

## Brothers retain PCL T20 title

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Brothers Union retained the title of Port City League T20 Cup beating Chittagong Tigers by three wickets in a nail-biting final at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium yesterday. Led by a fightback from the late-order batsmen, Brothers Union overhauled the victory target of 130 with three wickets in hand and two balls to spare. Despite being a low-scoring affair, the match lived up to the billing with the momentum shifting from one side to the other till the very end.

Batting first on winning the toss, Chittagong Tigers posted a decent total of 129 runs losing seven wickets, thanks to a thrashing half-century from opener Shamsur Rahman Shuvo. The hard-hitting right-hander smashed three sixes and a couple of boundaries in his 39-ball 51 that

held the innings together and gave Tigers the score of 129 after 20 overs. No other batsman found it easy going on a slow wicket, especially dealing with veteran Abdur Razzaq who bowled a miserly spell of left-arm spin taking three wickets.

Chasing the 130-run target, Brothers Union struggled to get runs early and lost half of their batsmen within fifty runs after 12 overs. Then skipper Tushar Imran and Pakistani all-rounder Azhar Mehmood stuck a fine partnership of 47 runs to keep them in the game. However, after their departure, at 103 for seven in 18 overs, Brothers Union looked down and out. But wily Mohammad Rafiq and big-hitter Ziaur Rahman had other ideas as they turned on the slog on the inexperienced Chittagong Tigers pacers Abul Hasan and Alauddin Babu.

Rafiq blasted Hasan to a six and a four and then leg-byeed one for four to take the equation to ten needed from six balls. After two singles in the first two balls of the

twentieth over from Babu, Ziaur Rahman launched the next two for a boundary and a six to take Brothers past the victory target to 132 for seven. The Brothers Union players broke into wild rapture on retaining the title.

Brothers Unions' Abdur Razzaq got the man-of-the-match award and also the highest wicket-taker's award for ten wickets in the tournament. His teammate Imran Nazir became the highest run-scorer and man-of-the-series with 183 runs.

### SCORES IN BRIEF

**CHITTAGONG TIGERS:** 129 for seven in 20 overs (Shamsur 51, Vincent 13, Abdur rzaaq 3 wickets)

**BROTHERS UNION:** 132 for seven in 19.4 overs (Azhar 26, Tushar 21, Juneed 17, Ziaur 17 not out, Rafiq 10 not out; Enamul 3 wickets)

**Result:** Brothers Union of Chittagong won by three wickets

**Man-of-the-match:** Abdur Razzaq  
**Man-of-the-series:** Imran Nazir

## Nasir treble powers Mohammedan

SPORTS REPORTER



Nasir Chowdhury struck the league's seventh hat-trick to power titans Mohammedan Sporting Club to a comprehensive 7-0 win over a listless Shuktara Jubo Sangsad of Narayanganj in the Bangladesh League at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Apart from the treble of the former Army man, Abdul Baten Komol struck twice, Zahid Hasan Emily netted once and the other came through an own goal scored by Shuktara defender Sohulul Islam Dulal in the heavily one-sided affair.

It was a relief for Mohammedan coach Maruful Haq to see his charges win a match so convincingly without their key Nigerian players Alamu Bukola Olalekan and Emeke Christian, who were omitted due to 'sickness' though both of them scored in the previous match against Feni Soccer Club.

The 7-0 thrashing was the biggest margin of victory this season after Arambagh thumped

Chittagong Mohammedan 6-1 in the first leg in the port city.

Following the omission of Bukola, Emeke and captain Arman Aziz, out of form striker Emily, Nasir and Zahid Hasan found themselves in the starting eleven and began to prove their worth. Emily, who was given rest in the match against Feni Soccer following his goal drought, returned to form with his seventh

league goal and was also provider three times. Nasir became Mohammedan's second player to score a hat-trick while Zahid played a key role in the midfield throughout the game.

Komol, who scored twice in the previous match after replacing Emily, once again justified his inclusion to give the Black and Whites a fifth minute lead after availing a push from Emily.

**Mohammedan 7 (Nasir 3 goals, Komol 2 goals, Emily 1 goal, Dulal 1)**

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PHOTO: STAR

Mohammedan forward Nasir Hossain (C) races past a Shuktara Jubo Sangsad player during their Citycell Bangladesh League match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. Nasir scored a hat-trick in the Black and White's 7-0 thrashing of the Narayanganj outfit.

