

Stalemate between Ctg giants

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Chittagong Abahani and Chittagong Mohammedan Sporting Club shared points in a goalless match of the City Cell B League here at the MA Aziz Stadium yesterday.

In the clash of the two popular local outfits, the yellow-jerseys have appeared slightly dominant over their black and white archivals. Sticking to their limits they kept the midfield under control and launched a few good attacks but failed to convert them into bigsmiles.

The Mohammedan players, who displayed a good show in their few previous outings, were not on song yesterday. Their only noticeable opportunity in the match came in the 28th minute when Antony spoiled his chance, after receiving an accurate pass from Ribon, by kicking the ball straight into the safe hands of Abahani keeper Toofan.

Abahani's Ronny was equally to blame for his failure in the 34th minute of the match. In a one-to-one situation, he couldn't keep his nerve and as result, the Mohammedan keeper Mamun had no problem to punch back his straight and feeble shot.

Abahani had another good chance in the 53rd minute but Mamun once again stood as the 'Great Wall of China' to save his team with a good stop from Mithun that he pushed out for a corner.

Sports for All

FROM PAGE 17
officer Col (ret) M Waliullah and deputy secretary general Ferdousi Khanam were present at the rally.

The next part of BOA's programme will be held in Sylhet on November 16.

PCB bans

FROM PAGE 17
Pakistan as he has joined the unrecognised Indian Cricket League (ICL), said Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) director of operations Zakir Khan.

The ICL on Wednesday confirmed that Yousuf had joined and would make his debut for the Lahore Badshahs on November 7.

"Yousuf's central contract has been terminated," said Zakir.

Soccer WC on

FROM PAGE 17
"Honestly speaking nobody cares about us. People are interested to talk about the football World Cup. We can catch the people's attention if we play competitive cricket in the series," said the Tigers skipper.

"Our main focus is on the one-day and Test series but anything positive in the Twenty20 match will help us get the confidence before the three-match one-day series," he said.

For Bangladesh skipper the same headache remained as his strike bowler Mashrafe Bin Mortaza again complaining of back pain.

TEAMS

Bangladesh (from): Mohammad Ashraful (captain), Tamim Iqbal, Zunaed Siddiqui, Imrul Kays, Shakib Al Hasan, Rokibul Hasan, Mushfiqur Rahim (wicketkeeper), Nayeem Islam, Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, Abdur Razzak, Syed Raseel, Shahadat Hossain.

South Africa: Johan Botha (captain), Loots Bosman, AB de Villiers (wicketkeeper), Jean-Paul Duminy, Herschelle Gibbs, Rory Kleinveldt, Johann Louw, Albie Morkel, Morne Morkel, Justin Ontong, Dale Steyn.

Manik eyes

FROM PAGE 17
hold on to my core and the team would be built around the 11 I had used mostly in Malaysia. There is little time for experiment.

"I am happy about our performance in Merdeka and hope to continue with the good works in Myanmar. Myanmar will be difficult on home ground. Indonesia are a far better team than us but I don't know whether they are going to send the national team or not. Whatever, our success depends not on the formation, rather on how the footballers play on the certain day."

Dhaka, Rajshahi

FROM PAGE 17
BARISAL: 385 and second innings 182-4 dec (Uttam 26, Faruque 100), Bashar 25, Imran 5, Nasir 7, Arafa 1*, Mukhtar 2-20, Tariq 1-28, Rezaul 1-41.

CHITTAGONG: First innings 392-9 in 131 overs (Salahuddin 51, Nafis 26, Ashraful 8, Tariq 37, Kamrul 33, Faisal 127, Minto 42, Rezaul 32, Mukhtar 2, Tariq 5, Sajid 2-64, Tariqul 2-104, Nasir 3-61, Imran 1-21).

Result: Match drawn.
RAJSHAHI: 117 and 263.

SYLHET: 172 all out and second innings 158 all out in 67.5 overs (Imtiaz 7, Saikat 33, Mithun 18, Ejaz 22, Rajin 20, Rahman 0, Kamrul 10, Nabil 17, Monir 0, Rashedur 6*, Roy 0, Shahzad 2-25, Shafiqul 25, Saqlain 3-34, Alamgir 1-11).

Result: Rajshahi won by 40 runs.



An action from yesterday's Chittagong derby between Abahani and Mohammedan at the MA Aziz Stadium.

