

Sunrise fire blank again

SPORTS REPORTER

Newcomers Sunrise Krira Chakra picked up their third point in the Senior Division Football League yesterday when they shared a goalless draw with Purbachal Parasad at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur.

It was Sunrise's third draw in as many matches, which saw them failing to score a single goal in the competition so far.

Purbachal, who lost their earlier match, pushed their collection to two points after two draws.

Two matches will be played today at the same venue with Dipali facing top-of-the-table Jatrabari and Victoria meeting Agrani Bank.

DC School kabaddi

UNB, Dhaka

The Dhaka Deputy Commissioner's School kabaddi tournament for boys and girls will begin at the Outer Stadium kabaddi court tomorrow.

DC of Dhaka Kamaluddin Pradhan will formally inaugurate the meet, organised by Bangladesh Kabaddi Federation.

A total of 16 boys' teams and six girls' teams from Dhaka Metropolis and Dhaka district will participate in the tourney.

'I never called Procter racist'

PTI, Perth

Under-fire Indian batting great Sunil Gavaskar Tuesday said he never called Mike Procter a racist and the word has been wrongly attributed to him in his column back home.

Gavaskar has been receiving mails and phone calls where critics have taken a shot at him on the basis of his column in which he came after Procter.

"Please do not go by the sensationalist headlines. I would ask my detractors to please read the piece carefully and tell me if I, personally, have called Mr Mike Procter a racist," says Gavaskar.

"That is a complete lie," he said ahead of the third Test beginning heretomorrow.

All hell broke loose since Gavaskar's piece was published close on the heels of Procter's verdict against Harbhajan Singh for an alleged racist remark against Australian all-rounder Andrew Symonds.

Harbhajan, on the basis of hearsay, was banned for three Test matches.

Gavaskar in his piece has wondered why the other umpire in the Sydney Test, Mark Benson of England, was spared the rod.

"I never called Procter a racist. People who say so haven't read the piece. It's the headlines which have been ascribed to me," Gavaskar said.

Former New Zealand captain John Reid said after criticising a Match Referee, Gavaskar has no business heading the ICC Cricket Committee.

South African great Barry Richards also criticised the former India captain, accusing him of playing the racism card.

Time for cricket

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strenuously deny. The appeal will not be heard until after the fourth Test, the ICC said late on Monday.

Aggressive opener Virender Sehwag was also set to be recalled at the expense of Yuvraj Singh.

The 52-Test veteran will return at the top of the order with Rahul Dravid, who has struggled as an opener in the first two Tests, dropping to number three.

"To have the quality of Rahul at three, it will again shift the batting order bit," Kumble said.

TEAMS

AUSTRALIA (likely): Ricky Ponting (captain), Chris Rogers, Phil Jaques, Andrew Symonds, Mike Hussey, Michael Clarke, Adam Gilchrist, Brett Lee, Stuart Clark, Mitchell Johnson, Shaun Tait, Brad Hogg (12th man).

INDIA (likely): Anil Kumble (captain), Virender Sehwag, Wasim Jaffer, Sourav Ganguly, VVS Laxman, Rahul Dravid, Sachin Tendulkar, Mahendra Singh Dhoni, RP Singh, Ishant Sharma, Irfan Pathan, Dinesh Karthik (12th man).

Akmal Hossain's qulkhwan today

SPORTS REPORTER

The qulkhwan of Sheikh Akmal Hossain, former general secretary of Bangladesh Football Federation and life member of Mohammedan Sporting Club, will be held after the Ash prayers today at his residence in Old DOHS (House No. 73, Road No. 6).

The eminent sports organiser passed away on Sunday morning and was buried at the Banani graveyard on the same day.

All his friends and well-wishers have been requested to attend the qulkhwan by the bereaved family members.



Pakistan's Patron's XI cricketer Nasir Jamshed flicks the ball on way to a brilliant hundred on the second day of the four-day match against Zimbabwe at the Defence Housing Authority ground in Karachi yesterday.

