



Members of the BKSP school cricket team pose with the trophy after their win over Kamarpara High School in the final of the Standard Chartered Young Tigers Under-16 National Cricket Tournament at the City Club ground yesterday.

Ex-Glamorgan

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922 in the other two. In 1988 he hit four of his 11 career hundreds, including two in the same match against Somerset, and was named as the county's player of the year.

In 209 first-class matches, Holmes scored 8092 runs at 28.49 and took 88 wickets at 45.03. In 189 one-day appearances he made 3643 runs at 25.47 and took 136 wickets at 25.68.

LOCAL SNIPPETS

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Bangabandhu National Stadium (BNS) on March 28. Narayanganj will play VDP in the other semifinal at the same venue also on the same day.

Commerce Minister Faruque Khan will grace the occasion as the chief guest. SYLHET BADMINTON Maha Badminton Tournament begins today at the Mohammad Ali Gymnasium, Sylhet under the auspices of Sylhet District Badminton Committee.

128 teams including 64 singles and 64 doubles have registered their names for the tournament, to be held on a knockout basis.

India pipped

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in Johannesburg on Wednesday for ending the year on top of table.

He will also pick up a cheque for 75,000 dollars for his team coming second in the ODI Championship. South Africa captain Graeme Smith will accept the ODI Championship shield and a cheque for 175,000 dollars on behalf of Cricket South Africa.

TEST TABLE

Table with 2 columns: Rank, Team. 1 Australia 128, 2 South Africa 119, 3 India 118, 4 Sri Lanka 108, 5 Pakistan 100, 6 England 98, 7 West Indies 89, 8 New Zealand 81, 9 Bangladesh 0.

ODI TABLE

Table with 2 columns: Rank, Team. 1 South Africa 125, 2 Australia 124, 3 India 122, 4 New Zealand 112, 5 Pakistan 111, 6 England 107, 7 Sri Lanka 105, 8 West Indies 92, 9 Bangladesh 46, 10 Zimbabwe 23, 11 Ireland 19.

HC rules in BCCI's favour

Cricket
CRICINFO, Bombay

The Bombay High Court has cleared the way for the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) to seek a new broadcast deal by rejecting a plea from Sony TV, which had challenged the Indian cricket board's decision to terminate its five-year deal to televise the Indian Premier League (IPL).

The BCCI has, meanwhile, signed a fresh broadcast rights deal worth a reported 1.2 billion dollars with World Sports Group (WSG), which in turn has been engaged in discussions with various broadcasters for a new IPL deal. It has been reported that Sony is among those who are now trying to negotiate a new deal with WSG and sources have indicated that ESPN-Star Sports (ESS) and NDTV, the New Delhi-based media

organisation, are also in discussions to telecast the IPL. It is unclear, though, if Multi Screen Media Pvt Ltd, which held the IPL contract under the Sony umbrella, will approach the Supreme Court to appeal against Monday's decision.

Sony had sub-licensed the IPL's subcontinent broadcast rights last year from WSG, who had won an original ten-year bid for 1.02 billion dollars, but moved the court after receiving a notice of termination from the BCCI, which runs the IPL. The Indian board claimed that Sony had repeatedly violated the integrity of telecast by prematurely cutting to breaks and inserting commercials during a live match, replays and other on-field action.

The court placed a freeze on IPL signing another broadcast deal and in the meantime, attempts between Sony and the IPL to negotiate an out-of-court settlement failed after the broadcaster agreed to the

Indian board's commercial terms but sought a "non-terminable contract".

IPL officials were unavailable for a reaction. Rohit Gupta, president of network sales at Multi Screen Media Pvt Ltd said he could not discuss "anything at all" regarding the issue.

The IPL's relationship with Sony had turned rocky last month after the IPL lost out on a 3.16-billion-dollar deal because of a dispute between Sony and Big TV, a direct-to-home provider. Ties between the two dipped further after the subsequent resignation of Kunal Dasgupta, the then Sony CEO, who was known to be close to Lalit Modi, the IPL chairman. Sony is also understood to have been keen on renegotiating the financial terms of its contract with the IPL and had concerns about the tournament's revised dates and some of the venues that were being considered.

Massa runs the rule

INTERNET, Rio de Janeiro

Surprised over the poor pre-season performance of the McLaren-Mercedes team, but worried about the excellence of Brawn GP and the evolution of Toyota, Ferrari's Brazilian Formula 1 driver Felipe Massa travelled to Australia Monday. "So far it is difficult to have a clear idea, because it is the first race that counts, but I think we have never seen a McLaren so far behind, a McLaren with so many difficulties as this year," Massa said in comments that were made public by his press team Monday.

