

BKSP, Tejgaon grab full points

SPORTS REPORTER

A 65th minute strike by Saifuddin helped BKSP collect full points from yesterday's Dhaka City Corporation Pioneer Football League match at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur.

In another second phase match, Tejgaon Nabataranga defeated Mohammadpur JSKS 2-1 at the same venue.

Nawsher and Siraj scored one goal apiece for the Tejgaon outfit while Bimal reduced the arrears for the losers.

ACA still in fear

REUTERS, Karachi

The Australian Cricketers Association (ACA) remained unconvinced there is a safe and secure environment to hold this year's Champions Trophy tournament in Pakistan.

Paul Marsh, chief executive of the ACA, said on Wednesday security consultants hired by the International Cricket Council (ICC) and Cricket Australia had identified threats in Pakistan.

"There is a credible threat in all the major cities in Pakistan, including those which are hosting the event, and they expect bombing in the coming week. So it's what we are concerned about," Marsh told the Geo News channel in a telephone interview.

On Thursday, the ICC will decide whether or not to move the Champions Trophy, scheduled for September, out of Pakistan over safety issues.

England, Australia and New Zealand have voiced concerns after some of their players raised the issue of travelling to Pakistan.

Lahore, Karachi and Rawalpindi are scheduled to stage Champions Trophy games.

Marsh said the report submitted by their consultant Reg Dickson indicated that security during a majority of the recent Asia Cup held in Karachi was not up to standard, apart from the final, when President Pervez Musharraf was the chief guest.

"The arrangements for the final were accepted as a good job," Marsh added.

"But there were number of key issues identified and our job is to make sure that what we put to our players is a safe environment and we are not convinced of what we have seen which is available here."

Marsh said the decision by the ACA and Cricket Australia on whether to play in Pakistan or not would be taken based on the recommendation in the security reports.

Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Dr Nasim Ashraf said he was in touch with all the participating countries and was trying to convince them that security measures taken for the tournament were of state level and very tight.

"We just hope the ICC makes the right decision and at the moment, we are confident we will be able to host the event on schedule," Ashraf said.

Powell takes

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challenger Cuba's 110m hurdles world record holder Dayron Robles maintained his impressive set of performances this term by easing home in 12.91sec, well ahead of US champion David Oliver.

The women's long jump also produced a season's best performance from Portugal's Naide Gomes, who produced a best of 7.04 metres and set herself up nicely for the Olympics, especially as the season's other most impressive performer Ludmila Kolchanova of Russia won't be there having failed to qualify at last weekend's Russian championships.

Gomes also saw off the challenge of home darling Carolina Klufi, who could finish only third on what was a mixed night for the hosts athletes.

Stefan Holm duly won the high jump while Olympic triple jump champion Christian Olsson made his return to competition after a year out and posted a not unexpected effort of 17m in finishing third.

However, the 28-year-old's evening turned into a miserable one as he revealed that he had pulled a thigh muscle and would miss the Olympics.

"The Olympics are gone, the whole season is gone," he told Swedish radio, while he also hinted that he may well retire from the sport.

There were signs though that some of the best performers this year are starting to feel weary just when it was getting to the business end of the season as Croatia high jumper Blanka Vlasic highlighted.

"I have become a little tired," said Vlasic, who still won with a height of 2.02m.

"I have competed a lot these past few weeks and I need some rest," added Vlasic, who is in line for sharing the Golden League million dollar bonus with just two meets remaining in Zurich and Brussels.



An action from yesterday's Pioneer Football League match between Bangladesh Sporting Club and BKSP on a barren pitch at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur.

Darren wants more Eng caps

Cricket

BBC ONLINE, undated

Darren Pattinson has set his sights on winning more England caps, although he accepts he may have to wait.

The Australia-raised Nottinghamshire bowler was controversially included in the second Test defeat against South Africa, taking two for 95.

"I've got things I need to learn and I know that my next chance might not come straight away," said the 29-year-old.

England coach Peter Moores has defended his inclusion insisting it was not an indictment of the selection system.

Pattinson was selected for the second Test at Headingley despite making only 11 first-class appearances for Nottinghamshire.

"It's happened a few times in my career when I've been picked out of nowhere and at the moment I feel that anything is possible," he said.

"It's been a big week for me and obviously I was nervous at first but I relaxed as it wore on and in the end it turned out okay."

