

Feni hold Brothers

SPORTS REPORTER

Shrugging off a shocking road accident on way to Dhaka, Feni Soccer Club put up a spirited show to hold hosts Brothers Union to a goalless draw in the Bangladesh League match at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium yesterday.

INDO-BANGLADESH BANGLA GAMES

Huge group leaves today

SPORTS REPORTER

A 182-member Bangladesh contingent leaves here for Kolkata by road tonight to take part in the third Indo-Bangladesh Bangla Games with a hope of achieving better results than in the previous editions.

Bangla Games and the chief of the BOA training committee, Mizanur Rahman Manu said that the athletes got 22 days for training.

Ljubicic stuns Nadal

Tennis

AFP, Indian Wells

Croatian veteran Ivan Ljubicic rallied for a 3-6, 6-4, 7-6 (7/1) triumph over world number three Rafael Nadal on Saturday to reach the final of the Indian Wells Masters 1000.

Nadal since 2005 as he stopped a five-match skid against the Spaniard that included defeats last year in the quarter-finals of Masters 1000 events in Monte Carlo and Shanghai.

Shafiu's bat

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Shafiu believed Bangladesh are in a position to take a first innings lead and push the visitors on the back foot. "And if we can do that, we can take a lead in the first innings," he added.

He took a 2-1 lead with a 138 mph ace, and a 3-1 lead with a backhand winner. Three Nadal miscues saw the Spaniard facing a 6-1 deficit, and Ljubicic gave him no time to climb out of the hole as he blasted his forehand winner on his first match point.

They're not

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what might help them to be in such a position of utter dominance. "It's a flat track and if you didn't try to get out, it's hard to get one out," he said.

But the batsman who usually is considered as the backbone of England's batting, didn't have a very successful outing. Having survived a very close leg-before appeal against Rubel Hossain, he looped up an easy catch at short cover off the bowling of left-arm spin of Shakib Al Hasan when he was on 45.

Ivan Ljubicic of Croatia celebrates after beating world number three Rafael Nadal of Spain in the BNP Paribas Open semifinal at the Indian Wells Tennis Garden on Saturday.

Deccan's 3rd in a row

PTI, Cuttack

Andrew Symonds purple patch continued as he came up with yet another all-round display to steer defending champions Deccan Chargers to a 10-run win over Delhi Daredevils in a thrilling Indian Premier League match here on Sunday.

Symonds first scored a brisk 24-ball 35 and then starred with the ball with figures of three for 21, apart from a coming up with a stunning catch to dismiss dangerman Dinesh Karthik, to guide the Chargers home in the match that saw fortunes fluctuating from one team to the other.

With this win, the Hyderabad outfit has recorded their third consecutive victory in the Twenty20 event after losing the tournament opener against Kolkata Knight Riders.

Daredevils, on the other hand, have slumped to their third defeat on the trot from as many as five outings.

SIX SEASONS CHESS Saptarshi on the brink of GM norm

SPORTS REPORTER

Indian IM Saptarshi Roy Chowdhury was on the verge of his last GM norm at the close of the penultimate round of the Six Seasons Chess Tournament at the Tulip Hall of Uttara Club here yesterday.

SCOREBOARD

Table with columns: FROM PAGE 17, Bowler, O, M, R, W. Lists bowling figures for various players like Bresnan, Swann, Finn, etc.

Arsenal ride

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Joey Craddock and an own goal from James Milner gave Wolves a surprise half-time lead. But Villa piled on the pressure in the second half and Carew scored his second goal of the game, eight minutes from time, to salvage a point.

