

Arman pleased with practice facilities

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Mymensingh

Captain of the Dhaka Mohammedan Sporting Club Arman Aziz expressed his pleasure after watching the even surface of the Mymensingh Circuit House ground yesterday.

The players had been seemingly frustrated with the lack of a permanent ground in Dhaka.

"I am very pleased to see the beautiful ground at the Circuit House here and all of us concentrated 100 per cent on the training which was not possible in Dhaka due to the family commitment as well as personal engagement," said Aziz.

Aziz also informed that coach Maruful Haq was putting emphasis on the set-pieces and he was specially working on the strikers and midfielders in a bid to increase

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Mohammedan captain Arman Aziz (foreground) and teammates go through a training session at the Mymensingh Circuit House ground yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Clubs relocate for training

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

There was a time when the concept of having a pre-season training camp was only restricted to the Bangladesh national side. But the scenario has gradually seen a change as four Dhaka clubs have recently decided to hold conditioning camps outside the capital ahead of the season's curtain-raising tournament, the Federation Cup.

After a pre-season training camp in Comilla last season, Motijheel-based outfit Mohammedan SC have proved to be the trendsetters in inspiring others to undertake training in the clam and pleasant environment outside Dhaka. Most of the Dhaka clubs have no facilities including ground inside the city and therefore often fail to make their players ready for the top-flight battle.

The popular Black and Whites also have no

ground in Dhaka and have kept their promise to continue the pre-season preparation outside Dhaka and this time they have chosen Mymensingh as the venue where they are able to avail all facilities including gym and swimming-pool.

Mohammedan under the supervision of coach Maruful Haq brought two trophies out of three home and finished behind champions Abahani in the B. League and many still believe that those successes were achieved, mainly due to the pre-season conditioning camp in Comilla that kept the players fit throughout the season.

Nevertheless, Mohammedan's successes have inspired new-powerhouse Sheikh Russel KC and even giants Abahani, who have the ground facility, to choose the Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Protisthan (BKSP) for the conditioning camp while Muktiyoddha Sangsad opted to train at the Dinajpur BKSP.

Mohammedan coach Maruful Haq believed

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Longest heavyweight fight between James Kelly and Jack Smith in 1865 lasted 186 rounds, six hours, fifteen minutes.



Rene Adler

(German goalkeeper)

"I want to be number one. I know what I can do and as a sportsman you always have to aim for the highest possible goals. I will fight to the end to stake my claim."



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Third Round

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STAR Sports

Asian FIFA WC qualifiers

Bahrain v Saudi Arabia

Live from 1:30am (Sunday)

SuperSport5

FIFA WC qualifiers

Argentina v Brazil

Live from 7:30am (Sunday)

Kiwis post big score

AFP, Colombo

New Zealand rode on a swash-buckling opening stand between Brendon McCullum and Jesse Ryder to hammer 170-4 in the second Twenty20 match against Sri Lanka yesterday.

The pair put on 84 in 10.2 overs after New Zealand captain Daniel Vettori won a second successive toss and elected to bat under lights at the Premadasa stadium here. Left-handed Ryder smashed three sixes and as many fours in his 52 off 37 balls, while McCullum hit a 34-ball 49 with two sixes and four boundaries.

Martin Guptill and Jacob Oram further boosted the total with a 43-run stand for the fourth wicket in 27 balls, before Guptill was bowled by Lasith Malinga off the final ball of the innings.

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Windies ultimatum for players

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Clyde Butts, the West Indies' chairman of selectors, has warned striking players to make themselves available for the region's domestic one-day tournament next month or face exclusion from the ensuing tour of Australia. Butts was hopeful, though not certain, that the industrial dispute between the board and the players will be resolved before the touring squad to Australia is announced, but raised the possibility that another weakened side, such as that humbled by Bangladesh in July, could be named if the unofficial deadline is not observed.

"The board is hoping to resolve this as quickly as possible," Butts told Cricinfo. "The board has asked the players to make themselves available for a domestic tournament from October 10, and if they do that, then I am confident we will have a strong squad for Australia. There has been a statement released about this."

"If that doesn't happen, then it depends on how the board views things. I believe there is a

rule that players have to play in the domestic tournament preceding a tour to be considered. I am hopeful most, if not all, the players will make themselves available for that tournament and we can proceed as normal.

