

School kabaddi begins today

SPORTS REPORTER

The 2nd Standard Chartered National School Kabaddi Championship of Dhaka Zone begins today at the Outer Stadium Kabaddi Court with 24 teams taking part.

The teams, split into eight groups, will play the first round on robin league format and the top team from each group will advance into the knockout phase. Seven matches will be held on the opening day.

Bangladesh Kabaddi Federation (BKF) general secretary Monir Hossain revealed these at a press conference at the federation office yesterday.

Monir informed that they would also hold competitions at five other divisional headquarters before the 12-team final round takes place in Dhaka.

Sponsors Standard Chartered will provide Tk 1.9 lakh for this zonal championship.

"We hope that the Standard Chartered School Championship will help identify and nurture talents. This initiative will definitely enable the federation to find out talents who will be able to reach new heights at major events like SA Games, Asian Games and Asian Kabaddi Championship," said Bitopi Das Chowdhury, head of corporate affairs of Standard Chartered Bank.

The BKF general secretary said that they would pick the talent from the championship to form a national school team and send them to West Bengal to compete in a tournament in December.

Talent hunt for shooters

SPORTS REPORTER

The 16th Inter-Clubs Shooting Championship got underway at the National Shooting Complex in Gulshan yesterday. Some 450 shooters from 49 clubs are to take part in the two-day event.

On the opening day, the shooters took part in 10m air rifle and 50m open side rifle events and the final results will be decided today. This competition has been organised to hunt talents.

New president of BCF

SPORTS REPORTER

Ghulam Muhammed Quader, Minister of Civil Aviation and Tourism, has been appointed as president of Bangladesh Chess Federation. This appointment came under the National Sports Council Law 1974 (Amended Ordinance of 1976). The position was vacant since the former president Muhammad Zamir, currently Chief Information Commissioner to the government, stepped down citing busy schedule in government service.

Ballack out

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An early x-ray at the stadium showed he had not broken any bones but Ballack was still worried as he left Wembley stadium.

Germany face Australia, Serbia and Ghana in Group D at the World Cup.

Loew is already under fire for leaving Schalke 04 striker Kevin Kuranyi out of the squad, despite the player's impressive tally of 18 Bundesliga goals this season.

In contrast, Loew's chosen strikers, Miroslav Klose, Lukas Podolski and Mario Gomez have all struggled to hit the target.

Shuvo puts

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through when Devon Smith was caught by Hasan for 30 runs.

SCORES IN BRIEF

WEST INDIES A: First innings 285 all out in 81 overs (Bravo 102, Dowlin 75, Nash 44, Smith 30; Shuvo 6-124, Hasan 2-53, Rassel 1-15, Nur 1-38)

BANGLADESH A: First innings 22 for 1 in 7 overs (Nazimuddin 16 not out, Marshal 2 not out, Nafees 3)

English

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Brazilian Australian side at this tournament to eight for three, saw Kieswetter (63) and Pietersen (47) put on 111 for the second wicket at the Kensington Oval in Bridgetown, Barbados.

As far as the Guardian was concerned, the win meant the team had finally arrived in the one-day game.

"Suddenly England feel like a force in international one-day cricket. Winning this tournament is a major achievement," it said.

Women's World T20 title goes to Aussies



AFP, Bridgetown

Ellyse Perry took three wickets and held her nerve in a tense last over as Australia beat New Zealand by just three runs in a thrilling women's World Twenty20 final.

With the White Ferns needing 14 off the last over, Perry -- backed up by fine fielding from Rene Farrell and Shelley Nitschke -- didn't give up a boundary and the pace bowler finished with impressive figures of three wickets for 18 runs from her maximum four overs.

Victory came just hours after Australia's men's team had lost in the corresponding final to arch-rivals England on Sunday night.

The result was tough on Sophie Devine, whose 38 not out off 35 balls rescued New Zealand from a top order collapse to give them a shot at victory just a year after they were beaten in the final to England at Lord's.

New Zealand, chasing a modest 109 for victory after holding their rivals to 103 for six, slumped to 29 for four inside eight overs.

"We believed our total was going to be enough," said Australia captain Alex Blackwell. "I know our bowling attack has the level-mindedness to get through whatever challenge was in front of them," she added.

Perry, the player of the match, said: "From all the games we've played against New Zealand, they never give up and nor do we so we were all expecting it to go down to the wire."

