

BCB honours women's team

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh Cricket Board president Maj Gen Sina Ibn Jamali yesterday handed over cheques of Tk 50,000 to each of the members and officials of the national women's cricket team which emerged champions in the ACC Women's Tournament held in Malaysia last July.

The BCB boss handed over the cheques and certificates at a prize giving ceremony at the Navana Tower office of BCB.

Congratulating the women's team for their success, Bangladesh Army Chief of Staff Jamali said: "It's a great achievement for the women's team. I want to thank everyone related with this success. I wish them further success in the future."

"Our main target is the development of cricket and also to work maintaining transparency. We want to prove what the present committee of BCB can do," he added.

Reds duo suffers

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will require surgery but we expect them to be out of action for between four and six weeks."

"Xabi Alonso has suffered a stress fracture to the fourth metatarsal in his left foot and Daniel Agger has suffered a stress fracture to the second metatarsal in his right foot."

Metatarsal injuries have struck a number of top footballers in England in recent years.

Manchester United's Wayne Rooney fractured the base of his fourth metatarsal before his miraculous recovery for the 2006 World Cup.

Steven Gerrard, David Beckham, Gary Neville, Roy Keane, Ashley Cole, Ledley King, David Nugent and Michael Owen have also suffered from the injury, which is usually incurred as a result of 'wear and tear'.

Maldini hits

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were "economic reasons and power struggles".

"Nowadays it feels like we're playing away or at a neutral ground, never at home. It's just not right and the team has had enough," Maldini said.

Many hardcore Italian football fans have not appreciated the government's security crackdown after police officer Filippo Raciti, 38, was killed when violence flared during and after a first division match between bitter Sicilian rivals Catania and Palermo in February.

Nayeemuddin

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India and digestive syrups (Marbels) to the booters before the Nehru Cup.

"I have used vitamins, nothing else. The use and role of vitamins are important in modern day sports science," said Nayeemuddin.

"We need help of all quarters to strengthen the national team. My request to the media is that you should talk with me before writing anything. Any negative report could only harm the national team and thus the whole game."

Meanwhile, the BFF has decided to continue the national camp without three of the 30-member preliminary squad.

Matiur Munna, Feroz Mahmud Titu and Mehdi Hassan Ujjal are the three senior players yet to join the camp, which began earlier this month in the tourist resort town in Cox's Bazar.

Munna is reluctant to carry on with his international career while the remaining two had taken medical leave from the federation. However, the duo has not contacted the federation since.

The BFF will also not call any new faces as replacements.

Arsenal 'nearly

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in a free-kick which Robin van Persie converted. Eduardo scored the third goal seconds before full-time as Sevilla over committed men to attack.

Visiting coach Juande Ramos bemoaned his team's lack of experience. The Arsenal match was the club's first in the Champions League proper.

He said: "The players we face this year are a lot stronger than we are used to in the UEFA Cup. At this level if you give the opposition a chance they will take it."

The former Malaga coach laughed off pre-match suggestions by Wenger that his team could win the whole competition.

He said: "I don't think so! I know our level and I know what we will have to do to win games in this group."

"There are a lot of clubs like AC Milan and Arsenal who are ahead of us, financially. We will have to play very well to go through from this group," he added.

The Spanish boss failed to be downbeat though, adding: "The great thing is that a team like Sevilla can come here and have a go at a team like Arsenal."



ACC women's tournament champions Bangladesh cricketers are seen with BCB president Maj Gen Sina Ibn Jamali and BCB ad-hoc committee members yesterday at the board's Gulshan office.

Toss remains key

CRICINFO, undated



That one of the teams that fought out the World Cup final last year had to be eliminated before the semifinals here wasn't a tragedy. Australia and Sri Lanka had been worthy finalists in West Indies but they haven't been half as dominant here. Australia were surprised by Zimbabwe and outplayed by Pakistan, Sri Lanka were routed by Pakistan and struggled to put up a score against Bangladesh.

The tragedy was that the match was not allowed to be the quarterfinal it could have been. At the best of times, there is a strong element of chance in this form of cricket; with a 10am start, chances are the game will be reduced to a lottery. The Sri Lankan challenge was effectively finished in the first six overs on Thursday.

Much of the credit for this must go to Brett Lee, who bowled a brilliant first over that nailed Sanath Jayasuriya, and then deceived Mahela Jayawardene by holding

the ball back a bit in the next over, but just how much were the Australians helped by the conditions? It's not summer yet in South Africa and mornings in Cape Town, one of the cooler South African cities, are nippy.

Bowlers being in the business is always good for the game and, in a format that gives them little chance, it's always nice when conditions conspire in their favour. In fact cricket has been at its most absorbing in this tournament every time there has been a bit for the bowlers.

