

MSC meet Brothers tomorrow

SPORTS REPORTER

The unfinished matches of Rounds 5, 6 and 7 will start from tomorrow before the eighth round of the B. League is to begin.

Mohammedan Sporting Club, who have played only three matches in seven rounds, will take on Brothers Union at the Bangabandhu National Stadium at 5 pm.

Already, seven rounds have concluded but holders Abahani and title contenders Mohammedan and Brothers Union did not play in the previous weeks for their commitment to national team.

The tournament committee had relieved the B. League teams with more than two national players off the competition.

Abahani and Brothers have played four matches each.



Did U Know?

Volleyball was introduced to Special Olympics in 1983.



Javed Miandad

(Former Pakistan cricket captain) "I have never had problems giving my service to Pakistan cricket and I will like to help out the board in any capacity as long as my role is a productive one."

After agreeing to join Pakistan Cricket Board as a member.



BTV

Bangladesh v New Zealand
Second Test, Day One
Live from 9:30am

ESPN

English Premier League
Everton v Man United
Live from 4:55pm
Tottenham v Bolton
Live from 7:55pm

STAR Sports

English Premier League
Sunderland v Newcastle
Live from 5:40pm
Blackburn v Middlesbrough
Live from 10:25pm

Primera Liga

Barcelona v Almeria
Live from 2:00am (Sunday)

TEN Sports

ICL Twenty20
Kolkata v Dhaka Warriors
Live from 8:00pm

UNDER-14 CRICKET

Narsingdi defeat hosts Manikganj

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Narsingdi defeated hosts Manikganj by 36 runs in the under-14 national cricket competition at the Shaheed Miraz-Tapan Stadium in Manikganj yesterday.

Batting first, Narsingdi were all out for 106 in 35.5 overs. Rifat top scored with 29 runs and Omar Faruk added 16. Nakibur, Zahid and Tutul took two wickets each for Manikganj.

In reply, Manikganj were bundled out for 70 runs in 22.4 overs. Nakibul scored 16 runs. Rejwan and Yasin took three wickets each

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5



PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh opener Zunaed Siddiqui (C) holds onto a chance during a slip-fielding session at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday. The Tigers will hope that Zunaed shakes off his poor form and gives the team a good start as the second Test gets underway today.

Pitch, Oram are Vettori's worries

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

The New Zealand team returned to the hotel without conducting any practice at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur because of rain yesterday. There has been more rain forecast following a low in the bay but it's difficult to predict whether the rain may cause a complete washout because of the tremendous drainage system at the 'home of cricket'.

The weather conditions, however, forced the home side to think about the team combination as

they were thinking about an extra seam bowler and in that case Mahbubul Alam may make his international debut.

For New Zealand side the most frustrating fact was the loss of all-rounder Jacob Oram, who was ruled out of the second and final Test with a sore back, though skipper Daniel Vettori was confident that his team can overcome the absence of the big all-rounder who salvaged his side in the one-day series to secure the man-of-the-series award.

"He (Jacob) is probably our most important player because of the role he offers, being our third seamer and one of our best bats-

men, so when he is out it makes things more difficult," Vettori observed while speaking in a very short pre-match briefing at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

The Black Caps skipper, however, said that the inexperienced Grant Elliott may come as replacement of Oram.

"We haven't decided yet, Jacob Oram is obviously out, so we have gone to look to make a replacement. Elliott hasn't got the experience or the performance of Oram, but we still think he will come and do a pretty good job. Any time you lose a player of Jacob's calibre it's

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1

Hosts' last-gasp win

CU CORRESPONDENT



Late goals in each half including Ridon's 89th minute strike gave Chittagong Mohammedan their second win

in three games when the hosts came from a goal down to beat Khulna Abahani 2-1 in the Citycell B. League at the MA Aziz Stadium here yesterday.

For the visitors, it was the sixth consecutive after beginning the league with an impressive 3-1 victory against Muktijoddha in the opening round. They stuck to second-from-bottom with three points while the port city Mohammedan, who have lost only to defending champions Abahani, moved to fourth place with nine

points from six outings.

