



IN MARAUDING MOOD: Abahani captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza plays a slog-sweep during his blistering knock of 32 off 12 balls in a Premier Cricket League match against Partex at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

Day of missed chances

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Mehrab Hossain missed a hundred for four runs but the Old DOHS captain could still afford to leave the near miss behind for two good reasons. Firstly his effort confirmed his side's fourth straight win in the Premier Division Cricket League and secondly the 38-run defeat of Mohammedan meant they crossed a big hurdle in the race for the title.

The defeat at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium on the other hand can be best described as worst possible start for Mohammedan and that too after their Twenty20 triumph earlier this month.

It was Mohammedan's second defeat against a win and a tie that put the Dhaka giants in a dicey situation they had never been in before.

It was however a day of missed opportunities as three batsmen perished in the nineties and for Abahani's young opener Rony Talukdar it was heart-breaking. Rony was run out while only one run short of what could have been his second ton in four games.

But Rony's stroke-filled knock and captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza's all-round show gave defending champions Abahani a massive 111-run victory over Partex at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

It was the third victory for Abahani in four games.

Joint leaders Biman also meant business as they thrashed Victoria by 106-run at the BKSP

in Savar for their fourth successive win.

DOHS-MOHAMMEDAN

Opener Imtiaz Hossain set the tone with a quick-fire 29-ball 42 that contained seven sweetly-timed fours after DOHS won the toss and decided to bat in their attempt to put up a massive total.

Left-handed Mehrob build on the good start with 96 runs as DOHS put up a fighting total of 251 runs. The national middle-order batsman smote nine boundaries in his 121-ball essay before being dismissed by his Mohammedan counterpart Sohrawordi Shuvo, the left-arm spinner who was the most successful bowler with 33-3.

When everybody was looking forward to a good match after DOHS's challenging target, Mohammedan gave up without a fight. A defeat was written on the wall when Mohammedan lost four wickets for 44 runs with new-ball bowler Rashedur claiming two quick wickets.

The resistance came from number five batsman Marshal Ayub but his 103-ball 81 that contained five fours and two sixes was not enough as Mohammedan were bundled out for 213 runs.

Mehrab was adjudged man-of-the-match for his valuable knock but Abul Hassan also played a vital role as the medium pacer followed up his 36-ball 30 with three wickets for 45 runs.

ABAHANI-PARTEX

Abahani perhaps provided the best opening pair in this year's league so far. It was evident again when the left-right combination of Tamim Iqbal and Rony produced 102 runs

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ASIA CUP HOCKEY German coach for nat'l team

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) confirmed German hockey coach Peter Gerhard Rach's services until



PETER GERHARD RACH

the Asia Cup in May. The 60-year-old coach, who arrived in Dhaka on Tuesday, has agreed to work initially for two months with the Bangladeshi players without any remuneration.

"We will just provide the local hospitality like accom

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DIV I CRICKET BD Boys win thriller

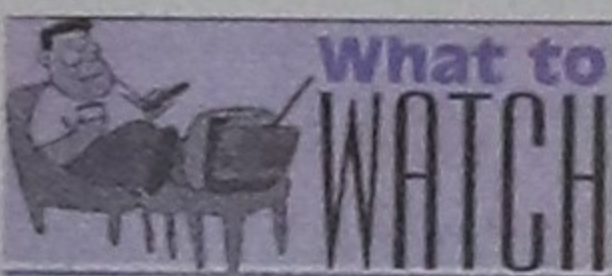
SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Boys beat Uttara Sporting Club by one wicket in an exciting First Division Cricket League match at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium yesterday.

Nuruzzaman's four-wicket haul enabled Boys to bowl out Uttara for 197 in 48.4 overs. The winners then reached their target with an over and a wicket to spare, with Rahe top scoring with 68.

Jatrabari notched their second win when they beat Orient SC by 22 runs at the Dhaka University Ground. On a slow turning wicket, Jatrabari batted first and made

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TEN Sports

West Indies v England
Third Test, Day 5
Live from 8:00pm

ESPN

Sportscentre India
Sports News
Live at 8:30pm



Premier Div Cricket League
BKSP v City Club
Venue: Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium, Mirpur
Young Pegasus v Gazi Tank
Venue: Fatullah Cricket Stadium
Surjo Torun v Cricket Coaching School
Venue: BKSP



Haroon Lorgat

(ICC chief executive)
"We are committed to staging the World Cup in Asia. I am aware of the current situation but the World Cup is still a long way away. It is too early to be concerned but we are monitoring the situation on a regular basis."
On 2011 Cricket World Cup.

