

SUPER CUP Plate final today

SPORTS REPORTER

The Citycell Super Cup plate stage final between Sheikh Russel and Farashganj will be held at the Bangabandhu National Stadium today.

The match will kick off at 5pm.

Russel eliminated Chittagong Abahani in the first semifinal by 5-3 in tie-breaker while Farashganj won the second semifinal against Rahmatganj by same margin, also in tiebreaker.

The plate champions will receive Tk 4 lakhs and the runners-up Tk 3 lakhs.

LOCAL SNIPPETS

SPORTS REPORTER

The games of the preliminary phase of the Mercantile Bank 35th National Chess Championship start today at 3.30pm at the Bangladesh Chess Federation hall room.

More than 100 selected players from all districts, Dhaka city, public universities and other affiliated organisations, national junior, sub-junior and women championships are participating in the phase. The event will be held in an 11-round Swiss League system and nine players will qualify for the final phase. Five Grand Masters of the country - Niaz Murshed, Ziaur Rahman, Enamul Hossain, Abdullah Al Rakib and Reefat Bin Sattar will participate directly in the final phase.

WOMEN'S FOOTBALL
Ansar will meet Jessore in the semifinal of the Citycell National Women's Football Championship at the

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Dhaka Mohammedan goalkeeper Aminul dives to his right to save a penalty from Chittagong Mohammedan's Nasir (not in picture) during the tiebreakers in yesterday's semifinal of the Citycell Super Cup at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

PHOTO: STAR

Two rookies on WI team

CRICINFO, undated

Uncapped Barbados batsman Dale Richards and Trinidad fast bowler Ravi Rampaul have been included in the West Indies squad for the third and fourth one-day internationals against England.

Richards, an opening batsman, replaced Devon Smith who did not play in either of the first two ODIs. He was also in the squad for the first Test against England but had to withdraw because of a foot injury.

Rampaul replaced the Daren Powell who has been out of form during the contests against England. Powell took only six wickets in the five-Test series at nearly 70 apiece and took 1 for 27 in five overs in the first ODI. Rampaul, who had played 30 ODIs, last appeared for West Indies on the tour of South Africa in early 2008.

The five-ODI series between West Indies and England is

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Pegasus down to First Division

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

City Club's maiden Premier League win hastened Young Pegasus's plunge into First Division Cricket after a 26-run defeat at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

Young Pegasus failed to repeat their rescue act of last year as they folded for 229 runs in 47.1 overs in reply to City's 255 for eight.

Both clubs will play in the lower division next season. In 2007-08, Pegasus fended off Sonargaon Cricketers (now known as Motijheel T&T Club) and Kalabagan Krira Chakra in the relegation league.

Jupiter Ghosh and Pegasus's Pakistani recruit Faisal Javed gave them the perfect start in the chase, adding 101 for the first wicket in just 21 overs. But as soon as the stand was broken, Arman Haider laid into the middle-order, snapping up three wickets for 23 from his ten overs. Rasel Al Mamun also took two wickets as the Mohammadpur-based club gave in to their fate.

Golam Hossain also took two wickets while Shafaq Al Jabir, Sirajullah Khadem and Rasheedul Islam all took a wicket each.

Jubair Ahmed smashed three boundaries and a six in his 41-ball 37 while Iftekhar Nayeem added to the late drama but when he was caught off left-arm pacer Khadem, Pegasus were bowled out with 17 balls to spare.

City's wicketkeeper-batsman Rabiul Karim ensured nothing

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BKSP school champs again

SPORTS REPORTER

BKSP school team became champions of the Standard Chartered Young Tigers under-16 national cricket tournament at the City Club ground yesterday.

The country's lone sports institute defeated Kamarpara High School by a massive margin of 155 runs in the final.

BKSP batted first after winning the toss and amassed 272 for six in 50 overs. Abid Hossain smashed 96 while Liton made 55 and Mamun blazed 44. Nur Mohammad took two wickets for the Kamarpara school.

The day got even better for Abid as he took three wickets for 22 runs. Mamun took three wickets too as Kamarpara were bowled out for 117 in 36.4 overs.

Abid was named man-of-the-final.

BRIEF SCORES

BKSP: 272-6 in 50 overs (Abid 96, Mamun 44, Liton 55; Nur 226).
KAMARPARA: 117 all out in 36.4 Overs (Billal 24; Abid 322, Mamun 331).
Result: BKSP won by 155 runs.

BSJA hands out 7-year awards

SPORTS REPORTER

It turned into a get-together for the sports personalities at the NSC Tower on occasion of the Kool BSJA Awards 2002-2008 yesterday.