As he evaluated his potential rivals for the season that is set to start Sunday at the Australian Grand Prix, Massa said he was impressed by the "resurrection" of Honda - now Brawn GP - in recent tests. "We have seen a Brawn GP that re-emerged from ashes to be a second faster than every-

one else, and a Toyota that grew from one moment to the next and improved its car a lot. They probably have a bit more than everyone else, be it's in the technical aspect, in aerodynamics, wherever, I don't know, but they have a bit more," the second-placed driver of the 2008 season said.

According to Massa, the evolution of Brawn GP and Toyota forces Ferrari to fight to reach the top level. "We have to discover where that difference is coming from and try to improve our car, or discover whether that difference comes from some area that is not yet so clear."

However, he noted that he was "satisfied" with Ferrari's pre-season performance. "The car is competitive, it is fast, it is solid. We could race quite a bit and carry out some race simulations in which there was no problem with the car. I hope the small problems that came up have been solved. We are ready to start the championship and I hope we are as competitive as we have been in

the past few years," Massa said. The Brazilian stressed that he feels "mentally stronger" this season, after the 2008 title slipped through his hands in the last lap of the Brazilian Grand Prix, the last race of the season.

"It was a great life lesson for me, a great lesson of personal learning which will probably make me stronger to fight for any championship, for any race or for any victory whenever I am on the track," he said.

Massa, however, declined to guess whether defending champion Lewis Hamilton, with McLaren, or his Ferrari teammate Kimi Raikkonen will be his top rival this year.

"Neither one nor the other. Everyone is a rival. Of course my teammate races with the same car as me and being ahead of him will show that I did the best I could with my car. But I am ready to fight with any rival, be it Kimi or Hamilton, or also (Fernando) Alonso and other drivers who can deliver a surprise this year," he said.

MSC-Abahani final

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a corner but Aminul, who was slightly out of his line, palmed away the header before substitute Ridon got behind the Dhaka custodian chasing Camara's cross, only to toe-poke the ball over.

Dhaka Mohammedan who were playing in their second choice green shirt, got one half chance when Robin cut a low cross from right but Mamun dove to stop the ball from reaching Godwin.

The deadlock was finally broken by Ridon, who scored 12 minutes after replacing Doe. Pavel chipped cross from the right above the last rival defender and Ridon, who was Aminul yards out of his line, drove a left-footer from the edge of the area into the top left corner.

Chittagong Mohammedan wasted a golden chance to seal a place in the final in the 11th minute when Raphael unsettled the local defence but Camara, who met the cross seven yards out of goal, stabbed the header just wide.

Shootout hero Aminul said after the match that he has always played for the team. "This is the first time I have

saved three consecutive penalties but I am always confident during shootouts. It's a habit from my childhood," said Aminul. "We had some problems in the combination due to injuries but hope to return to the final in full strength."

"We were 100 percent positive today," said coach Maruf adding that they have showed improvement in the tournament.

"Our rivals played better than us today and got a goal from counter attacks. It happened because we attacked and were not looking forward to hold on to our 1-0 lead from the first leg match," Maruf said. "Aminul was excellent today and has been in great form throughout the tournament."

Port city coach Nazrul Islam said that luck was not with them. "We gave our best and after winning 1-0 in the 90 minutes, our target to take the match into penalties was fulfilled. But the players changed their decisions during the shootout," Nazrul informed.

"I specifically told them where to shoot against a class goalkeeper like Aminul but they

changed their minds. We lost to Aminul, not to Mohammedan. "We started without our injured captain Kaiser but the players never let me feel that. I am happy the way they tormented a great team today. We came here to surprise and we just did that."

"We conceded a late goal in the first leg due to a mistake and had that not happened, we would have played in the final," added Nazrul, whose side will meet Brothers Union in the third-place play-off also on Friday.

Yellow cards: Rajani, Kamal (Dhaka Mohammedan) and Shawkat, Touhid (Chittagong Mohammedan)

TEAMS DHAKA MOHAMMEDAN: Aminul, Hassan Al Mamun, Rajani, Emmanuelle, Ripon (Kamal, 56th), Nasir, Arman Aziz (Maruf, 66th), Sharif, Hazem, Goodwin and Robin (Kamol, 64th).

CTG MOHAMMEDAN: Mamun, Sharif, Pradip, Shawkat, Lincoln (Sanwar, 85th), Touhid (Pavel, 75th), Doe (Ridon, 71st), Camara, Mousa, Raphael and Nasir.

