Old Dhaka face Sipahi Para in final

UNB, Dhaka

Old Dhaka moved into the final of the Dhaka Bank Independence Day Hockey tournament after playing out a 2-2 draw with Bangladesh Army in their last match at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Old Dhaka meet Sipahi Para of Rajshahi in the final today at 3 pm. With the day's draw, Old Dhaka secured 14 points to reach the final while Bangladesh Army were eliminated from the meet with 13 points

from six matches. Sipahi Para qualified for the final with unbeaten run collecting 16 points.

Abdus Samad put Old Dhaka in front in the 33rd minute with a field goal while Asaduzzaman doubled the margin in the 41st minute from a penalty corner.

Abdus Salam struck twice for Army team in the 45th and 52nd minutes, first from a penalty corner while the second was a field goal to turn it into an exciting encounter but it ended in a draw.

In the day's other match, Sipahi Para thrashed lowly Mirpur Academy 10-1 at the same venue.

IPL-bound Bracken in doubt

CRICINFO, undated

Nathan Bracken, the Australian fast bowler, has revealed how close a knee injury was to ending his international career. Bracken, 30, underwent surgery in Melbourne this week after a scan showed his cartilage was dangerously close to snapping and he has been advised between four to ten weeks of rehabilitation.

"I was doing more damage to the ligament every time I walked or moved," Bracken told the Sun-Herald. "It was serious. It could have ended my career if it went, for sure."

The recovery seriously threatens his participation in the Indian Premier League, but he hopes to be fit for the one-day component of the West Indies tour, which starts on June 24. Bracken has signed with Bangalore in the Twenty20 competition that starts on April 18 and finishes on June 1.

Bracken went into the season aware of a problem, but he continued after he was diagnosed with severe bruising. He took 21 wickets in the CB Series, which earned him the Man-of-the-Series award.

I knew something was wrong," he said. "There was a bit of pain and when I experienced it during the Pura Cup final the doctor suggested I get it looked at. The big thing now is that I do the right rehabilitation. If there is any pain and discomfort I'm going to have to stop. It's important I don't push it too hard. Because the injury is in a really bad spot it can cause all sorts of dramas.'

Bracken said the bone was bruised and that the doctor who operated on him said the cartilage "was like old paint peeling off a wall". "A big chunk of cartilage came out while he was cleaning the area up," he said. "He was amazed I was able to play through the summer.

RU athletics begin

RU CORRESPONDENT

The authority organised an athletics meet at the Rajshahi University after eleven years. The two-day RUCSU (Rajshahi University Central Student Union) athletics competition began yesterday at the university stadium.

RU vice chancellor Prof Altaf Hossain inaugurated the event.

A total of 110 athletes of 16 residential halls will take part in 33 events of the competition.

Akhtar, Asif

FROM PAGE 17 is for the first two matches.

"We will give chance to all the players who have been doing well in the domestic competitions, said Ahmed.

Bangladesh arrive here on April 6 and play the first of five matches in Lahore two days later.

The remaining matches will be played in Faisalabad (April 11), Lahore (April 13), Multan (April 16) and Karachi (April 19).

The tourists will also play a Twenty20 international in Karachi on April 20.

PCB arranged the one-day series against Bangladesh to fill the gap created by the postponement of Australia's tour. Australia postponed their March-April tour over security fears.

SQUAD

Shoaib Malik (captain), Salman Butt, Nasir Jamshed, Younis Khan, Misbahul Haq, Mohammad Yousuf, Shahid Afridi, Kamran Akmal, Umar Gul, Sohail Tanveer, Rao Iftikhar, Sohail Khan, Wahab Riaz, Fawwad Alam, Bazid Khan, Sarfraz Ahmed.



Rubaba Dowla (R), marketing division director of Grameenphone, addressing a press briefing regarding the

Nottke ready for WI

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Usually by the end of March Ashley Noffke knows what is happening with his off-season plans. Previous winters have involved stints in England or business duties, family time and fishing trips, but this one threatens to include the tour of the West Indies in May.

Academy Cup cricket yesterday at a local hotel.

