

Bengal Open squash

SPORTS REPORTER

Tareq Aziz Khan recorded a straight 2-0 win over Ersad Hossain in the Prestige Bengal Open Squash tournament at the Gulshan Club yesterday.

In the same Group A, Harun beat Hamza 2-1 while Saju and Arif defeated Tanvir and Arif respectively to move into semifinals from Group C.

Swapnil and Shahin advanced into the U-18 final after routing Ilyas and Delwar respectively.

Ganguly bats for Mishra

PTI, Kolkata

Former India captain Sourav Ganguly on Saturday said India should retain Amit Mishra notwithstanding the suggestions that the leg-spinner should be replaced in the second Test against Sri Lanka from November 24-28.

The Indian spinners were off colour and bowled wayward giving away the advantage to Lankans in the first Test at Motera in Ahmedabad but the ace left-hander feels there was no point blaming the duo of Harbhajan Singh and Amit Mishra.

"Performance should not be judged on basis of just one match. He (Mishra) should play in the second Test," said Ganguly.

Pool system

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When asked what the federation would do if the bracketed players could not get any team or were given less money than their expectation, Jamil said, "The clubs had assured me that they would complete the formalities with the players by December and if any player cannot find team or get less money than his expectation, then I will look after them."

Season's curtain-raising Club Cup and Premier Division Hockey League will be held after completion of SA Games, scheduled for January 29-February 9 next year.

The meeting also decided not to relegate any team like the previous year.

National team's striker Rasel Mahmud Jimmy said they are disappointed with the decision taken by the league committee and they would sit together after Eid vacation to discuss the matter.

Shaky start

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the forwards, Shantoo said they might have been shaky thinking of being dropped from the final squad.

He, however, believes his side will get the real rhythm in the next two matches against BFF XI on Tuesday and Korean Ulsan Hyundai Club on Thursday.

Sheikh Russel's midfielder Maruf Ahmed, who was dropped from the national team, was the brightest point of the day, shoring up the midfield and seen everywhere behind the ball.



Did U Know?

Chess is called the game of kings, because for many centuries it was played primarily by nobility and the upper classes.



Gunners misfire



PHOTO: AFP

American Peter Marshall celebrates his 50m backstroke victory with a new world mark in the FINA Swimming World Cup in Singapore yesterday.

Biman surprise

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batsmen capitulated once again after promising start by the top order. Opener Imtiaz Hossain's 31 off 32 balls and Hannan Sarker's 56-ball 32 gave them hope while skipper Habibul Bashar's fine batting kept them in play for much of the chase. Bashar batted single-handedly but saw his partners fall one after another. He was the last man to get out for 52 with the score on 182 in 45.4 overs, giving Mohammedan a comfortable victory in the end.

These two results leave Mohammedan with a solo lead on 18 points from nine games followed by Abahani's 16 from same number of games. Rest of the matches of the ninth round will be played today at four different venues, the pick of those matches the one between erratic Gazi Tanle and Khelaghar who have registered their first points in

the lastround. The league goes to an eleven-day break after today for Eid-ul-Azha.

BRIEF SCORES

Biman vs Abahani

BIMAN: 238 for 7 in 50 overs (Zahurul Islam 96, Jehan Mubarak 77; Mohammad Rafique 3-43, Rabiul Islam 2-37)

ABAHANI: 209 for 9 in 50 overs (Nadiq Chowdhury 44, Reshma Ranjan 44; Shafiqul Islam 3-33, Mosharraf Hossain 2-30)

Result: Biman beat Abahani by 29 runs

Mohammedan vs Surjor Torun

MOHAMMEDAN: 234 for 8 in 50 overs (Shamsur Rahman 83, Mahmudullah 70, Farvez Maharoof 33; Taposh Baisya 2-43, Sanjamul Islam 2-45)

SURJO TORUN: 182 all out in 45.4 overs (Habibul Bashar 52, Imtiaz Hossain 31, Hannan Sarker 31; Nabil Samad 3-30, Saqlain Sajib 3-37)

Result: Mohammedan won by 52 runs

Records fall at shortcourse too

AFP, Singapore

South Africa's Kathryn Meeklim, American Peter Marshall and Swedish swim queen Therese Alshammar stormed to new world records on Sunday as the shortcourse World Cup season concluded in style.

In the high humidity of Singapore and at a partially-enclosed aquatic complex, the first day of the meet Saturday surprisingly saw no new world marks despite 16 being set in Berlin last weekend.

But that all changed with the powerfully-built Meeklim obliterating the women's 400m individual medley record.

She turned under world record time after the butterfly then fell off the pace on backstroke before recovering strongly with impressive breaststroke and freestyle legs to clock 4mins 22.88secs.

It knocked nearly three seconds off the old mark set by Spain's Mireia Belmonte in Rijeka, Croatia in December last year.

Like Meeklim, Marshall has been inizzling form this year and he broke his own 50m backstroke world record, leading from start-to-finish to touch in 22.61secs.

His time shaved a fraction of a second off his previous record of 22.73 set in Stockholm earlier this month.

Gayle likely

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Excelsior High when he spoke to reporters but gave no update on his ailing mother.

She is said to be suffering from a heart problem and was admitted to a hospital in Kingston, the island's capital.

Gayle, who was recently renamed the captain of the West Indies team, flew back to Jamaica last week with permission from the team's management when his mother was hospitalised.

While team officials voiced their support, there are concerns about whether Gayle will be ready to take his place in the team when the Test starts after so much travel.

Tough times

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Certainly that is the opinion of the never bashful Erci Cantona, who suffered his won World Cup heartbreak in the final qualifier for the 1994 edition when Bulgaria scored in the final minute.

"What shocked me most was that at the end of the match, in front of the television cameras, this player (Henry) went and sat down next to an Irish player to console him, even though he'd screwed them three minutes earlier."

"If I'd been Irish, he would'n't have lasted three seconds."

So if there is any good to come out of this dark episode then calls for video replays to be introduced - like they are used in tennis and rugby union - have created a cacophony which is so loud that even UEFA supremo Michel Platini's implacable opposition to such a measure might wilt.

ing from behind to earn a 1-1 draw at Burnley.

Scotland international Steven Caldwell's ninth-minute strike had put Burnley on track for another win at Turf Moor but Emile Heskey salvaged a point for Villa with four minutes left.

Birmingham's recent improvement continued with a 1-0 win over Fulham that extends their unbeaten run to four matches. Midfielder Lee Bowyer beat Fulham's offside trap to score the winner after 16 minutes.

The relegation battle between Hull and West Ham ended in a thrilling 3-3 draw.

Liverpool boss Rafael Benitez remained upbeat.

"The positive thing is we showed great character when we went behind," the Spaniard said.

"I think we won six games in a row not so long ago and we have to think positive. When we have all our players coming back I am confident we will start winning games in a row."

Aston Villa climbed into the top four at the expense of Tottenham - who entertain Wigan on Sunday - after com-

peting with Carlton Cole, a superb strike by Kamil Zayatte and a Jimmy Bullard penalty.

The home side were reduced to ten men early in the second half when Bernard Mendy was sent off for a professional foul on Scott Parker and Manuel Da Costa equalised as the visitors finished strongly.

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