WI on the ropes

Cricket

AFP, St John's

England were in full control of the third Test after career-best bowling from Graeme Swann carried them to a 281-run first innings lead over West Indies on Tuesday.

England -- who trail the hosts 1-0 -- were 31 for one in their second innings when stumps were drawn on the third day at the Antigua Recreation Ground.

This followed Swann taking 5-57 from 24 overs, as West Indies were dismissed for 285, replying to England's first innings total of 566 for nine declared.

Ramnaresh Sarwan hit the top score of 94 for West Indies, and there were supporting knocks of 38 from Devon Smith, 27 from Ryan Hinds, and 22 from Daren Powell.

England decided not to enforce the follow-on, and suffered an early loss, when their captain Andrew Strauss was caught at second slip for 14 off the fiery Fidel Edwards.

The visitors chose to send James Anderson in as night-watchman and he was fortunate to have survived. On four, he edged Edwards to third slip, where Hinds muffed a simple chance.

Earlier, England toiled on the hard, easy-paced ARG pitch and took all their chances after West Indies continued from their overnight total of 55 for one.

Before lunch, it was Swann's off-spin bowling, rather than the fast bowlers that provided England with two wickets, as West Indies reached 132 for three at the interval.

West Indies lost the wickets of Smith and Powell in the second hour before lunch.

The ARG pitch, as

expected, played a few tricks, but England's bowlers were not accurate enough, and the West Indies' overnight pair of Smith and night-watchman Powell studiously navigated the first hour.

But Swann provided the breakthrough, when Smith tried an ugly-looking slog at a flighted delivery and was bowled by the second ball after the drinks break.

Strauss continued to rotate his bowlers, particularly the fast bowlers from the southern end of the ground in an effort

to make use of a ridge in the middle of the pitch which made batting difficult.

But Swann was allowed to wheel away from the northern end and got his second scalp, when Powell was caught at slip playing defensively forward in the last 15 minutes before the interval.

The West Indies fast bowler had shown enormous restraint in a little over two hours spent at the crease before Swann outfoxed him.

After lunch, England

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England off-spinner Graeme Swann is in his delivery stride during the third day of the third Test against West Indies at the Antigua Recreation Ground (ARG) in St John's on Tuesday.

PHOTO: AFP

LOCAL SNIPPETS

SPORTS REPORTER

Saai Naveen of India beat Taipei's Jui Mao 5-7, 6-2, 6-0 in the fourth round of the Dhaka Bank 23rd International Junior Tennis Championship at the Ramna National Tennis Complex yesterday.

Besides, China's Wang, India's Jayaprakash and Nakireddi, Britain's Mathew and David Thomson, Taipei's Liang and Philippines' Patrombon advanced to the boys' singles quarterfinals by winning their respective matches.

In the girls' singles Thailand's KumKhum and Uppapong, Taipei's Lee Hua Chen and Tsao, Korea's Hong, India's Nova, Sri Lanka's Jayawickrema and Netherlands' Schuur won their games to qualify for the quarterfinals.

The quarterfinal matches will be held today at the same venue.

WOMEN'S CHESS

IWM Rani Hamid of Titus Club and Sharmin Sultana of 12 Soft Solutions are jointly leading the points table with 4 points each after the end of fourth round in the Begum Laila 3rd Open FIDE Rating Women Chess Tournament at the chess federation hall room.

WFM Samima Akter Liza and Nazrana Khan Eva of Overseas School of Chess and Mehnaz Ahmed Mithila are in 2nd position with 3 points each.

In the 4th round games Rani Hamid beat Samima Akter, Shirin beat Masuda Begum, Eva beat Protiva Talukdar, Mithila beat Jahana Haque, Shamiha drew with Ahely Sarkar and Zakia Sultana drew with Amena Begum.

The 5th round games will start today from 12.00 pm at the same venue.

DIV III FOOTBALL

Dilkusha SC beat Dhaka Junior SC 1-0 in the Citycell 3rd Division Football League at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Sepoy Mohammad Mostafa Stadium at Kamalapur.