## Mumbai roll on

SPORTS REPORTER

Ambati Rayudu's fiery knock kept the Mumbai Indians juggernaut rolling with a 63-run victory over Deccan Chargers in the second match of the IPL T20 yesterday.

Rayudu's unbeaten knock of 55 from just 29 balls, Saurabh Tiwary's 44 and Sachin Tendulkar's 35 gave the table-toppers a daunting total of 178 for five in their twenty overs. Then the Mumbai Bowlers turned in on the act as they skittled the Deccan Chargers to just 115 runs to script yet another comfortable win. The highest 21 runs in the Deccan innings came from the bat of Andrew Symonds. Zaeher khan, Harbhajan Singh, Kieron pollard took two wickets each for Mumbai.

This win helps Mumbai extend their lead at the top of the league standings to four points with Delhi in second place on 10. Deccan are tied on seventh place with six points.

In the earlier match of the

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## Introduction of franchises deferred

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has deferred the introduction of franchises and players selection programme of the forthcoming National Cricket League Twenty20 to make room for the players who are yet to return from Port City League (PCL).

BCB's tournament committee chairman Gazi Ashraf Hossain said that while the extra time would help the players have some rest before joining their respective teams it would also feed in the latest

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## INT'L SURFING CONTEST Zafar leaves for Hawaii

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Cox's Bazar

Bangladeshi surfer Zafar Alam flew off to the island state of Hawaii last night to take part in the International Surfing Contest later this month.

The 28-year-old from Cox's Bazar will take part in the two-day competition, to be held on April 24 and 25, with the top



ZAFAR ALAM

140 surfers from around the world.

The choppy waters of Hawaii was the scene of Zafar's first tryst with top-class surfing when he took part in the International Freedom Surfing Contest in May last year and came out sixth among 130 surfers.

Zafar will have a busy time in Hawaii as he will attend a 20-day programme at the North

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PHOTO: AFP

**INSTANT IMPACT:** Chelsea's star Ivorian striker Didier Drogba, who came off the bench in the second half, celebrates after scoring the second goal in his side's 2-1 win against Manchester United in the top-of-the-table clash of the English Premier League at Old Trafford yesterday.

## Chelsea overtake MU

AFP, Manchester



Chelsea took maximum advantage of Wayne Rooney's enforced absence to move into pole position in the Premier League title race with a 2-1 win over Manchester United here on Saturday.

Goals from Joe Cole and substitute Didier Drogba amounted to a fair reflection of the Londoners domination of opponents who looked distinctly short of inspiration without their 34-goal star striker.

A late strike from substitute Federico Macheda ensured United kept the contest alive to the death and, on another day, United might also have enjoyed a better return from three debatable penalty appeals.

But the champions could scarcely complain about the outcome after failing to create a single clear scoring opportunity in open play before Macheda bun-

dled a cross from fellow substitute Nani over the line with nine minutes left.

Rooney's absence did not entail a change of shape for United, with Dimitar Berbatov - who once again failed to live up to his status as the most expensive signing in the club's history - slotting in at the sharp end of an attacking trident made up of Ryan Giggs and Antonio Valencia.

Anelotti's pre-match suggestion that Drogba was too important to be left out

proved to be a smokescreen as the Italian opted for the same line-up that started last weekend's 7-1 demolition of Aston Villa.

That meant Nicolas Anelka leading the line and Cole and Florent Malouda occupying the flanks and it was the two wide men who combined to give Chelsea the

lead after 20 minutes of cagey opening exchanges.

From wide on the left, Malouda wriggled past Valencia, turned inside Gary Neville and powered into the area, muscling Darren Fletcher aside on his way to the byline.

The Frenchman's low cross found Cole at the near post and, despite the attentions of Patrice Evra, the England international was able to produce a deft little flick through his own legs to find the net.

That piece of improvisation made amends for Cole having wasted the best chance of the match until then, when he shanked his shot from an inviting Anelka pass.

For United, Berbatov had headed a Valencia cutback high over the bar and Evra had had an effort from the corner of the penalty area comfortably saved by Petr Cech.

The home side did have two first-half

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## Sania knows all the truth

INTERNET, undated

Unfazed by threats of legal action from the family of Ayesha Siddiqui who claimed to have married him, Shoaib Malik on Saturday made a surprise visit to Sania Mirza's house amid reports that their marriage may be shifted to Dubai.