But then conditions must be equal, or close to equal, for both teams. Luck with the toss has always been an integral part of the game and captains would sound like sourpusses if they blamed defeats on the toss. In Tests, or even 50-over matches, there is space to accommodate and play around a challenging first hour. In Twenty20, it could mean death because the first hour constitutes three quarters of the innings. Australia would have perhaps won anyway because they are a champion side that knows to how to raise the game when it matters, but

even they would concede that Sri Lanka were massively disadvantaged this morning.

The shortness of this tournament has been one of its appealing features. The 55-day World Cup in West Indies felt miserably long. In hindsight, though, three games a day might not be such a great idea. To start with, this format -- even for those who adore it -- can be too much of a good thing and, from a playing point of view, forces an early start. Conditions stay more or less the same for the matches that start in the afternoon or the evening but with early starts the unevenness is glaring.

That said, Australia were switched on. Throughout the tournament, their players have given the impression they are yet to buy in to the concept wholeheartedly. Among the reservations, not openly articulated but implied, is that the best teams don't necessarily win this form of the game. Pushed to a corner, though, they responded in a manner that you would expect them to.

Clark's quiet climb

CRICINFO, undated

Stuart Clark does n't stand out as the ideal Twenty20 bowler. He doesn't have a searing yorker or mischievous changes of pace and relies on plugging away to extract his victims, seemingly not the best tactic when a bowler has just four overs up his sleeve. But Clark's 4 for 20 against Sri Lanka has propelled him to the top of the World Twenty20 wicket-taking list and kept Australia in the tournament.

Typically it has been done without any fuss or fanfare, the same way he regularly troubled England during the Ashes after suggestions he was the weak link. However, despite making a fine combination in Tests Clark's bowling was thought to be similar to Glenn McGrath for them to both make the World Cup squad. It was only when Brett Lee pulled out that Clark earned a late call, and then played one match in the eight-week tournament.

With McGrath now part of Australia's past rather than present a space has opened up for Clark and he has grabbed the chance to impress. He also has fond memories of bowling in South Africa after his first Test tour in 2005/06 where he took 20 wickets at 15 in three matches, including nine at Cape Town, although Twenty20 has proved a new challenge. "I'm trying to bowl more variation than I have done in the past," he said. "I did a lot of that with Hampshire in England, but there's no great secret to it."

In Tests, Clark is used to nagging away outside of stump, preying on the batsman's patience in

the way McGrath made himself the world's best. In the longer form bowlers can create wickets over an extended spell but Twenty20 doesn't allow that luxury. Up to the end of this match, there had been two slip catches during the tournament, so is a bowler purely waiting for a batsman to give his innings away rather than using his skill?

"It does appear to be the way it is happening," said Clark, but he still believes there is scope for the bowler to play his own role. "There's a bit of both, you get guys out by bowling well and building as much pressure as possible and making them do something that will force them to hit the ball in the air."

Of Clark's four wickets against Sri Lanka, two were caught at point from flashing shots (one a stunning effort by Michael Clarke) another taken at third man and one, Tillakaratne Dilshan, trying to sweep through fine leg. Though the end results may not be the traditional way to collect wickets, the Australians have shown that the basic bowling attributes remain the same.

Brett Lee has been hostile with the new ball, which again swung for him, Nathan Bracken has varied his pace and Mitchell Johnson has gone hard into the pitch and generated extra bounce. Throw in Clark's back-of-length accuracy and it has formed a potent attack, especially when bowling first. "The bowlers have been fantastic all the way through," said stand-in captain Adam Gilchrist, "they probably did a lot more bowling leading into the tournament than we did work as batsmen."

Their performance enabled Australia, for the second time in the

tournament, to secure a must-win match following the group-stage victory over England on the same ground. "It would have been more humiliating to go out in the first round. At least we got through to the Super Eight stage," said Gilchrist after being asked whether this match had more pressure than the England game. "We rise in these occasions and are experienced in the big games. The guys rallied really well even though we didn't have our captain (Ricky Ponting) out there."

This was another example of Australia, despite having misgivings over the tournament, still turning on the power when it mattered. Gilchrist, who earlier in the week continued to cast doubt on Australia's commitment to Twenty20, said the team's thinking is changing.

"As a team that has dominated the other two forms for a long while it could be easy for us to come into this feeling as though we are owed something, that it isn't right that teams are being brought closer to us who we believe aren't as skilful."

"Maybe we had that mindset at the start of the tour, you'd have to ask each player individually, but it was identified in my mind and it certainly isn't the case. You are never owed anything in this game. It's (Twenty20) a very real part of cricket and I think we have made that adjustment."