"It was a bit tough walking into

the dressing room for the first time but the guys welcomed me with open arms.

"I'd like to think that I can be involved again further down the track."

Pattinson was picked in place of the injured Ryan Sidebottom, ahead of the likes of Chris Tremlett, Simon Jones, Steve Harmison and Matthew Hoggard.

His debut added to the uncertainty surrounding the line-up for the second Test at Headingley and, following the 10-wicket defeat, led captain Michael Vaughan to admit the final XI was a confused selection.

Pattinson statistics so far this summer -- 29 wickets in six first-class matches for Nottinghamshire -- elevated him above players who have been under central supervision with the England set-up at Loughborough, and sparked outrage among critics.

"I can see what people are saying but it is being taken in isolation because Stuart Broad came through that system," said England coach Peter Moores.

"Lots of players will come through that system, and are coming through nicely, so we shouldn't not pick someone who hasn't come

through that system if we think 'Okay, actually this guy is the best here'."

"Because he hasn't been through the system doesn't mean he should not be picked, I don't think."

Glamorgan's ex-Australia seam bowler Jason Gillespie told BBC Radio 5 Live on Tuesday that Pattinson should not be used as a scapegoat for England's second Test defeat to South Africa.

"I can't imagine that many of the selectors had seen him in action," he said. "Maybe they were going on the faith of one selector."

"It was unfortunate. He tried his guts out and performed solidly."

Pattinson's inclusion also caused controversy because of his age and the fact that he was raised in Australia.

But he sought to clear up any confusion over his nationality.

"I've only got an English passport. I'm a resident in Australia when I'm there so there was never a decision to make between playing for England or Australia."

The seam bowler is unlikely to keep his place for the third Test at Edgbaston, with Sidebottom expected to return.

Vaughan told to explain

Cricket

AFP, London

England selector Geoff Miller demanded an explanation from skipper Michael Vaughan, who described selection for the disastrous second Test against South Africa as "confused" as a trio of former captains Wednesday spoke out.

The selectors have come in for criticism, most particularly over the late call-up of Nottinghamshire debutant seamer Darren Pattinson, who had made just 11 previous first-class appearances.

Following the 10-wicket thrashing which put South Africa 1-0 up in the four-Test series Miller told the Daily Telegraph: "The selectors are not here to make Michael's job harder, which is why I'd like him to clarify his comments."

"It's been made into a massive issue by the media and I want to hear his side of the story."

Miller also told the Sun: "I'm the

national selector, Michael is the captain -- we're both in this together."

Three former England captains added their voices to the debate amid doubts as to who had the final say on the selection of 29-year-old Pattinson.

Ian Botham said in his column for the Daily Mirror that the selectors had made "appalling, embarrassing and downright wrong" decisions.

Botham said: "The England team selection on Friday knocked me sideways."

"I feel very sorry for Darren Pattinson, but I don't have any sympathy for the selectors who lost all sense of perspective and embarrassed English cricket."

"It was the most illogical, pathetic and diabolical piece of selecting I've seen."

Pattinson was the first new cap awarded since Geoff Miller, James Whitaker and Ashley Giles took over on the selection panel.

Geoff Boycott said it would be unfair to blame Pattinson for the

debacle.

Boycott wrote in the Daily Telegraph: "He bowled steadily and didn't let anyone down."

"But this was one of the first big decisions taken by England's new selection panel, and they got it badly wrong."

"They need to admit their mistake and realise that wild hunches are no way to build an international cricket team."

Nasser Hussain told the Daily Mail the players, and Vaughan especially, had to look at themselves.

"Geoff Miller is in charge of selection but there has to be collective responsibility and we can't forget that it was the players who lost the match."

"The bottom line is that the selectors chose to bring Darren Pattinson into the squad but it was Michael Vaughan, as captain, and coach Peter Moores who decided he should be included in the side."

And Hussain concluded: "Ultimately, as captain, you have to take the blame."

Tamarine surprised

AFP, Bangkok



Olympics after her performance at this year's Wimbledon.

Tamarine, 31, who has appeared in three previous Games, initially missed out on representing her country in Beijing because her world ranking had dropped.

However, after her show at Wimbledon earlier this month, when she reached the quarter-finals -- where she was beaten by eventual winner Venus Williams -- her rankings soared from 60 to 38.

