



Members of Bangladesh Army and Bangladesh Rifles, who finished joint champions in the Independence Cup kabaddi competition, pose with the trophy after the final at the Kabaddi Stadium in the city yesterday.

Friends XI into final

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Friends XI moved into final of the Municipal Gold Cup Cricket Tournament with a 39-run victory over Green Valley at Shaheed Miraj-Tapan Stadium in Manikganj yesterday.

Friends XI batted first and made 198 runs for eight wickets in 40 overs. Milton remained not out on 48 off 48 balls while Bashar blasted 40 runs from 19 balls. Mithun picked up three wickets.

In reply, Green Valley were all out for 159 runs in 35 overs. Mithun scored 55 runs. Tanzu of Friends XI picked up four wickets to be adjudged the man-of-the-match.

Liza earns

FROM PAGE 17 "I must appreciate the initiative of Niaz Bhai and I think it will help the local players a lot to earn norms if he can hold such tournaments regularly," said Liza.

WIM Kiran of India also achieved her third and final Grand Master norm from the tournament and thus emerged champion with seven points from nine games. Kiran drew with Russian Minina Veronika, who finished fifth with five points.

FM Abu Sufian Shakil became runner-up while FM Syed Mahfuzur Rahman finished third through tie breaking after both earned 5.5 points.

Swann thanks

FROM PAGE 17 When asked to explain why his team didn't enforce follow-on despite a 303-run first innings lead, Swann said that "The follow-on was discussed but we felt this was the best way to win the game."

Swann however praised Bangladesh's fighting spirit. "Bangladesh batted very well today for an hour before lunch and an hour after lunch and that showed we are going to have our work cut out to take the last 10 wickets. It's no surprise after the one-day series. They've shown they have some very capable batsmen and some capable bowlers as well. It's no surprise that they are putting up a fight," he said.

He however issued a warning for the Bangladesh batsmen as he indicated that it would not be an easy task for the batsmen to survive in the pitch. "We've got a bit of reverse swing going and there's always a little bit of turn, the odd one hitting a crack and going a bit more so we're confident," he warned.

Dull draw

FROM PAGE 20 Getafe had gone close through Pedro Leon on the half hour mark and Mallorca didn't heed the warning conceding two minutes later as Jaime Gavilan's cross was headed in by former Real Madrid man Parejo.

The 20-year-old Parejo produced a perfectly weighted 10 pass for Getafe's second 10 minutes from time as substitute Miku, only on the pitch two minutes, slotted home.

It got worse for Mallorca five minutes later when Jose Nunes was sent off for a hand-ball on the goal-line and Manu del Moral converted the penalty to complete the scoring.

Mallorca stay fifth, one point behind Sevilla, while Getafe are six points off the top six.

Athletic Bilbao spurned the chance to go level on points with Mallorca and are two points behind the islanders after drawing 0-0 at Sporting Gijon.

Bilbao midfielder Igor Gabilando missed a penalty on 58 minutes with goalkeeper Juan Pablo Ferreras getting down well to save.

Nadal returns with win

Tennis

AFP, Indian Wells

Reigning champion Rafael Nadal, playing his first match in more than a month, reached the third round of the BNP Paribas Open Saturday with a 6-4, 6-4 victory over Rainer Schuettler.

Nadal hadn't played since retiring with a right knee injury while trailing Andy Murray by two sets in the quarterfinals of the Australian Open in January.

Nadal's victory over Schuettler offered little opportunity to gauge his game given the chilly, windy conditions that prevailed as darkness fell in the California desert.

"When I went to practice in the morning, it was perfect conditions," Nadal said. "And when I went on court, the weather completely changed, so it was difficult to adapt."

Nadal, who sped to a 5-1 lead with two breaks of serve in the opening set, then lost three games in a row before

closing out the set. He needed only one break of serve, in the seventh game, and didn't face a break point in the second frame as he closed out the match.