"Certainly, it would be very difficult for a young team to go to a place like Australia and not have the senior players to rub shoulders with and learn from. I am hoping the impasse will have been resolved by then, but I just don't know for sure. I am optimistic, however."

Butts, a former Test off-spinner, admitted that neither the players nor the board could afford a long-term continuation of their industrial dispute, from both a financial and general interest perspective. Since the likes of Chris Gayle, Shivnarine Chanderpaul and Ramnaresh Sarwan withdrew their candidacy for selection, West Indies have suffered embarrassing Test and one-day series defeats to Bangladesh and named a severely weakened side for this month's Champions Trophy in South Africa.

"This will probably go on for a little while yet (but) I don't think West Indies cricket can afford to go down this road much longer," Butts said. "There isn't a person in this region who doesn't

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Aus ride on Ferguson

Cricket

AFP, London

Callum Ferguson's career-best 71 was the centrepiece of Australia's 260 for five against England in the first one-day international at the Oval on Friday.

Ferguson, who might have been out for nought, surpassed his previous best at this level of 63 against South Africa at Cape Town in April, during a composed 75-ball innings featuring five fours in what was the 24-year-old's 15th match at this level.

Cameron White made 53 with medium-pace Paul Collingwood, whose first six overs cost 22 runs, taking two wickets for 47, to check Australia's progress after England's Ashes-winning captain Andrew Strauss won the toss and fielded in the first of this seven-match series.

While world champions Australia scored briskly against England's quicks, they found runs harder to come by off leg-spinner Adil Rashid (10 overs for 37) and Collingwood, who had a hand in three of the five wickets to fall.

England struck in the third over when Tim Paine was run out for nought by Collingwood's direct hit.

But from 11 for one, Shane Watson (46) and White rebuilt the innings with a fifty stand off 56 balls.

Collingwood broke the second-wicket stand when Watson tried to turn the ball legside but instead got a leading edge and gave a gentle return catch.

Watson faced 50 balls with six fours and added 82 with White.

Australia didn't score a boundary for 39 balls.

White though batted stylishly for a fifty in 64 balls with seven fours.

But White was run out when, going for a second, he failed to beat Graeme Swann's throw from deep square leg to wicketkeeper Matt Prior.

Ferguson was then fortunate not to be lbw to Rashid while still on nought.

Rashid did not concede a boundary until his eighth over when Michael Clarke, leading Australia in the absence of the resting Ricky Ponting, edged a cut.

Clarke and Ferguson put together a stand of 79 but off a relatively sedate 109 balls.

And Clarke, trying to force the pace, exited for 45 when he sliced a drive off Collingwood to Owais Shah at cover, having faced 72 balls with just three boundaries to leave Australia 190 for

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England all-rounder Paul Collingwood (2nd from left) celebrates after taking the wicket of Australia's Shane Watson during their first one-day international at The Oval in London yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Rajib in joint lead

SPORTS REPORTER

GM Enamul Hossain Rajib shared the lead along with four other players at the close of the third round in the 4th Kolkata Open International Grand Masters Tournament in Gorky Sadan, Kolkata on Thursday.

Rajib with white pieces defeated Indian GM Abhijit Gupta in 41 moves to earn maximum four points.

After two successive wins, GM Ziaur Rahman dropped point as he drew against GM Surya Shekhar Ganguly of India. He was jointly in second position with 11 other players, said a press release yesterday.

In the other matches of the round, FM Minhazuddin Ahmed Sagar beat India's Diptayan Ghosh while GM Reefat Bin Sattar drew with India's Vaibhab Suri. Shakil drew with India's Fenil Shah while Debaraj Chatterjee lost to India's FM Shyam Niki.

Tiger SC thrash Udiyaman Janata

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Tiger Sporting Club tore apart Chandirchar Udiyaman Janata Sangha with a 10-1 victory in the Hafijul Islam Khan Uttu Smriti First Division League at Shahid Miraz-Tapan Stadium in Manikganj yesterday.

Jibon and Bikash struck hat-tricks to script this massive win for Tiger Sporting Club.

Jibon continued his goal spree in the tournament by grabbing five in the match to raise his overall tally to eight while Bikash netted three and Atik and Tutul added one each.

Abdullah Al Masud scored the consolation goal from a spot kick for Udiyaman Janata Sangha.

With the day's result, Tiger Sporting Club improved their tally to six points from three matches to follow the leaders City Club and Dragon Sporting Club along with Diamond Friends Club who have seven points each.