"I was surprised and glad when I heard. It is an honour for my family and myself to serve the nation in the Olympics," she told AFP.

"I see this tournament as tougher than the Grand Slams. It's very tough, but I will do my best."

An official at the Lawn Tennis Association of Thailand (LAT) said they were expecting the invite from the

International Tennis Federation (ITF) after there were four withdrawals ahead of the start of the Games on August 8.

Although Tamarine's performance was a surprise at Wimbledon she had already proved her talent after defeating French Open runner-up Dinara Safina on grass at the Ordina Open in Holland in June.

LIAT vice president Chaiyapak Siriwat said they were expecting an official invite from the ITF later Wednesday.

India beside

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attended. At the meeting, the players' representatives were told that the governing body or the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) couldn't give any foolproof security guarantees.

"We have serious concerns with the security situation in Pakistan, especially after the briefing in Dubai," Irish said.

Arendse told Independent Online that he was aware of SACA's views and would consult Logan Naidoo, the manager of the South Africa team that toured Pakistan last year, and the rest of his board before the teleconference.

Open letter

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cheque fraud scheme that involved her former partner, Tim Montgomery.

Jones, who admitted that she used banned drugs prior to winning five medals -- including three golds -- at the 2000 Sydney Olympics, began serving the sentence on March 7.

"As the new CEO of USA Track and Field, I have a moral and practical duty to make the case against her request," added Logan, who was named to the job last Thursday and immediately vowed to make the fight against doping a top priority.

Logan noted that Jones denied cheating for years.

He said a pardon or commutation of her sentence would send a "horrible message" to young American athletes and fans -- and to the huge international audience who saw Jones perform at the Sydney Games.

"Few things are more globally respected than the Olympic Games, and to pardon one of the biggest frauds perpetrated on the Olympic movement would be nothing less than thumbing our collective noses at the world," he said.

Decision will be for cricket

AFP, Karachi



The International Cricket Council said Wednesday that its decision on whether Pakistan can host the Champions Trophy in September must be viewed in the "larger interest of the game".

The ICC executive board is due to hold a teleconference on Thursday to decide if the security situation in Pakistan is safe enough to hold the event, or whether it should be relocated.

"The ideal scenario is that without compromising on the safety and security of the players, the tournament is held in Pakistan."

"In that case the members must view this decision in the larger interest of the game and make this important tournament a success," an ICC spokesman told AFP by telephone from Dubai.

"If the tournament is relocated we must move on as well."

Cricket's top eight nations -- Australia, South Africa, England,

India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, New Zealand and the West Indies -- compete in the biennial event, which is scheduled to be held in Pakistan from September 11-28.

But Australia, England and New Zealand have raised concerns about security in Pakistan, which is battling militants in tribal areas where Washington has said Al-Qaeda and Taliban extremists have created sanctuaries.

If the board decides to clear Pakistan as the venue, some top players are likely to stay away.

"The ICC had an assessment and individual countries had their own assessments, and now if the tournament is held in Pakistan, I suspect it is inevitable that some people may pull out, which would be disappointing," the ICC spokesman said.

"For the ICC, every player is important. We have assured that there will be no compromise on the safety of the players and the host country will be responsible for that," he said.

Media reports in Pakistan and India suggest the security assess-

ments conducted by the ICC, before and during the Asia Cup which Pakistan hosted in June-July, are favourable.

However a suicide bomb blast in Islamabad earlier this month, which killed 19 people, and a series of small bombings in the port city of Karachi have renewed security fears.

Rawalpindi -- which adjoins Islamabad -- Karachi and Lahore are the three venues for the Trophy matches.

Representatives of the participating boards and players received a security briefing on Sunday from the ICC, after which the game's governing body raised concerns about threats beyond the Pakistan Cricket Board's (PCB) control.

"While there was recognition of the PCB's security arrangements, concerns were expressed about the potential for threats beyond the PCB's control and these will be addressed in the board's meeting," the ICC said in a statement on Sunday.

Dissenting nations would need seven out of 10 votes to change the host nation.

"Military and police forces protect individuals. Even those forces, however, cannot always legislate for a crazed individual. That was the point that was being made on Sunday that referred to threats beyond the control of the Pakistan Cricket Board, the host," the statement said.

Sri Lanka, the designated alternative venue for the tournament, is also facing renewed violence between Tamil Tiger rebels and government troops.

