

Don't rule out

FROM PAGE 17 trying to nurture and progress them together as a group, but with someone of Harmy's class, ability and stature in the game, you'd be foolish to ever rule out the possibility of him getting another crack.

2nd phase

FROM PAGE 17 any points in the second-leg matches when Mohammedan take on Feni Soccer Club at Shaheed Salam Stadium in Feni today.

"We are still four points short of Abahani and we have no way to lose any points in the second leg if we want to clinch the first-ever title of the professional football league," Maruf told The Daily Star from Feni yesterday.

No doubt, coach Maruf will have his fingers crossed so that Abahani lose points to come close to them and make the league exciting till the last game between them. Maruf also thinks that the Bangladesh League is being affected because of not holding the senior and first division leagues in the last two seasons as the same players have been playing the professional league for three seasons and most of them have no quality to play in such a level.

Abahani arrest

FROM PAGE 17 hat-trick in the 14th minute through a penalty corner -- combination of Amit Kumar, Moshir Rahman Biplob and himself. Later, Chandan struck the fourth goal from a penalty stroke in the 25th minute while Police pulled one goal back one minute later through a field goal from Rana.

Top Sports

FROM PAGE 17 second edition of the Port City league first time being held overseas. Satellite channel ATN Bangla is beaming all the matches of the weeklong tournament live from the venue. BRIEF SCORE CTG MOHAMMEDAN: 124 for 7 in 20 overs (Ashraf 37, Faisal 35; Mukhtar 2-18, Nasir 2-16).

Zlatan edges

FROM PAGE 20 provided the breakthrough on 62 minutes with Carles Puyol's stabbed shot fumbled by Dudu Aouate and Ibrahimovic was on hand to smash the ball home. Ibrahimovic then released a superb pass using his back, reminiscent of Ronaldinho's days at Barca, to lay the ball to Messi whose fierce shot was tipped over.

Juve fans

FROM PAGE 20 league games this season and have been bundled out of the Champions League, Europa League and Italian Cup. At the start of play they sat sixth in Serie A, six points behind Palermo in the crucial fourth spot but with a game in hand and face the very real risk of missing out on Champions League football next season.



McLaren-Mercedes driver Jenson Button (C) of Britain celebrates defending the Australian Grand Prix title in Melbourne yesterday. Button claimed the title when he led for the second half of a compelling race to beat Renault's Polish driver Robert Kubica (L) by 12 seconds with Ferrari's Brazilian driver Felipe Massa (R) 2.4 seconds away in third.

Button wins a thriller

INTERNET, undated World champion Jenson Button won a thrilling Australian Formula One Grand Prix the second straight year on Sunday as long-time leader Sebastian Vettel was stopped by his eighth career win in a McLaren despite a far from perfect pit stop early in the race and riding into the gravel afterwards while the pole sitter Vettel had to retire after 26 of 58 laps with what he said was a broken brake disc in his Red Bull.

Robert Kubica took second place in a Renault and Felipe Massa was third in a Ferrari an action-packed race at Albert Park which made up for the procession-like event at the season-opener in Bahrain two weeks ago. The Bahrain winner Fernando Alonso placed fourth in the second Ferrari to retain first place in the drivers' standings with 37 points from Massa (33) and Button (31) after two of 19 season races.

with just one stop. "It was my call. When I got into the pit lane I thought it was catastrophic decision because it was soaking there. But the pace was good then and it was the right call." "I never thought of putting on another set. My pace was not great but consistent. We couldn't have done a better strategy."

The boredom of Bahrain was instantly forgotten in Australia with Massa roaring from fifth on the grid to second behind Vettel, who won the start from pole on a wet track. Behind him, three world champions did not get around the first turn unscathed, with Button and Alonso touching, the Spaniard spinning around 180 degrees and Michael Schumacher damaging his Mercedes GP front wing beyond repair in the incident as well.

settle for 10th in the end in a modest showing. "We were faster today," said Schumacher, adding about the first-turn incident "I don't know who did what. It was a little chainreaction. That's racing." Button was the first to change to slicks on a rapidly drying track and almost all others followed two laps later.