Nadal said he felt comfortable on his forehand, but had particular trouble with the wind behind him on his backhand.

Nadal next faces Croatian Mario Ancic, a 4-6, 7-6 (7/5), 6-3 winner over France's Julien Benneteau.

Ancic, a 2004 Wimbledon semifinalist, missed most of last year after being diagnosed with mononucleosis that had first been diagnosed as a bad flu in 2008.

Serbian Novak Djokovic, seeded second behind Roger Federer in the first Masters 1000 tournament of 2010, survived some erratic play to emerge with a 6-1, 0-6, 6-2 victory over American Marty Fish -- the man Djokovic beat in the final here in 2008.

Djokovic blazed through the first set in 39 minutes -- then dropped the second in just 28.

BOA urged to bring foreign coaches

SPORTS REPORTER

The medal winners of the different international meets will be given priority in selecting the athletes for the 2010 Commonwealth Games to be held from October 3 to 14 in New Delhi.

The decision was taken at the meeting of the Bangladesh Olympic Association's training and development committee with its vice-chairman Mizanur Rahman Manu in chair.

The general secretaries of the different federations who attended the meeting emphasised the need of foreign coaches and the meeting asked them to submit the specific proposals regarding foreign coaches.

The meeting also advised the federation high-ups to go for talent hunt and ensure those who would be picked to be trained twice a year as well as making sure that they could take part in the inter-district competitions.

CHITS FROM CHITTAGONG

FROM PAGE 17 Test runs in England's second innings but while a lot of batsmen have done it, the captain's mark came with a special touch.

At 25 years and 79 days, he became the second-youngest cricketer in Test history to reach the milestone. Legendary batsman Sachin Tendulkar has done it faster at the age of 24.

THE CURSE CONTINUES The left-arm spinner curse on Kevin Pietersen continued as it was Shakib Al Hasan in the second innings who got the right-hand leg-before after a brisk 31.

In the first innings, it was Abdur Razzak who dismissed him with a cracker but not after the superstar batsman got himself a run short of a century.

In the one-day series, Shakib got him once while Razzak had his number twice in the second and third game respectively.

Kasba clinch

FROM PAGE 17 game in bigger margin had their forwards not missed some good chances.

National player Krishna Kumar guided the boys in the championship and he was also ecstatic after getting success in his first-ever assignment as a coach.

Krishna informed that most of those schoolboys practiced together in Rajshahi under the supervision of Baikal Sangha, a club who have a record of 17 hockey titles in a row in Rajshahi hockey league.

The national forward said Rajshahi is now the biggest player provider in the Dhaka leagues and tournaments, but they don't have facilities of practicing on turf there. He urged the authorities concerned to install a hockey turf in Rajshahi to keep hockey alive.

Robben bails

FROM PAGE 20 Their second straight wins lifts Nuremberg up to 15th in the table and out of the relegation zone.

Police made 30 arrests and four officers were injured after 100 Hertha fans rampaged through Berlin's Olympic Stadium and damaged the home side's bench after the final whistle.

Dortmund moved up to fourth and picked up their second straight win with a 4-1 victory at Bochum. Argentine striker Lucas Barrios landed the hammer blow for Dortmund when he scored twice in three minutes midway through the second-half.

BFF reschedules MSC's match

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Football Federation responded to the appeal of Mohammedan Sporting Club positively as the game's governing body has shifted their schedule away match of Bangladesh league against Chittagong Mohammedan to the end of the first leg matches.

Title contenders Mohammedan were scheduled to play against their Chittagong namesakes today at the port city, but the Dhaka giants asked the league committee to postpone it following the injuries of the players, who came under attack from the spectators in Sylhet after the match against Beanibazar SC a few days ago.

Now, the match between Dhaka Mohammedan and Chittagong Mohammedan will be held on March 24 at the MA Aziz Stadium.

The Black and Whites will play their next match against rivals Abahani on Friday in a bid to reduce the gap with the defending champions and league leaders, who are four points ahead.