South Africa and England have been tipped as other potential alternatives.

Meanwhile, former Pakistan captain Rameez Raja said the cricket world should rally around Pakistan.

"The cricket fraternity should rally around Pakistan which is a country where cricket is followed as a passion," Raja told AFP.

He added: "We see no danger to the competing teams here."

Raja, a former opener and now a commentator, said Pakistan's successful hosting of the Asia Cup made a strong point in their favour.

Shipperd wants to coach Kiwis

CRICINFO, undated

Greg Shipperd, the Victoria coach, could be one of the contenders to replace John Bracewell, whose term as New Zealand coach ends in April 2009.

Shipperd apparently has the backing of the New Zealand captain Daniel Vettori, who was impressed by the Australian during their stint with the Delhi Daredevils in the Indian Premier League.

"I'll certainly think about it, yes," Shipperd told the Wellington-based Dominion Post. "Any national coaching job is very prestigious and a great challenge and you've got a terrific emerging team I think, so from a coaching point of view it would be a great challenge and another level above where I currently coach."

Shipperd coached Tasmania for 11 seasons after quitting first-class cricket in 1990-91, guiding the state to its first Sheffield Shield final in 1993-94, then again in 1997-98 and 2001-02. He took charge of Victoria after David Hookes' death in January 2004 and in the same season, the team celebrated its first Pura Cup title since 1990-91. In the IPL, Delhi made good progress at the start of the tournament, but narrowly made it to the semi-finals, where they lost to champions Rajasthan Royals.

Shipperd has until August 4 to make a formal application. New Zealand Cricket (NZC) haven't disclosed the names of any applicants yet. However, Justin Vaughan, NZC's chief executive, had stated John Wright, the former New Zealand captain and India coach, is one of the favourites for the job.

Of the state associations in the country, the paper reported that Andy Moles (Northern Districts) and Anthony Stuart (Wellington) have attracted a lot of positive feedback. Tom Moody, the former Australian all-rounder and coach of Sri Lanka, has indicated his preference to stay on Perth with Western Australia, and hence will not apply.

Bangladesh A

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Needham took away the initiative by removing both the visiting openers in the space of ten runs.

Tamim, in particular, put the opposition attack to the sword during his 69-ball 60 that featured six fours and three sixes before the left-hander was caught by White. Zunaed was stumped by Poynton off Needham for a 73-ball 25.

Nazimuddin and Shakib Al Hasan both got good starts but failed to carry on and left victims to right-arm pacer Greg Smith.

Nazimuddin was trapped in front for 19 while Shakib contributed 29 off 30 with four boundaries before being stumped by Poynton as the tourists were reduced to 148 for four.

Bangladesh A fell into big trouble when pacer Wayne White trapped Rokibul leg before for 12.

Earlier, Derbyshire declared their second innings on 176 for eight after resuming the day on 122-7.

Battling all

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adjustments and improved after training with us but if we get new players just before the competition, it would be difficult for them to gel with the others in such a short time.

"The Federation Cup would be the ground where we will assess our position and sort out what we need to do to come with full force in the professional league."

SQUAD

Nizam, Mostaque, Himel, Rezaul Karim Biplab, Rajib, Azizi Al Arman, Titu, Shahinur Roni, Bappi, Tajul, Jalaluddin, Masud Alam, Asif, Biddyt, Sentu, Amin Rana, Kanchan, Walid and Milon.

'Umps' decision is final

Cricket

AFP, Colombo

An experimental rule allowing players to seek a second opinion on umpiring decisions will not undermine the on-field officials' authority, a top cricket official said here on Wednesday.

The rule, on trial in the current three-Test series between India and Sri Lanka, allows a batsman or fielding captain to request a review of any decision by referring it to the third official monitoring television replays.

"The umpire's word is still final," said Dave Richardson, general manager of the International Cricket Council (ICC).

"The way I look at it is that it is an extension of the appeal. It doesn't undermine their roles. Their skill as umpires is still paramount. They have to make the decision (after consulting the TV umpire)."

Each team will be allowed three unsuccessful review requests per innings and if one is successful they will get an additional appeal.

So far, only the on-field umpires determine if a decision needs to be

passed on to TV officials.

"In fact even when it goes for review, they (on-field umpires) have to make the final decision. So the decision-making starts and ends with them," said Richardson.

