

Zia slips to third

SPORTS REPORTER

Grand Master Ziaur Rahman slipped to third position as he lost the seventh round board against Indian International Master Dinesh Kumar Sharma in the 8th United Insurance & United Leasing International Masters Chess tournament yesterday.

Dinesh and International Master Himanshu Sharma were jointly leading the table with 5.5 points each.

Himanshu beat FM Abu Sufian Shakil.

FM Minhazuddin Ahmed Sagar and International Master Mahmood Lodhi of Pakistan followed the leaders with five points each.

Sagar beat FM Mehdi Hasan Parag and Lodhi beat Saifuddin Lavlu.

Zia, who stayed top along with other players till sixth round, remained on 4.5 points.

Dhaka Open tennis

UNB, Dhaka

The semifinal line-up of the men's singles event of the Dhaka Open tennis competition was completed at the Ramna National Tennis Complex yesterday.

In the day's matches, Amal Roy (NTC) beat Laxman Lal (American Club) 6-2, 6-3, Alamgir Hossain (Nordic Club) defeated Prithul Mondal (ZITO) 6-4, 6-1, Murad Hossain (Hotel Sarina) outplayed Delwar Hossain (NTC) 6-3, 2-6, 7-6 and Ranjan Ram (NTC) beat Mozammel Hossain (NTC) 6-2, 6-0.

In the women's singles, Sathi Sarker (NTC), Saima Islam (NTC), Kibria Aita Zaman Bhabna (Naogaon) and Sharmin Alam (NTC) reached the last four winning their respective quarterfinal matches.

In the Boys' Under-14 events, Biplob Ram (NTC) and Sajib Passi (NTC) moved into the final eliminating their respective opponents in the semis.

Swadheenata and Tangail group champions

SPORTS REPORTER

Swadheenata Krira Sangha became Group A champions of the Dhaka City Corporation Pioneer Football League with a 2-0 victory over Golam Mostafa Lane Kishore Sangha at the Birshreshtha Mohammad Mostafa Kamal Stadium at Kamalapur yesterday.

Shakil Alam broke the deadlock in the 50th minute while Mohammad Sohail doubled the margin two minutes later after a barren first-half.

In the day's other match at the same venue, Tangail Football Club emerged Group B champions when they played to a goalless draw with Arambagh Krira Sangha.

Games will be

FROM PAGE 17

"I said at the outset that I believe these Games will be historic.

"They are already a landmark event for the Olympic Movement.

"The mere fact that the Olympic Games are coming to China - home to nearly 20 percent of the world's population - is significant.

"A billion television viewers are expected to watch live coverage of the opening ceremony on Friday.

Sharmin G4S's

FROM PAGE 17

Sharmin is among five other sports personalities who have been selected as brand ambassadors of G4S for the Beijing Olympics that start on August 8. The other ambassadors are from Thailand, Kazakhstan, Botswana, Nigeria and Guatemala.

Manik could be

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process for the Mardeka Cup in October.

Manik, a former national player, coached Mohammedan Sporting Club, who finished runners-up in the inaugural B. League in 2007 and emerged champions in the Nitel-Tata National Football League in 2005.

Before that he guided Muktiyoddha Sangsad to the Premier League title twice, the National League, the Federation Cup twice and 1998 McDowell Cup in Kolkata.

Where's Phelps?

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Singapore Island Country Club, the team's other stars - including Aaron Peirsol, Ryan Lochte and Natalie Coughlin - were escorted through the crowd to the team bus and taken to afternoon training.

Phelps is aiming to better Mark Spitz's record of seven gold medals at one Games.

He just missed out on making history in Athens four years ago when he won six gold medals and two bronze.

In Beijing, Phelps will swim the 200m and 400m individual medleys, the 100m and 200m butterfly, the 200m freestyle, and the three relays - the same programme he followed in Athens.

Reasons for resignation

Cricket

AFP, London

Two successive defeats against South Africa and a run of poor form persuaded Michael Vaughan to quit as England captain Sunday.