Ponting practises toss

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

The toss has been so important in this series that in the lead-up to the deciding fourth Test the Australians practised their calling. It was a short, light-hearted exercise, like a game of two-up on Anzac Day, and at the end it was revealed that the coin was two-headed. After three guesses Ricky Ponting was one of two guys with a perfect record. He always calls heads, and is desperate for a change in luck on Thursday morning at the Vidarbha Cricket Association's new stadium.

Ponting has lost the past two tosses and quickly watched his team fall behind, and he does not need the bat-first-and-dominate theory to occur as they push to level the series and retain the Border-Gavaskar Trophy. "I went down and had a look at the wicket on Tuesday, it's rock hard like concrete and there's no grass on it," Ponting said. "With no history to the wicket, we don't know if it's going to bounce, or stay low, or what it's going to do. One thing I know is that it is going to spin, it's so bare. Hopefully we win the toss."

While Ponting has no control over the fall of the coin, he is also uncertain as to what will happen in the morning when he walks out to the toss. Gautam Gambhir's appeal against a one-match suspension for elbowing Shane Watson in the third Test in Delhi was turned down by

the ICC on Tuesday, but the Indian board has "rejected" the ruling.

"It's going to be an awkward situation for me to be put in tomorrow (Thursday) if I get out there for the toss and the guy that's been rubbed out has his name on the team sheet," Ponting said. "I need to be clear, and Cricket Australia needs to be clear, on that."

India, who lead the series 1-0, also have a new captain in Mahendra Singh Dhoni after the exit of the leg-spinner Anil Kumble on Sunday, while VVS Laxman is playing his 100th Test and Sourav Ganguly will join Kumble in retirement after the game. Ponting hoped all the off-field issues of his opponents would help his side.

"One thing it (the Gambhir decision) does do is create a bit of confusion around their team," Ponting said. "They'll obviously have a lot of distractions going on. For us, it's pretty plain sailing, we've just got to work out the best way to play in these conditions."

The decision over the final XI will be difficult, but it appears the off-spinner Jason Krejza will make his debut. Australia have taken 14, 13 and 12 wickets over the first three games and it is the main reason they are in such an unfamiliar position.

"We've got to look at our overall balance," Ponting said. "If we're going to get Krejza into the side does he come in for White or one of our quicks? It's the big decision we've got to make."

"Mitchell Johnson is our leading wicket-taker and Brett Lee got

better and better in the last game. Stuart Clark did an excellent job for us, bowling his 30 overs for 50 or 60 in the first innings, and that is a pretty important role to play in a team over here if you've got guys that are striking at the other end."

Lee, Michael Clarke and Doug Bollinger were struggling with upset stomachs on Tuesday but are expected to be available for selection. Ponting has been impressed with Krejza, who he said had got better after going wicket-less and giving up 199 runs in a warm-up game before the first Test.

Whatever Australia decide, it will be a risk. If Krejza and White are used in tandem, or if Peter Siddle comes in for his second game, it will steal experience from the fast bowling unit, which has regularly faltered. It is an unenviable choice for such an important contest.

To add to Australia's problems, they know very little about the ground, which is being used for the first time. The squad went to the stadium outside of Nagpur on Wednesday afternoon for a short look at the conditions that will help determine whether they leave India with a prize.

"This is probably as big a Test match as a lot of us have played," Ponting said. "Being 1-0 down with a match to play is a position that a lot of us haven't been in before. We pride ourselves on playing well in big games and this is certainly a big game for us. There is a great opportunity for us to stand up and play better cricket than we've played in the first three Test matches."

BCCI protests ban

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

The Indian board appears to be heading for a confrontation with the ICC over the one-Test ban on Gautam Gambhir. While the BCCI has rejected the decision of the appeals commissioner, Justice Albie Sachs, to uphold the ban, and issued a strongly worded protest, the ICC has said the "matter is closed".

"The ICC Code of Conduct is a robust and independent process designed to achieve a fair and proper outcome," Haroon Lorgat, the ICC's chief executive, said. "Although we have received an objection letter from the BCCI, there is nothing more that we can do as the appeal commissioner's decision is a final and binding decision."

The BCCI, in a statement, said the order "seems to have been pre-decided" as it had been passed without affording the player an opportunity of personal hearing and legal representation, without according to his request for certain documents/recordings to be given to him and also denying him an extension of time.