Noffke's outstanding first-class collection of 51 wickets at 19.03 and 741 runs at 46.31 -- he became the third Australian behind George Giffen and Greg Matthews to capture the 50-wicket, 500-run season party. double -- has him hoping to be part of his second Caribbean adventure with the national team. After such a strong campaign the expectation is he will be in the squad when it is named this week, possibly as early as Wednesday.

While picking up a host of trophies at the Queensland awards dinner on Saturday, including the Player-of-the-Year prize, Noffke made it clear he was ready to add to the one-day and Twenty20 debuts that came in 2007-08. "Throughout the year I was thinking, 'how am I going to get into the Test team?' Halfway through I came to the conclusion Test cricket wasn't going to happen this summer.

"I love playing one-day cricket and I love playing Twenty20, but I want to play a Test and I want to

hammered five sixes and four fours

batting at eight while Shamsur

Rahman top-scored with 67 from

8, finished on 202 built around

Sabbir Rahman's run-a-ball 64 after

Surjo Torun left-arm spinner

Mohammed Younus captured 4-20.

smashed 11 fours and three sixes to

dominate BKSP's 277-9 singled-

handedly before being run out. With

the BKSP skipper put on 79 runs for

the table with their sixth win, later

restricted Kalabagan to 181-6.

Shahbaz Butt (40) and Jamaluddin

Babu (48 not out) were the notable

reached the target also losing eight

wickets with Arafat Salahuddin and

Shafaq Al Jabir rattling 50 off 29 balls

last over at the Dhanmondi Cricket

Stadium and Arafat Salahuddin, who

made an unbeaten 24 off 22 balls

after taking 3-59, capitalised on an

overthrow to take three runs in the

That left Shafaq (19 off 14 balls)

The pair needed seven runs in the

for the unbroken ninth wicket.

Chasing Partex's 257-8, City Club

scorers for the losing side.

opener Mohammad Mithun (40),

At the Fatullah Stadium, Rahim

Young Pegasus, reduced to 126-

114 deliveries.

the second wicket.

penultimate ball.

Big hitting day

BKSP, who remained fourth in SPORTS REPORTER

show my wares over the long game. Whether or not I get an opportunity for that soon, or if I've got to wait another season, I don't feel age is a barrier." Noffke turns 31 in April but is not concerned when he looks at players such as Stuart Clark and Michael Hussey, who received

later-in-life-opportunities. A remodelled bowling action and extra attention on his alwaysproductive batting has turned not going to get another opportu-Noffke into a major force. Even Simon Katich, who struck a recordbreaking 1506 Pura Cup runs, could not feel more upset than Noffke if he is omitted from what will probably be a 15-man touring

If Noffke is picked it will be his third trip with the squad after being a late call-up for the 2001 Ashes tour and completing the 2003 visit to the Caribbean. Injuries over the next few years intervened and led to the technical overhauls.

Noffke returned to the international set-up for the Twenty20 against New Zealand in December, taking 3 for 18, and hit back from a poor opening in his ODI debut on his home ground in February. "The first two and a half overs were some of the most regrettable bowling I've bowled," he said. "It's funny how body and mind can you let you down at times. I'd worked so hard over a long time to achieve that

specific moment." Brett Lee and Ricky Ponting offered support, but it was Adam

with just one run to score in the final

fielding at cover -- lost the ball from

his grip to miss a certain run out,

out four short of what would have

been his second hundred in the

league. The City captain hit ten fours

Amol Roy clinched the men's

singles title of the Independence

Day Tennis tournament after Shibu

Lal retired in the final set during the

final at the Ramna National Tennis

Shibu walked off with a niggling leg

title defeating Aquib Monir 6-2, 6-1

president AMM Nasiruddin wit-

nessed the day's finals as chief

guest and later distributed the

The score was 6-2, 5-7, 5-3 when

Rustam Ali won the boys' singles

Bangladesh Tennis Federation

and one six in his 96 off 120 balls.

Amol takes

men's title

Complex yesterday.

injury.

in the final.