The home side hardly impressed in the first half, frustrating their fans who rushed to the stadium amid incessant rainfall. The rainfall also did not get the best out of both teams.

Khulna Abahani went ahead in the 25th minute when Ripon opened the scoring with a fine shot after controlling a pass from Ashiquil inside the penalty area.

Two minutes later, the tourists

SEE PAGE 18 COL 3

POINTS TABLE

Teams	M	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Russel	6	4	2	0	13	3	14
Rahmatganj	6	3	1	2	7	6	10
Abahani	4	3	0	1	7	2	9
Cig MSC	6	2	3	1	6	5	9
Brothers	4	2	2	0	7	4	8
Farashganj	6	2	2	2	6	6	8
Mohammedan	3	2	1	0	11	1	7
Cig Abahani	6	1	3	2	3	4	6
Arambagh	5	1	2	2	4	7	5
Khulna Abahani	7	1	0	6	6	18	3
Muktijoddha	5	0	0	5	2	16	0



PHOTO: STAR

Viqarunnisa Noon School captain Pinky shoots past Australian International School defenders in the opening match of the Metropolitan Women's School football tournament at the Dhanmondi Women's Sports Complex yesterday.

Tigers target 'session wins'

Second Test starts today

BISHWAJIT ROY



The weather was gloomy but there was no darkness in the face of the Tigers ahead of the today's second and final Test at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

It had been a common scene in the Bangladesh tent to look downcast while going into the second match after a heavy defeat in the first one. But this time the scenario has been reversed, although they are still 1-0 down in the series.

The reason is simple: a spirited performance in the first Test at Chittagong.

The home team lost the match but won the hearts of many by the way they fought against the Kiwis for five days before New Zealand skipper Daniel Vettori snatched the three-wicket victory.

Here, however, lies the chal-

lenge for Mohammad Ashraful's men as they have to prove a point that they are consistent in their performance, irrelevant of results. And the Bangladesh skipper knows that only 'good cricket' for session after session can ensure that they will be competitive enough in the last match of an otherwise good series.

"Our target remains same as we have to bat eight sessions. I think we played good cricket for five days in the first Test and we should continue it. We have to win sessions if we want to be competitive in the Test," said Ashraful in a pre-match press conference at Mirpur yesterday.

In Ashraful's consideration the most encouraging feature in the first match was his side's approach to make an effort until the end of the match.

"We have to focus on a few things like our first innings batting which was good in Chittagong. But we were a few runs short... a set batsman should carry his batting for long and undoubtedly the top five

should give a platform which was not the case in the first Test," said Ashraful.

At this point naturally the question was raised about his own performance because the Tigers skipper scored 0 and 2 in the first Test.

Was he feeling any extra pressure? "No, my performance was not good but as a team we played good cricket. I am trying my best and I am hopeful about the second Test match."

Then is it the bowling or batting of the New Zealand skipper, Daniel Vettori, the main headache for his side? "Both (batting and bowling) but honestly speaking we are thinking only about our improvement. We are not surprised by our performance in the first match because we were practising hard for this and the key thing is that we continue it," he said.

The Bangladesh captain, however, admitted that the absence of injured Jacob Oram is an advantage for his side. "The absence of an all-rounder like

Oram will definitely effect the team balance and of-course it is an advantage for us that he will not be available for the second Test but once again I want to say that our main focus is on our own performance."

In the first Test the Tigers have learnt that hard lesson on how tough it is to win a Test match but another effort like the first match would definitely be highly praised from all corners.

TEAMS

BANGLADESH (12): Tamim Iqbal, Zunaed Siddiqui, Mohammad Ashraful (captain), Mehrab Hossain, Mushfiqur Rahim, Shakib Al Hasan, Naem Islam, Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, Abdur Razzak, Shahadat Hossain, Mahbubul Alam Robin
NEW ZEALAND (From): Aaron Redmond, Jamie How, Jesse Ryder, Ross Taylor, Brendon McCullum, Daniel Flynn, Daniel Vettori (captain), Kyle Mills, Jeetan Patel, Lain O'Brien, Grant Elliott, Mark Gillespie, Tim Southee.



