

Dhaka, Rajshahi zonal champs

SPORTS REPORTER

Dhaka became zonal champions after their 34-run win over Mymensingh in the 30th Inter-District Cricket Championship in Jamalpur yesterday.

Batting first, Dhaka were bowled out for a modest 184 from 45 overs with Faiyaz making 40. In reply, Mymensingh never found it easy as they were bowled out for 150 from 42 overs.

Paceman Shahin took three wickets to win the man-of-the-match award.

In Comilla, Cox's Bazar beat Khagrachhari by nine wickets while Khulna defeated Jhenidah by 98 runs in Kushtia.

Our Pabna correspondent adds: Rashahi became zonal champions when they beat Chapainawabganj by three wickets.

Chapainawabganj scored 243-9 with Sharif scoring 88 and Sohel 61.

In reply Rajshahi chased down the target in 48.5. Mahub scored 62 while Mohaimanul made 52.

Pabna police superintendent Md. Jamil Ahmed distributed prizes among the winners after the final match.

Fine start for India

SPORTS REPORTER

Favourites India got off their IHF Handball Challenge Trophy campaign in style when they posted a massive 44-11 win over Nepal in Group A at the Shaheed Shurawardi Indoor National Stadium yesterday.

India established their solo dominance in the first half having scored 22 goals while Nepal managed only five.

After the break, India added another 22 to finish the game 44-11 with Samsher Singh scoring 14 goals. Fuldev Chowdhury scored four goals for the losers.

In the day's other match, Yemen defeated Afghanistan 35-24 after leading the first half 17-10. Yemen's Abdullah Ahmed Ali was the highest scorer with seven goals followed by his Fadhli Mohammed and Murtaza, who struck five goals each.

Ahmed Zohair and Moqbel Ahmed scored five goal each for Afghanistan, who lost both their matches after going down to Bangladesh in the first match on Wednesday.

Friendly soccer

SPORTS REPORTER

Myanmar Army football team will take on a Bangladesh Football Federation XI in a friendly match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium today.

The match will begin at 3.30pm.

Impossible

FROM PAGE 17 and through on goal clipped the ball over the keeper for the third.

Guardiola brought on Yaya Toure to strengthen the midfield but their concentration on defence led to them taking their foot off the pedal.

Except for a shot soon after the break, Messi faded from the game and Arsenal had the majority of the better chances and actually had themselves to blame for not getting back in the game.

Bendtner was too often the culprit with his slow movement allowing Rafa Marquez to clear on one occasion and then he hit the post with a clear header from point blank range, although he was judged off side.

As the Barca defence dozed Tomas Rosicky too stole in but blazed over the crossbar.

Messi, though, wrapped up his match winning performance by tucking the ball past Almunia from a tight angle.

Cyclones

FROM PAGE 17 ATN Records, who got the event marketing rights, also signed a deal with Destiny2000, which earned the title sponsorship rights spending Tk 1.5 crore.

Gazi Ashraf Hossain, BCB's director and chairman of the tournament committee, informed that five matches would be held under floodlights at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur despite the country going through a severe power crisis.

"First of all I apologise for the delay. We believe that it would be a successful event and helpful for the national players before the World Cup. Despite power crisis five matches will be day-night affairs," said Ashraf.

Former national skipper Roquibul Hassan was moderator in the programme.



Sonali Bank goalkeeper Probir Kumar Ghosh sprawls on the ground to make a save against an Usha attacker during their Dhaka Bank Club Cup Hockey match yesterday.

Bracken, Clark axed for Ashes

Cricket

AFP, Sydney

Australia Wednesday culled fast bowlers Nathan Bracken and Stuart Clark from their roster for next season, when they will try to regain the Ashes from England and defend the World Cup.

Selectors also dropped batsmen Brad Hodge and David Hussey, and wicketkeeper Graham Manou, from the list of 25 centrally contracted players for 2010-2011 but retained veteran quick Brett Lee, despite his move to retire from Tests.

Fellow fast bowler Shaun Tait, a Twenty20 specialist, was also kept on for this year's ICC World Twenty20 in the West Indies.

"We see him as an important member of the ICC World Twenty20 squad and (he has) a real chance to force his way back into the Australian 50-over side," said selection panel chairman Andrew Hilditch.

Batsman Phillip Hughes, 21, was given a chance to make amends for last year's disappointing Ashes tour.

Pakistan to bank on spinners: Waqar

Cricket

ANI, Lahore

Defending champions Pakistan would be banking upon its spinners to retain the ICC T20 World Championship, coach Waqar Younis has said.

Waqar said he believed that the team had spinners who could pocket the coveted title for a second consecutive time.