Referee: Abdur Rahman (Qatar)

Law signs for Derbyshire

AFF, London

Former Australia batsman Stuart Law is to play one-day English county cricket for Derbyshire in the upcoming season, it was announced on Tuesday.

The 40-year-old Queenslander, who is now qualified for England, has signed a contract with the Midlands club to play in limited overs matches only.

Law, released by Lancashire at the end of last season, is set to play for Derbyshire in the 2009 50-over Trophy competition as well as the Twenty20 Cup.

Lancashire's captain last season, Law spent eight campaigns at Old Trafford where he scored heavily after first making his mark in the English county game with southern side Essex.

"I am very happy to be committing to Derbyshire," he said. "They are an up-and-coming club with a good mixture of youth and experience, and I look forward to helping out some of the younger guys in the squad."

BSJA hands

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GM Enamul Hossain Rajib (chess), Zahidul Islam Rajan (hockey), Ahsan Habib Parash (badminton), Fahima Akhter (weightlifting) Siddiqur Rahman (golf), Azad Rahman (referee), Dr Omar Faruk (sports medicine) and Citycell (sponsor).

Two rookies

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currently level at 1-1. The third game is in Barbados on March 27.

SQUAD

Chris Gayle (captain), Denesh Ramdin, Lionel Baker, Dwayne Bravo, Shivnarine Chanderpaul, Fidel Edwards, Nikita Miller, Keiron Pollard, Ravi Rampaul, Dale Richards, Darren Sammy, Ramnaresh Sarwan, Lendl Simmons.

IPL in South

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weather has played a part in it not being chosen.

Modi had earlier told an Indian TV station: "Weather could be a problem. Moreover because of the London Marathon (26 April) there could be a problem finding hotel rooms for some days."

"There's also the Test series between West Indies and England we have to take into account."

There are other factors that render South Africa a more attractive option, including television timings -- South Africa is closer to India in terms of time zones -- while the cost of holding the tournament is reportedly cheaper in the African nation.

The TV rights issue in South Africa is also more straightforward, with Supersport holding the rights to the IPL as well as international cricket in the country.

That is not the case in England, where Sky hold the broadcast rights to all cricket played in England -- but rival Setanta bought the UK rights to the IPL last year and showed the inaugural tournament.

BBC sports editor Mihir Bose also believes the South African government played its part, saying: "South Africa have clearly provided the Indians with the sort of guarantees they were after."

"The weather was a factor, but I also understand from talking to various people that the South African government came in a very strong way. With a lot of spectators expected to move around, issues like visas are also crucial and all of that has played a part."

Pegasus down

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went wrong for the Pallabi-based club with a prolonged stay at the crease. But the doughty right-hander missed a century by just three runs when he was trapped in front by Jubair Ahmed for 97 off 126 balls. He found good support from opener Mayshukur Rahman, who hit 81 off 133 balls with a couple of boundaries and a six. The two shared 184 runs for the second wicket but once Mayshukur fell, the City innings faded away as they were stopped at 255 runs.

Jubair took four for 61 from nine overs while Rubaiyat Haq, Abul Bashar and Faisal Javed all took a wicket each.

BRIEF SCORES

CITY CLUB: 255-8 in 50 overs (Rabiul 97, Mayshukur 81, Saif 22 not out; Jubair 4-61, Javed 1-30)

YOUNG PEGASUS: 229 all out in 47.1 overs (Jupiter 51, Javed 42, Jubair 37; Arman 3-23, Golam 2-29) Result: City Club won by 26 runs.

'Pak players should be allowed to play now'

CRICINFO, undated



Shoaib Akhtar is hopeful the Indian Premier League's (IPL) impending move to South Africa or England could pave the way for Pakistani players to return to the lucrative Twenty20 tournament.

them.

"We do not have great circumstances with India at the moment. The situation between us is not critical anymore, and hopefully it will get better in the coming months. It is a shame for the Indian fans that the tournament will not be played in India, but I think it is a good thing that it is still happening. London is like a second home to us. We would be very comfortable playing there. It



SHOAIB AKHTAR

would be great if that happened, but for now I am preparing to play against Australia in the ODIs next month and take wickets for my country."

Shoaib made a brief, though spectacular, contribution to the inaugural IPL after signing with the Kolkata Knight Riders for a reported 425,000 dollars. In his first game against the Delhi Daredevils, the Pakistani tearaway claimed figures of 4-11, but played just two more games thereafter before again

being struck down by injury.