Also an Australian international football player, Perry said of her final over: "It's a fantastic opportunity to win a World Cup for your country rather than lose it. That's how you have to approach things like that."

"I feel very grateful to Alex for believing I could do it and I felt I had the support of my team which was really obvious in the fielding of Rene and Shelley down on the boundary."

Australia men's captain Michael Clarke put aside his own disappointment to watch the women's final along with some of his team-mates and

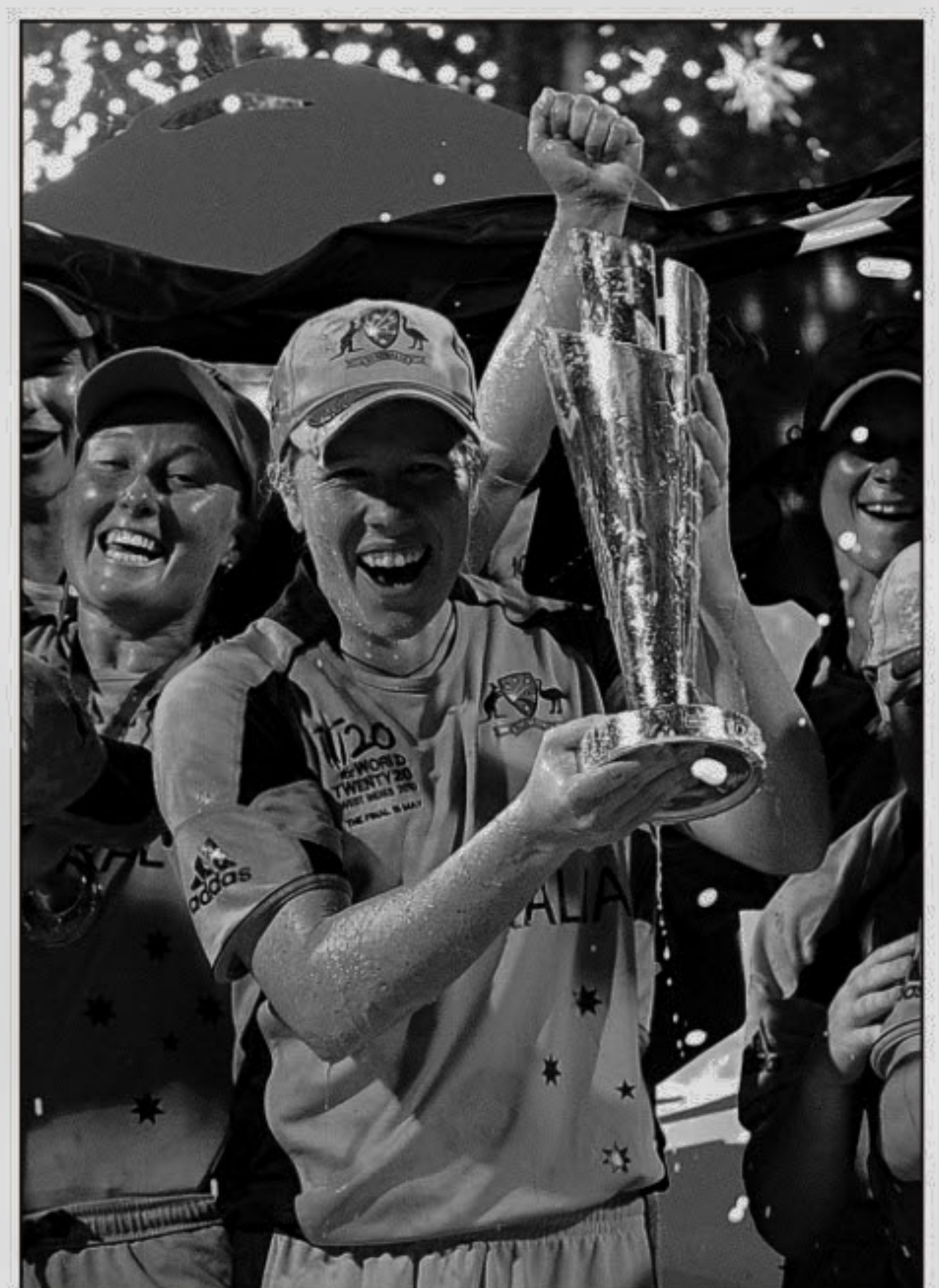


PHOTO: AFP Australia captain Alex Blackwell (C) along with her teammates celebrates with the trophy after beating New Zealand in the Women's ICC World Twenty20 final at the Kensington Oval in Bridgetown on Sunday.

