

SO CLOSE YET SO FAR: South Africa fast bowler Morkel punches the air after taking the penultimate England wicket (Graeme Swann) in an exciting final session of the first Test at SuperSport Park in Centurion on Sunday. England last pair of Paul Collingwood and Graham Onions however staved off the nervy last 19 deliveries to enforce a dramatic draw.

League moved

FROM PAGE 17 completion of the SA Games. "We had a fruitful discussion with all 13 participating teams of the professional football league and they agreed to play in Kamalapur in the greater interest of football. The meeting also emphasised on security of the venue," said league committee chairman Salam Murshed emerging from the meeting at the BFF House yesterday.

Asked whether the pitch was ready for the game, Murshed said that the pitch was used as a practice venue during the SAFF Championship and there was no problem holding the Bangladesh League matches in Kamalapur.

The league resumes today with unbeaten Farashganj Sporting Club taking on visitors Chittagong Mohammedan in Kamalapur at 3:45pm. Benibazar will host winless Feni Soccer Club at Sylhet Stadium.

Younus back

FROM PAGE 17 "lost command" of the side, and was not considered for the current tour of Australia. Mohammad Younus took over as skipper.

Chief selector Iqbal Qasim last week said Younus would be considered for the five-match one-day series against Australia next month. The series will follow three Tests starting in Melbourne on December 26.

While resting, Younus remained out of touch with the Pakistan Cricket Board.

"I will be available to play for Pakistan whenever needed. I wanted rest, which I have taken," he told reporters in Lahore.

Jadeja jolts

FROM PAGE 17 successive deliveries.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of Sri Lanka's innings against India in the third one-day international in Cuttack on Monday: SRI LANKA Tharanga b Jadeja 73 Dilshan c Karthik b Nehra 41 Sangakkara st Karthik b Sehwa 46 Jayawardene c Raina b Harbhajan 22 Kandamby b Sharma 22 Kapugedera b Jadeja 15 Kulasekara lbw b Jadeja 10 Randiv c Karthik b Sharma 0 Malinga b Nehra 13 Mendis b Jadeja 6 Welegedara not out 2 Extras: (b-1, lb-2, w-6) 9 Total: (All out in 44.2 overs) 239 Fall of wickets: 1-65, 2-165, 3-169, 4-173, 5-204, 6-210, 7-210, 8-218, 9-236

Bowler O M R W Zaheer 7 0 49 0 Sharma 7 0 63 2 Nehra 6.2 0 32 2 Harbhajan 9 0 29 1 Sehwa 4 0 26 1 Jadeja 10 0 32 4 Yuvraj 1 0 5 0 INDIA: Sehwa, Gambhir, Tendulkar, Yuvraj, Raina, Karthik, Jadeja, Sharma, Zaheer, Harbhajan, Nehra. Toss: Sri Lanka. Umpires: Marais Erasmus and Sanjay Hazare.



Did U Know?

Pakistan fast bowler Shoaib Akhtar made his ODI debut on March 28, 1998 against Zimbabwe in Harare.

Hughes given recall

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Phillip Hughes has won a recall to the Australian squad and is on standby for Ricky Ponting while Peter Siddle has also been included in the 13-man outfit for the Boxing Day Test against Pakistan. Hughes has not played a Test since being dropped after two games in the Ashes series, but the opening batsman has convinced Andrew Hilditch's panel he is the man to replace Ponting if he does not recover in time from the left elbow problem suffered in Perth.

Ponting, who was struck trying to duck a Kemar Roach short ball, hopes to play but the selectors are being cautious after a run of injuries. The physiotherapist Alex Kountouris said Ponting, who has been in a hyperbaric chamber to speed up the healing, was having on-going treatment for the problem. "We'll need to wait until he bats at training later in the week to determine his fitness for the Test," Kountouris said.

Siddle missed the Perth win with a hamstring

strain but will play a domestic one-dayer for Victoria on Wednesday to build up his fitness. Clint McKay, who debuted at the WACA, holds his place while Ben Hilfenhaus misses out again following a knee problem that ruled him out of the final two Tests against West Indies.

"Ben bowled eight overs in club cricket on Saturday," Kountouris said. "However, after bowling again at training on Sunday, he reported knee pain once again." Kountouris predicted Hilfenhaus would need a "more extensive rehabilitation" before he overcame the problem.