Elena, Jelena fall

AFP, New York



Fourth seed Elena Dementieva and fifth seed Jelena Jankovic were upset victims Thursday at the US Open while top-ranked

Dinara Safina struggled but is now the only seed still in her quarter of the draw.

Russian stars Maria Sharapova and Svetlana Kuznetsova avoided the trend of shockers and breezed into the third round, but could feel the stress as Flushing Meadows favourites began to fall at Arthur Ashe Stadium.

"You do sense it," Sharapova said. "I saw some of the tough matches. You don't want to be that person."

US teen Melanie Oudin shrugged off a sore left leg to stun 2004 US Open runner-up Dementieva 5-7, 6-4, 6-3 and leave the Russian still searching for her first Grand Slam crown.

"For sure it was disappointing. I was hoping

to play very well," Dementieva said. "She had a very good answer to me on the court. She was really playing at her best."

It was the earliest US Open exit by the Russian since 2002, sent off by a 17-year-old American with "believe" written on her pink and yellow shoes.

"I just played with no fear," Oudin said. "I just went out there and played my game and I came out with a win."

Yaroslava Shvedova, a 20-year-old Kazak ranked 55th in the world, outlasted former world number one Jankovic 6-3, 6-7 (4/7), 7-6 (8/6). The 2008 US Open runner-up blew two match points and lost to a Shvedova ace on match point.

"It was great," Shvedova said. "I'm happy so much to be able to beat a great player in the big stadium."

After the match, the Serbian star said she was mourning the death of her grandmother

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Melanie Oudin of the United States cheers after defeating fifth seed Elena Dementieva of Russia in their second round match of the US Open at the Flushing Meadows in New York on Thursday.

PHOTO: AFP

Safe sailing for Andy, Novak

AFP, New York



Hopes for a first home win in the men's singles at the US Open in six years were given a boost

on Thursday with Andy Roddick and rising star Sam Querrey leading a charge into the third round.

Roddick, the fifth seed and the last American to win the title here in 2003, coasted through 6-1, 6-4, 6-4 against Frenchman Marc Gicquel in a match that finished after midnight.

The giant 21-year-old Querrey, who this summer has taken over as the US number two, defeated compatriot Kevin Kim 7-5, 6-7 (6/8), 6-4, 6-4 and is just two wins from a possible quarterfinal match against top seed and title-holder Roger Federer.

Joining Roddick and Querrey in the third round of the top half of the draw were former US No. 1 James Blake, who edged Olivier Rochus of Belgium 6-4, 3-6, 7-6 (8/6), 6-3, and another outsized US

player in John Isner, who blasted past Turkey's Marsel Ilhan 6-3, 6-4, 7-6 (7/1).

Earlier, compatriot Jesse Witten, a 26-year-old qualifier playing in just his second Grand Slam event, defeated Maximo Gonzalez of Argentina 6-7 (3/7), 6-4, 7-5, 6-2.

Next up for him will be fourth-seeded Serb Novak Djokovic, who had little trouble in seeing off Australian qualifier Carsten Ball 6-3, 6-4, 6-4.

"I think we've got a shot," said Querrey of the American chances of a home win.

"We've got Andy (Roddick) who has been in the top 10 for almost 10 years. Hopefully James (Blake) can get back up there. Hopefully Mardy (Fish) can get healthy."

"I'm climbing up the rankings. John Isner is doing really well. Jesse Levine is in the second round. Jesse Witten is in the third round. There's a big group of us here."

"I think we can make it like it once was in the '90s."

Querrey was referring to the decade when Pete Sampras, Andre Agassi, Jim

Courier and Michael Chang were all in their prime and Americans won the US Open six times in 10 years.

Another American failure in the men's singles this year would make it six years in a row without a title, the worst winless run for home players since the Open era began in 1968.

Roddick said of his upcoming third round clash with Isner: "John has been playing a lot better and it's going to be a completely different matchup. It will come down to a couple of points here and there."

Early play on Thursday saw 10th seed Fernando Verdasco of Spain and 20th seed Tommy Haas of Germany set up an intriguing third-round clash.

Verdasco, a semifinalist in the Australian Open at the start of the year, brushed aside Florent Serra of France 6-3, 6-0, 6-3, while Haas was too good for American Robert Kendrick, winning 6-4, 6-4, 7-6 (7/3).

The German, who has failed to get past the quarterfinals in New York in 12 previous appearances, said he expected a battle.

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