"We have variety of all types of bowlers but I think we have an edge in the spin department and we will be depending upon our spinners to play a key role in team's success to defend the title," Waqar told reporters on the sidelines of the ongoing training camp at the National Cricket Academy here.

He pointed out that slow bowlers like Shahid Afridi,

Shoaib divorces

FROM PAGE 17

"Whatever has been done has been done according to our religion and sharia. After negotiations all through last night, the divorce proceedings happened around 7am this morning in the presence of a qazi," he said.

Rasool said they had been working for the last five days as the entire community was upset with the controversy. "A lot of muck was thrown at each other. There were allegations and counter allegations and it was getting dirty."

"We have not taken sides and [we] resolved it peacefully. We worked all through last night and about 10-15 people were involved in it. The end result is a happy result," he said.

Rasool said both families had gone through a very rough time. "Ayesha's father is a heart bypass patient and her elder sister was going through pregnancy," he said.

Sadiqa Babar, a friend of Ayesha and whose father was involved in working out the compromise deal, said it was a great relief that the marriage row had ended.

Big two keep

FROM PAGE 17

minute when the younger brother of striker Emily latched a right-footer inside the box past goalkeeper Atiqul Islam Tareq.

Shakil finally made the result safe with a spectacular drive in stoppage time as the winger drove a high cross from Ariful home from inside the box to strike his league's second goal.

TEAMS: MOHAMMEDAN: Aminul Haque, Wali Faisal, Nasirul Islam, Mofazzal Hossain

Saikat, Mamunul Islam, Ariful Islam, Enamul Haq Sharif, Abdul Baten Komol (Arman Aziz), Zahid Hossain (Shakil Ahmed), Nasir Chowdhury (Alamgir Rana) and Zahid Hasan Emily.

Usha power past Sonali

SPORTS REPORTER

Usha Krira Chakra warmed up well for the semifinals of the Dhaka Bank Club Cup hockey tournament when they beat Sonali Bank 2-0 at the Maulana Bhasani Stadium yesterday.

Goals from Krishna Kumar and Mazharul Islam set up the win for Usha who now await the winners of the much-awaited Abahani-Mohammedan clash today to know their semifinal opponents as Usha became group champions with their third consecutive win.

It was an evenly contested affair but the match started tilting towards Usha mid-way through the first half. In the 23rd minute, forward Krishna latched on to a minus from Sheikh Mohammad Nannu and stroked the ball in the back of the net as Usha went into the half-time break with a 1-0 lead.

Usha almost doubled the margin in the 41st minute, captain Maksud Alam Habul missed an open net chance when he shot wide after receiving a ball from the first goalscorer Krishna.

But seven minutes later, Mazharul only had to tap in a powerful low pass from Krishna and it was 2-0 in favour of Usha.

Sonali Bank had two late penalty corners but they failed to convert any of them as Usha walked away with a dominating performance.

16 coaches get A licence

SPORTS REPORTER

As many as sixteen Bangladesh coaches got the AFC 'A' licences after they succeeded in the first-ever AFC 'A' licence certificate course in Bangladesh.

Iranian instructor Masoud Eghbali conducted the one-month course in January-February with AKM Saiful Bari Titu and BA Jubair Nipu, both AFC A-licensed coaches, assisting the Iranian.

The successful coaches are Syed Golam Gilani, Mahtab Hossain, Mohammad Sagir, Mahabub Hossain Roxy, SM Zakaria, Shafiqul Islam Manik, Abu Yousuf, AKM Maruful Haq, Swapan Kumar Das, Mosharraf Hossain Badal, Amit Kumar Roy, Abdur Razzak, Sheikh Zahidur Rahman Milton, Ujjal Chakrabarti, Paritosh Dewan and Kazi Jasimuddin Joshi.

Easy wins for Tiger, Biltu

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Tiger Sporting Club defeated Manikganj United City by five wickets in the Khan Real Estate Second Division Cricket League at the Government Boys' High School playground here yesterday.

United City batted first and were all out for 122 runs in 22.3 overs. Pappu scored 27 runs, Ziko 22 and Kawser 18. Hira picked up four wickets while Shiba took two wickets.

In reply, Tiger Sporting reached 125-5 in 20 overs. Jewel remained not out on 46 runs from 25 balls and Johnny made 45 from just 22 balls.

In another match, Biltu Club defeated Balaka Sporting Club by 98 runs.

Harbhajan conceded the

Lumb knocks out Punjab

CRICINFO, undated



The Sawai Mansingh Stadium remained a fortress for Rajasthan Royals, who made it eight out of eight at the venue by bulldozing Kings XI Punjab with five overs remaining.

Opener Michael Lumb pummelled 83 off 43 to deliver Rajasthan their third straight win, which lifts them to joint second spot, an unlikely position for a team that was written off after starting with three defeats in a row.

