scored 39 while captain Tazkia Akhtar and Salma Khatun scored 16 each.

When Hong Kong replied, they were overwhelmed by Champa Chakma, who took three wickets and Panna and Salma took two wickets each.

Pinky grabbed two and Tithi took a wicket to wrap up Hong Kong.

Bangladesh now face Nepal in the final today.

Handball meet from tomorrow

SPORTS REPORTER

Madaripur take on Dhaka in the opening game of the Basic Bank 18th National Women's Handball Championship at the Handball Stadium yesterday.

The budget of the competition, which will be participated by sixteen districts, was set at Tk 256,200. The lead sponsors Basic Bank will provide Tk 200,000 for the tournament.

New coach

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PCB chairman Nasim Ashraf has denied that a players' vote led to Lawson's appointment.

"We took the players' opinion but it's wrong to say that the decision was made on that, we considered all points," said Ashraf while announcing Lawson's appointment on Monday.

Intikhab said Lawson was too new to coaching whereas Whatmore had experience.

"Whatmore has proven credentials with World Cup win in 1996 with Sri Lanka, a semi-final place with Sri Lanka in 2003 World Cup and a lot of progress shown by Bangladesh under him," he added.

"I am lost for words."

Tigers play

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The 25-year-old all-rounder Ian Daniel, who is yet to make his international debut, will lead the Sri Lankan selection which is mostly comprised of their academy players. Only pace bowler Nuwan Kulasekara, who played four Tests and 19 one-day internationals, is the only familiar name in the squad.

"We are not thinking of the opponents rather our main focus is to take the opportunity before the one-day series. It's very important match for us. There are some new guys who joined the team and the match will give us the opportunity to play together," said Bangladesh captain Mohammad Ashraful.

TEAM

Mohammad Ashraful (captain), Shahriar Nafees, Tamim Iqbal, Aftab Ahmed, Tushar Imran, Shakib Al Hasan, Mushfiqur Rahim, Forhad Reza, Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, Mahmudullah Riyad, Abdur Razzak and Syed Rasel.

Toni worry

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"If the ball comes into the box, it will be dangerous for all our opponents."

"There won't be many teams who can contain us", added Klose, who insists he has come to Bayern to "score a lot of goals", but Munich's fans must wait to see the pair in competitive action for their new club.

Klose is likely to partner teenage striker Sandro Wagner against Bremen on Saturday after the 19-year-old was promoted from the Bayern second team

Gunners

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would believe that it's been a difficult summer but I think people have not really looked behind what's happened.

"I'm very relaxed. I think we've got a very good squad and we've added a few players, most of them not names people have heard of before.

"But that's very much Arsene Wenger's style. People hadn't really heard of Thierry Henry, Patrick Vieira or Cesc Fabregas before they arrived."

Hill-Wood rubbished suggestions that the Gunners are being hampered by the financial burden of their new Emirates Stadium home.

"It's actually the reverse," he insisted.

"Relocating to the Emirates has increased the income of the club. The stadium has not held Arsenal back at all in terms of bringing in players.

"It's actually given us the opportunity to compete with the biggest clubs in the world.

"If we had stayed at Highbury that would have limited our resources and over the long term affected our ability to financially compete with the top sides."



Bangladesh players celebrate after they qualified to the final of the ACC Women's Cricket tournament at the PT Ibrahim Institute ground in Johor yesterday.

Players want CEO to go



CRICINFO, undated

The West Indies national team have called for the resignation of Bruce Aaneensen, the WICB's chief executive who has been in office for less than three months, highlighting what seems an almost irreparable divide between players and officials.

In a strongly-worded letter, originally posted on caribbeancricket.com, to Dinanath Ramnarine, the chief executive of the West Indies Players Association (WIPA), the players wrote that they were highly offended that Aaneensen publicly labelled them as incompetent.

"We are now left with the rather difficult situation of determining whether as players we would be able to continue working with Mr. Aaneensen," the letter concluded. "Unfortunately, given the unfair and

frankly thoughtless nature of his comments we would not be keen in having any further interaction at a professional level with Mr. Aaneensen. From Mr. Aaneensen's comments, for which, significantly, he has made no withdrawals or apologies, we would find it virtually impossible to engage him in any meaningful manner."