NZ v AUS 1ST TEST Bolinger too hot for Kiwis

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

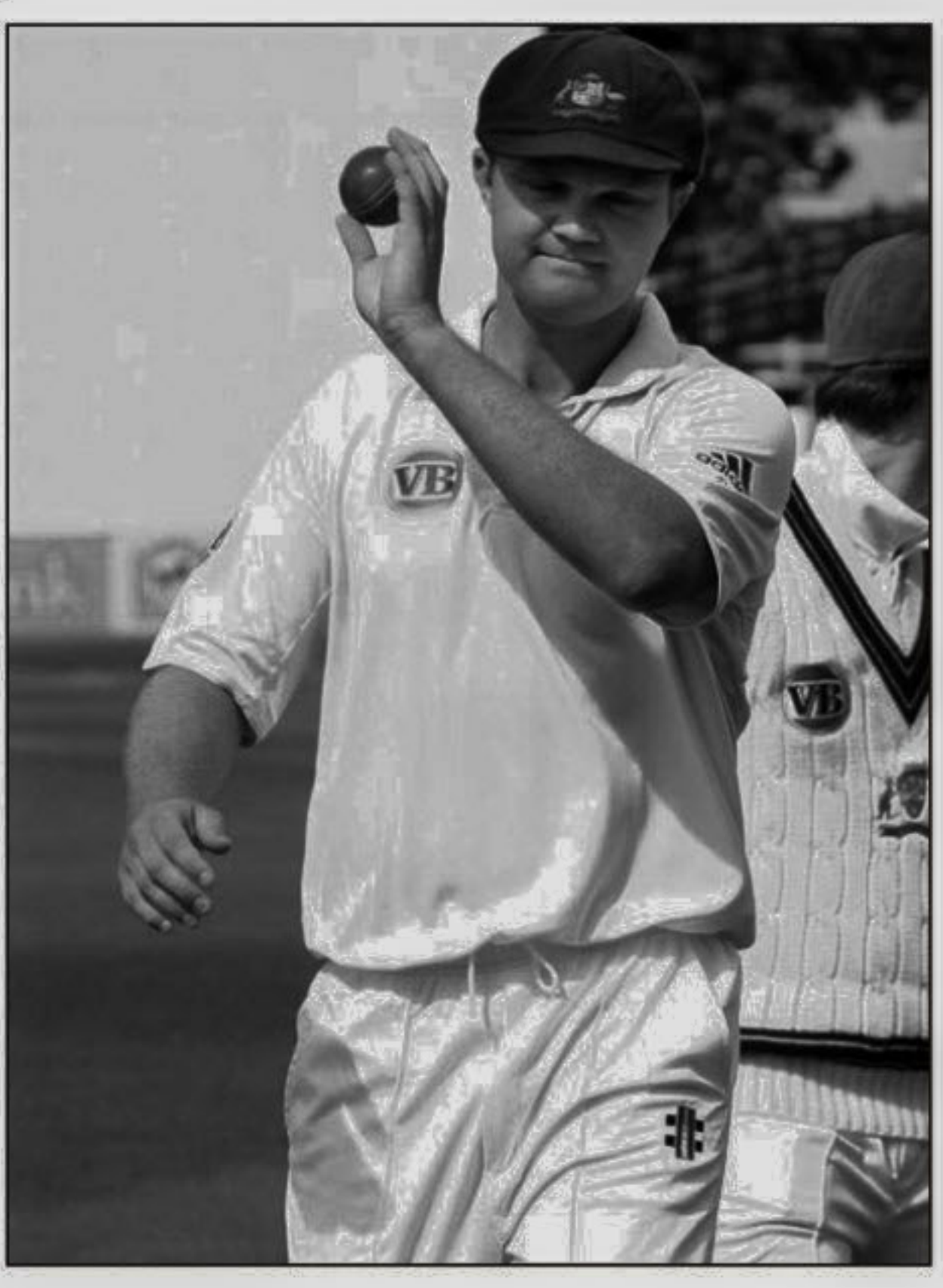
New Zealand didn't understand the fuss over Doug Bollinger during the one-day series, but they do now after he put Australia on track for a convincing victory in Wellington. After struggling through the limited-overs engagements and being attacked by the home batsmen, Bollinger has caused a lot of damage on a fine surface during the opening Test.

A career-best 5 for 28 helped floor New Zealand for 157 in their first innings, which ended 65 minutes into the third day and left them 302 behind, and Bollinger returned to cause more difficulties during the hosts' improved second effort.