Patience pays for Rogers

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Openings for Australian openers are rare and Chris Rogers must have wondered whether he had missed his chance when he spent the first Test of the home summer in rehabilitation instead of at the Gabba. Rogers and Phil Jaques had been trying to out-stare each other since the retirement of Justin Langer last January, but the battle between two men who swear they are friends ended in October when Rogers experienced serious stomach pain.

The upshot was an operation to take out his appendix and it seemed like his medium-term Test prospects had also been removed. Matthew Hayden's spot was among the safest in the team and Jaques re-started his Test career with back-to-back centuries against Sri Lanka.

While top-order vacancies are scarce, Rogers, a short-sighted Western Australian, didn't have to look far for role models of patience. Justin Langer had spent years in and out of the team before making

the first of many lasting impressions and Michael Hussey chipped away for a decade before becoming an overnight success.

Hayden's leg injury, which ended his 86-Test streak, meant Rogers, who is 30, had to wait only another two months for an opportunity and he will walk out with Jaques, his former Australia A partner, in the third Test. Ricky Ponting confirmed the change at the WACA and the locals will have another left-hander to praise on Wednesday.

Rogers, a batsman more like Langer and Hussey than Adam Gilchrist, will become the country's 399th Test player and the first proud redhead to play for Australia since Craig McDermott finished in 1996.

Hayden's hair shades in a team of natural and bottle blonds aren't normally a big deal, but the characteristic features heavily in profiles of Rogers, who is also colour blind and sometimes struggles to pick up the ball in a background of seats.

When given three words to describe himself Rogers uses "cheeky, irritating and red" and his personal motto is "better red than dead". A steak-and-chips man, Rogers also keeps his batting sim-

ple and has refined a method that has been successful on the speed of Perth, the seam of England and the low-bouncing pitches of Pakistan.

Like Langer and Hussey, Rogers is capable of large scores -- he has a triple-century for Northamptonshire and 279 for Western Australia -- but his most important innings was 219 for Leicestershire against Australia in 2005. Rogers was such a pain to his country's side during the match that the tourists sledged him, saying he should get out in the national interest. He stayed true to himself and remained until dismissed by Stuart MacGill after hitting 32 fours and three sixes.

Despite making such a strong statement, he was not elevated to a national contract until posting 1202 Pura Cup runs in 2006-07. Since the operation he has not recaptured his previously outstanding touch, but he picked up 60 in the tour game against India last week and hit a century for his club South Perth on Sunday, which included a six to win the one-day quarter-final against Langer's team. However, neither innings will matter much when he finally makes his Test debut.

To err is human: Bucknor

Cricket

AFP, Montego Bay

Embattled cricket umpire Steve Bucknor expressed disappointment Monday in being sent home from the Test series between India and Australia.

Bucknor said, "I was disappointed that I am not continuing the tour between Australia and India, in Australia. But I respect ICC's authority in the matter."

"To err is human, to forgive divine, as the old saying goes."

"However, I consider it a sad day to see umpires sidelined after making only two wrong decisions out of a record of 35 appeals."

The ICC dumped Bucknor, a West Indian umpire, after India complaints over his performance in last week's Sydney Test match won by Australia.

Several wrong decisions by Bucknor swung the odds against the Indians.

Bucknor the most experienced Test umpire in the Elite Panel made a quiet return home to Jamaica over the weekend, managing to elude the glare of the local press

and a group that had planned to meet him at the airport to show their support for him.

The 61-year-old Bucknor, a former FIFA referee, whose cricket career where he set several records including standing in 120 Test and five straight ICC Cricket World Cup finals including the most recent hosted by the West Indies.

Bucknor was replaced by New Zealand's Billy Bowden for the third Test which starts Wednesday and runs through the 20th.

Bucknor's removal was announced by ICC chief executive Malcolm Speed who also acknowledged that some people would be unhappy given India had requested Bucknor be stood down.

"I can understand that people will take that view," he said.