In its letter to the ICC, written by board secretary N Srinivasan, the

BCCI said the order was void as being in violation of the mandatory provisions of the rules and/or the principles of natural justice. However, the ICC Code of Conduct - for players and officials for matches other than the World Cup, Champions Trophy and Under-19 World Cup - says the "decision of the appeals commissioner shall be final and binding". It gives the commissioner absolute authority in such situations, including the right to decide whether oral representations should be permitted.

"Oral representations (either in person or by telephone conference as determined in the discretion of the appeals commissioner) should be permitted unless there are good reasons for relying on written submissions only," the rules state. "Where it is available, he shall view video tape of the incident which is the subject matter of the appeal."

Earlier, the ICC rules - which were changed in 2007 - provided for a dispute resolution committee to handle such protests, a provision that BCCI utilised in 2005 when a six-ODI ban on Sourav Ganguly, the then India captain, for slow over-rates during an ODI series against Pakistan was reduced to a four-match penalty. Ironically, in that case, it was Justice Sachs who over-

turned the adjudicator's decision to uphold the ban by Chris Broad, the then match referee.

Gambhir was banned for one Test by Broad after he pleaded guilty to a charge of not conducting play "within the spirit of the game as well as within the laws of cricket" during the third Test against Australia in Delhi, a Level 2 offence under the ICC Code of Conduct. The incident that led to the ban occurred in the 51st over of India's first innings on the first day, when Gambhir, who had verbal altercations with Shane Watson, appeared to elbow the bowler during a run. He was told of his ban before the third day's play after which he filed an appeal.

When making his decision, Broad took into account Gambhir's previous fine for running into Pakistan's Shahid Afridi during an ODI in Kanpur last year. He had been fined 65 per cent of the match fee after he was found guilty of a Level 2 charge of inappropriate and deliberate physical contact between players as well as a Level 1 charge of not conducting himself within the spirit of the game.

Justice Sachs, Cricket South Africa's representative on the ICC Code of Conduct Commission, is a senior judge on the Constitutional Court of South Africa.

Latif exits as Malik enters

CRICINFO, undated

Rashid Latif, the former Pakistan captain, has resigned as wicketkeeping coach of Pakistan's National Cricket Academy, citing the appointment of Salim Malik as the academy's head coach as the reason for his decision.

Latif expressed his shock at Malik's appointment in a resignation letter to the PCB chairman Ijaz Butt. "Since I was the main figure in the match-fixing inquiry after which Mr. Malik was awarded a life ban which was overturned last month therefore I have no other choice but to step down as the wicket-keeping coach," he said.

Latif began working as a wicketkeeper coach for the NCA in June this year, hired initially for three years to nurture and groom young talent in the country.

School kabaddi from December

UNB, Dhaka

The first-ever National Standard Chartered School Kabaddi for boys and girls will begin in the city next month.

The competition, sponsored by the Standard Chartered Bank, will begin in the last week of December.

The schools interested to take part in the competition have been requested to send their entries to the general secretary of the Bangladesh Kabaddi Federation on letterhead pads of their respective institution by November 20.

The federation will bear the cost of food, accommodation and conveyance of all the participants.

Rubel, Nadim star for F'ganj

UNB, Dhaka

Farashganj Sporting Club drubbed Shishu Kishore Sangha 7-0 in the Green Delta First Division League at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Rubel and Nadim scored three goals each while Zahed netted the other goal for the winner. All seven strikes came in the second half.

In the day's other match at the same venue, Barnak Samaj beat Uttara

Hockey Club 4-0 with two goals from Ivan and one each from Kawsar and Alamgir.

Sanjid brace sinks Euro

UNB, Dhaka

Two swift goals from Sanjid powered Kawan Bazar Pragati Sangha to a 3-1 win over Euro Famous Club in the Second Division Football League at the Kamalapur Stadium yesterday.

Sanjid struck twice in the space of three minutes that gave Kawan Bazar the lead and took them to 3-1 after the match was deadlocked at 1-1 in the first half.

Ashiqur Prat Pragati Sangha ahead in the 11th minute before Rubel restored parity for Euro Famous in the 27th minute.

In today's match, Uttara Baridhara Club take on BG Press at the same venue.

BFF inspired

FROM PAGE 17
picked the best team in South Asia," said Prem Chand adding that his organisation was interested to work at the grassroots and youth development in districts, villages and schools.

BFF president Kazi Salahuddin thinks it was the beginning of a 'long-term relationship' with Nokia. "We are proud to have a brand like Nokia with us. Many parties were interested about the national team but we have chosen a very popular brand," said Salahuddin.

"It's also very encouraging that they are thinking long-term association with us. We will soon sit to see what we can do together."