Gordon, who leaves office in 12 days, responded to Ramnarine, who forwarded the players' letter along with a few asides of his own, by saying that he was not satisfied by the letters as there was no justification in the charges made.

But he rounded on Ramnarine, accusing him of being "frequently abusive to Deryck Murray [WICB director] and his team at negotiations." Gordon wrote: "You have stated at meetings with one of our board members and two executives of WICB present that I am a liar. You have since denied saying so, while everyone present heard your com-

ment... You have stated at meetings with one of our Board members and two executives of WICB present that I am a liar. You have since denied saying so, while everyone present heard your comment."

Reacting to the attack by the players, Aaneensen said that he was anything but happy about it though he added that his response would be measured and forthcoming at the appropriate time. About the charge of calling the players "incompetent" following the second Test, Aaneensen told the Trinidad Express: "I had discussions with some of the players long after that interview [in the second Test] was done and I got no sense of animosity from them." He accused Ramnarine of wanting to unleash an assault on him. "[He] thought that [the players' letter] was a good support mechanism for his assault."

India ponder options

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can't be easy - but it would also allow the team a chance to play the extra batsman in Yuvraj.

India's batting is awesome on paper but, as was shown at Chelmsford, it just takes a persistent bowling attack to open up the cracks. The top order is weak, the middle is inconsistent and the tail is mostly redundant. Lord's is usually good to the batsmen and India's batting galacticos, as the Guardian newspaper called them, will need to stand up. If they need some expert advice about batting on the ground they just need to look around the dressing room and spot a man who managed three hundreds on the trot here.

For Dilip Vengsarkar, the current chairman of selectors, Lord's, where he cracked centuries in 1979, 1982 and 1986, was his backyard. He downplayed the

achievement, when Cricinfo asked him about it, but explained why the ground was special.

"Every player has his favourite grounds. I've got four hundreds at the Feroz Shah Kotla but nobody remembers that. And they were against better teams - three against West Indies and one against Asif Iqbal's Pakistan. Everybody only talks about the three hundred at Lord's. Of course it was a great feeling. It's special playing at Lord's. Walking through the long room you have a heavy feeling in the heart. You see the honours board, the pictures on the wall, the packed atmosphere. It's electrifying. But once you hit the grass, it's just another ground."

Did he have to make any special adjustment to counter the famous Lord's slope? "Too much is made of the slope at Lord's," he said nonchalantly. "Every ground has some

slope - go to Leeds you have a slope, at Chelmsford there's also a slope. You need to adjust to different conditions and the slope is just one part of it. It's not as tough to adjust as it's made out to be."

But which of the three hundreds will he most cherish? "I think the century in 1986 was my best. We won at Lord's for the first time and went on to win the series. The bowlers won the game for us - Chetan Sharma bowled superbly, Kapil Dev was equally good. Maninder Singh too. To finish on the winning side after making your third successive hundred was very satisfying."

India had never won a Lord's Test before 1986, they've yet to win one since. As much as he's proud of being part of that side, Vengsarkar will hope that India double that victory tally in the coming days.

Russel crush hapless Reds

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Bulbul, who got possession after the Moroccan's hard work at left, cut the ball back to Younes, who got enough time on the edge of the area to adjust to an awkward bounce and put a sublime right-footed drop-volley into the left hand post of Titumir, flat-footing four rival backs inside the box.

Titumir did well to block another Younes effort while the Muktiyoddha attackers hopelessly saw a series of shots during a melee failing to beat a forest of rival legs as the match entered the

last five minutes.

Fetah then released Kaiser in the 90th minute with a brilliant diagonal pass to help Russel put the result beyond any doubt. Titumir left his post but the diving goalie lost the ball under pressure from Kaiser, who made no mistake to sidefoot into an open goal.

Russel added more salt to the Reds' wounds in the second minute of the stoppage time when Younes, getting the ball from Fetah, squared the ball from the right. Hassan Al Mamun fumbled on a regular clearance, giving an

unmarked Nayan all the time to drill home to seal the victory.

Yellow cards: Saadane (Russel) and Parvez, Ghansah, Jony (Muktijoddha).