Blackwell said: "That was fantastic, to have Michael Clarke and a lot of the boys watching us. I think that really helped us stay in the game and fight to win this world cup for Australia."

New Zealand captain Aimee Watkins was left to rue her side's batting after fine work by the White Ferns' attack.

"It's obviously disappointing. We bowled really well and I thought after that we deserved to win the game. But we lost early wickets, had too many dot balls through the middle period and we dug ourselves into a hole. We just left our launch too late."

By the time Rachel Priest was out, New Zealand were in dire straits at 36 for five.

However, Nicola Browne (20) helped Devine add 41 for the sixth wicket.

And when she exited, Devine kept going, striking Farrell for four and six off the

last two balls of the 19th over.

That left New Zealand with 14 to win, off the final over from Perry.

A single got Devine back on strike and she then took several twos to leave the target down to seven off the last two balls.

Another two left the Kiwis needing five off the last ball but they could only manage a single.

Earlier, Browne rocked Australia with a new-ball burst of two wickets for 11 runs during an innings where the top score was Leah Poulton's 20.

Browne forced opener Ellyse Villani (six) to spoon a drive to cover and then dismissed Australia captain Alex Blackwell for nought, with the aid of a fine catch in the gully by Devine.

In the end, Australia were grateful for a late stand of 27 between Sarah Elliott and Lisa Sthalekar.

New PM hails T20 heroes

AFP, London

Britain's new Prime Minister David Cameron sent his congratulations to England's World Twenty20 winning team Monday.

Cameron said he hoped the seven-wicket victory over Australia in Barbados would be the "start of a great summer of sport for England", ahead of events including the football World Cup in South Africa, which starts in June.

"Congratulations to Paul Collingwood and the England Twenty20 team on becoming world champions for the first time with a magnificent victory over Australia," he said in comments relayed by his official spokesman.

"Let's hope this marks the start of a great summer of sport for England."

England cruised to victory with three overs to spare Sunday following a second-wicket stand of 111 between South African-born duo Craig Kieswetter and Kevin Pietersen.

Insult to injury!

AFP, Bridgetown

Australia's Brad Haddin was fined 10 per cent of his match fee after showing dissent when dismissed during his side's seven-wicket loss to England in the World Twenty20 final here on Sunday.

The wicketkeeper-batsman was caught down the legside by England gloveman Craig Kieswetter off Ryan Sidebottom for just one.

But he pointed to his thigh after being given out by West Indian umpire Billy Doctrove, clearly signalling his belief he hadn't touched the ball.

Haddin's exit left Australia deep in trouble at eight for three inside three overs and, even though replays suggested he may have had a case, he was always likely to face disciplinary action for so clearly questioning the decision.

He pleaded guilty to a level one charge of the ICC code of conduct -- "showing dissent at an umpire's decision during an international match".

As such, Sri Lankan match referee Ranjan Madugalle imposed the fine without the need for a full hearing.

Messi leads

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A draw would not have done for Real in any case and it didn't seem to matter as Messi scored to make it 3-0 against Valladolid on 61 minutes.

Yaya Toure made the goal with a surging run past two defenders and his perfect cut-back gave Messi the easiest of tap-ins.

Toure set up Messi again on 75 minutes with the Argentine's quick feet and shot making it 4-0 and 34 goals for the season.

Messi matches the record mark of Brazilian Ronaldo who scored 34 goals for Barcelona in the 1997 season.

The defeat meant Valladolid joined Xerez and Tenerife in being relegated while Malaga and Racing Santander, 2-0 winners over Sporting Gijon, survived.

Tenerife lost 1-0 at Valencia while Xerez drew 1-1 with Osasuna on Sunday.

Captaincy at stake

AFP, Bridgetown

Australia Twenty20 captain Michael Clarke admitted his place was under threat after a poor run of form continued in a seven-wicket World Twenty20 final loss to England.

Clarke, batting at No 3, was involved in the run out of hard-hitting opener David Warner as Australia collapsed to eight for three at the Kensington Oval here on Sunday.

He himself made just 27 --- but that was still his best score of the tournament -- in a total of 147 for six and Clarke ended the event with 92 runs at a meagre average of 15.33.