Earlier, Imran Ahmed was run

victory was achieved for City.

delivery and when Rafiqul Islam -

Gilchrist's advice that was memo rable after Noffke let 19 runs escape in 12 balls. "Gilly ran up to and said: 'If you took a wicket in your first couple of overs we would have thought you were a big head."

The good-natured teasing was successful. "It calmed me down a little bit," Noffke said. "I was thinking, 'if I don't pull my socks up and start bowling like I know I can, I'm nity'. After those couple of overs I settled down and bowled as well as I'd done throughout the year." He finished with 1 for 46 off nine, but was squeezed from the side when Clark came back.

The rest of the season was spent trying to revive Queensland without squad success, but his individual results remained strong. While some of his teammates considered deals with the Indian Premier League, Noffke hid himself from the talk and did not register for the second auction. "At end of the day I didn't want to let myself know too much about it," he said. "I just want to play cricket for Australia at the moment."

Another season with the English county Middlesex is a possibility, but that depends on the events of the next week. "I'm waiting to see what's happening with the tour,' he said. "I'm still contemplating going to Middlesex as long as they want me, but that's if I'm not selected for the West Indies -- I'd be pretty disappointed if I didn't go."

BBC ONLINE, undated

Scottish Cricket has announced a the last financial year.

competing in two World Cups the organisation also made a £40,000 surplus.

rained-off international between in Glasgow last summer.

"This shows the progress of the Scottish game across all fronts, said Roddy Smith of Cricket Scotland.

increased outlay of over £360,000 from competing on several fronts in 2007.

tournament in South Africa. Scotland's A team also played

for the first time in the English County 2nd XI Championship. Keith Oliver, chairman of

us at all levels, so we must be pleased to have emerged with financial credit," he said.

Grameenphone. BCB's development committee chairman Lt Col (rtd) MA Latif, however, assured that they will lay

"Sorry, we are yet to start the work of the Academy which is my main goal to achieve. But I can assure you that we will lay the foundation in the next month,' Latifinformed.

He also said that they will restart the High Performance (HP) programme soon. "You know a lot of players came from this programme but we had to stop it because shortage of coaches but we have recently appointed two

On the other hand the question was raised about the too many Test players' inclusion in the Academy

side, then they would be out of cricket for long," said Mahmud defending the decision.

LOCAL SNIPPETS

SPORTS REPORTER

SPORT

Bangladesh Air Force take on BKSP today in the opening match of the Independence Day basketball competition at the Dhanmondi Woodenfloor Gymnasium.

Seven teams, including Dhumketu, Police, Josephites, Eagles and Navy are taking part in the tournament, organised by Bangladesh Basketball Federation. Federation president Kazi M

meet. **GAIBANDHA CRICKET**

Our Correspondent: Munshipara Krira Chakra handed Kishaloy Krira Chakra a 10-wicket defeat in the Naheed Cotton First Division League at the local stadium here yesterday.

Aminul Islam will inaugurate the

It took only 6.5 overs for Munshipara to notch up a 62-run target set by Kishaloy, who were bowled out for 61 in 30.3 overs.

Babu top-scored for the winners with 36 runs.

BEACH KABADDI

The women's semifinals line-up of the first-ever Beach Kabaddi was complete at Laboni Point in Cox's Bazar.

Jurain, Ansar, Jatrabari and Matuail all made it to the last four of the competition after wins in their last group matches.

In the men's competition, Navy beat Fire Services 38-34 and BDR ran to a 62-20 victory over Jail

DU INTER-DEPARTMENT CRICKET

Directorate.

Psychology became champions in the Dhaka University interdepartment cricket tournament, beating Applied Physics, Electronics and Communications Engineering by 12 runs in the final at the Jagannath Hall ground.

Batting first, Psychology scored 137 runs. In reply, the runners-up scored only 125 runs for 8.

For his all-round show, Emdadul Haq of the losing side was adjudged man-of-the-match.

INTER-DISTRICT **VOLLEYBALL**

Satkhira were crowned champions in the regional final of the 13th Inter-District Volleyball competition in Narail. They beat Khulna 25 13, 25-23, 10-25, 26-24 in the final.