TEAMS

Russel: Zia, Aminul, Bourdif, Hassan, Mishu, Pappu (Kaiser), Saadane, Fetah, Tanvir (Nayan), Bulbul and Younes.

Muktijoddha: Titumir, Hassan Al Mamun, Ghansah, Rajani, Parvez, Brahim (Saiful), Arman Aziz, Maruf, Arman, Biddyt (Jony), Alfaz (Enamul) and Kanchan.

Referee: Mansoor Azad.

Ono denies United

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United were then caught out on the break, though, when Uchidate left Van der Sar red-faced with his freak long-range opener less than sixty seconds later.

The veteran midfielder was left unchallenged by the United defenders thirty yards from goal, but his right-foot strike should not have worried Dutch international Van der Sar.

But the goalkeeper misread the flight of the ball and, without deflection, Uchidate's shot flew past Van der Sar, who for some reason dived in the opposite direction.

Having made costly mistakes against Portsmouth and AS Roma late last season, this was another example of the 36-year-old's increasing frailties.

Wayne Rooney almost hauled United back level before half-time,

though.

Firstly, he floated a terrific cross to Paul Scholes that saw the midfielder's header well saved by Tszuzuki.

And the England youngster then beat four defenders and ran from inside his own half before having his right-foot effort blocked by the Urawa goalkeeper.

With the prospect of a dispiriting opening defeat looming, United stepped up a gear early in the second half and Scotland international Fletcher pulled the English team level two minutes after the interval.

Carrick's shot had been saved before Rooney picked up the rebound and laid off to Carrick, who pulled the ball back for Fletcher to score from six yards.

When Ronaldo put United ahead with right-foot strike on 52 minutes,

Urawa looked out of the game, but Ono secured a deserved draw when he capped a late fightback with a well-taken 77th minute goal.

Follow Park

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The only other Asian in the United squad is China's Dong Fangzhou, who was signed in 2003 for 3.5 million pounds (6.8 million dollars) -- a record for Chinese football.

He was loaned to Belgium's Royal Antwerp until he became eligible for a work visa in England and was finally rewarded with a first-team debut in May against Chelsea.

Dong is not with United on their Asian tour, but is instead on international duty with China at the Asian Cup.

Indian pair in lead

SPORTS REPORTER

Sayantan Das and Shaati Mazumder took solo lead in the StanChart 9th National School Chess tournament at the federation conference room yesterday.

After his win over Fahim from Titas Gas Adarshya Vidyalay, student of Kolkata Scottish Church School reached six points after the sixth round of games in the Class VI to X Group.

Rezaul Islam, Sharif Hossain, Abdullah Al Saif, Prantik Roy, Akshat Agarwal and Abhirup Das are in second position with 5 points each.

Shaati, who is from Kolkata Indira Gandhi School, maintained her lead in the points table with 6 points in the girls group after their sixth round games. Aeon Sarkar and Ama Sarkar are in second place with 5 points each.

Shayan Majumder of Kolkata Indira Gandhi School and Mainuddin Ahmed Asif of Hazrat Shah Ali School are jointly in the lead with maximum 5.5 points each in the points table of group class KG to V.

Dravid opens

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iconic landmarks.

The festival will see over 200 cultural organizations contributing to the season, including a selection of London's most well known museums and galleries such as the British Museum and Victoria and Albert museum. Over one million Londoners are expected to take part in the events.

The number of Londoners of Indian origin was over 4.3 lakh last year - accounting for six per cent of the capital's population and making it the largest national minority community in the city.

Standing at approximately six metres high and eight metres long, the intricate replica of the Taj Mahal received a contemporary artistic treatment by Bollywood set designer, Gupta and modern Indian artist, Suchi Chidambaram.

A one metre high plinth supports the Taj Mahal, hand painted by Suchi Chidambaram, with modern Indian and London city scenes.

Mourinho

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2-1 victory over Mexico's Club America that saw Mourinho make 10 changes at half-time with only captain John Terry playing the full 90 minutes.

He plans to give all his players a similar run-out at the Home Depot Center and will seek to utilise two wingers against the Korean side.

That means a central midfielder will lose his place in the starting line-up but Mourinho insisted Michael Essien would definitely not be the one missing out.

"We want to play with people wide so there will be one less man in the centre of midfield and for that you need him (Essien)," Mourinho said.