The incident allowed Nico Rosberg to slip into fifth place. Hamilton at least salvaged sixth while Webber had to go to the pits again for a new front wing and finished ninth. Button crossed the line in 1 hour 33 minutes 36.531 seconds, 12 seconds ahead of Kubica and almost 15 clear of Massa, who was delighted to get the second podium in as many races in his return from a life-threatening crash in Hungary last July.

Federer cruises

AFP, Miami Roger Federer preserved dignity among the elite at the Miami Masters Saturday, earning a comfortable opening victory after world number three Andy Murray crashed out to unheralded Mardy Fish.

World number one and top seed Federer quietly dominated Nicolas Lapentti, vanquishing the Ecuadorian 6-3, 6-3 in 66 minutes. But it was another story for Murray, who fell 6-4, 6-4 to the 101st-ranked Fish. Federer is the sole survivor of the top three as Murray's early exit followed that of second-seeded Serbian Novak Djokovic on Friday. Federer admitted that seeing Djokovic and Murray bow out before he had even taken the court had given him pause.

chances at least on the return games," said Federer, who needed only two breaks of Lapentti to earn his 12th victory of the season. Federer lined up a third-round clash with Frenchman Florent Serra, a 6-3, 3-6, 6-2 winner over Spain's Albert Montanes. Federer is beginning a bid for a third Miami title after winning here in 2005 and 2006. Swedish fifth seed Robin Soderling, the French Open runner-up, progressed to the third round with a 7-6 (7/5), 6-0 win over Australian Peter Luczak. Croatian number seven Marin Cilic accounted for Stephane Robert of France 6-3, 6-1. Spain's 10th seed Fernando Verdasco saw off Israel's Dudi Sela 6-1, 6-2 while 13th-seeded Russian Mikhail Youzhny chased past Santiago Giraldo of Colombia 6-0, 6-1.

Taylor fights alone

FROM PAGE 17 In the first session Taylor received help from the opener BJ Watling, who worked hard over his 46, but that was the second highest score as the rest were unable to contribute more than Tim Southee's late 22. When Taylor was around boundaries rained and his fireworks were more suited to a one-day or Twenty20 instead of a lazy Test Sunday in Hamilton.

Having been missed on 7, 53 and 92, he knew it was his day so he kept on swinging, majestically at times and wildly at others. A fierce cut through point took him to 99 and the century came with a slice over the slips cordon. He mixed some memorable boundaries -- his driving between mid-on and cover off the fast bowlers was delightful -- with streaky shots, but the combination made it an exceptional performance. Following his third reprieve, when Watson missed a regulation edge at first slip, Taylor quickly brought up his century and things really got ugly for the visitors.

launched three sixes in a row over midwicket, the sightscreen and midwicket again. It would have been worse if Watson hadn't taken a catch on the boundary edge and thrown it back into the field athletically before he crossed the boundary, saving five runs. New Zealand hadn't passed Australia's total at that stage and were six down, but the Australian shoulders were slumping during the onslaught. By the end of the day their outlook was much brighter than the conditions.

The first miss came when Taylor edged Ryan Harris between Watson and Ricky Ponting, with neither man going for the ball. He followed up by driving Johnson for four through the offside twice in two balls in a brutal response to a costly fielding error. Taylor continued to leap forward and pulled Watson to midwicket before bringing up his half-century with a six to midwicket. The milestone arrived in an astonishing 34 balls and he didn't slow much on the way to his fifth Test hundred. Hauritz came on in the first session to goad Taylor, who swiped at his third ball, and

LOCAL SNIPPETS

FROM PAGE 17 Group Sultan Ahmed, secretary of Pabna DSA Abu Ishaque Shamim were also present.