Both sides move to the final round of the competition. Hosts Narail grabbed the third

place with a 25-22, 25-18, 25-18 victory over Jessore. District Commissioner Abdul

Qyyum Sardar distributed prizes

among the winners. DIV 1 CRICKET

The dicey relegation league matches of First Division League begin today.

Agrani Bank will play Mariner Open semi-finals and was ousted Youngs Club at the Jahangirnagar University Ground while Badda Dubai. Ekota faces Kathalbagan at the Dhaka University Ground.

Youngsters

FROM PAGE 17

Hossain, who scored second team highest 31 of 59 balls, none could contribute to put up a challenging

Mohammedan's left-arm pacer Manjurul Islam had to leave the field after bowling just one ball because of hamstring injury.

SCORES IN BRIEF

BIMAN: 174 for eight in 50 overs (Tamim 65, Nafis 3, Mosharraf 0, Asif 14, Kapali 11, Sanwar 31, Mashrafe 14, Sajjad 14*, Mahbubul 10, Nabil 0*, extras 12, Razzak 1-24, Tapash 4-36, Shuvo 2-42).

MOHAMMEDAN: 175 for six in 46.4 overs (Imtiaz 7, Zunaed 2, Anwar 24, Aftab 19, Ashraful 7, Rokibul 55*, Ageel 0, Shuvo 54*, extras 7, Mashrafe 4-14, Mahbubul 1-31, Mosharraf 1-35). Result: Mohammedan win by four

wickets.

McKenzie

FROM PAGE 17 between India and South Africa at the Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai on Sunday:

SOUTH AFRICA: First innings 540 (Smith 73, McKenzie 94, Amla 159, Boucher 70, Harbhajan 5-164) INDIA: First innings 627 (Jaffer 73, Sehwag 319, Dravid 111, Steyn 4-103, Ntini 3-128, Harris 3-203) SOUTH AFRICA: Second innings

ACROSS

4 ABC

daytime

name

undone

Suzanne

12 Wish

13 Farm

14 Singer

15 Acuity

Name

Is --

lasting

retreat

member

modernis

21 Religious

17 "My

18 Turl

19 Ever-

24 Scale

25 Ultra-

26 Felon's

32 Nurse

36 Gilpin of

37 Finished

"dog"

from

WSW

39 Dog's

41 Away

"Frasier"

34 Trot

flight

28 Undraped

42 Symbol of DOWN

holder

2 Seek

3 Dutch

dog

5 Bar

7 Adam

and

9 Jack

11 Eden

16 Postal

event

creed

word

Mae

partially

Sprat's

fare

4 Destruc-

live one

supply

44 Shut

tightly

tioned

shade

hound's

57 Therefore

(Abbr.)

60 "My Heart

singer

adjective

61 Abner's

52 Memento 6 Gaelic

consisting 8 Conceal

59 Go postal 10 Taj Mahal

Solution time: 25 mins.

51 Blood-

clue

(overnight 131-1) McKenzie not out 155 Smith lbw b Harbhajan 35 Amla c Dravid b Kumble 81 Kallis c RP Singh b Harbhajan Prince c Jaffer b Harbhajan DeVilliers c Ganguly b Sehwag 11 Bouchernotout Extras: (b-8, lb-5, nb-1) Total: (For five wkts in 109 overs) Did not bat: Morkel, Harris, Steyn, Ntini.

Fall of wickets: 1-53, 2-210, 3-264

April 11-15: Third Test in Kanpur.

Sreesanth

RP Singh

Ganguly

Kumble

Sehwag

Laxman

Harbhajan

4-272, 5-306. OMRW 12 0 42 0 43 1 101 1 1 0 2 57 2 55 10 2 19 0

Result: Match drawn. Man-of-the-match: Virender April 3-7: Second Test in Ahmedabad.

PCA warns ECB

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

The Professional Cricketers' Association (PCA) has refused to rule out the possibility of England's leading players joining the Indian Premier League (IPL). Only Dimitri Mascarenhas has so far signed up to the IPL, while the likes of Alastair Cook and Kevin Pietersen have poured water on suggestions that they and their teammates could be lured to the IPL by money.