"I think the team is much more powerful, much more dominant when Michael is playing.

"I'm going to play two different teams and two different formations and Michael will be playing in the first half and he will play with Frank Lampard so I look forward to seeing them play together."

Mourinho feels the Koreans will offer a suitable challenge for his players.

"I'm happy to play them at this stage because they're a good team," he said.

"They play good football, they pass the ball and technically they are good so this is the type of match that is good for us.

"Our first match against Club America was also positive for us and I think at this stage, the Bluewings will give us the game we need to improve.

"This is the type of match we need at this moment to achieve our objectives."

Iran, China

FROM PAGE 20

Islam Inomov out through suspension but should welcome back injured midfielder Aziz Haydarov.

"We're not thinking about revenge for March -- we just want to win the match and qualify. It will be different on Wednesday and you'll see the difference between the Asian Cup and a friendly."

Meanwhile, Malaysia are aiming only at damage-control with media baying for more changes after the heavy defeats prompted the football association's deputy president and two independent council members to step down.

"With all the criticism and all the humiliation I don't think the best psychologists could help the team now," the coach said.

"We have to be realistic -- we can't win against Iran but we have to make sure that they don't score too many goals."

Iran are seeking their first Asian Cup title in 31 years, while Malaysia are playing their first tournament since 1980 by virtue of co-hosting the event.

Uzbekistan reached the quarterfinals in 2004, when China reached the final on home soil. But China have been on a poor run and coach Zhu is under orders to reach the last four "or else."

No contract for Inzy

SPORTS REPORTER

CRICINFO, undated

The Pakistan Cricket Board edged Inzamam-ul-Haq further out of international cricket by not awarding the former captain a central contract. The door is not yet shut, the PCB were keen to point out, but it is looking increasingly unlikely that Inzamam will be involved in Pakistan's upcoming season in any capacity.

Inzamam's omission wasn't a surprise; local reports had predicted it sometime back. The new selection committee had hinted that it was time to move on and bring in middle order replacements, despite Inzamam's stated desire to play on in Test cricket. Inzamam was not, as Nasim Ashraf revealed, even in the 33 probabilities the selection committee had sent out of which 20 were chosen.

"It is not true that the board don't want Inzamam to play," Ashraf said. "Even if he isn't on the list he can still be selected to play. But I want to stress that selection will be 100% based on physical fitness."

The official reason for his omission was his retirement from ODIs after the World Cup; the board was keen to award contracts to only those who could play both forms of the game. One official, however,

admitted to Cricinfo that, on form, Inzamam still warranted a place in the Test side and it was only the need to find new blood which kept him out.

In this light, the selection of Misbahul Haq for a central contract, is particularly baffling. He last played a Test for Pakistan nearly four years ago, his last ODI was nearly three years ago and his record in either form of the game is modest. At 33, he doesn't represent new blood.

The new central contracts, to be put in place with immediate effect, will run initially till December. From January, new yearlong contracts will be awarded. Pakistan's players had been without contracts since the World Cup, when the board suspended them in the aftermath of a poor display in the Caribbean.

The new contracts have been calculated on a set of criteria formulated by the board which give weightage to factors such as player performances in the preceding 12 months (40%), as well as to fitness (20%), discipline (20%) and seniority (20%). There remain three grades as before and for now, the retainers for each category are unchanged. Category A players will receive a Rs 250,000 monthly retainer, category B players Rs 150,000 and category C players Rs 100,000.

Additionally, match fees have

also been increased for every player. "We have decided to base match fees on performances as well. The more experienced you have, the better you perform, the higher your match fees, so category A players will have the highest match fees. We discussed this with the players and they were keen to link it to performances. The fees have increased for everyone across the board," Ashraf said.

The board will pay approximately 20 players on the fringes of national selection a retainer of Rs 50,000 per month. The list has not yet been finalised but will include potential future players and selectorial recommendations.

Shoaib Malik, Mohammad Asif and Umar Gul have all moved up to category A in the new contracts, while Misbah, Imran Nazir and Yasir Arafat are new names on the list.