BFF senior vice-president Abdus Salam Murshedi and vice-president Badal Roy were also present on the occasion.

Match of many

FROM PAGE 17
said his team needed to be at their best in a match they must win to retain the Border-Gavaskar Trophy.

"Being 1-0 down in a series with one match to play is a position a lot of us have not been before. This is probably the biggest test for all of us," said Ponting.

"We pride ourselves in playing well in big games and this is certainly a big game. This is a great opportunity for all of us to stand up and play better cricket than we've played in the first three Tests."

"It's the one that we obviously have to win and I think looking back at last week (third Test), we all are pretty happy at the way we competed. The last three and a half days we played very good Test match cricket."

Australia put in an impressive batting performance under pressure in the previous match, scoring 577 in reply to India's mammoth first-innings total of 613-7 declared. "We know we have to play better cricket than we played in the first three Tests if we have to level the series, but there are plenty of positives to take from the Delhi Test," he said.

Ponting said Gambhir's absence could affect India's chances of making a solid start.

"Gambhir and Virender Sehwag have been responsible for getting India off to a good start. Without him (Gambhir) it gives us an opportunity to put pressure on their middle order," he said.

On their last tour in 2004, Australia won their first Test series in India since 1969. They retained the Border-Gavaskar Trophy in an ill-tempered series on home ground earlier this year.

TEAMS

INDIA: Mahendra Singh Dhoni (captain), Murali Vijay, Virender Sehwag, Rahul Dravid, Sachin Tendulkar, Sourav Ganguly, VVS Laxman, Harbhajan Singh, Zaheer Khan, Amit Mishra, Ishant Sharma. **AUSTRALIA (from):** Ricky Ponting (captain), Matthew Hayden, Simon Katich, Michael Hussey, Michael Clarke, Shane Watson, Brad Haddin, Cameron White, Jason Krejza, Stuart Clark, Brett Lee, Mitchell Johnson.

VVS senses special 100th

Cricket

AFP, Nagpur

Indian batsman Venkatsai Laxman on Wednesday said he was hoping for a "special" performance in his 100th Test against Australia, the team he has smashed more centuries past than any other.

Laxman has scored six of his 13 hundreds against Australia, including two double-centuries, and is only the second Indian after Sachin Tendulkar to have made more than 2,000 runs against them.

"I have always enjoyed playing against them (Australia)," said Laxman, who on Thursday will become the eighth Indian to play 100 Tests.

"It gives you a lot of satisfaction to do well against the top side in the world. They have always been number one since I started playing international cricket."

"It's been an amazing journey. It's a great moment for me and for all the people associated in this journey of mine. I hope I can make it special."

Laxman's liking for the Australian bowling began in 2000

when he hammered a robust 167 in Sydney for his maiden Test hundred.

His best came the following year at Kolkata when he hit 281 under pressure to turn the second Test against Steve Waugh's Australia upside down, eventually setting up India's win after the follow-on.

He looks at his fluent best against Australia, having been involved in four massive partnerships against them.

The middle-order batsman put on 376 with Rahul Dravid in 2001 (Kolkata), 353 with Tendulkar in 2004 (Sydney), 303 with Dravid in 2003 (Adelaide) and 278 with Gautam Gambhir last month in Delhi.

Laxman, 34, is a spectators' delight when on song, with timing being his hallmark. His wristy shots and impressive footwork have often reduced the opposition to a state of helplessness.

Yet, he has never felt as secure as his renowned middle-order teammates -- Tendulkar, Dravid and Sourav Ganguly -- since making his Test debut in 1996 against South Africa at home.

He was often criticised for not converting solid starts into big

innings in the early stages of his career, taking three years to score his first Test century.

Laxman was also pushed up and down the batting order in the initial years, his first hundred coming as an opener.

He was upset when the media reported after a Test series defeat in Sri Lanka in August that it was time for veterans, including Anil Kumble, Dravid, Tendulkar and Ganguly, to make their retirement plans.

"It hurts when people criticise," Laxman said after scoring a double-century in the third Test in Delhi last week.

"Don't over-respect us, but we don't want people downgrading our contributions for so many years. Everyone keeps advising us to retire, but each of us is mature and responsible enough to make his own decision."

Kumble retired after the last Test while Ganguly has already announced he will quit after Thursday's match.

The hosts lead 1-0 in the four-Test series following their 320-run win in the second match in Mohali. The Tests in Bangalore and Delhi were drawn.