"It is an extraordinary set of circumstances and we want to take some of the tension out of the situation."

He was confident Bucknor would umpire again at Test level.

Published reports estimated that as many as eight of 11 questionable decisions made by Bucknor and fellow umpire Mark Benson went against India.

Prime Bank's no to BFF

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proposal," informed BFF's communications manager Sayed Al Fatah yesterday.

"However, we have received a letter from the bank which mentions they won't be able to support us this year," he added.

The BFF's proposal included 21 events in 2008 for which they need Tk 9.5 crore but Prime Bank's budget for 2008 is not adequate to support the football's governing body.

"They said that they are sponsoring games like golf, chess and recently joined tennis, which will not allow them to get involved with BFF this year."

"However, if there was any scope, they would come forward, they have promised," the BFF official said.

Many believe that the huge amount of the money forced the bank to walk back even after having three meetings with the BFF. Also, the unsettled condition of the federation with its high-ups running from the scene one after another and the remaining ones losing peoples' faith could be a factor behind the refusal.

BFF's acting general secretary Manzoor Hossain Malu claimed their proposal was not given as a whole but had been prepared tournament by tournament, which

means that the BFF would have agreed to take a chunk of the proposed budget too.

BOA chief operating officer Col (ret) M Waliullah said that the BOA and NSC will now have to sit with the bank and the federation to solve the issue.

Prime Bank's senior vice president Ehsan Habib, however, mentioned that their response did not mean that the door was closed.

"It's not negative. In fact, our budget had been prepared in October 2007. There is very little we can do now. But in near future, we will try our best to accommodate the BFF whenever we get the chance," told Habib.

'Desperate for 17th'

FROM PAGE 17

Indian cricket what and what not to do, that's up to them."

Instead Gilchrist was disappointed at the failure of the media to highlight the performance of the Australian team on the field. "It's a bit frustrating and disappointing to see how little has been written about the quality of cricket that was on offer in the Test. It was an amazing match. Any Test that goes to the last session to the last hour and then to last over is quite a Test match."

Gilchrist also said that despite all the controversies, the focus of the team had never shifted from the cricket, and the target was now the 17th win. The team has had

motivational sessions with Ray McLean, the man who inspired Geelong and Sydney Swans to the premiership titles in the Australian Football League, and Mark Taylor, the former Australian captain.

McLean, a renowned motivational guru in Australia, was present during the Australian camp held in Coolong a few months ago. "It's just about a whole host of things about the team, the direction of the team, very minimal about on-field stuff," said Gilchrist. "It was more about our unit and what our team environment is. It was really good, really positive."

Tigers easy

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was also the top scorer with 106 runs at the average of 35.33 in the three-match one-day series.

The selection of the Test team also raised eyebrows, as it was not clear why the management sent Tushar Imran home after the one-day series and didn't give grafter Rajin Saleh a chance.

The team management tried with Aftab Ahmed but the dashing batsman was horrible in his Test return with 30 from four outings.

If the batsmen need inspiration to play for Bangladesh, then they should go no further but have a long talk with their bowlers, who did what they could do best: bowl out the opposition; they did it in New Zealand twice.

Jamshed flays Zimbabwe

AFP, Karachi

Opener Nasir Jamshed hit a sparkling hundred as Pakistan's Patron's XI strengthened their position in the four-day match against Zimbabwe on Tuesday.

The 18-year-old left-hander scored a career-best 182 to help the hosts reach 361-3 at close on the second day at Defence Stadium, gaining an overall lead of 152 on Zimbabwe's first-innings total of 209.

Jamshed hit 16 boundaries and seven sixes to punish a hapless Zimbabwe attack during his 240-ball knock.

Zimbabwe's management issued a brief statement before the start of the second day, pledging their commitment for the tour.

"The tour stands as per schedule," said Zimbabwe team manager in a reaction to a bomb blast in Karachi that killed nine people on Monday.