Sheikh Russel will take on Brothers Union at Bangabandhu National Stadium in another match today.

Hockey players' resignation accepted

SPORTS REPORTER

Six hockey players, who had resigned from the national team after failing to get any team during the special transfer window for the upcoming domestic competitions, have been freed of their national duty as Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) accepted their resignation yesterday.

"Considering the circumstances, the governing body meeting accepted resignation of those six players and now they are free from the pool," said BHF general secretary Khondokar Jamiluddin.

Jamil said those six players can now change their previous clubs through mutual understanding and it was not federation's duty to negotiate the amount of money between the players and the clubs.

He also informed that there would be no pool system from the next season.

National skipper Moshirur Rahman Biplob, Mosharaf Hossain Kuti, Zahid Bin Talib Shuvo, Abdus Sajjad John, Rimu Kumar Ghosh and Khandokar Hasan tendered their resignation on March 9.

Jamil, however, said those players might be called up again for the qualifying round of the Asia Cup that will be held in Bangladesh from May 7 to 17 if they performed better in the domestic competitions.

Sinclair gets a recall

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

New Zealand have gone back to a familiar but inconsistent batsman in Mathew Sinclair as they attempt to challenge Australia in Friday's opening Test in Wellington. Sinclair, 34, is a chance for his sixth return to the XI after coming into the 13-man squad for Neil Broom on the back of a strong domestic season for Central Districts.

Sinclair has been elevated to cover for the top order and is a strange choice given the assignment is against the world's No. 3-ranked side. Sinclair scored two double-hundreds at the start of his career, but he played the last of his 32 Tests in March 2008. In eight matches against Australia he has managed only one half-century and an average of 14.13.

"We felt we needed a cover top-order batter, rather than

cover for our middle order, so Neil is a little unlucky in that respect," the coach Mark Greatbatch said. "Neil's form is not quite as good as it was in February."

Sinclair's best chance is if the selectors lose faith in his Central Districts team-mate Peter Ingram, the No.3, who was dropped during the one-day series after limited overs returns of 2, 0, 40, 14 and 5. Sinclair, who has 638 Plunket Shield runs at 58.00 this season, appears more likely to come into serious consideration for the second game if there are problems at the top at the Basin Reserve.

The doubts over New Zealand's limited batting options mean Daniel Vettori will enter at six after doing the job in the past two Tests. Vettori, who is usually a No.8, posted 134, his fifth century, against Pakistan in Napier and added 10 and 13 against Bangladesh.

New Zealand have a developing side and Greatbatch's initial aim for both Tests is to take them into a fifth day. "It's a great challenge for some of them to go up against the best side in the world," he said. "We need to compete every day and fight hard, and smart. If we can take Australia to five days we are a chance."

Both Greatbatch and Vettori are hoping the side can build on its dead-rubber one-day win on Saturday during the Test series. "Anytime you beat Australia it's a great feeling," Vettori said. "It gives us a bit of confidence going into the Tests and proceeding towards a World Cup."

SQUAD

Tim McIntosh, B.J. Watling, Peter Ingram, Ross Taylor, Martin Guptill, Daniel Vettori (captain), Mathew Sinclair, Brendon McCullum (wicketkeeper), Daryl Tuffey, Jeetan Patel, Tim Southee, Chris Martin, Brent Arnel.

Tigers under huge lead

FROM PAGE 17

England off-spinner Graeme Swann claimed five wickets for 90 runs but the day's highlight was the batting of Bangladesh wicketkeeper-batsman Mushfiq, who together with Nayeem made a new eighth wicket record for Bangladesh. The previous best was 87 made by Mohammad Ashraful and Mohammad Rafique in West Indies in 2004.

Everybody was looking to local hero Tamim Iqbal when Bangladesh resumed their innings on 154 for five. But the left-hander could manage to add only five runs to his overnight score of 81 as a beautiful delivery from paceman Tim Bresnan put an end to his brilliant knock.

