

Feni move into semis

SPORTS REPORTER

Feni Soccer Club became the first team to move into the semifinals of the Bashundhara Champions Club Cup after beating Youngmens Club, Fakirpool 3-0 in a Group B encounter at the Cox's Bazar Stadium yesterday.

The result was enough to see off Youngmens Club, the champions of Dhaka Senior Division League, who also went down 5-0 against Pui Smriti Sangsod of Jhenaidah in their first match.

Arif put Feni ahead in the eighth minute before Raju doubled the lead in the 28th minute while Sabuj sealed the match in the 45th minute to confirm their semifinal place from Group B.

Away at the Shamsul Huda Stadium in Jessore, GRC Sporting Club of Narsingdi knocked Chittagong Mohammedan SC (Blues) out of the tournament after registering a lone goal win over the port city giants.

Shah Aziz struck nine minutes from final time to

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Did U Know?

Mickey Wright, one of the most prominent female golfers of all time, was honoured with a 1976 induction into the World Golf Hall of Fame.



Graeme Smith

(South Africa cricket captain) "Mahendra is a very composed person but a few tactical decisions of theirs have come under scrutiny and that's always difficult to deal with as a leader."

While offering his support to under-fire India skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni on Monday after the defending champions crashed out of the World Twenty20.



ESPN

FIFA Confederation Cup
Spain v Iraq
Live from 8:00pm
South Africa v New Zealand
Live from 12:30am (Thursday)

STAR Sports

FIFA WC Qualifiers
South Korea v Iran
Live from 5:00pm
Bahrain v Uzbekistan
Live from 10:30pm

BKSP continue form

SPORTS REPORTER

BKSP posted a massive ten-wicket victory over Amzad Ali Sarkar Girls High School 'B' in the Girls' School Cricket Tournament at the Gulshan Youth Club ground yesterday.

Amzad Ali Sarkar Girls High School 'B' scored only 31 runs for eight wickets in their share of 20 overs while BKSP achieved the target of 32 runs in 2 overs without loss of any wicket.

At the Azimpur Girls High School ground, Amzad Ali Sarkar Girls High School 'A' secured a seven-wicket victory over Rahmatullah Model High School.

Rahmatullah Model were

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Star Sri Lanka batsman Tillakaratne Dilshan (R) steers the ball towards third man during their ICC World Twenty 20 Super Eights match against New Zealand at Trent Bridge in Nottingham yesterday.

'Pakistan not cheats'

AFP, London



Pakistan captain Younus Khan said the additional scrutiny his team had been placed under at the World Twenty20 because of ball-tampering allegations was

"embarrassing". Fast bowler Umar Gul's feat in taking a Twenty20 international record five wickets in a comprehensive victory over New Zealand last weekend was soon mired in controversy after the Black Caps made an informal complaint regarding the state of the ball.

However, no action was taken after match officials satisfied themselves there had been no foul play although that did not stop umpires Rudi Koertzen and Rod Tucker making repeated spot checks at the Oval on Monday as Pakistan beat Ireland by 39 runs to book their place in the World Twenty20 semifinals.

"We're not cheating and today was very embarrassing with the umpires checking the ball all the time," Younus told reporters.

"Sometimes it is very embarrassing because there are a lot of cameras so how can we cheat?"

It was at the Oval three years ago that Pakistan became the first side in history to

forfeit a Test match when Australian umpire Darrell Hair, supported by West Indian colleague Billy Doctrove, penalised them five runs for ball-tampering.

Although they were subsequently cleared at an International Cricket Council hearing, their first visit to England since 2006 has seen them plunged into fresh controversy.

"Why does this happen all the time in England?" asked Younus. "Don't talk about a bowler like Umar Gul because he has a good reputation. Why is it always about Pakistan?"

"I think we should forget about this thing and just focus on the game. There are a lot of cameras so why didn't the cameras catch us doing something?"

"In this cricket there are a lot of sixes and the ball goes into the crowd a lot so the ball changes like that. It is an art actually, it's not cheating."

Younus indicated he felt New Zealand's complaint might be a case of sour grapes.