Clad in a trouser and T-shirt, Shoaib who is slated to marry Sania on April 11, appeared on the balcony of the tennis star's house and was seen talking on his mobile phone while Sania and her mother were involved in an animated discussion with each other.

At times, the talk between the mother and daughter appeared to be tense and heated.

His visit to Hyderabad assumes significance in the context of a late night threat by Ayesha's parents that they would file an FIR against him if he went ahead with

the marriage without divorcing their daughter.

There was no indication about the sudden visit of Shoaib but it comes amid reports in the Pakistani media that the

venue of the marriage could be shifted to Dubai to avoid any problems from Ayesha's family. There was no confirmation of the reports as yet.

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PHOTO: YOUTUBE

A video grab shows Shoaib Malik (R) talking on his mobile phone while Sania Mirza (C) and her mother sorting something out on the balcony of the tennis star's house in Hyderabad yesterday.

## What to WATCH

### MAX & SuperSport2

Indian Premier League  
Kolkata v Punjab  
Live from 4:30pm  
Delhi v Bangalore  
Live from 8:30pm  
**ESPN**

### English Premiership

Birmingham v Liverpool  
Live from 7:55pm  
Fulham v Wigan  
Live from 10:30pm  
**STAR Sports**

### English Premiership

Everton v West Ham  
Live from 8:55pm  
**SuperSport3**

### Primera Liga

Racing v Real Madrid  
Live from 11:00pm

## DAY'S EVENT

Bangladesh League  
Sk Russel v Muktiyodha  
Time: 5:00pm  
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium

Club Cup Hockey  
Wari v Sadharan Bima  
Time: 4:00pm  
Venue: Maulana Bhasani National Stadium

## LOCAL SNIPPETS

SPORTS REPORTER

Mokhlesur hit 126 as Nature posted a 23-run victory over Naogaon in the 30th Inter-District Cricket Championship yesterday.

Nature piled up 274 for five in 45 overs and later wrapped up Naogaon for 251 runs.

In the day's other matches, Tangail (257-6) secured a comfortable 110-run victory against Kishoreganj (147-10), Narayanganj (144-2) beat Gopalganj (143-9) by eight wickets, Comilla (193-4) registered six-wicket victory over Chittagong (189-10), Nilphamari (337-7) outplayed Panchangar (148-10) by 191 runs, Barisal (244-10) defeated Bhola (183-10) by 61 runs, Jhenaidah (213-10) beat Bagerhat (170-10) by 43 runs.

### INDEPENDENCE

#### DAY TENNIS

BKSP students swept the age-group titles of the Runner Group Independence Day Open Tennis Competition at the National Tennis Complex.

Mamun Beparj became champion in the boys' singles (Under-14) event with a 6-4, 6-0 victory over his teammate Delwar Hossain while in the boys' singles Under-12 group Mahin Reza clinched the trophy beating Ador of Naogaon 7-5, 6-3 and Rebeca Sultana emerged champion in the girls' singles Under-12 group with a 6-4, 6-2 win

against Pinki of Madaripur.

Amol Roy and Ranjan Ram moved into the men's singles final. In the topsy-turvy first semifinal Amol beat Prithul Mondal 6-2, 0-6, 6-3 while Ranjan defeated Alamgir Hossain 6-3, 6-4.

Sharmin Alam Sarda and Sathi Sarker reached women's singles final. Sarda beat Moumita Jannat Mou 6-1, 7-6 and Sathi beat Ishita Afroz 6-0, 7-5.

In men's doubles quarter finals, Amol and Ranjan pair defeated Sheikh Hasibul Haque and Raisul Islam 6-0, 6-1, Selim Hossain and Yuki came from behind to beat Mizanur Rahman and Anwar Hossain pair 2-6, 7-5, 7-6, Niranjan Ram and Prithul beat Mufazzal Hossain and Milon Hossain pair 6-1, 6-2, Alamgir and Dipu Lal pair beat Delwar and Arvind Fernando pair 6-4, 6-1.

### INDEPENDENCE

#### DAY CHESS

Delwar Hossain became champion in the Independence Day Rapid Chess Tournament that was held at the Bangladesh Chess Federation hall-room on Friday.

Abdullah Al Saif finished runner-up and FM Syed Mahfuzur Rahman Emon finished third.

Delwar clinched the title in tie-breaker after Delwar, Saif

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info@officextracts.com • www.officextracts.com