Vaughan, 33, was England's most successful Test captain, leading the team to 26 wins in 51 Tests, including the Ashes triumph against Australia in 2005.

But he scored only 40 runs in five innings in the first three Tests against South Africa.

When the tourists won the third Test to take a winning 2-0 lead in the series, Vaughan decided it was time to go.

It was also announced that Paul Collingwood had resigned as England one-day captain. A new captain for both forms of the game will be announced Monday.

Vaughan will take a three-week break from cricket and is not available for the final Test at the Oval starting Thursday. But he said he wanted to continue playing for Yorkshire and England.

Ironically it was against South Africa five years ago that Vaughan ascended to the captaincy when Nasser Hussain resigned, also after

a poor performance in Birmingham.

Vaughan and former coach Duncan Fletcher built up a formidable record, taking England to second place on the international Test rankings.

An elegant top order batsman, Vaughan had an ongoing battle against knee injuries which prevented him from leading England on the return Ashes tour in 2006/07.

Under stand-in captain Andrew Strauss, England lost all five Tests and the Ashes they had won in such a thrilling fashion 18 months before.

He returned to the team against the West Indies last year and made a century against the West Indies at Headingley, Leeds, his home ground.

England suffered a rare home series defeat against India last year and lost against Sri Lanka on their 2007/08 tour.

Although they won away and at home against New Zealand, Vaughan admitted after the defeat against South Africa at Edgbaston Saturday: "We've lost to the top bracket teams."

At his after-match conference Vaughan said he would "let the dust settle" before thinking of his future but less than 18 hours later

he resigned.

"This decision has been something that has crossed my mind for some time," he said.

"I had every ambition to lead the England team to the next Ashes Series but as England captain I feel I've run out of steam. I believe that the best thing for the team is to embark on a new direction under a new captain."

"I also believe the best thing for me is to try and get back to being the best batsman I can be. I'll still have all the experience and knowledge to pass on and I hope to be a valuable player for both my county and the England team."

Hugh Morris, managing director of England cricket, said Vaughan had always led from the front "with an unprecedented level of professionalism, integrity and honesty every step of the way."

"As a batsman he has been one of the finest cricketers this country has seen and he took the England captaincy to new heights since assuming the role in 2003."

South African captain Graeme Smith said he was shocked by Vaughan's decision. "I have the highest regard for him as a person, sportsman and leader. It is a great loss for world cricket."

Colly explains why

Cricket

BBC ONLINE, undated

Paul Collingwood said his failure to cope with the demands of being England one-day captain left him with no choice but to step down from the position.

The Durham all-rounder, who is banned from England's next three one-day matches for his team's slow over rate, succeeded Michael Vaughan in June 2007.

"I've found the extra workload to be very difficult," said Collingwood. "I feel the captaincy diminished my ability to perform for England across all forms of the game."

Collingwood took over from Vaughan after England's dismal showing at the 2007 World Cup in the Caribbean.

The 32-year-old won his first match in charge, against West Indies at Lord's in July that year, but England lost the series 2-1.

Impressive series wins at home to India and away to Sri Lanka followed but then England were beaten away and home by New Zealand.

Rogers Cup Safina's

Tennis

AFP, Montreal

Russia's Dinara Safina steamrolled Slovakian Dominika Cibulkova 6-2, 6-1 to capture the WTA Rogers Cup for her third title in her last six events here on Sunday.

Safina, who is enjoying one of the most productive runs of her career, needed just one hour, eight minutes to beat unseeded Cibulkova at the Uniprix Stadium court.

The 22-year-old Safina also won last week in the Williams sisters' backyard of Carson in south central Los Angeles. This was her fifth championship match in six events.

"It's the first time in my life I have won tournaments back-to-back," said Safina. "Usually I would win a tournament and the next week I would lose in the first round."

Safina blasted eight aces while teenager Cibulkova had just one and committed six double faults.