Hughes scored 122 in the first innings of New South Wales' Sheffield Shield game on Saturday, but fell for 7 today in an innings that didn't change the thoughts of the selectors. He has scored 388 runs in nine Shield innings and re-found his form this month following a difficult period when it seemed he was unsure whether to follow his natural instincts or conform.

SQUAD

Shane Watson, Simon Katich, Phillip Hughes, Ricky Ponting (captain), Michael Hussey, Michael Clarke, Marcus North, Brad Haddin, Mitchell Johnson, Nathan Hauritz, Peter Siddle, Clint McKay, Doug Bollinger.

Lady luck plays

FROM PAGE 17 the prize giving ceremony or the post match briefing.

Reporters were able to get the reaction of Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, the injured regular skipper of Abahani, who had paced all throughout the match by the boundary in anticipation of an Abahani win. He admitted it was a tough and nerve-racking battle between the two best sides of the league. "Cricketers of this generation hadn't had much of an idea what the pressure is like in domestic cricket. We learned it today, and it is sad for us that we lost. But this type of match is good for domestic cricket".

What was the reason to lose a match which once looked to be in their clasp? The injured

skipper said: "We probably made a few errors under pressure which cost us the game and the title."

The winning captain Khaled Mashud was obviously very delighted with the result, but admitted there was a touch of luck in it: "It was a fantastic match. I can't remember of another one in this recent past. The match could've gone either way. Probably luck was on our side today. In the end, the best team won the tournament," said the former national skipper. Masuhd, who won this title three times before with two other clubs, gave credit to all his team members: "Ashrafu batted very well and kept us in the game. Mahmudullah and Faisal

batted superbly. Navedul provided the finishing touch."

"We all knew Navedul has this ability. We were all waiting for him to fire and he did at just the right time," said a beaming Mashud.

Navedul himself expressed his satisfaction at being able to help Mohammedan to the title: "Even though my performances prior to the final had not been that good, I am delighted with the way it finished. I hope I can help my team in this fashion in the future too."

When asked if they had thought at any time they were out of the chase, the Pakistani all-rounder said: "It was part of our game plan. We always knew if we had wickets in hand towards the end, we would be able to chase down the target."

MSC champs

FROM PAGE 17 bowler for the last over as he had used both his pacers and interestingly veteran left-arm spinner Rafique lost his nerve in this crucial stage.

There was no run from the first ball but then Navedul came up with two consecutive sixes over midwicket to demoralise the fielding side. But again the match turned into the favour of Abahani when the Pakistani ducked the fourth delivery and was stumped off the fifth after going for a big one; leaving his side to score four of the final ball.

Earlier a 115-run fifth wicket partnership between Mahmudullah Riyad and the experienced Faisal Hossain provided the foundation although the asking rate was increasing every over during their partnership and the equation was at one stage to score 100 runs from the last ten overs.

The two batsmen made the rescue act after Mohammad Ashrafu had a suicidal run out after a 76-ball 52 that featured only two boundaries. It was not a perfect chase for Mohammedan as they lost three wickets for 51 runs in 17.5 overs and the 53-run fourth wicket repairing act from Ashrafu and Riyad was not good enough to revive the hope.

Riyad however kept the scoreboard ticking by rotating strike during his 80-ball 64 that saw only three boundaries. However he had the lack of big hitting when it was needed but his partner Faisal tried to accelerate the innings in his 69-ball 77 with two fours and three sixes but still they left a big task to achieve for the

late order batsmen.

Pacer Shuvashish Roy was the most successful Abahani bowler with three for 49 runs.

It however could have been a match for another Pakistani all-rounder Abdul Razzaq who continued his terrific form in the crucial game as the right-hander's blazing 71-ball 88 that included three fours and six sixes helped Abahani to set a daunting task for their opponents.

The Pakistani got brilliant support from Nadif Chowdhury who made 56 off 67 balls after Abahani lost three quick wickets in the span of 22 runs.

But all of their brilliant efforts were in-vain in the face of Navedul's pyrotechnics and Mashud's ingenious.