More powerful hitters for Australia's top order were largely able to cover for Clarke's lack of runs and with remarkable frankness, he told reporters: "There's no doubt the selectors will need to have a look at my performances."



PHOTO: AFP Australia skipper Michael Clarke reacts after losing the ICC World Twenty20 final against England at the Kensington Oval in Bridgetown on Sunday.

"I certainly know they haven't been up to scratch through this whole tournament and probably in Twenty20 cricket in general."

"I'm sure the selectors will sit down and have a look and if I'm not the right guy for No 3 and the captaincy then they'll make that decision," added the 29-year-old.

Clarke, the Test and one-day vice-captain, was the natural choice to inherit the leadership when regular skipper Ricky Ponting retired from Twenty20 international cricket.

Up until the final, Australia had been unbeaten at this World Twenty20, having been knocked out in the first round in England last year.

But in left-arm quick Dirk Nannes, fast bowler Shaun Tait and the Hussey brothers, Michael and David, they appear to have the nucleus of a fine Twenty20 line-up.

Clarke certainly relished leading his side to what was a first World Twenty20 final for both Australia and England.

"I've enjoyed every minute of it," Clarke said. "Captaining your country is a wonderful thing and I've been very lucky to get that chance."

"I'm stoked to have been given this opportunity to lead the Twenty20 team. There are no guarantees in this world and it's about getting back and preparing for the next tournament."

"I'll be back as vice-captain (in the Test side) which I really enjoy and we have a wonderful leader (Ponting) back in Australia."

England cruised to victory, with three overs to spare, following a second-wicket stand of 111 between South Africa born duo Craig Kieswetter (63) and Kevin Pietersen (47).

The win gave England another triumph over Australia to put alongside last year's home Ashes win and set the scene for the return series 'Down Under', which gets underway in November.

"I've seen them (England) celebrate twice in a short space of time now but they deserved it," Clarke said.

"We knew England were going to be tough, and losing those three wickets early didn't help. It put a lot of pressure on our middle order."

"I thought we did well to scrape our way to 140-odd, although we were probably about 30 runs short, or 50 runs short the way England batted. We got beaten by the better team today."

Nadal Madrid master



AFP, Madrid

Rafael Nadal clinched a record-breaking 18th career Masters title on Sunday when he defeated old rival Roger Federer 6-2, 7-6 (7/5) in the Madrid final, landing a powerful psychological French Open

blow in the process. The Spaniard, who will reclaim the world number two ranking on Monday, became the first man to claim three major clay titles prior to the start of Roland Garros while victory also gave him an 18th Masters trophy, one more than Andre Agassi and two ahead of Federer.

A year ago, Federer defeated Nadal in the Caja Magica final, then carried the victory momentum to Roland Garros where he lifted his first title at the venue with a defeat of Robin Soderling to complete a career Grand Slam.

Nadal now heads to Paris with all guns blazing as he bids to wipe out last year's fourth-round loss to Soderling and resume his trophy chase after winning the first four editions he played in the French capital. "Winning here at home is a dream," said Nadal, who took the victory honours over the past weeks in Monte Carlo, Rome and Madrid.

"Never in my wildest dreams did I imagine I would win all three of these big events," added the Spaniard, unbeaten this clay season with 15 consecutive victories.

Nadal, now with 39 titles to his name, leads Federer 14-7 in career meetings, winning ten of their last 12.

He now stands 28-2 in claycourt finals, his two losses coming at the hands of Federer, including Madrid a year ago.

Federer said that despite his loss, "the clay court season will not be judged here but in Paris. We will see what happens in three weeks. I feel I'm ready for Paris. I felt a major improvement in my game compared to last week when I came here from Estoril."

Federer missed out on chances repeatedly in the final, which lasted just over two hours, converting on only one of seven break points in an hour-long opening set.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down. Includes a solution time of 25 mins.

Cryptoquip puzzle grid with a 10x11 grid of letters and numbers.

CRYPTOQUIP Y T X T V C Y F K I D I G O H I K O V G I L I K U F H J H G E O S I C I Y N X N Y O F I I X V E S O O X J I U Y C C I L " R X V ' F I K X D I H G R . "

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF DOROTHY'S DOG IN "THE WIZARD OF OZ" OWNED BALLET GARB, I GUESS THEY'D BE TOTO'S TUTUS.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: R equals Y