Currently, the IPL clashes with England's county season but Lalit Modi, its chairman, maintains his willingness to shift the dates of future tournaments in order to accommodate English players. The ECB chairman, Giles Clarke, strongly believes that England's players would rather play for their country than an Indian franchise, but Sean Morris, the PCA chief executive, is aware of the need for a balance.

"We will ask the players how they feel," he said. "We need to sit them down and ask their personal views -- some might have different opinions to others. But I would like to think on behalf of the players we would be able to take advantage of this concept and allow them to

reap the benefits.

"There may be a very strong collective view but there may also be different circumstances for each individual which would affect their decision. We have a very open dialogue with the ECB right now, we met this week and will be meeting with them again next week, so there is a strong channel of communication.

"Modi is saying that he's prepared to move his tournament to accommodate English players and that is music to everyone's ears in this country."

The issue the PCA are trying to address with the ECB is the poten-

tial restriction of employment. "Their priority is England, they've all said that," Morris said.

"But I just hope we can come to a point where they're comfortable with their arrangement with the ECB as their employers and take advantage of the increase in income into the game, because you're a long time retired. "Restricting employees any-

where will cause friction in a relationship -- over a period of time that will break it down."

Meanwhile Dougie Brown, the PCA chairman, insisted that for all the players' loyalty to England, "IPL is not something that is going to go away -- it's going to be around for 10 years" and the ECB need to act sharply.

"So we have to compartmentalise it within our own calendar. create a window of opportunity, or it will be a precarious situation that the ECB will find themselves in. You might find guys coming to the end of their careers will not sign a central contract, they will go and sign with the IPL instead. Suddenly you will be losing people a couple of years earlier than you might have."

Federer starts with a win

Tennis

AFP, Miami

Federer shook off his surprising semifinal failure in Indian Wells last week to make a winning start Saturday at the Miami ATP Masters

Federer, the top seed, beat unseeded Frenchman Gael Monfils 6-3, 6-4 to move into the third round of the 7.54 million-dollar tournament, which also features a WTA tier one tournament.

After enjoying a first-round bye, Federer was playing his first match since he was shocked by then world number-98 Mardy Fish in the first prestigious Masters Series event of the year. "I think the important thing was

don't get in too much trouble on my serve early on in the sets, so I baseline if you play aggressive don't fall behind like what happened against Mardy, for instance, Federer said. "I think it really came down to showed today.

the big points. Those are the ones I had to win and did, so I'm very pleased. of his first title of 2008, the first time

since 2000 that he has gone so far into a season without capturing a In two starts prior to Indian Wells, 12-time Grand Slam champion Federer lost in the Australian he had to save five break points

by Andy Murray in the first round at The 26-year-old has pointed to a the first set, but you might as well

debilitating bout with mononucleosis as slowing his start to the sea-

But Federer never looked me threatened against Monfils, stretching his streak of victories against French opponents to 20 - a run dating back to April 2005.

Federer earned the break he needed in the first set in the eighth game and served out the set. He broke again in the third game of the second set and closed out the match in 67 minutes.

Federer, who won this title in 2005 and 2006, saved all seven break points he faced. "I tried to play an aggressive

way," Federer said. "I couldn't really chip and charge because I think he's really improved his second serve. "But other than that, he gives you always a chance from the

enough to come in. "I'm really volleying well in the

last few weeks, so I think that again "All in all, I really think I played a

very good match tonight." Sixth seed and 2004 champion The Swiss star remains in search Andy Roddick had to rally to get past Serbian qualifier Viktor Troicki 5-7, 6-2, 6-4.

> serve was nowhere to be found in the opening set, and even after he got on terms by winning the second against him the third.

"I actually don't feel like I hit the ball that badly from the baseline in

Roddick's usually dominant

just play the set with the second serve - it makes things difficult," Roddick said. "And that's really not

"I was fortunate to get out of that one," he said.