"Everyone has their own opinion, especially when you lose a game like that. New Zealand have a good reputation around the world and they are upset about getting out cheaply."

"I still believe for reverse swing you need pace and a good action and he (Gul) has a good action."

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Gary finds IPL at fault

AFP, Nottingham



India's coach Gary Kirsten pointed fingers at the cash-rich Indian Premier League for his team's ouster from the World Twenty20, saying it had left

the players tired.

India, who won the inaugural T20 Worlds in South Africa two years ago, lost both their Super Eight matches to the West Indies and hosts England to be knocked out before the semifinals.

Kirsten, the former South African opener, said his team was physically and mentally unprepared to defend the title because the cricketers were involved in the IPL.

He also did not rule out asking his main players to withdraw from next year's edition of the IPL in March so that they will be fresh for the next World Twenty20 in the Caribbean in April.

"We had a lot of players with niggles coming into this tournament. A lot of those niggles were picked up during the IPL," said Kirsten ahead of the last Super Eights match against South Africa at Trent Bridge later on Tuesday.

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Colly feels confident

Cricket

AFP, London

Paul Collingwood said England's morale would not be damaged ahead of the Ashes by their World Twenty20 Super Eights exit at the hands of the West Indies.

In what was a winner-takes-all clash, with a semifinal place up for grabs, the West Indies defeated England by five wickets in a rain-affected encounter at the Oval on Monday after being set a revised target of 80 in nine overs.

It was a bitter pill for England to swallow after they'd hammered the West Indies in both Test and one-day series on home soil earlier in the season.

But Collingwood, England's Twenty20 captain in the absence of regular Test skipper Andrew Strauss, who opted out of the World Twenty20 because he believes himself unsuited to the format, said he would be returning the side to the opening batsman in a sound state.

"Part of my job as captain is to keep the same sort of team ethos," he said.

"Obviously Strauss hasn't been a part of the Twenty20s so it was important for me to keep that togetherness."

"When I give the reins back, the boys will be in good spirits."

England, beaten 5-0 in Australia in 2006-07, will look to repeat their home Ashes triumph of four years ago when the latest edition of cricket's oldest Test rivalry gets underway in Cardiff on July 8.

"Now we can focus on what's coming ahead," said Collingwood. "We need to get the bodies, minds and skills right to beat the Aussies in the Ashes."

England, who've yet to win a major global limited overs tournament, were undone by a stand of 37 between the experienced duo of Shvane Nene and Ramnaresh Sarwan after taking five wickets in six overs in a match that the West Indies won with four balls to spare.

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Mendis guides Sri Lanka

AFP, Nottingham



Ajantha Mendis spun out New Zealand as Sri Lanka roared into the World Twenty20 semifinals with an emphatic 48-run win at Trent Bridge here on Tuesday.

The mystery spinner grabbed 3-9 in three overs as the Black Caps failed miserably to chase down a target of 159 in a must-win game and were shot out for 110 in 17 overs.

Martin Gupthill top-scored with 43, but New Zealand lost their last eight wickets for 46 runs after being comfortably placed at 64-2 in eight overs.

Sri Lanka topped group F with three straight wins, following their all-win record in the preliminary league, and now travel to the Oval in London for the second semifinal on Friday.

Their opponents will be either South Africa or the West Indies, depending on the result of the last Super Eights match between the Proteas and India here later on Tuesday.

Pakistan take the second spot in the group with four points, two more than New Zealand, and play the first semifinal at Trent

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SUPER EIGHTS STANDINGS

Super Eights group standings in the World Twenty20 after Tuesday's South Africa and India match (played, won, lost, points run-rate):

GROUP E						
South Africa	3	3	0	6	+0.787	-Q
West Indies	3	2	1	4	+0.249	-Q
England	3	1	2	2	-0.331	
India	3	0	2	0	-0.466	
GROUP F						
Sri Lanka	3	3	0	6	+0.937	-Q
Pakistan	3	2	1	4	+1.185	-Q
New Zealand	3	1	2	2	+0.125	
Ireland	3	0	3	0	-2.183	

Q = qualified for semifinals.