SCORES IN BRIEF

MOHAMMEDAN v ABAHANI Venue: SBNCS

ABAHANI: 273-9 in 50 overs (Kayes 12, Rony 46, Mahbulul 28, Shakib 1, Razzaq 88, Nadif 56, Nasir 18, Rafique 0, Sunny 0, Hamidul 7 not out, Shuvashish 0 not out, extras 17; Rana 3-41, Sajib 2-57, Nabil 1-46, Ashrafu 2-46, Faisal 1-29). MOHAMMEDAN: 274-7 in 50 overs (Shamsur 17, Ashrafu 52, Aftab 4, Marshal 8, Riyad 64, Faisal 77, Rana 29, Shahajada 2 not out, Mashud 4 not out, extras 17; Shuvashish 3-49, Rafique 2-60).

MAN-OF-THE-MATCH: Navedul Hasan (Mohammedan).

Result: Mohammedan won by three wickets.

ROLL OF HONOUR

TEAM CHAMPIONS			RUNNERS-UP
1987-88	Mohammedan		Abahani
1989-90	Abahani		Rupali Bank
1990-91	Brothers Union		Biman
1991-92	Mohammedan		Abahani
1992-93	Abahani		Mohammedan & Biman
1993-94	Abahani & Biman		Mohammedan
1994-95	Mohammedan & Abahani		Kalabagan
1995-96	Mohammedan		Brothers
1996-97	Abahani		Kalabagan
1997-98	Abahani		Brothers
1998-99	Biman		Abahani
1999-00	Abahani		Kalabagan
2000-01	Mohammedan		Abahani
2001-02	Victoria		Mohammedan
2002-03	Victoria		Mohammedan & City Club
2003-04	League not held		
2004-05	Old DOHS		City Club
2005-06	Old DOHS		Sonargaon Cricketers
2006-07	Abahani		Mohammedan
2007-08	Abahani		Biman
2008-09	Abahani		Surjo Torun
2009-10	Mohammedan		Biman

England's escape act

Cricket

AFP, Centurion

Last man Graham Onions played out a tense final over from Makhaya Ntini as England escaped with a draw on the fifth and final day of the first Test against South Africa at SuperSport Park on Sunday.

The match seemed to be heading for a routine draw when Jonathan Trott and Kevin Pietersen batted together for more than three hours but South African new cap Friedel de Wet produced an inspired spell with the second new ball to leave England hanging on.

"The emotion in our dressing room is excitement about getting so close and bowling so well," said South African captain Graeme Smith.

"We finished the match on top and played the better cricket throughout the Test match. We will go into [the second Test in] Durban with a lot of confidence."

De Wet dismissed Trott in the second over with the new ball and had a spell of three for three in five overs. Five wickets fell in the final 15 overs but Paul Collingwood and Onions survived the last 20 balls.

It was a tense finish reminiscent of the first Ashes Test against Australia in Cardiff earlier this year when England were also nine down at the end.

But England captain Andrew Strauss said the circumstances were different.

"In Cardiff, for the majority of the day, we were behind the eight ball. For the majority of today we were heading for a draw. It would have been very disappointing if we had lost."

England, set 364 to win, finished on 228 for nine.

Trott, who came to the wicket after the dismissal of nightwatchman James Anderson in the third over of the day, defied the South African bowlers for 317 minutes and faced 212 balls in making 69.

Pietersen was more aggressive in making 81 off 143 deliveries as the pair put on 145 for the fourth wicket.

The partnership was only broken two overs after tea when Pietersen pushed the ball into the covers and set off for a suicidal run. Trott did not respond and bowler De Wet had plenty of time to pick up the ball and trot to the batsman's end to break the wicket.

Trott batted through until the second new ball, taken when just over an hour's play remained.

Until then, remarkably few deliveries had behaved unusually off the pitch, in contrast to the previous two days.

But De Wet made the hard new ball fly off a length and it ripped into Trott's right glove and deflected to third slip where AB de Villiers made a diving catch.

De Wet had Ian Bell caught

behind four overs later and England were six down with a maximum of 10.4 overs remaining.

Matt Prior also fell to a catch behind off De Wet before Stuart Broad was caught behind off left-arm spinner Paul Harris and Graeme Swann was leg before to Morkel Morkel.