Tamim was almost helpless as the ball clipped his off stump. Bangladesh went for lunch at 239 for seven when night-watchman Shahadat Hossain was dismissed by pacer Steve Finn for 14 runs.

But the visitors had to work harder than expected to wrap up the Bangladesh innings as resistance came from Mushfiq and Nayeem. Both the batsman showed real Test-match temperament, especially Mushfiq set an example for the top-order batsmen during

his 152-ball 79 that contained 15 boundaries. It was nice to watch for everybody the way the little right-hander showed his respect to the good deliveries and punished the bad balls.

The partnership came to an unfortunate end as Nayeem, who added 38 runs, ran blindly for a second run only to fall short of his crease. Nayeem's dismissal saw Bangladesh innings survive only three more balls.

Swann got the prize wicket of Mushfiq but thanks must go to substitute fielder James Tredwell who took a blinder at short midwicket.

The Tigers' innings ended at 296 runs 40 minutes before the tea break which gave England the huge first innings lead, but visiting skipper Alastair Cook didn't enforce the follow-on to give his bowlers rest.

Cook, who hit his career best 173 in the first innings, and Michael Carberry gave the tourists a good start once again, but Mahmudullah Riyad made the breakthrough by removing Cook for 39 runs.

England then lost wickets at regular intervals, but they still left the field in comfort as they were all set to give Bangladesh a daunting task to chase.

Magura honours its SA winners

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Magura

Gold and silver medal winners of the 11th South Asian Games who hailed from Magura were accorded a reception at the Magura stadium yesterday.

District Sports Association (DSA) and district administration arranged the reception where political and socio-cultural leaders, relatives of the winners including their parents and fans were present on the occasion.

Gold medalists Sharmin Akther Ratna (shooting), Mintu Sheikh (football), Shammi Akther (taekwondo) and silver winner in kabaddi Kazi Shahanara hail from different villages of Magura district and were formally greeted with crests and garlands.

Later, a discussion with Deputy Commissioner in Magura Mohammad Dilwar Bakht in the chair was held where lawmaker of Magura-1 constituency Dr. Mohammad Serajul Akbar, Superintendent of Police Mohammad Shahriar, Additional Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Tarikul Alam, central leader of Awami League (AL) Mohammad Altaf Hossain amongst others spoke.



SA Games gold medalists, (R-L) footballer Mintu Sheikh, shooter Sharmin Akther Ratna and taekwondo player Shammi Akther and silver medalist Kazi Shahanara of the women's kabaddi team, who all hail from the district of Magura, were accorded a reception at the Magura Stadium yesterday.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 1 Pie maker's device, at times, 6 Sch. org. 9 Burst 12 Scent 13 Work unit 14 "Hail, Caesar!" 15 Genius 16 One who's hardly humble 18 Short and thick 20 Sty cry 21 Salamander 23 Crony 24 Intersect 25 Complaint 27 Skewed entree 29 Upbraid 31 Disinclined 35 Shopping centers 37 Go sight-seeing 38 Claw 41 Victory 43 Inseparable

Grid for crossword puzzle with numbers 1-51.

DOWN 2 Bobby of hockey lore 3 Poultry purchase 4 Send forth 5 Accumulated, as debts 6 Little rock 7 Avoid-du-pois alternative 8 — Khan 9 Veranda 10 They take the cake 11 Makes coffee, maybe 17 Fruity ice 19 Rock drummer 21 Decline

CRYPTOQUIP XDBH OAVGAMBL ZADTHHBM G CBOBM XBLB ZKMN NANTSSW KHGSTWTUSB, RCR NDBW UBOAVB ULTDVM' UAVUM? Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF I EVER WALK INTO AN ICE CREAM SHOP, I PLAN TO NONCHALANTLY ASK "WOULD YOU DO ME A FLAVOR?" Today's Cryptoquip Clue: R equals D