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

BRINGING DOWN THE HEAT: The New Zealand team engage in a relaxing swimming session at a local hotel after practice was cancelled yesterday.

MERDEKA CUP Vietnam face Malaysia in final

SPORTS REPORTER

Having stopped Myanmar's bid to reach the final of the Merdeka Cup for the third successive time, Malaysia will face Vietnam in today's final of the Merdeka Cup at the National Stadium, Bukit Jalil in Kuala Lumpur.

The national team will also look forward to keep the trophy home after their under-23 side lifted last year's crown beating Myanmar, who had won the 2006 title.

Malaysia maintained their

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5

Viqarunnisa win opener

SPORTS REPORTER

Viqarunnisa Noon School got off to a fine start in the first ever school football event for women in the country when they defeated Australian International School 2-1 in the opening match of the Dhaka Metropolitan Women's School football tournament at the Dhanmondi Women's Sports Complex yesterday.

Pinky put Viqarunnisa ahead after 16 minutes while Habiba sealed the victory three minutes later. AIS reduced the deficit through Saraf in the 25th minute.

Pinky was adjudged the most valuable player of the match.

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) president Kazi Salahuddin declared the 12-team meet open as the federation finally launched what seems to be a regular event in the domestic calendar for women.

The BFF's previous committee

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1

Gilchrist, Tendulkar hold 'clear the air' talks

Cricket

AFP, New Delhi

India's Sachin Tendulkar on Friday said Australian star Adam Gilchrist had phoned him to clarify his controversial comments about the batting great in a new book.

The World Cup-winning wicketkeeper-batsman, who retired from the game earlier this year, said in his autobiography that Tendulkar was "hard to find for a changing room handshake after we have beaten India".

Gilchrist also questioned Tendulkar's honesty throughout the acrimonious Harbhajan Singh-Andrew Symonds incident during the Test series between the two

cricketing powers in Australia last summer.

Australia claimed Harbhajan called him a monkey during a match but an independent tribunal later cleared the India off-spinner of the racial charge.

As tensions mounted over the book and ahead of the next Test between Australia and India, Tendulkar said the former wicketkeeper and batsman had made contact to explain the comments.

"Gilchrist called me up and clarified this issue," he told Times Now newchannel in India's western Pune.

"He said his comments have been taken out of context," he said without elaborating further.

Gilchrist's comments in the book, which is set to be released

next week, sparked angry reaction from Indian cricket officials earlier Friday.

Former national selector Dilip Vengsarkar branded them a gimmick to sell more copies. "It is very unfortunate that Gilchrist has made such comments," he told CNN-IBN newchannel.

"You get a lot of money to write a book in Australia and England. But you have to write something sensational to sell your book. It is a marketing strategy to sell his book," said the former Test batsman.

The Indian cricket board said Gilchrist's comments were off the mark.

"Gilchrist should have thought twice before making such comments about Tendulkar, who is a

SEE PAGE 18 COL 7

Pakistan sack Lawson

Cricket

AFP, Islamabad

The Pakistan Cricket Board sacked national coach Geoff Lawson on Friday, just 15 months after the former Australian paceman took up the position, the board's spokesman said.

"Geoff Lawson has been sacked. He has been given three months' severance pay," PCB spokesman Raza Rashid told AFP.

The move comes just three days after new PCB chairman Ijaz Butt said that Lawson's contract would not be renewed next year, on the grounds that Pakistan had "no utility" for him.

The 50-year-old Lawson was appointed Pakistan coach in July last year after Pakistan's first-

round defeat in the World Cup in the Caribbean in March.

Calls for his removal intensified when Pakistan lost to Sri Lanka in the final of the T20 four-nation event in Canada earlier this month.

Butt had said that Lawson could not be instantly removed for financial reasons.

Pakistan must now look for a new coach before a Test series against India at home in January-February next year.

Former coach and legendary ex-captain Javed Miandad is widely tipped as a leading candidate to succeed Lawson, according to several PCB sources, but there was no immediate confirmation.

The PCB has also sacked chief



GFOFF LAWSON