South African hopes were raised early in the day when Anderson gloved De Wet down the legside to wicketkeeper Mark Boucher.

Alastair Cook defended resolutely for 79 minutes and 56 balls, scoring 12 runs, before he too was caught off a glove, when a ball from left-arm spinner Paul Harris went to Graeme Smith at leg gully off his glove and pad.

But Trott and Pietersen dug in on a pitch which did not provide as much unpredictable bounce as it had on the previous two days.

Only one delivery truly misbehaved before the dramatic closing stages, a ball from De Wet which shot through low and trapped Pietersen, on 39, plumb in front of his stumps.

But umpire Steve Davis nabbed De Wet for overstepping.

SCOREBOARD

Final scoreboard on the fifth day of the first Test between South Africa and England at SuperSport Park in Centurion on Sunday:

SOUTH AFRICA: First innings

418 (Kallis 120, Duminy 56, Boucher 49, Prince 45, Harris 38, De Villiers 32; Swann 5-110, Onions 3-86)

ENGLAND: First innings 356 (Swann 85, Collingwood 50, Strauss 46, Pietersen 40; Harris 5-123, Ntini 2-78)

SOUTH AFRICA: Second innings 301 for 7 declared (Amla 100, De Villiers 64, Boucher 63 not out; Anderson 4-73, Broad 2-58)

ENGLAND: Second innings (overnight 11-1)

Strauss c Boucher b Morkel 1

Cook c Smith b Harris 12

Anderson c Boucher b De Wet 10

Trott c De Villiers b De Wet 69

Pietersen run out (De Wet) 81

Collingwood not out 26

Bell c Boucher b De Wet 2

Prior c Boucher b De Wet 0

Broad c Boucher b Harris 0

Swann lbw b Morkel 2

Onions not out 1

Extras: (b-10, lb-3, nb-11) 24

Total: (For 9 wickets in 96 overs) 228

Fall of wickets: 1-5, 2-16, 3-27, 4-172, 5-205, 6-207, 7-208, 8-209, 9-218

Bowler O M R W Ntini 18 7 41 0

Morkel 18 3 46 2

Harris 26 11 51 2

De Wet 23 8 55 4

Duminy 8 2 7 0

Kallis 3 1 5 0

Result: Match drawn.

Man-of-the-match: Graeme Swann.

Toss: England.

Umpires: Aleem Dar and Steve Davis.

Second Test: Dec 26-30, Durban.

'Instigators get away lightly'

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Anil Kumble, the former India captain, has said the International Cricket Council's (ICC) match referees don't seem to punish the instigators of on-field spats severely enough. He feels that too often the provocateurs escape with a light censure while players who react strongly are penalised severely.

Kumble expressed his views in his syndicated column after the completion of the Perth Test, during which three Australian players were fined while West Indian spinner Suleiman Benn was banned for two one-day internationals by match referee Chris Broad. Benn, Mitchell Johnson and Brad Haddin were involved in an ugly incident on the second day of the Test, which led to Benn's ban and Haddin and Johnson being fined 25 percent and 10 percent of their respective match fees.

The clash began with a run-in between the bowler Benn, who was moving across to field a drive, and the non-striker Johnson, who was taking off for a single. The contact seemed incidental, with neither man at fault, but Haddin appeared to inflame the situation after

completing the run, when he pointed his bat at Benn.

The pair exchanged words and the sparks flew again two balls later, when Haddin drove the final ball of the over back to Benn, who shaped to throw at the striker's end even though Haddin was not taking off for a run.

Haddin and Johnson had a mid-pitch meeting at the end of the over and Benn continued his remonstrance, moving close to the batsmen and pointing at Haddin across the shoulder of Johnson.

There appeared to be some incidental contact between Johnson and Benn when Johnson moved to position himself between his partner and the bowler. Things became even uglier when Johnson pushed Benn away, following

the initial contact. After stumps the West Indies captain Chris Gayle said he felt Benn had not initiated the physical clash.

"There doesn't seem to be any punishment forthcoming for someone who provokes and that to me is against the principles of natural justice," Kumble wrote. "The Australians always seem to get away. Whatever their transgressions on the field, invariably it is their opponents who end up paying a price. Somehow or the other, teams playing against the Aussies seem to invite the match referee's wrath."