Star sportsmen, coaches, organisers, sponsors, all gathered to attend a colourful function organised by Bangladesh Sports Journalists Association (BSJA), which gave away awards to sports personalities of the last seven years.

Information and Cultural Affairs Minister Abul Kalam Azad graced the function as chief guest while State Minister for Youth and Sports Ahad Ali Sarker and Managing Director of Square Toiletries Anjan Chowdhury Pintu were also present as special guests.

For their brilliant contributions in different fields a total of 111 sports personalities were honoured in the function.

There was a pleasant surprise for national cricket all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan, who was nominated for the sportsman of the year 2008, as his 21st birthday was celebrated at the function.

World number one all-rounder in ODIs, Shakib celebrated his birthday in a buoyant mood by cutting a birthday cake in presence of the sports personalities from different disciplines.

"I was prepared to enjoy with an award in the function but never thought that such a big surprise was waiting for me," said an excited Shakib.

RECIPIENTS FOR THE YEAR 2008: cricketer Shakib Al Hasan (sportsman of the year), Mashrafe Bin Mortaza (cricket), Arman Aziz (football),

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MSC-Abahani final

SPORTS REPORTER



Citycell SUPER CUP

yesterday.

A 79th minute goal by substitute Akbar Hossain Ridon gave the visitors a solitary goal win in the second leg of the second semifinal at the Bangabandhu National Stadium as the battle entered extra period after a 1-1 aggregate in the two-leg semis.

Both sides failed to score in the next 30 minutes and the trend continued in the tie-breakers as Dhaka Mohammedan won 3-2 after the first five attempts from the semifinalists went down the drains.

National number one goalkeeper Aminul dived both ways to parry spotkicks by Chittagong skipper Camara, Nasir and Pavel while Nigerian duo John Godwin and Dami Emmanuelle failed to hit the mark for the local side.

Godwin shot wide while Emmanuelle was denied by Mamun at the Chittagong goal as the crowd began to feel the heat of a nerve wrecking shootout.

However, Maruf, Sharif and Hazem

Mahmud, the Egyptian midfielder who took the final shot of the match, scored to keep the Dhaka giants' dream to win the Tk one-crore championship prize.

Raphael and Shawkat finally beat Aminul but that was not enough for Nazrul Islam Ledu's side to break the monopoly of the teams from the capital.

The port city side, who got the black and white strip, needed a two-goal win to qualify for the final directly and dominated the show. Liberian midfielder Doe came close after 15 minutes but his powerful drive was blocked by Emmanuelle inside the area. Touhid reached the rebound quickly but his effort sailed over the Mohammedan bar.

Maruful Haque's side -- missing their key striker and B. League's top scorer Alamu Bukola of Nigeria due to fever -- were unfortunate as Hazem's left-footed freekick bounced off the crossbar in the 40th minute, just before Aminul pulled off a top-class save from Nasir, the Army striker who had raced past two defenders to rifle a left-footer from 15 yards.

Dhaka Mohammedan survived a white tide after the resumption when their leftback Ripon failed to stop a barrage of attacks down the flank.

Guinean striker Raphael miskicked a chance from close and forced a fine save by Aminul after Nasir did the hard works.

Defender Shawkat threatened to score from

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IPL in South Africa

BBC ONLINE, undated



DLFA

LEAGUE

The 2009 Indian Premier League (IPL) will now take place in South Africa. Security concerns in India forced organisers to seek an alternative host, with England a possible destination.

But IPL boss Lalit Modi opted for South Africa following talks with Cricket South Africa (CSA) chief executive Gerard Majola in Johannesburg on Tuesday.

The tournament, which will feature 59 matches across six venues, will start a week later than planned, running from April 18 to May 24.

The 59 matches are scheduled to be played in Johannesburg, Pretoria, Cape Town, Durban, Port Elizabeth and East London.

"We are very happy to confirm that South Africa will host the 2009 Indian Premier League tournament," confirmed Modi.

"The South African public loves Twenty20 cricket and CSA successfully hosted the inaugural ICC World Twenty20. Both these factors weighed heavily in South Africa's favour."

Majola added his delight, saying: "This is a great compliment to both CSA and our nation to be shown this confidence in our ability to hold one of the world's top sporting events at short notice."

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Did U Know?

The Sampdoria team and 200 players walked 20 miles to a mountain sanctuary near Genoa in 1969 to thank the Madonna for helping them stave off relegation.



Rafael Nadal

(World No. 1 tennis player)
"Andy (Murray) was the only big top player I didn't win against this year, so it's an important win for me. But the most important thing for me is to win the title, not the opponent."

After winning the Indian Wells ATP Masters series title on Sunday.