Russian Dinara Safina poses with the winner's trophy after beating Dominika Cibulkova of Slovakia in the Rogers Cup final in Montreal on Sunday.

Thorpe to sue

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Australia's most successful Olympian said his reputation had been irreparably tarnished by the allegation, which came just months after he retired from a sport he had dominated for most of a decade.

"Ian Thorpe intends to pursue the legal proceedings for defamation that he has commenced in the court against French newspaper L'Equipe and a journalist from that newspaper, Damien Ressiot," spokesman Jason Allen said in a statement.

Thorpe's lawyer Tony O'Reilly had informed the New South Wales Supreme Court of this on Monday and said that the proceedings would include a claim for infringement of privacy, the statement said.

The court proceedings were adjourned until September 22, when it was expected that preparations would be made for a hearing some time next year, the statement said, adding that no further comment would be made.

Shortly after being cleared last year, Thorpe told reporters: "My name is forever tarnished, more so overseas than what it is here, and that's something that I continue to have to deal with."

"The court proceedings were adjourned until September 22, when it was expected that preparations would be made for a hearing some time next year, the statement said, adding that no further comment would be made."

Kumble hails

FROM PAGE 17

so far shared 34 wickets in two matches.

Sri Lanka captain Mahela Jayawardene conceded the loss of early wickets affected their chances of chasing the target.

"It was important to get a good start when you are chasing any total, which we did not get. Losing three wickets for 10 runs was not ideal and that's where we probably lost the game," he said.

"We had a plan, but when you lose three quick wickets it is very difficult to fight back. Our batting was not consistent enough. I thought we could give them a better fight."

Jayawardene was all praise for unorthodox spinner Mendis, who took a maiden 10-wicket haul in only his second Test.

"I am very happy for Ajantha. He bowled brilliantly and supported the other bowlers as well, but it is very disappointing to lose the game in which he has taken 10 wickets," he said.

"The bowling unit fought really well throughout the Test and created opportunities for us."

Dhoni awarded highest honour

AFP, New Delhi

India's one-day and Twenty20 captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni has been awarded the country's top sporting honour, cricket board officials said Monday.

Dhoni, 27, has been named winner of the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna award for 2007 after he led a young Indian side to triumph in the Twenty20 World Cup in South Africa last year.

The wicketkeeper-batsman also captained the team to a memorable tri-series victory in Australia earlier this year.

"Dhoni has been declared the recipient of the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award, the country's most prestigious sports award," the board said in a statement.

Cricket board president Sharad Pawar said Dhoni was a deserving winner.

Dhoni is the second cricketer after batting genius Sachin Tendulkar to win the award. Tendulkar bagged the honour in 1998.

Right-hander Dhoni has amassed 1,418 runs from 29 Tests and 3,600 runs in 115 one-day internationals. He has also taken 186 catches and effected 186 stumpings in Tests and ODIs after making his international debut in 2004.

Dhoni however is likely to miss out on the awards ceremony, slated for August 29, as he is expected to be playing in a one-day series in Sri Lanka after opting out of the ongoing three-Test series citing fatigue.

New body of Surjo Torun

SPORTS REPORTER

The executive committee of Surjo Torun Club has been formed for the duration of 2008 to 2011 with Afzalur Rahman Sinha made president and Shahadat Hossain Selim the general secretary.

The vice-presidents are Rezaul Rahman, Faruque Al Naser, Monir Hossain, MA Mahfuz Anjan, Mohammad Nayef Islam, Ishtiaq Sadeq, Zahur Hossain Shawkat, Eng. Shahiduzzaman, Khondakar Jamiluddin and Mahmudul Hasan Khan Babu.

The other committee members are Atiqul Habib (founder chairman), M Iqbal Shymol and Fahim Sinha (assistant general secretary), Iqbal Azim (chairman, cricket committee), Sultan Riaz Chowdhury (vice-chairman, cricket committee), Arman Islam Namnu (organising secretary), Golam Faruque Fatik and Sohuluzzaman Khan (assistant organising secretaries), Tayeb Afzal (cricket secretary) and Shibly Rubayet Saikat (badminton secretary).