Kumble cited the example of the Delhi Test in 2008, during which Gautam Gambhir was banned for a Test by match referee Broad because he elbowed Shane Watson, with

whom he had verbal altercations before the incident. Gambhir also argued with Simon Katich in the same innings.

"In the Delhi Test against us, my last, the one that earned Gautam Gambhir a ban for having a go at Watson, the same umpire and the match referee were officiating," Kumble wrote. "At that time, the umpire Billy Bowden didn't see it fit to report Simon Katich who had later obstructed Gautam and the match referee Chris Broad too didn't bother to act on his own or follow it up with the on-field umpires even though it was very much evident on TV. And as on that occasion, the provocateurs got away in Perth too, with Haddin and Johnson receiving minor reprimands."

Biman 2nd

FROM PAGE 17

batted with aplomb to see their side home with four overs left unused. Hashanta remained not out on 54 while Sunny was unbeaten on 49.

Earlier, despite a 174-run partnership in the middle-order CCS could muster only 221 runs losing all their wickets in 49.3 overs. Taposh Ghosh (85) and Nazmul Hossain (89) played two marvellous knocks, but found very little support from the others, except from skipper Uttam Sarker (21) who was the only other batsman to get to double digits. Sharifullah was the most successful bowler with 3 wickets for 27.

In the other match of the

day, Kalabagan defeated Victoria by six wickets at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium to finish fourth on the points table. Victoria finished above Cricket Coaching School amongst the Super League teams.

Batting first Victoria put on 259 losing all wickets in their 50 overs, thanks to a 101-run knock from all-rounder Abul Bashar. But Kalabagan were not flustered by that as they had their own man in Mohammad Zahid who scored 107 runs to overhaul the target with 5.5 overs remaining and six wickets in hand.

SCORES IN BRIEF

Biman v Cricket Coaching

School

CRICKET COACHING SCHOOL: 221 all out in 49.3 overs (Taposh Ghosh, Nazmul Hossain 89; Sharifullah 3-27, Mosharraf Hossain 2-39)

BIMAN: 222 for 4 in 46 overs (Mushfiqur Rahim 55, Hashanta Fernando 54 not out; KM Shakil 2-34)