"It was a dramatic comeback for me," he recalled. "I had been going through so much with the five-year ban [for breaching the PCB's code of conduct, later overturned], and to go out there and play again was one of the hardest things I have had to do in my life. But it was a fantastic experience. Shah Rukh Khan, Sourav Ganguly and the whole team management really helped me a lot, and the Kolkata fans were very supportive. I had gone through a lot of mental trauma and was mentally not quite right going in, but they did a lot to help me."

Prior to the 2009 IPL auction, the contracts of Shoaib, Younis Khan, Shoaib Malik, Shahid Afridi, Salman Butt and Mohammed Hafeez were terminated by their franchises. Four other Pakistani players -- Umar Gul, Misbahul Haq, Kamran Akmal and Sohail Tanvir -- had their contracts "suspended", allowing their teams to replace them at the draft.

Ijaz Butt, the PCB chairman, said he would make inquiries as to whether some of those players could be readmitted into the IPL's playing ranks. "I will be talking to the Indian board president and also our government," Butt told PFI. "I am sure some of the players would now like to play in the IPL if possible. If some players are interested in playing in the IPL and if their commitments don't clash with our national team commitments I will talk to the relevant authorities."

Bucknor praised

Cricket

BBC ONLINE, undated

West Indian umpire Steve Bucknor has been praised after he stood in his 128th and last Test in South Africa's win over Australia in Cape Town.

His final international game before retiring will be the one-day between England and West Indies on March 29.

Former Pakistan captain Inzamamul Haq praised the example set by the 62-year-old -- cricket's most-seasoned umpire.

Inzamam said: "I always respected his decision-making, man-management skills and his humble and friendly attitude."

English umpire Ian Gould and New Zealander Tony Hill have been added to the International Cricket Council's elite panel of umpires because of Bucknor's retirement and the decision of Darrell Hair to stand down in 2008.

Former Sussex wicketkeeper Gould played 18 one-day internationals for England.

"I believe that having played cricket at a high level for 21 years I understand the game from the players' point of view and that I bring that empathy out in my umpiring," stated Gould.

Bucknor is the most experienced umpire in international cricket history, having officiated in a record 128 Tests, stood in 179 one-day internationals -- including five consecutive World Cups -- and he was also the first umpire to officiate in 100 Tests.

Inzamam hopes Bucknor will pass on that knowledge

despite retiring. "It was an absolute privilege to play in matches he umpired," he enthused.

"I also know he was an inspiration to many young umpires who took up umpiring with him as their role model."

"I sincerely hope he keeps his association with this great game and passes on his rich experience and knowledge to

umpire for 29 more Test matches than South Africa's Rudi Koertzen, although Koertzen is the leading umpire in one-day internationals, with 195 compared to Bucknor's 179.

Koertzen explained how much his fellow umpire will be missed.

"I have the utmost respect for Steve and his career. He has been one of the best you have to be to have umpired five World Cup finals and I will definitely miss having him around," he said.

Another noble

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the development of the national economy," she said.

She also said the talent hunt will be extended to other divisions as well to find out the talented athletes from the all over the country and give them proper training and grooming for the Special Olympics.

"These initiatives are being taken to empower the country people," Rubaba said adding that, "the special Olympics is not only a sport or competition rather it is an opportunity to empowering them as well as increasing their confidence and skills."

The selected athletes of Bangladesh will participate in seven disciplines -- athletics, badminton, bocce, football, table tennis, swimming and cricket.

Ashraf-ud Dowla, founder chairman of Special Olympics Bangladesh and Shuvashish Priya Barua, head of CSR Graameenphone, were also present.



STEVE BUCKNOR

the umpires and continues to play the mentor's role."

Bucknor made his one-day international umpiring debut in the match between West Indies and India at St John's, Antigua, on 18 March 1989 and four weeks later at Kingston, Jamaica, he stood in his first Test between the same sides.

Former West Indies captain and coach Clive Lloyd described Bucknor as an honest and dedicated umpire.

"Things that come to mind about Steve Bucknor are his honesty and hard-working attitude," he commented.

"I hope that the West Indies Cricket Board will look to use his knowledge and experience when it comes to training and coaching new umpires." Bucknor has been an

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down words.

Cryptogram puzzle grid with letters and numbers.

CRYPTOQUIP

J P R C D B W X F V C I J V F M W I I R S J E S Z C T F K C G R C D V V B F G C C M , I V Z F F T Z V C T F R C D X F D Z F G K C C V P C M E F

Yesterday's Cryptiquip: EVERYONE LOVES THIS PARTICULAR COTTONWOOD TREE. I HAVE NO IDEA WHY IT'S SUCH A POPULAR POPLAR. Today's Cryptiquip Clue: X equals V