Jr. chess

SPORTS REPORTER

Women FIDE Master Samima Akhter Liza lost first two rounds in the girls section of the World Junior Chess Championship in Turkey yesterday.

Liza lost her first board against WFM Hoolt Sarah of Georgia and second round board against Alavi Hour Homa of Iran.

A team lose

FROM PAGE 17

Left-handed opener Tamim Iqbal however proved that he has got the ability to keep the consistency at any level as the Chittagonian was the top scorer in the longer-version matches with 250 runs in four games while made 79 runs in three one-dayers.

Rokibul Hasan topscored with 126 runs in three matches including one hundred with an average of 63 but his performance in the shorter-version was not satisfactory with 70 runs in three matches.

Rafiqul praised the effort of young Nayeem Islam although the statistics hardly showed anything special (93 runs in three longer-version matches and 55 runs in as many limited-over games).

"Among the non-capped player Nayeem was good on the tour," said the former national cricketer.

Before the England tour, Bangladesh A played a one-day match and a Twenty20 fixture against Ireland and lost both matches by 82 runs and 5 wickets respectively. One four-dayer against Ireland A was drawn while the other was washed out.

Gilly for T20

FROM PAGE 17

"Take it from someone who has won almost everything cricket has to offer -- the Olympics is the absolute pinnacle in sport."

"Cricketers won't care about the money. The chance to stand on top of the Olympic podium, to wear an Olympic gold medal and the pride of belting out your national anthem would be a life-changing money-can't-buy experience," he said.



Andy Murray of Great Britain celebrates after defeating Novak Djokovic of Serbia in the final of the Cincinnati Masters on Sunday.

Murray's maiden crown

Tennis

AFP, Cincinnati

Andy Murray lifted his first career Masters title, defeating Novak Djokovic for the second time in as many weeks to claim a 7-6, 7-6 win at the Cincinnati event on Sunday.

The Scot, who will rise to a career-best sixth in the world on Monday, had to work for the victory as Djokovic mounted a closing surge.

Murray eventually won in the second tiebreaker after two hours, 22 minutes.

He notched his second victory over the world number three after losing his first four meetings until last week's Toronto quarterfinal success.

The Scot clocked the first British success at a Masters event since Tim Henman won Paris Bercy five years ago. Henman also lost the Cincinnati final eight years ago to Swede Thomas Enqvist.

Murray travels to the Beijing Olympics with a renewed conviction in his game.

"I'm taking a lot of confidence from this win, you expect to get that after winning your first big tournament," said Murray, now with three trophies this season.

Djokovic saved four match points late in the second set as Murray served for victory leading a set and 5-3 after breaking the Serb.

But after his mis-fires, Murray found himself down a break point, which Djokovic converted after five deuces to climb to 4-5.

The Serb who had beaten Rafael Nadal with a sterling performance the night before, was unable to come good against the determined Murray.

"It's different when you play against an opponent who plays a similar game with you," Djokovic said. "He was making me do a lot of unforced errors."

"He was playing a lot of slice and changing pace to my forehand. I just lost the rhythm today."

"I had a great match last night, I played rocket tennis, but that was not possible against Andy today. We've known each other since we

were 13 or 14.

"We used to watch these kind of matches on television and now we are playing them."

Murray said that playing all week in the heat was crucial to his chances on a another sunny afternoon.

"It was really hot but I've played all of my matches in these conditions," said Murray, 35-12 this season. "But by the end we were both tired, it was really getting to us."

Djokovic was unable to make an impression in the end after striking 46 unforced errors.

Murray was third Briton to reach the final at Cincinnati after Henman and Mark Coxin 1977.

"I really struggled against him in the past," Murray said of Djokovic. "I had to change something."

"I played a bit more aggressive and served a little bit smarter than I had in the past, and obviously it worked."