Yousuf wants both

Cricket

AFP, New Delhi

Star batsman Mohammad Yousuf on Wednesday said he was still keen to play for Pakistan despite signing up with a rebel Twenty20 league in India.

Yousuf, 34, was set to stage a comeback for Pakistan in next week's three matches against the West Indies in Abu Dhabi after missing a Twenty20 event in Canada last month because of visa problems.

His name featured in the 15-man squad announced on Monday, but shortly afterwards it was revealed that he had signed for the Indian Cricket League (ICL).

"I had a misunderstanding with the ICL. Now that has been sorted out and I will play for them," Yousuf said at a press conference here.

"But I still want to play for my country. This matter is in the hands of the (Pakistan) board. If I get a call-up, I will definitely represent

the country."

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has a strict policy of banning all players who have joined the unofficial ICL, which is backed by India's largest media group, Zee TV.

About 15 Pakistani players, including former captain Inzamam-ul-Haq, joined the league last year and were barred from playing international and national cricket by the PCB.

Yousuf, whose 1,788 runs in 2006 is a calendar-year record, previously signed a contract with the ICL after he was omitted from Pakistan's Twenty20 World Cup squad in September last year.

But the PCB later convinced him to tear up the contract and instead signs with the official Indian Premier League (IPL).

The ICL filed a legal case against Yousuf in Mumbai for breach of contract while the IPL also threatened to take him to court.

ICL business head Himanshu Mody said they had dropped the case against Yousuf.

"We have settled the case with Yousuf. We have signed him for a

three-year deal," Mody said.

He also claimed that the IPL could not take Yousuf to court because the batsman had not inked any deal with them.

"Yousuf has not taken any money from the IPL. There was no agreement between the two, so the IPL cannot take any action against him. However, if something does come up, we will stand by Yousuf," Mody said.

Former India all-rounder and ICL chairman Kapil Dev said the league was hopeful of gaining official recognition soon.

"I don't see any difference between the ICL and IPL, both are private bodies. We are waiting for just one confirmation," he said.

Yousuf, part of the Lahore Badshahs team, will make his ICL debut in western Ahmedabad on Saturday with a match against Dhaka Warriors, which comprises players from Bangladesh.

Yousuf has played 79 Tests and 269 one-day internationals for Pakistan since making his debut in 1998.

Jelena wins Serb battle

Tennis

INTERNET, undated

Jelena Jankovic enjoyed her first victory over Ana Ivanovic for three years to open her Sony Ericsson WTA Tour Championships campaign with a 6-3-6-4 victory.

"It was a pretty strong performance," Jankovic said after beating her fellow Serb for only the second time in eight meetings. "It was very windy and not easy to play but I was strong today and very focused."

"Since the last time we played, at the French Open, I have improved so much. My game has gone to another level."

The two Serbs, playing outdoors for the first time since the US Open in September often produced good quality but also showed a lot of inconsistency, particularly in the early stages.

Ivanovic's forehead was especially potent, with some of her strokes taking the breath away.

The less erratic Jankovic played aggressively from the baseline and was also successful on her occasional forays to the net.

Jankovic made the better start, breaking for 2-0 and holding a break point for 4-0 before Ivanovic settled.

A fine crosscourt forehand gave

Ivanovic a break in the fifth game but her opponent stopped her in her tracks by forcing a backhand error to break for 4-2.

Jankovic then broke to love to begin the second set. This time Ivanovic levelled at 3-3 before the world number one replied with another break.

That was enough to effectively end the contest although there was drama before the end.

At 5-3 Ivanovic suddenly stopped in mid-rally and leaned on her knees as if in pain before returning to her chair for medical attention.

She resumed, held serve by winning the next two points before Jankovic served out the match.

"I just started feeling dizzy a little," said Ivanovic. "I think it's maybe humidity and I was probably dehydrated."

"I just felt so weak. I had to stop."

In the tournament's first match, and the same White Group as the Serbian battle, Vera Zvonareva enjoyed a 6-2 6-3 victory over Svetlana Kuznetsova as she handled the windy conditions in the Qatar capital better.

Kuznetsova recently left her base in Barcelona where she has spent much of her life since the age of 14, returning home to St Petersburg in the hope that it will

give her the mental lift her career needs.

But her straight sets loss to Zvonareva again produced a feeling of talent unfulfilled, especially after three missed break points in the first set.

Then two games from the end Kuznetsova attempted a forehand drive winner from