Zimbabwe are due to play five one-day internationals against Pakistan on the tour, with the first match scheduled here on January 21.

Resuming at 65-0, the Patron's XI lost Khalid Latif for 18. He had added one more to his overnight score before being caught behind off paceman Elton Chigumbura.

Jamshed and Afaq Rahim (77) then punished the tourists during their 205 runs for the second wicket. Rahim was caught at the stroke of tea, off Chigumbura who finished with 2-61.

Left-arm spinner Ray Price finally ended Jamshed's brilliant knock when he had the opener caught off a miscued drive. Rahim hit six boundaries and a six.

At close, Naumanullah Khan was unbeaten on 46 and Fawad Alam was 28 not out.

Brief Scores: Zimbabwe 209 (B. Taylor 64, Shahid Afridi 4-37); Patron's XI 361-3 (Nasir Jamshed 182, Afaq Rahim 77)

Aga Khan Gold Cup golf held

SPORTS REPORTER

Saad Rahim Choudhary won men's title while Luna Sarker clinched the women's crown in the Aga Khan Gold Cup Golf Tournament at the Kurmitola Golf Club (KGC) course recently.

An impressive number of golfers totalling about 255 took part in this premier event, sponsored by His Highness Prince Aga Khan Shia Imami Ismaili Council for Bangladesh.

Chief of Air Staff Air Marshal S M Ziaur Rahman inaugurated the meet and later he distributed prizes as chief guest.

Habib Hirji, president and Ms. Noorbannu Virji, vice president of His Highness Aga Khan Shia Imami Ismaili Council for Bangladesh also attended the prize-giving function.

Brothers set

FROM PAGE 17

by Brothers Union.

Brothers turned to the court after the board's decision to relegate them along with Indira Road Krira Chakra from the Premier League after the two clubs' failure to turn up for a relegation play-off match on October 4.

City Club was the other team of the relegation league who survived.

BCB reveals

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The selected players have been asked to report to the team manager at BKSP on Thursday by 5:00 pm for a training camp.

SQUAD

Suharwardi Shuvo (captain), Dollar Mahmud, Marshall Ayub, Shuvashish Roy, Rubel Hossain, Golam Kibria, Rony Talukdar, Mahmudul Hasan, Nasir Hossain, Mohammad Shakil, Nadimuddin Mintu, Mohammad Mithun, Saikat Ali, Amit Majumder and Ashique Islam.

No favours

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"September is a good month for English footballers, so given the fact Croatia are our strongest opponents, to play them then is ideal," said Capello.

Capello's first competitive match as England coach will be against Andorra. While a 16-hour round trip to Kazakhstan in June is hardly ideal, he will lobby strongly for an evening kick-off to take the edge off what are expected to be stifling conditions.

The Italian will now focus on arranging friendlies leading up to those qualifiers. Eastern European opponents can be expected at Wembley for the scheduled August friendly, while it now appears likely England will snub the opportunity of a close-season tour in favour of remaining closer to home.

It is anticipated at least one of two planned May fixtures will take place at Wembley, with FA sources stressing a proposed meeting with Scotland is still on the agenda.

Fast and furious

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Chris Rogers has called it hellish and Adam Gilchrist thinks it has the fire to shock. Gary Kirsten, India's coach in waiting, has included it in the document he's prepared for the team. Dennis Lillee has ensured it regains some of its old glory and, going by all the chatter, Shaun Tait is obviously licking his lips. Welcome to the WACA, the ground that houses the world's most popular pitch.

So quick is it supposed to be that Australia are likely to go in without a specialist spinner for the first time in 16 years. The last time it happened was at this ground against the same opponent, back in 1992, when left-arm quick Mike Whitney ran through the batting line-up with 7 for 27 in the second innings. It's fondly remembered as the Test where Sachin Tendulkar played his finest innings but the result was quite gruesome: India crushed by 300 runs.