Super Cup Football (Plate Group Final)
Sheikh Russel v Farashganj
Time: 5:00pm
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium, Dhaka

Another noble gesture

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

After the successful ending of the first regional talent hunt programme for the country's intellectually challenged athletes, Grameenphone, in partnership with Special Olympics Bangladesh, is organising a second such regional programme in Chittagong division.

The second round will be held at Chittagong BKSP training centre over April 1-4 where athletes from 22 special schools and organisations of intellectually disabled will participate.

This was announced at a press briefing at the Grameenphone head office at Gulshan in the city yesterday.

The objective of the talent hunt is to form a national talent pool of intellectually disabled athletes and to empower them by nurturing and nourishing their sporting capabilities, said the organisers.

They also said once finalised, the national talent pool will be further groomed, nurtured and prepared for the next Special Olympics, the largest sports competition for children and adults with intellectual disabilities, scheduled to be held in Athens in 2011.

It is expected that 150 athletes will be participating in the talent hunt in Chittagong under the guidance of specially trained coaches.

Dr Shamim Matin Chowdhury, chairman of Special Olympics Bangladesh, said about 30 athletes out of 162 of nine special schools in

Rajshahi division were selected for the Special Olympics from the first regional talent hunt that was held in November last year.

"A 47-member team of Special Olympics Bangladesh with the sponsorship of Grameenphone participated in the Special Olympics Summer Games 2007 in China and won 71 medals including 32 gold medals showing their outstanding performances," she said.

The intellectually challenged athletes of Bangladesh made the country proud in the 1995, 1999, 2003 and 2007 Special Olympics World Games, she said adding that, "We were unbeaten champions in cricket in 2007 games."

By taking part in the games the children with disabilities get all sorts of development including intellectual, she said adding that, "They can do; give them the opportunity."

Thanking Grameenphone for their support, Shamim stressed the need for creating more opportunities for the intellectually challenged athletes so that they can get involved in the sporting activities.

Rubaba Dowla, Chief Communications Officer of Grameenphone, said about three per cent of the total population are reportedly intellectually challenged and they are deprived of social rights.

"Apart from social responsibilities, it is also our individual responsibility to bring the talents to a platform so that they can also contribute to

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Tigers all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan (centre) cuts his birthday cake as Bangladesh captain Mohammad Ashraful (left) and vice-captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza applaud during the BSJA Awards ceremony at the NSC Tower in the city yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR



PHOTO: INTERNET

India's star batsman Sachin Tendulkar practises during a training session at the Edan Park Stadium in Auckland yesterday. India will play the second Test against New Zealand in Napier from tomorrow.

India pipped by Proteas

Cricket

INTERNET, undated

India missed out on second spot in the annual ICC Test Championship and a prize purse of 75,000 dollars after they were pipped by South Africa by just a point following the Proteas' win over Australia in the third Test in Cape Town.

South Africa, who would have secured top spot had they clinched the series against Australia, lost 1-2 and barely managed to hold on to their second spot.

India, who beat New Zealand in the first Test in Hamilton by 10 wickets, will end the year in third spot on 118 points behind South Africa (119) and Australia (128) on the April 1 cut-off date.

In the ICC ODI rankings as well Mahendra Singh Dhoni's team will end the year at third spot, a mere two points behind second-placed Australia (124). South Africa will be on top with 125 points on the same cut-off date.

Australia captain Ricky Ponting will receive the ICC Test Championship mace and 175,000 dollars on behalf of Cricket Australia from ICC General Manager (Cricket) David Richardson

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How comes in as cover for India Test

AFP, Wellington

Batsman Jamie How was brought Tuesday in as cover for New Zealand in the second Test against India as Daniel Flynn struggles to overcome a hand injury.

Flynn received a blow to his left hand while scoring a defiant 67 in the 10-wicket first Test defeat and he was unable to bat in the nets Tuesday or do fielding drills at training ahead of the Test in Napier starting on Thursday.

His injured hand was scanned Tuesday and no broken bones were revealed, but deep bruising and ligament damage made holding a bat difficult.

The 23-year-old will continue to receive treatment and will be assessed Wednesday before any decision is made on whether he plays in the Test.

Team management said How would join the team late Tuesday, after being dropped from the national team during the one-day series against the West Indies in January.

How has since scored 190 for New Zealand A against England A and hit some big totals in domestic first-class cricket.

Ex-Glamorgan cricketer dies

INTERNET, undated

Former Glamorgan all-rounder Geoff Holmes has died at the age of 50.

A middle-order batsman and medium-pace seamer, Holmes joined Glamorgan after a spell on the MCC groundstaff, making his debut at the end of 1978. Although he was not an overly attacking batsman, his ability to accumulate allied to his good fielding made him a reliable one-day player.

Between 1984 and 1988 he passed 1,000 runs in a season four times and scored 999 and

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