INDEPENDENCE DAY TENNIS

Runner Group Independence Day Open Tennis competition will begin tomorrow at the National Tennis Complex in Ramna. Tournament director Mohammad Ali Deen announced this at a press conference yesterday. Tk 1,24,800 would be distributed as prize money with the men's winner receiving Tk 20,000 and the women's champion picking up Tk 10,000. As many as 281 players

UNDER-16 CHESS

Ikramul Haq Siam defeated Abdullah Al Saif 2-0 in the playoff final to clinch the Prime Bank 30th National Sub-Junior Chess trophy at the Sankar Govinda Chowdhury Stadium premises in Natore yesterday. This was a second consecutive title for the student of Motijheel Model High School who earned 8.5 points from nine games. Abdullah, who also collected the same number of points, became runners-up. In the girls' competition, Tahmina Akhtar became champions while Tanzina Akhtar came out second.

Seventh heaven for Chelsea

FROM PAGE 17 Samir Nasri's goal nine minutes from time appeared to have sealed victory for Arsenal only for Kevin Phillips to equalise in the closing moments. "It was a bad one for Arsenal to drop points so late in the game today," said Ferguson. "They're now four points behind us." Frustrated Arsenal manager Arsene Wenger criticised the St Andrew's playing surface.

giers Hull won 2-0 at home to Fulham. "I think it was better than the way we played the other day but it wasn't good enough to win the game. I'm so disappointed," said Zola who later admitted he was considering his position as manager of the troubled club. Meanwhile Wolves and Everton shared the points in a goalless draw. At Stamford Bridge, Lampard gave Chelsea a 15th-minute lead when he struck at the far post following Florent Malouda's centre. But Villa, who face holders Chelsea in next month's FA Cup semifinal, equalised when Norway striker John Carew turned in Ashley Young's cross in the 29th minute. Lampard restored Chelsea's lead a minute before half-time with a penalty after James Collins tripped Yuri Zhirkov. Malouda then made sure of the points when the France winger turned in a cross from Zhirkov in the 57th minute. Lampard had his hat-trick when he scored his second penalty following a foul on

Toni blows

FROM PAGE 20 for Milito to prod home from inside the six-yard box, although television replays showed there had been an offside in the build-up. But just as Inter looked to be taking control, a miscued shot from substitute Rodrigo Taddei fell to Toni, who shot home into the bottom-right corner from 15 yards on 72 minutes. Inter threw everything at Roma and came within inches of equalising deep into injury time when Milito crashed a shot against the left-hand upright. In the day's late game Palermo maintained their grip on fourth place and Champions League qualification as Fabrizio Miccoli scored a hat-trick in a 3-1 defeat of lowly Bologna.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 35 Cain's victim 1 Dined 4 Last year's frosh 8 Actor Pitt 12 Hawaiian garland 13 Greek vowel 14 Continental coin 15 Collar style 17 From the beginning 18 Hastens 19 Church music-maker 20 Unyielding 22 Disappear 24 Sported 25 Grand view 29 Past 30 Helicopter blade 31 Ump 32 Almond confection 34 Trucker on the radio



Bangladesh Tennis Federation general secretary Ishtiaq Ahmed (4th from L) receives the title sponsorship cheque from director of Runner Group Mohammad Ali Deen (3rd from R) at the Ramna National Tennis Complex yesterday. Runner Group is sponsoring the weeklong Independence Day Open tennis tournament, starting today.

Cryptogram grid with numbers 1-51 and letters A-Z.

CRYPTOQUIP AOU JRKMAVDU SRTVKM ERZA SZLUS TZKAF AR BVKG Z KUT LZSUUS. OU DQFA EU ERSUG RQA RB OVF FLQJJ.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN THOSE THIEVES DECIDED TO STEAL THE BIG BLANKET, COULD YOU SAY THEY WERE TAKING COVER? Today's Cryptoquip Clue: U equals E