The pitch at Perth has slowed down over the years but the sight of the ball flying around in Australia's recent Twenty20 game against New Zealand has triggered a hype. "This particular wicket has been relaid with some of the soil that they had at the WACA when it was in its heyday in the late 1970s and early 80s," Whitney told Cricinfo. "So this wicket will be bouncy."

Cameron Sutherland, the curator, tries his best to play down the build-up but drops enough hints to suggest a red-hot surface. "We did relay the pitches in April last year and there will be a bit more pace than a couple of years back but nothing extraordinary," he said. "There has been a fair bit of pressure (in) the past two-and-a-half years I have been here, and some of the wickets have just not worked out for us. The pitch we are using has had its top taken off and (we have) relaid some of that soil over the top and regressed it."

"It was probably as hard this morning as it was on day one of the Ashes last year, two days out it is just about playing around with the surface now -- it is pretty solid. I think it will have a bit more pace. We like to think it will keep its pace more over the four or five days. Last year after day three it became a bit hard toil for the bowlers when it slowed down a bit."

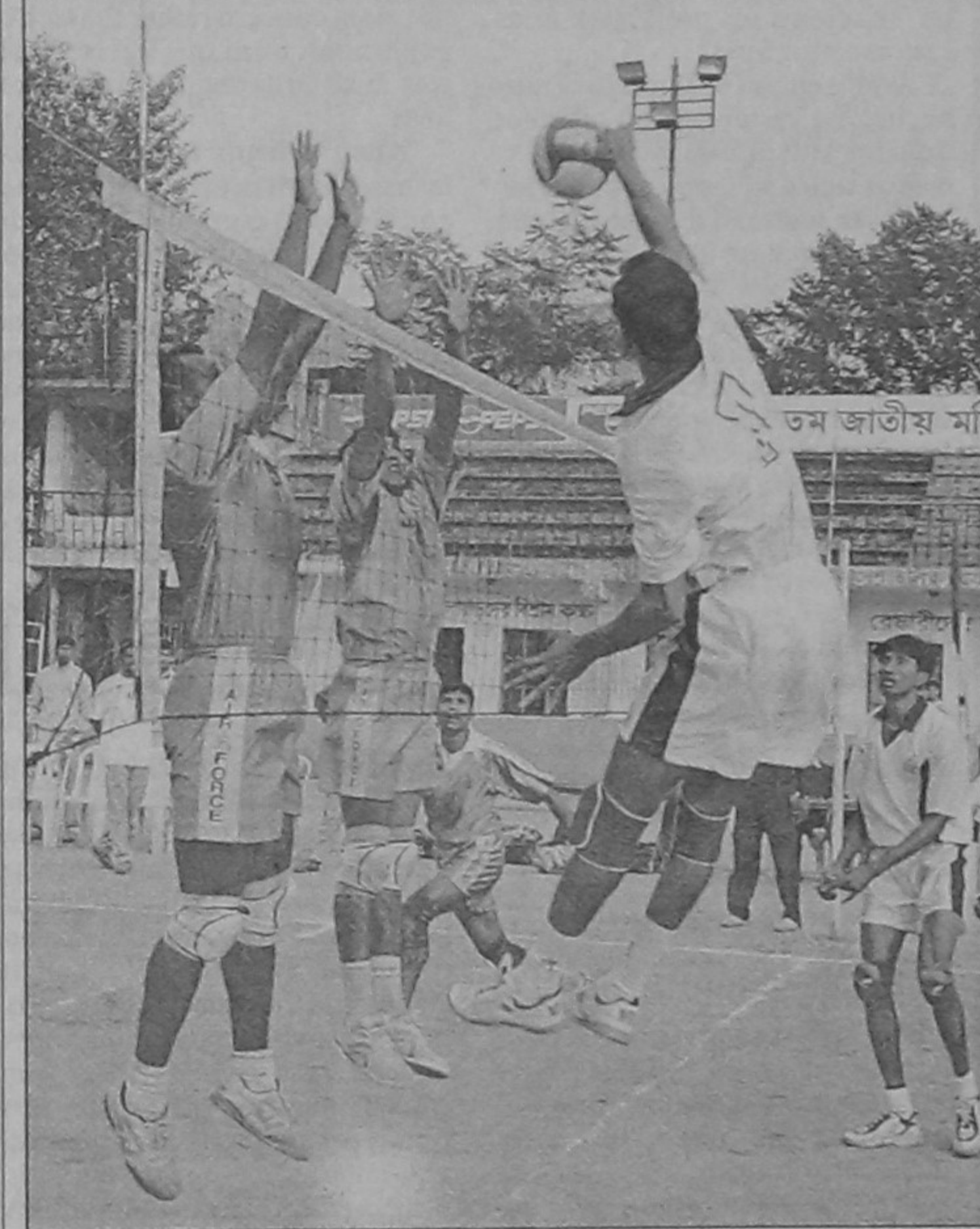
Gilchrist, who's played most of his cricket here, hoped his side could open up a few scars from the past. Only Tendulkar has played a Test here but others have experienced a one-day hammering on their tours in 2004 and 2000.