Australia have shown their mettle when it comes to crunch matches and there are now potentially two knockout games remaining. Regardless of how much they accept the format, you wouldn't bet against them lifting the trophy.

Jatrabari Ideal crush their namesakes 9-0

SPORTS REPORTER

Jatrabari Ideal School registered the biggest victory of the Dhaka School Football League (Under-11) when they crushed Ideal School of Motijheel 9-0 at the Khilgaon Model School ground yesterday.

Yusuf put Sena Pally ahead with his eighth league goal while Faisal scored the match winner after Raihan struck an equaliser to briefly bring back the Haider Ali boys in contention.

In another U-11 match, Shaheed Nabi HS trounced Ali Ahmed HS 4-1 with a hattrick from Rabbi.

In the Under-13 league, Khilgaon Model HS nipped Segun Bagicha HS 1-0, Dhamrai HS beat Khilgaon HS by the same margin while Motijheel Government HS blanked Kamalapur School 2-0.

Lalbagh edge Rainbow

SPORTS REPORTER

Lalbagh SC won a 7-goal thriller against Rainbow AC in yesterday's Third Division Football League at the Shaheed Bir Shrestha Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur.

Lalbagh's 4-3 win was inspired by a brace from Sujan and a goal apiece by Sanu and Kalu.

Rainbow at one stage fought back to 3-3 with two-goal Shahid and Rony's single strike but failed to hold on to the scoreline.

Gulistan Club drew 1-1 with Matuail Udayan Sangsad at the same venue while Priyotosh struck the match winner as Muslim Institute defeated Euro Famous by a solitary goal at the Outer Stadium.

B'DESH-PAK SCOREBOARD

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Younis st Rahim b Razzak 1
Malik Aftab b Riyad 21
Misbah lbw b Mashrafe 1
Akmal not out 3
Extras: (lb-1, nb-1, w-3) 5

Total: (For 6 wkt/s in 19 overs) 141
Fall of wickets: 1-59, 2-66, 3-69, 4-
102, 5-106, 6-119

Did not bat: Asif, Gul, Tanvir

Bowler O M R W

Mashrafe 4 0 45 1
Rasel 3 0 34 1
Razzak 4 0 16 2
Shakib 4 0 17 0
Riyad 4 0 28 1

Result: Pakistan won by four wickets.

Man-of-the-match: Zunaed Siddique.

Toss: Pakistan.

Umpires: Tony Hill and Ian Howell.

Wilkins predicts

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winning mentality in players' heads and they go and win things.'

Another former Chelsea player, Gavin Peacock, was also worried.

He told BBC Radio Five Live: 'I think that half the team will have been affected badly and it's going to be hard to get that team spirit that Jose managed to manufacture.'

Former England manager Graham Taylor believes the beginning of the end came when Michael Ballack and Andrey Shevchenko were brought in, reportedly against Mourinho's wishes.

Taylor told BBC Radio Five Live: 'Once you take away the authority the manager has in signing players, you're on a slippery slope.'

'What I would say about Mourinho is his record is with underachieving players and when Shevchenko and Ballack came in, it disturbed the balance.'

'They've never looked as fluid and that's because the manager probably did not himself believe that is the way they should be playing.'

Portsmouth manager Harry Redknapp, who worked with Grant at Fratton Park, backed the former director of football to succeed.

Redknapp admitted Mourinho's exit was a shock.

'It was a complete surprise, amazing to me because he's done such a fantastic job at Chelsea in the last few years,' he told Sky Sports News.

'It was a massive surprise but I knew Avram had gone there and I thought 'I can see them pushing him into that position', he was the obvious candidate for me.'

'They've got a game on Sunday'

Gambhir c Broad b Maddy 58
Sehwag b Tremlett 68
Uthappa b Tremlett 6
Dhoni not out 10
Yuvraj c Collingwood b Flintoff 58
Pathan not out 0
Extras: (lb-5, w-11) 16
Total: (For 6 wkt/s in 20 overs) 218
Fall of wickets: 1-136, 2-144, 3-155,
4-216
Did not bat: R Sharma, Harbhajan, J
Sharma, Sreesanth, RP Singh 28

Bowler O M R W
Anderson 4 0 25 0
Broad 4 0 60 0
Flintoff 4 0 33 1
Mascarenhas 1 0 15 0
Tremlett 4 0 45 2
Collingwood 1 0 13 0
Maddy 2 0 20 1

ENGLAND
Maddy c Gambhir b Pathan 29
Solanki c R Sharma b Pathan 43
Pietersen c and b Harbhajan 39
Collingwood b RP Singh 28

Result: India won by 18 runs.

Man-of-the-match: Yuvraj Singh.

Toss: India.

Umpires: Simon Taufel and Billy Doctrove.

Morne called in for Tests

AFP, Johannesburg