Result: Biman won by 6 wickets

Kalabagan v Victoria

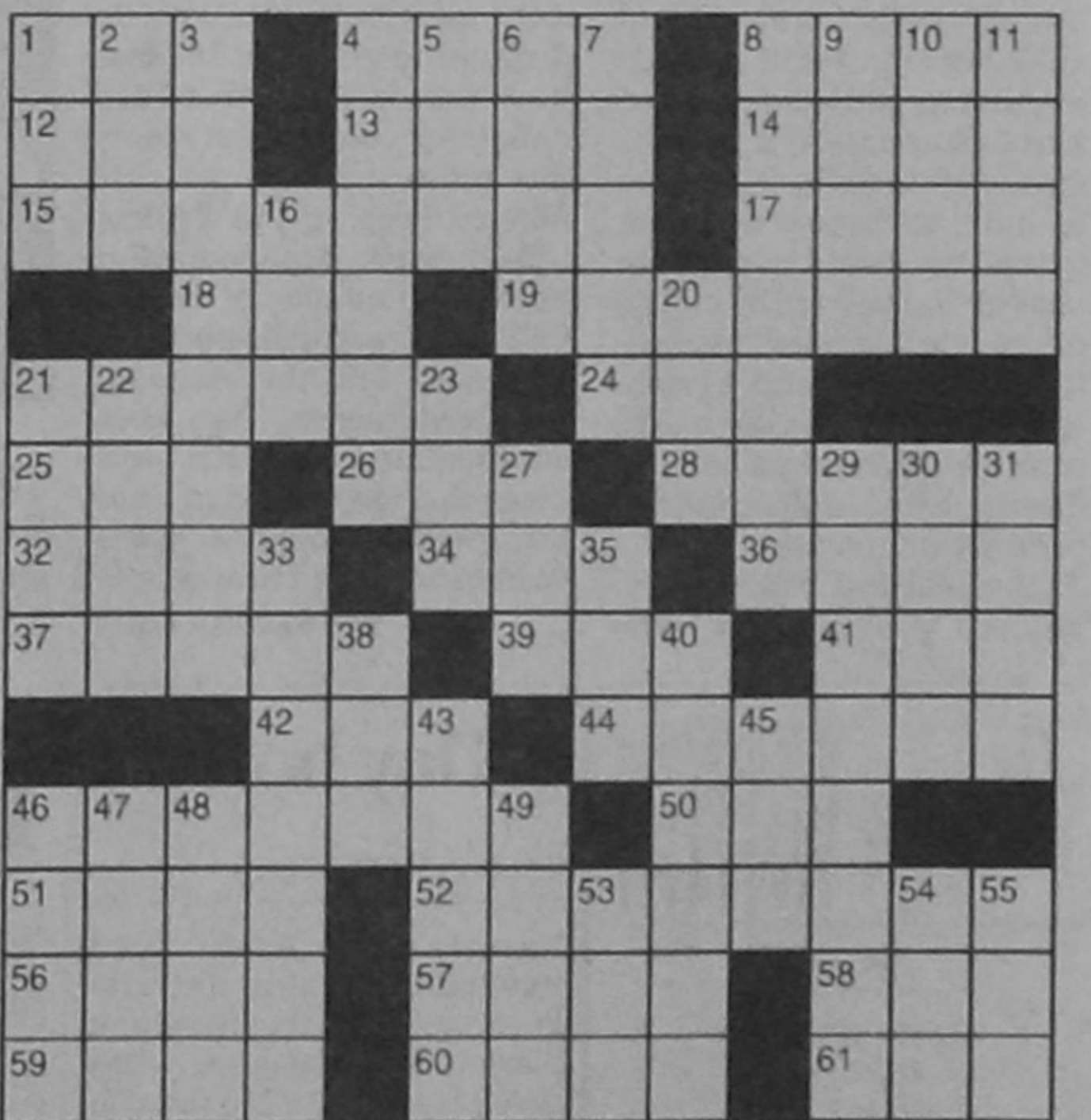
VICTORIA: 259 all out in 50 overs (Abul Bashar 101, Arafat Salauddin 44; Murad Khan 3-37, Enamul Haque 3-42)

KALABAGAN: 263 for 4 in 44.1 overs (Mohammad Zahid 107, Javed Omar 58 not out; Rashedur Rahman 1-27)

Result: Kalabagan won by 6 wickets

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS			DOWN		
1 Picks out	39 Wiretap	1 Half the	20 Saturn model,		
4 Piece for two	41 Energy	2 Medic	21 100 percent		
8 Speaker's place	42 And so on (Abbr.)	3 Colt's pop	22 Press unit		
12 "As if!"	44 White winter weasel	4 Take out of context?	23 Work unit		
13 Poet Pound	46 Auto's body	5 Submachine gun	27 Filch		
14 Expel onion	50 Lubricate	6 Cupid's alias	29 Big tent		
17 Earthen pot	51 Posterior	7 Aquariums	30 Similar (to)		
18 Shelter	52 Bundle of nerves?	8 Random draw-	31 Rickey ingredient		
19 One without snow	56 Furniture store name	9 "— Lang Syne"	33 Calendar box		
21 "Ecce homo" sayer	57 Enthusiastic	10 Capri, e.g.,	35 Payable		
24 Costa del —	58 Individual	11 Luminary	38 Part of FWIW		
25 Swiss canton	59 Moist in the morn	12 Meadow	40 Weak and unsteady		
26 Blunder	60 Optimistic	13 Measure	43 Stogie		
28 Kath-mandu's land	61 Affirmative action	14 Scolded	45 Wire		
32 Source		15 Raise			
34 Deity		16 From the top			
36 Munro's pen name		17 Palm starch			
37 Boredom		18 Ph. bk. data			



CRYPTOQUIP

J H K M O Z Z V U X M K H I M O U H

Y H V T - X M A M T V F W Z H A M F T O F

I G H K M U Y N T H F C Y N T

CHOWYUNTZ: "JHKVAG CGNZ." Yesterday's Cryptoquip: SUPPOSING THE COCOONED INSECTS SUDDENLY GREW WIDER, I GUESS YOU'D SAY THEY WERE DILATED PUPAS.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: H equals A