"A number of these players played a ODI here a few years ago and that pitch had plenty of fire," said Gilchrist. "We would be looking to open up any little scars or wounds that they might have had from that day because we bowled them out quite comprehensively. It's probably the bounce that's the main thing that surprises you when you first come out here."

The strip to be used for the Test hasn't been played on this season. A domestic Twenty20 final was held on the adjacent track, one that produced a high-scoring game. Kirsten hoped India's batsmen don't overly analyse the pitch and urged them to draw on their experience of various conditions instead. "You can get beaten up about it and it can affect you," he said. "That was exactly what I experienced. If you got in it became the most magnificent place to bat. There was pace on the pitch and you didn't have to hit the ball too hard, something I wasn't very good at."

Sourav Ganguly, meanwhile, was again down with fever -- the third such instance in six weeks -- and did not participate in India's net session. He was taken to a local Perth doctor, accompanied by Chetan Chauhan, the Indian manager, and physio John Gloster. "He's changed the medicines and, if I'm not better by the morning, then I've got to undergo a blood test," Ganguly, who also has a sore throat, told Kolkata's Telegraph.

"An allegation was made against



An action from yesterday's match between Bangladesh Navy and Bangladesh Air Force at the Dhaka Volleyball Stadium on the opening day of the President Cup Super Four volleyball tournament.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	DOWN
1 That girl	1 Wound cover
4 Sculptures, e.g.	2 TV time slot, often 25
7 Hemingway sobriquet	3 Franc bone
11 Government overthrow	4 Bow-wow!
13 Shad product	5 Leeway the decks?
14 Wife of Osiris	6 Largest of the lower 48
15 Emanation	7 Comic's pitch?
16 "The Simpsons" network	8 Simile center
17 Apiece	9 Snapshot
18 Soup stock	10 Blond shade
20 "I have this dance?"	12 Well done!
22 Lumox	13 Posessed
24 Parody	
28 Tabloid topic	
32 Pillered	
33 Ridge	
34 Web address part	
36 Sharpen	
37 Islander's farewell	

21 Affirmative reply	23 Craze	25 Entrance	26 Arm bone	27 Orange coating	28 Clear the	29 Honeycomb compartment	30 Lotion additive	31 Journal	35 Afternoon affair	38 Commotion	40 Sieler	42 Willy	45 Info	47 Narc's measure	48 Relaxation	49 No stay-at-home	50 Morning moisture	51 Gorilla	52 Conk out	54 Aye anilthesis
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CRYPTOQUIP
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Q Y F X E Y P K D Y Q N A A X P C
X P J A A N P Y S N J W X O C L
B K F F L C Y W I K E I S F X N E P
Saturday's Cryptquip: OF ALL THE STALKING BEASTS, DO YOU THINK THE LION COULD POSSIBLY BE THE PREDATOR-IN-CHIEF?
Today's Cryptquip Clue: Q equals F