Shaju Miah scored the lone goal in the 54th minute.

In another match, Muslim Institute and Jirabo SC split points in a 2-2 draw at the same venue.

Shujon and Riazuddin scored for Muslim Institute and Avi and Obaidur netted for Jirabo.

In today's matches, Anirban meet Rahmatganj and Shwadheenata KC face-off with Tongi KC.

MILITARY SPORTS

International Military Sports Council held a Day Run at the Bangladesh Army Stadium in Banani. The 3.5 km run started from Bangladesh Army Stadium and finished at Choppers Den in Dhaka Cantonment.

Chief of General Staff of Bangladesh Army

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WOMEN'S FOOTBALL Ansar destroy Rajshahi

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Ansar made a flying start in the final round of the Citycell National Women Football Championship when they crushed Rajshahi 11-0 at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Rawshanara scored four goals in the 14th, 36th, 65th and 74th minutes, Nubai scored another hat-trick in the 47th, 63rd and 78th minutes, Kabina also struck a hat-trick in the 54th, 59th and 69th minutes while Suinu Pru netted the other in the 48th minute.

Eight teams, who emerged zonal champions and runners-ups in the preliminary round, are participating in the final round split into two groups.

The semifinals will be held on February 26 while the final on February 28.

State Minister for Youth and Sports Ahad Ali Sarker formally opened the 11-day final round. Football Federation president Kazi Salahuddin, women's football committee chairman Sirajul Islam Bachchu and deputy chairman Mahfuza Akter Kiron were present.

Riz Events to get Pak series sponsorship rights

SPORTS REPORTER

Riz Events, a concern of Axiom Technologies, is going to get the sponsorship rights for next month's cricket series against Pakistan.

The Pakistan team will arrive in Dhaka on March 7 to play five one-day internationals and two Twenty20 matches in Dhaka and Chittagong.

It was learned that Riz Events has already sold the title rights to Basundhara Group.

Bangladesh Cricket Board will confirm the details of the deal in a day or two.

The man who hit cricket for six

AFP, London

When Allen Stanford unveiled his 20 million dollar winner takes all Twenty20 match between his Caribbean Superstars and England, many in the cricket world were stunned and appalled.

But the allegations levelled by the US Securities and Exchange Commission on Tuesday that Stanford and his companies were involved in "a fraud of shocking magnitude" worth more than nine billion dollars threaten to have consequences far beyond the confines of the sport.

The SEC charged Stanford and his companies with "orchestrating a fraudulent" investment scheme centering

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A mid-pitch action of the Citycell National Women's Football Championship final round match between Rajshahi and Bangladesh Ansar at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

'India better prepared'

Cricket

AFP, New Delhi

India will be better prepared to tackle conditions in New Zealand than they were on their losing tour seven years ago, former India coach John Wright said on Wednesday.

On their last tour of New Zealand in 2002, India lost both Tests inside three days on seaming wickets prepared to suit the home team bowlers, before losing the one-day series 5-2.

India will tour New Zealand from Friday for two Twenty20 internationals, five one-day matches and three Tests.

New Zealander Wright, who was India's coach on that disastrous tour, said the Indians had improved vastly and were capable of turning the tables this time.

"The advantage India have this time is that, whatever conditions are rolled out by the hosts, they have the attack to make the most of them," the former Kiwi opener told the www.cricketinravana.com website.

"They have a lot of firepower to call on and I'd imagine New Zealand will want to do just the opposite this time and ensure the pitches are pretty flat.

"India will possibly want to settle a few old scores after what happened in 2002-03," the 54-year-old said.

Wright, who coached India from 2000-2005, said pace spearheads Ishant Sharma and Zaheer Khan were a serious threat to batsmen the world over.

"India must be very excited about his (Sharma's) potential," he said. "We've only really seen him bowling in subcontinental or Australian conditions, where it's pretty hard work for the pacemen.

"You'd expect once he gets to a place like New Zealand or England, where the conditions favour the seamers more, he'll be at least as influential again. You can't overplay his importance right now."

Wright said what set apart the current Indian side from its predecessors was the vastly-improved bowling attack.

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Indian cricketers led by captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni (3rd from L) pose during the launch of a new team kit in Mumbai on Wednesday ahead of their tour to New Zealand for two Twenty20 internationals, five one-day matches and three Tests.

PHOTO: AFP