Bollinger has played only seven Tests, but he was the attack's main man as he recorded the second five-wicket haul of his career and followed up with 2 for 30 off 13 overs. There were five breakthroughs in the day as he finished off the first innings and gave his side some inspiration when the visitors were calmed in the second session.

Backing up after a demolition is not always easy for the bowlers, who expect to repeat their exploits despite their fatigue. The fast men didn't regain the same opportunities until Bollinger stepped up, dismissing BJ Watling and Peter Ingram (1) in the half hour before tea.

Watling, who made an unsuccessful challenge, was lbw to Bollinger for the second time in the game and walked



7-STAR BOLLINGER: Australia pacer Doug Bollinger shows the ball after taking another New Zealand wicket on the third day of the first Test in Wellington yesterday.

off with 33 in 131 minutes, while Ingram flirted at Bollinger to give Brad Haddin an easy catch. Throughout the day he provided extra speed, bounce and a touch of swing to gain his rewards.

In the morning Bollinger, the third bowler used, struck twice in three balls, adding the victims to his two of the previous afternoon. Brendon McCullum left after trying a wild pull - he was well caught by Harris at fine-leg - and Bollinger then delivered a beautiful shorter ball angling away to brush Martin Guppill's edge.

Bollinger's fifth wicket came when Brent Arnel nicked his first delivery to Ricky Ponting at second slip. In celebration he attempted to kiss the team badge on his shirt - but smooched the sponsor's beer logo instead.

New Zealand resumed at a wobbly 108 for 4 and Daniel Vettori started the collapse of 45 for 6 when he edged the debutant Ryan Harris (2 for 42) to Ponting in the day's opening over. They made a better fight of their second innings thanks to the effort of McIntosh, who settled the team during a 70-run opening stand with Watling.

McIntosh, the left-hander, was a great man for the situation and was solid in defence

before branching out a little as the afternoon wore on. For most of the time the going was slow, but it was exactly what New Zealand wanted, especially as wickets fell regularly after Watling departed. There were people in the crowd asleep, but they were allowed to dream of a lengthy second innings and possibly some rain over the final two days.

Shortly before his dismissal there were two McIntosh fours in a row off Mitchell Johnson, including a crisp cover drive, in a collection of 10 boundaries and a straight six off Nathan Hauritz. However, his resistance ended when he pushed defensively at Hauritz and inside-edged to Simon Katich at short leg.

New Zealand were 183 for 5 and Vettori found himself in a similar position to when he arrived yesterday. His side was in danger and needed a lot of runs. He had added 18 before stumps, while McCullum was 4 when bad light intervened.

Hauritz, the offspinner, delivered 22 overs in a row after lunch and gained some worrying turn at times. He produced one crucial ball to Ross Taylor that landed in a footmark outside off stump and spun back sharply while keeping low. Taylor, who had earlier hit Hauritz for a six and a four, didn't play a shot and was hit in front of off stump. The Australians challenged successfully after Asad Rauf initially gave it not out and it was another costly lapse on a bad day for New Zealand.

SCORES IN BRIEF AUSTRALIA: First innings 459 for 5 decl. NEW ZEALAND: First innings 157 (Vettori 46, Guppill 30, McCullum 24, Taylor 21; Bollinger 5-28) NEW ZEALAND: Second innings 187 for 5 (Watling 33, McIntosh 83, Taylor 25, Vettori 18 batting; Bollinger 2-30)

\$ 703m for Pune, Kochi

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According to Shirke, the Sahara franchise would have its home ground situated on the outskirts of Pune city, in Ganjune, which is on the Mumbai-Pune expressway. The ground construction is already underway with Shapoorji Pallonji being the main contractors.

He was confident that the ground would be ready in time for the IPL's fourth season when Sahara would unveil its team. "The construction work has already started and it should be ready by March 2011," Shirke said.