Bari interim chief Pak selector

AFP, Karachi

Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) said Tuesday they had appointed Wasim Bari as interim chief selector to pick the team for next month's series against Sri Lanka after Abdul Qadir quit the post.

Bari, a former captain who is currently working for the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) as director of human resources, had served as chairman of selectors for three previous periods in the past.

"Bari has been appointed as interim chairman of selectors to pick the team for Pakistan team's tour of Sri Lanka," said a PCB release. Pakistan will play three Tests, five one-day internationals and a Twenty20 match.

Captain Younus Khan, coach Intikhab Alam and vice captain Misbah-ul-Haq will be the interim members of the committee for the Sri Lanka tour only.

Final approval of the squad will be made by PCB chairman Ijaz Butt, the release said.

Qadir resigned from the post of chairman of selectors last week, blaming the PCB for not allowing him to work independently. Qadir also blamed Khan, Alam and manager Yawar Saeed for interference -- a charge denied by the officials.

Salim Jaffer and Shoaib Mohammad -- two other members of the selection committee -- did not resign, but a decision on their fate and the appointment of a permanent chief selector are still pending.

SA put final nail in India's coffin

AFP, Nottingham



South Africa warmed up for the semifinals of the World Twenty20 by fighting back to defeat ousted champions India by 12 runs here on Tuesday.

The Proteas hit back after being restricted to 130-5 by keeping error-prone India down to 118-8 in the last Super Eights match at a Trent Bridge ground packed with some 15,000 disappointed Indian supporters.

Graeme Smith's men topped group E with three straight wins in the Super Eights and now await resurgent Pakistan in the first semifinal at the same venue on Thursday.

Sri Lanka, the group F champions, take on the West Indies in the other semifinal at the Oval in London on Friday.

"The bowlers did well but we have a few things to work on when it comes to the batting,"

said India captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni. South Africa captain Smith praised his team's ability to adapt to all surfaces and conditions.

"I think 130 on that wicket was a good total. The wicket was slow and the way we defended the total was excellent," he said.

India, who won the inaugural event in South Africa two years ago, collapsed after a bright start when openers Gautam Gambhir and Rohit Sharma put on 48 by the sixth over.

The Indians, 55-1 at one stage, lost four top order wickets for 14 runs against a seven-man South African attack.

Dhoni highlighted his team's poor batting display by being run out off a wide ball from Morne Morkel when Yuvraj Singh refused his call for a sharp single.

Off-spinner Johan Botha removed Gambhir in his first over and Suresh Raina in his second, and also dismissed Harbhajan Singh at the end,

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Gayle very happy

AFP, London



West Indies captain Chris Gayle was a happy man as his side atoned in part for their "disaster tour" of England by going through to the semifinals of the World Twenty20 at the hosts' expense.

Set a revised target of 80 in nine overs, West Indies beat England by five wickets in a rain-affected match at the Oval here on Monday.

They won with four balls to spare after a stand of 37 between senior batsmen Ramnaresh Sarwan (19 not out) and Shvane Nene Chanderpaul (17 not out) saw them recover from 45 for five.

This victory was especially sweet as West Indies had been on the end of drubbings by England in both Test and one-day series earlier in this English season, defeats that called into

question their character and commitment. Opening batsman Gayle said: "It was very satisfying. They had the better of us."

"We are happy to be in the semifinal after our disaster tour of England. We wanted to give our supporters something to cheer about. It's been a long hard summer for us, so to be in the semifinal is brilliant."

Before they batted, the West Indies held England to 161 for six off 20 overs and Gayle said the home side had paid for a lack of power hitting down the order after star batsman Kevin Pietersen fell for a relatively modest 31.

"The game was won and lost in that middle period. They lost Pietersen, they lost crucial wickets at crucial times. They needed a couple of hitters down there would have been really handy."

"To restrict them to 161 was a good effort from our bowlers."

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England skipper Paul Collingwood (L) walks away as the West Indies team members celebrate after knocking the hosts out of the ICC World Twenty20 at The Oval in London on Monday.

PHOTO: AFP