"It's huge to win your first sort of major tournament, and to do it in a match like today makes it more special."

Kevin given the reins

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"He likes to challenge us on a daily basis. There are a lot of strong characters in the dressing room and a lot of opinionated people. I sat down with Peter and we had a real good discussion about how we want to take this team forward. I think my position from a player to a captain is totally different and we need to unite and to get on the same hymn sheet."

He said he would lean on people like Vaughan.

"I will always respect what happened in the past and I will always ask for advice. I'm fresh into this and I will need some help. One of the most exciting things is that I have had text messages and phone calls from senior members in the squad who have said they are right behind me."

Chairman of selectors Geoff Miller confirmed that uniting the Test and one-day captaincy was something he had wanted to achieve. Paul Collingwood resigned from the one-day captaincy Sunday.

Miller announced only one change in England's 13-man squad for the final Test against South Africa, with batsman Ravi Bopara replacing Vaughan, which he said was a sign that there was no panic from the selectors with England trailing the four-match series 2-0.

He said the selectors had not contemplated a change of captaincy before Vaughan's resignation.

Nottinghamshire batsman

Samit Patel is the only uncapped player in a 15-man squad for a Twenty20 international and five one-day internationals against South Africa. Wicketkeeper Matt Prior has been recalled.

Pietersen was quoted recently as expressing doubts about travelling to Pakistan for the Champions Trophy next month.

He has also been linked with the Indian Premier League Twenty20 competition.

Asked how the captaincy would affect his participation, he said: "I haven't even thought that far ahead. My concern this week is about how we can salvage pride from this series."

Pietersen was born and raised in South Africa and played for the Natal provincial team as an off-spin bowler and hard-hitting lower order batsman.

Disenchanted with South Africa's racial quota system he joined Nottinghamshire in 2001, where he quickly established himself as a top order batsman.

Entitled to a British passport through his English-born mother, he qualified for England in September 2004 and was almost immediately picked for England's one-day side for a series in Zimbabwe.

He made such an impact there that he was drafted into the squad for a one-day series in South Africa and despite being jeered by the local crowds he made three centuries in seven matches to announce himself as a player of quality and

big-match temperament.

He made his Test debut against Australia in 2005 and played a major role in England's winning of the Ashes, notably with his innings of 158 in the final Test at the Oval.

Despite being criticised for sometimes being too aggressive and impetuous he has hit 13 centuries in his 42 Test matches and has an average of 50.36, placing himself in the top bracket of international players.

Pietersen holed out to long-on when he was on 94 in the third Test at Edgbaston last week.

Asked whether he might have played differently if he had been captain, he said: "Hopefully I am going to bat exactly the same way. The way Colly (Paul Collingwood) and I played is exactly the way you need to play against South Africa and against Australia. You have to be positive and aggressive."

TEST SQUAD

Kevin Pietersen (captain), Alastair Cook, Andrew Strauss, Ian Bell, Paul Collingwood, Andrew Flintoff, Tim Ambrose (wicketkeeper), Ravi Bopara, Stuart Broad, Ryan Sidebottom, Steve Harmison, James Anderson, Monty Panesar.

ODI & T20 SQUAD

Kevin Pietersen (captain), Alastair Cook, Luke Wright, Ian Bell, Ravi Bopara, Owais Shah, Paul Collingwood, Andrew Flintoff, Matt Prior, Stuart Broad, Ryan Sidebottom, Graeme Swann, James Anderson, Chris Tremlett, Samit Patel.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS										DOWN											
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4 Museum fill	44 Hammer's target	46 Card-suit symbol	50 Rough journey	53 Two (Sp.)	55 Not good at all	56 Throw hard	57 Conceit	58 Disen-	59 Shrek	60 Reed or shop	61 Female deer	19 Height of fashion?	Solution time: 24 mins.	28 Nightwear	32 High nest	33 The yoke's on them	34 Bliss	36 Discour-teous	37 Large quantities	39 Resident	

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