CATEGORY A: Shoaib Malik (capt), Mohammad Yousof, Younis Khan, Shoaib Akhtar, Shahid Afridi, Umar Gul, Abdul Razzaq, Mohammad Asif

CATEGORY B: Salman Butt, Mohammad Sami, Imran Farhat, Mohammad Hafeez, Yasir Hameed, Danish Kaneria, Kamran Akmal (wk)

CATEGORY C: Imran Nazir, Rao Iftikhar Anjum, Faisal Iqbal, Misbahul Haq, Yasir Arafat

Akhtar all for Lawson



AFP, Karachi

Pakistani fast bowler Shoaib Akhtar said Tuesday he was delighted by Geoff Lawson's appointment as national team coach, arguing only an Australian can help Pakistan to beat the world's number one team.

Former fast bowler Lawson, 49, succeeded onetime England batsman Bob Woolmer, who died during the World Cup in the Caribbean four months ago. He edged out two other short-listed Australians, Dav Whatmore and Richard Done.

"I am excited that he is coming to Pakistan, it's thrilling. He can lift us to that level where we can become the world beaters," said Akhtar.

"I have always loved the Australian mentality. They only play to win and even if they lose they put up their best till the end," he added.

"I am confident that Lawson will help us beat Australia because he will know their weaknesses and strong points."

Akhtar said teams from the subcontinent, especially Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, have benefited from Australian coaching. Dav Whatmore has coached both.

"Australian thinking is different from the subcontinent. They acquire knowledge about minor things and work on them while subcontinental people think differently," the pacesman said.

The 31-year Akhtar, nicknamed the Rawalpindi Express after his hometown, has been plagued by injuries. He only returned to the Pakistan team last month after missing the World Cup in March.

Lawson has said that Akhtar is key to Pakistan's success.

"He's a vital cog to them being top of the tree," Lawson said after meeting Akhtar last month.

Akhtar said Lawson's appointment would help him and fellow pacesmen.

"He (Lawson) is someone who believes fast bowlers can win matches and I will definitely be able to lift the level of my performance under him. Once the fast bowlers deliver the team will benefit," he said.

"Even Steve Waugh and Mark Taylor benefited from Lawson's help when they played alongside him in New South Wales, so he must have something which worked."

Akhtar said the team is gearing up for an exciting but tough season ahead.

"This current Pakistan team has a young captain in Shoaib Malik and it has worked extensively to be the fittest. The atmosphere is very good and we are gearing up for the challenges ahead," said Akhtar.



WHAT ARE YOU THINKING OF? Fahim, a class four student of Titas Gas Adarshya Uchcho Vidyalaya relaxes as he ponders his next move against Shayan Majumder of Kolkata Indira Gandhi School in the sixth round of the Standard Chartered Ninth School Chess Tournament at the chess federation conference room yesterday.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	DOWN
1 Distortion in wood	1 Service-woman
5 \$ dispenser	2 Khan title
8 Omit	3 Ward-robe malfunction
12 Ex-change premium	22 Volcanic outflow
13 Skater Babilonia	23 Promptly, on a memo
14 Domini preceder	24 Fry lightly
15 Critical	26 Cold and impersonal
17 Defeat	27 — En-lai
18 Pump up the volume	28 Make
19 Careless-ness?	29 Coaster
21 Necklace fastener	31 Farm fraction
24 In-box filler	34 Virgilian hero
25 Impetuous	35 Weakness
26 Whims	37 Wild blue yonder
30 Eggs	38 Amor-phous mass
31 "Be-Bop-—"	39 Portrayal
32 Actor Holbrook	40 Unslightly
33 Maximum contents	41 Quarrel
35 Golf warning	44 Blackbird
	45 Melody
	46 Rude, for short
	47 Commotion

Solution time: 21 mins.

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EAR	HASHES	
ALBEDO	ALUM	
LEU	HAM	SLOSH
GAGE	HEAD	KNEE
ASBAY	YES	CR
BRAS	PLAYER	
BRUNCH	LAB	
YOUNG	HONEYCOMB	
EON	TRITE	FEET
SKY	STEER	FAT

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CRYPTOQUIP

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E Z V P X F P N V A E Z V T Z R S .

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF A LANDSCAPE GARDENER IS COMPLETELY TIRED AND READY FOR BED, YOU MIGHT SAY HE'S BUSHED.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: A equals N