Rajasthan sprinted to the highest total of the season in the first five overs (65), after Punjab had mucked about to gather the least runs in the final five overs (27), reflecting the gulf between the two sides. Punjab reverted to being the bumbling punch that has been entrenched at the bottom of the table all season: the batting lost fizz after a bright start, the fielding was the usual butter-fingered effort expected, and the bowling lacked inspiration.

Mahela Jayawardene top-scored again, and Yuvraj Singh briefly showed off his awesome hitting, but with the rest failing to contribute anything substantial Punjab ended up with an inadequate total.

The variety of sweeps against the spinners and the trademark carves behind point off the quicks were the highlight of Jayawardene's innings in which only seven runs were scored in front of the wicket. He had some luck as well, a leading edge six to third man off Aditya Dole, relieved when Shane Warne reacted slowly to a caught-and-bowled chance and dropped by Dole at deep square leg.

With Kumar Sangakkara's poor tournament continuing, it was Yuvraj who provided some support for him. Warne was at his bewitching best in the previous game, but had no answer to Yuvraj today. First, Yuvraj muscled him over midwicket for a six, and two overs later clobbered two flat sixes and a four to take 24 runs off eight balls against the Rajasthan captain.



Michael Lumb of the Rajasthan Royals sweeps on way to scoring 83 against Kings XI Punjab in the Indian Premier League Twenty20 match at the Sawai Mansingh Stadium in Jaipur yesterday.

'Sachin's cramp cost us'

INTERNET, undated



Mumbai Indians player Harbhajan Singh said his side could have chased down the target set by Chennai Super Kings in the Indian Premier League match here on Tuesday if Sachin Tendulkar had not suffered cramp due to dehydration.

"Sachin is better now. But his coming out due to cramp was the cause for our loss. Youngsters like Ambati Rayudu and Saurabh Tiwari were out quickly and we were not able to put up good partnerships.

It is part of the game. If Sachin had stayed at the wicket for 15 overs, the story would have been different," Harbhajan said at the post-match after his side lost the match by 24 runs.

Harbhajan conceded the youngsters failed to perform but hoped that they would do better in the remaining matches.

"We have to give them lot of encouragement for what they have done. They have won a lot of games for us. This is one of the games that they did not click. We have lot of faith in them. They are all young and exciting cricketers. I am sure they will do better in our future games," he said.

He gave credit to Chennai for their fine bowling and fielding performances.

"The track is little on the slower side from what I have seen from the last two three games. When I was batting it was pretty slow. May be they have been playing lot of games on this strip. I think 166 is still was a very good bowling effort and we should have got that."

"I must say that Chennai bowled very well and their fielding was also brilliant. They played better cricket than us.

Hats off to them for their performance. Hopefully, we will get our acts together and go back to the winning ways," the off-spinner said.

KKR upstage FROM PAGE 17 21 balls) milked 94 runs in the first 10-odd overs to give the home side a perfect start before the Daredevils bowlers put a brake on the run rate.

SCORES IN BRIEF KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS: 181 for 3 in 20 overs (Ganguly 56, Mathews 46 not out, Gayle 40, Tiwary 26 not out); DELHI DAREDEVILS: 167 for 8 in 20 overs (Sehwag 64, Gambhir 47, Karthik 20, Vettori 12 not out; Dinda 2-21, Mendis 2-22)

Result: Kolkata Knight Riders won by 14 runs. Man-of-the-match: Sourav Ganguly.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 1 There's a lot of this ... 5 ... in this 8 - gin fizz 12 Sandwich cookie 13 Crony 14 Full house, e.g. 15 Wrenches 17 Memorization method 18 Got a look at 19 Prayer 21 Parsley piece 24 Algerian port 25 Baseball's Hershiser 26 Controversial punishment 30 Newhart or Hope 31 "Million Dollar Baby" star 32 Life story, for short 33 Droopy-eared dogs 35 Heart of the matter 36 Historic times 37 Sound portion 38 Cup holder 41 Possessive 42 A deadly sin 43 All aglitter 48 Neighbourhood 49 Annoy 50 Loathe 51 Catherine who wed Henry VIII 52 Ph. bk. info 53 Elliptical Hershiser Solution time: 21 mins.

Crossword grid with numbers 1-32 indicating starting positions for clues.

CRYPTOQUIP PCXQD YD KRTDP GXNKDIDJ GXCHGK P HS UICDXJ P UGTRICND JDPDIN CP JDUCXCNDKS YQRQRKGNDRPD.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: SUPPOSING A GADGET COULD DETECT A BAD-WORD BLEEPER'S PRESENCE, WOULD IT BE A CENSOR SENSOR?

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: P equals S