While Sahara has a long history of sports sponsorship and are a high-profile corporate group, little is known about the winners of the Kochi franchise. It is a consortium with five partners - the Rendezvous group, Parini developers, Anand Shah Estate, Anchor Earth Private Limited and Film Waves. Minister of state for external affairs Shashi Tharoor was involved in bringing together the group, but has no stake in the franchise.

In fact, Tharoor clarified to Cricinfo that he had no stake in the Kochi franchise and that his role was limited to encouraging the consortium that bagged the team. "My role consisted only of encouraging and blessing the venture, and steering it to Kerala," he told Cricinfo. "Tharoor was involved in

facilitating and trying to get a team for the state," Modi confirmed. "He is an ardent fan of cricket and he has been trying to get people from Kochi to bid for it. I think his involvement ends there."

Modi said the tournament's organisers would provide the Kochi franchise a home ground till the Kerala Cricket Association completes construction of its new stadium. "Kerala Cricket Association is in the process of building the infrastructure and as when the stadium is ready teams will play there," he said. "But till the structures are ready, the IPL will provide them with an alternate venue."

Speaking to reporters, Shaileendra Gaikwad of Rendezvous World Sport said, "We have closely been following every development within the IPL, right from the inaugural year. Today, I am very happy for our consortium of Rendezvous World Sport and the people of Kochi as we finally have a team to call our own in this amazing city-based sports franchise."

While the huge money offered by the new franchisees shows the health of the IPL, Modi said there were no plans in the near future to further increase the number of teams involved. "We also have no plans to expand further immediately. In fact I

don't foresee an expansion in many, many years to come but then you never know."

The IPL will now feature 10 teams and - if the current format is retained - a total of 94 games, from the existing 60. After the first season in 2008, the league has already expanded its reach to other centres such as Cuttack, Ahmedabad, Nagpur and Dharamsala.

The franchise auction process was to have been completed on March 7 but was postponed by two weeks after the bidders and the BCCI objected to stiff financial clauses.

MIRPUR MASALA

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the first dig came after four years. The last time was against Australia in Fatullah. The first time was of course in the inaugural Test match against India in 2000 before they reached 416 against West Indies (in 2004), 488 against Zimbabwe (in 2005) and 427 against Australia (in 2006).

Out of the previous four occasions, Bangladesh won the game against Zimbabwe in Chittagong while they lost twice and had drawn in West Indies.

MU prevail

FROM PAGE 20 half, playing just behind United's lone striker Rooney, but the second period began in very different fashion for the South Korean, who soon made room for himself on the edge of the area and unleashed a shot which forced Reina to save.

However, just before the hour, the Liverpool goalkeeper had no chance with Park's next attempt - a clinical, diving header from no more than six yards which put the home side in front.

Rooney had started the move with an intelligent pass to Fletcher on the right wing and the Scotsman's delivery was inch-perfect.

The earlier threat of violence re-surfaced in the 67th minute when Fletcher was tripped by Kuyt and retaliated with a kick at the Dutchman which should have brought a yellow, or even red, card but which saw both players merely lectured by Webb.

Rooney chipped over and Benitez introduced Alberto Aquilani and Ryan Babel as Liverpool tried desperately to find some attacking impetus. But Torres wasted their best hope of an equaliser in the final minute when he completely miscued from eight yards and Yossi Benayoun headed meekly at van der Sar.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down. Clues include: 1 Mas-seur's workplace, 4 "Just Dance" singer Lady, 8 Crazy, 12 Scepter, 13 "Zounds!", 14 Stench, 15 Ship-repair site, 17 Wilder or Hackman, 18 Help, 19 Inventor, 21 Appomat-tox, 22 Caseload, 26 Barber-shop item, 29 Cocoa holder, 30 "What'd you say?", 31 Black birds, 32 "Great Expectations" lad, 33 Poi base, 34 B&B, 35 Car wash option.

Cryptquip puzzle grid with letters and numbers. The clue is: Yesterday's Cryptquip: WHEN A WORM FINDS ITSELF ENCLOSED IN A FUZZY FRUIT, I SUPPOSE YOU COULD SAY IT'S IMPEACHED. Today's Cryptquip Clue: Z equals I