Roddick is enjoying his best start to a season in three years, with titles in San Jose and Dubai. However, he was surprised in the second round at Indian Wells last

Fourth-seeded Russian Nikolay Davydenko also advanced on Saturday, outlasting Latvia's Ernests Gulbis 3-6, 7-6 (8/6), 7-6

Australian Open finalist Jo-Wilfried Tsonga of France also had to rally to get past Austrian Jurgen Melzer 6-7 (7/4), 7-5, 6-1. On the women's side, second-

seeded Serbian Ana Ivanovic, who captured the title in Indian Wellson Sunday, won her opener against France's Emilie Loit 6-1, 6-2. Fifth-seeded Russian Anna Chakvetadze advanced with a 6-3,

Paszek, while seventh-seeded Daniela Hantuchova of Slovakia downed Venezuelan Milagros Seguera 6-2, 6-1. Two former world number ones,

France's Amelie Mauresmo and

American Lindsay Davenport

6-2 victory over Austrian Tamira

moved into the third round. Mauresmo beat China's Peng Shuai 4-6, 6-2, 7-6 (7/2), while Davenport defeated France's Camille Pin 6-2, 6-1 to book her first

career meeting with Ivanovic.



Jelena Jankovic of Serbia makes a forehand return against Sofia Arvidsson of Sweden during the Sony Ericsson Open in Florida on Saturday. Jankovic won 6-7 (7/9), 6-2, 7-6 (11/9).

20 Long

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By Eugene Sheffer 21 Initial chip 15 restitution nessed 29 Rebuke severely 31 Conked 33 Morning moisture 46 47 48 minutia 38 Year end 43 Prepared casserole 45 Foolish

CRYPTOQUIP

OMN UEBRC REQUBDP BDUBKO Z LBAQZAJ, B AQRCMD OMN VMNXK PQE Z

SNSSXQ-SZAAQXQK UFMEPND Yesterday's Cryptoquip: EACH TIME YOU CALL SOMEBODY UP AND BEGIN TO TALK, I GATHER YOU ARE SPEAKING PHONE-ETICALLY

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: O equals Y

M United thrash Villa FROM PAGE 17 half-time. But a William Gallas strike and a Robin Van Persie penalty levelled things up after the break and

Arsenal's commitment to all-out attack paid off when Samuel deflected the ball into his own net after Cesc Fabregas had sent Alexander Hleb's cross goalwards. Arsenal boss Arsene Wenger admitted his side had come within

race. "We knew 2-2 was not good enough to stay in the title race," said the Frencham. "To be two goals down and ten against 11, it was a big mental test and I'm very proud of the team tonight." For Bolton, the morale-sapping

seconds of dropping out of the title

nature of the defeat was compounded by the impact of Birmingham's win, which means they find themselves four points adrift of safety with only six games left to secure their top flight status. Birmingham, who had gone 2-0 up thanks to a double from

Argentinian forward Mauro Zarate,

were given cause for concern when Franck Queudrue's foul on Benjani Mwaruwari resulted in both a red card for the defender and a penalty that Brazilian midfielder Elano converted.

But a Gary McSheffrey penalty 13 minutes from time made the points safe for the home side. Sunderland's chances of beating the drop were given a huge shot in the arm by a 2-1 victory over West

Ham at the Stadium of Light. Andy Reid's injury-time strike settled the contest after Kenwyne Jones had cancelled out Freddie Ljungberg's opener for West Ham and Roy Keane's side now have a seven-point cushion between them and the relegation zone.

Elsewhere, Jermain Defoe took his goal tally for Portsmouth to eight in seven games with a double in the 2-0 win over Wigan, while ten-man Reading held out for a goalless draw with Blackburn after having Czech midfielder Marek Matejovsky sent off for a second yellow card with 20 minutes left.

Scots produce record income

record turnover of nearly £1.8m for Despite increased costs from

Much of the rise came from the India and Pakistan due to be staged

The healthy figures are despite

Scotland's cricketers took part in the World Cup in the West Indies as well as in the inaugural Twenty20

Scottish Cricket Limited was satisfied with the latest accounts. "It was a helter-skelter year for

the foundation for the Academy sometimes in next month.

foreign coaches to fill the gap," he

"If they weren't included in the