"We have given the players an opportunity to initiate a consultation process or as we like to call it, a review process as opposed to a challenge process."

"I know a lot of people will say that it is contrary to the spirit of the game and you are challenging the umpire's decision."

"But what is better for the game -- the umpires making mistakes and being accused of cheating and (cricket) boards criticising umpires or a system where the umpire is given an opportunity to review his decision?"

The ICC decided to trial the review in March, but it was delayed after England and South Africa failed to reach an agreement on it for their ongoing series.

"We are relying on whatever technology is available," said Richardson, former South African wicketkeeper who played 42 Tests and 122 one-day internationals before retiring in 1998.

"Whatever help it can give the umpires is an additional bonus. If

the worst comes to the worst, if the technology fails, the on-field umpires still make the decision. So we are no worse off."

"I am confident it will work quite well. We must not forget what the real objective of this process is and that is to avoid obvious and clear mistakes."

Richardson said the experimental rule was different from the one applied in the English domestic one-day cricket last season, which was widely regarded as unsuccessful.

"In England, the TV umpire would actually over-ride the on-field umpire. In our case, it is a consultation between the on-field and the TV umpires and the on-field guy still makes the final decision," said Richardson.

"Also in England, the problem was they had very limited technology available. In this case, we have better technology."

A player can make a request for a review by making a "T" sign with his hands.

The rule will apply for all dismissals except "timed out" when an incoming batsman is out if he takes too long to arrive at the crease after the fall of the previous wicket.

Djokovic downs Dancevic

Tennis

AFP, Toronto

Defending champion Novak Djokovic returned to tennis for the first time since Wimbledon and broke Canadian hearts with a 6-4, 6-4 second-round win over local Frank Dancevic on Tuesday.

The Serbian third seed and the Canadian of Serb heritage fired up their serves from the start, with Djokovic finding his precision return game to make the difference in his first visit to Toronto.

"I knew I was playing the home player, a big hope," said the Australian Open champion. "I've known Frank a long time and he always plays well here."

"I did what I needed to win, I so I'm happy."

Djokovic secured the opening set with a break and stayed in focus to secure a 4-2 lead in the second.

But Dancevic, who had knocked off Mario Ancic 24 hours earlier, saved a match point in the eighth game and broke Djokovic before the Serb broke back a game later for the win under threatening skies.

Djokovic, who beat Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal on the way

to the title in Montreal a year ago, said he is taking his return to summer hardcourts slowly.

"I'm not looking at ranking points, I'm just trying to enjoy. I've had my best results on hardcourts."

Former champion Andy Roddick had to work harder than expected to suppress an upset bid from France's Nicolas Mahut with a 6-1, 6-7 (6/8), 6-3 second-round win.

The 2003 titlist showed some signs of rust as he competed for the first time in nearly a month following a second-round loss at Wimbledon, which was followed by more work to rehab a right shoulder injured two months ago in Rome.

"I feel good for the first time since probably we finished our Davis Cup tie in April," said the sixth seed.

"I might have played decent at Wimbledon had I been prepared. But I went there kind of hoping, and I knew I was doing that. It's unfortunate, but I've been pretty lucky."

Spain's 13th seed Fernando Verdasco and number 16 Czech Tomas Berdych advanced on a day interrupted for a short period by showers and the fear of lightning.

German Tommy Haas, a quarter-finalist last week at the Indianapolis

event where he ended with a loss to eventual champion Gilles Simon, was another early winner.

The 30-year-old beat Spain's Carlos Moya 6-3, 6-2.

Haas underwent a third operation on his right shoulder seven months ago and reached the last eight in four days ago.

If the shoulder stays at one stage 'there's no more' I'll have to deal with that," said the 30-year-old. "It has already tried it three times, and I'm still here, so it's still pretty good."

Canada-born American Jesse Levine earned a Wednesday match with second seed Nadal after beating Canada's Peter Polansky 6-2, 6-4.

The Spaniard, who beat world No.1 Federer in the Wimbledon final, will be playing for the first time this summer on cement as the Beijing Olympics and US Open approach.

"I'm looking forward to playing," said Levine, ranked 121 places lower than Nadal. "I always watch him on TV, so it's good to play him on stadium court tomorrow."

Swedes collected a hat-trick with first-round wins from Robin Soderling, lucky loser Thomas Johansson and 36-year-old Jonas Bjorkman.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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