



Jahid treble sinks Wari

SPORTS REPORTER

Striker Hasan Jubair struck a hattrick to power Abahani to a comprehensive 7-1 win over Wari Club in the Green Delta Insurance Premier Division Hockey League at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Abahani, the last year's runners-up, hardly faced any challenge from the Old Dhaka outfit and took a comfortable 3-0 lead in the first half with defender Asaduzzaman Chandan converting two corners after Rubel Hossain gave the Sky Blues an eighth minute lead.

National striker Pushkar Khisa widened the margin two minutes into the second half before Selim pulled back a goal for Wari.

However, it was Jubair, who launched a late onslaught to strike a treble scoring in the 48th, 53rd and 68th minutes to complete the rout.



Bangladesh captain Shakib Al Hasan (2nd from L) and teammates wait ahead of a practice session at the Rangiri Dambulla International Cricket Stadium yesterday, on the eve of their inconsequential Asia Cup match against Pakistan today.

PHOTO: AFP

Anelka axe sparks revolt

AGENCIES, Knysna

The France players boycotted a training session on Sunday in support of Nicolas Anelka, a day after he was kicked out of the World Cup for insulting coach Raymond Domenech.

The France coach read out to reporters a statement by the players in which they explained they had decided not to train to protest against the decision to send the striker home.

Anelka was removed after insulting Domenech at halftime of a 2-0 defeat by Mexico on Thursday in Polokwane.

"The players are unanimously against the French Football Federation's decision to expel Nicolas Anelka," said the statement.

Sunday's public session had already been halted after a furious row between captain Patrice Evra and fitness coach Robert Durverne, leading to the immediate resignation of the team director.

France, facing an early exit, still plan to play their final Group A game against South Africa on Tuesday in Bloemfontein. But if Mexico and Uruguay draw their match, France are out of the tournament regardless of the result against South Africa.

Anelka was sent home Saturday after refusing to apologise for an expletive-laden outburst at Domenech.

"They will do everything individually and in a collective spirit" on the pitch on Tuesday, the statement read.

The session at France's base in Knysna,

Western Cape, was about to begin when a heated dispute started at the centre of the pitch between Evra and Durverne.

Domenech had to move in to separate them. Durverne angrily threw his stopwatch on to the pitch and left.

The players then walked towards their bus following the incident.

"They don't want to train, it's a scandal," France team director and FFF managing director Jean-Louis Valentin said as he also left the pitch.

"It's a scandal for French people, for the youngsters who came here to watch them train. I'm resigning, I'm leaving the Federation. I have nothing more to do here. I'm going back to Paris."

The new scandal came a day after Evra told reporters a "traitor" within the team had leaked Anelka's insults to the press.

French sports daily L'Equipe put them on their front page and a few hours later, Anelka was kicked out of the squad.

Asked by a reporter on Sunday if he was the "traitor", Valentin replied "no, no, no" and appeared close to tears.

Henri Guaino, advisor to French President Nicolas Sarkozy, described the situation as "distressing".

"It's no longer football, it's no longer sport, it's no longer a team," he said on a television station.

When asked whether a political intervention from Sarkozy would calm down the situation, he replied: "I am not convinced that a political intervention would be likely to solve this kind of problem."

Mizan joins table toppers

SPORTS REPORTER

Mizanur Rahman joined three other players to lead at the end of the eighth round 36th National Chess Championship preliminary phase at the Bangladesh Chess Federation hall-roy yesterday.

Mizanur beat FM Mohammad Javed while FM Abu Sufian Shakil drew against FM Minhazuddin Ahmed Sagar and FM Mehdi Hasan Parag was held by Debaraj Chatterjee.

Now Mizanur, Shakil, Sagar and Parag have 6.5 points each. Nine players were in the second position with six points.

Late Shuvo goal saves Sunrise

SPORTS REPORTER

Last year's runners-up Sunrise SC came from behind to play out a 1-1 draw against Jatrabari KC in the Bashundhara Senior Division Football League at the Bir Shreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

After the barren first half, Moeen gave Jatrabari an advantage in the 74th minute only to be canceled by Shuvo, who leveled the margin three minutes from time.

With fifth draw in seven matches, Sunrise joined second-placed Uttar Baridhara on 11 points equal. Jatrabari have nine points from seven matches.

Queen's Baton arrives in town

SPORTS REPORTER

The Queen's Baton and four representatives of the Commonwealth Games arrived in Dhaka yesterday in a bid to complete the baton relay tomorrow.

The Queen's Baton Relay, similar to the Olympic Torch Relay, will start at the Army Stadium in the morning and finish at the South Plaza of Sangsab Bhaban.

Bangladesh is the 69th destination to receive baton en route to Pakistan.

The 19th Commonwealth Games will be held in Delhi from October 3 to 14.

What to WATCH

ESPN & SuperSport3

2010 FIFA World Cup
Portugal v North Korea
Live from 5.30pm
Chile v Switzerland
Live from 8.00pm
Spain v Honduras
Live from 12.30am (Tuesday)

STAR Sports & SuperSport5

Wimbledon Championships
First Round
Live from 5.00pm

DAY'S EVENT

Premier Div Hockey League
Ajay SC v Azad SC
Time: 4.30pm
Venue: Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium

19 Sulk
20 Snatched
21 Genghis and Kublai
23 "Loves me (not)" flower
25 Encount

Netherlands show their mettle

FARAZ IHTESHAM

Cameroon became the first team to exit the World Cup after their 2-1 defeat at the hands of Denmark. The experienced Danes were too formidable for the Indomitable Lions and two clinical finishing from forwards Bendtner and Rommedahl were enough to seal the African's fate.

Denmark will now fight for the second spot with Japan and the way the Danes played they look favourites to go through along with the Dutch who already booked their place in the second round courtesy of a 1-0 win over the Blue Samurai.

Netherlands star Wesley Sneijder's speculative strike was deflected into the back of the net by Japanese goalkeeper Eiji Kawashima, yet another goalkeeping mistake

and Okada's men had no answers.

Many people's favourite Netherlands are looking as strong as ever. They are yet to concede a goal and were the first team to enter the knock-out phase.

Down to ten men the Aussies held out for a draw.

Ghana now top the group and need only a draw against Germany to advance. The Germans face the possibility of going home after the first round and must beat the Black Stars to avoid such ignominy.

The Socceroos face the uphill task of defeating Serbia. The Serbs may ultimately prove too strong for Australia.

unchanged.

What has altered is the height of the bounce.

"It's slightly less dense

which allows more air movement through the grass and that helps the soil get harder quicker which means the ball bounces higher from day to day," he said.

Players had a fraction of a second longer to reach a higher-bouncing ball, instead of having to catch it low off the ground, he explained.

"The bounce was lower because the ground was softer. That's the only difference."

The stoical Seaward and his 14 permanent staff have had a particularly difficult growing year. A sharp late frost in May when nothing would germinate meant they had to cover the courts with a membrane to create a greenhouse effect and warm the soil.

"Then it was hot and dry, then it got cold again so all the way along we've had to battle the weather this year -- but that's what we do, that's our job," Seaward, who has weather forecasts sent to him every hour, said.

As he stared across his unblemished court, the groundsman was sympathetic to the problems that Wembley Stadium in north London has been suffering with its much-criticised pitch, constantly churned up and needing renewal.

Wembley had to try to keep its turf in top condition the whole year, he said. It

needed the ball to roll rather than bounce so it had a sandy rather than clay soil.

"I don't think you can compare them, it's like chalk and cheese," Seaward said.

"We grow the grass at the right time of the year -- in the summer -- and we've got to have it in peak condition for only two weeks really."

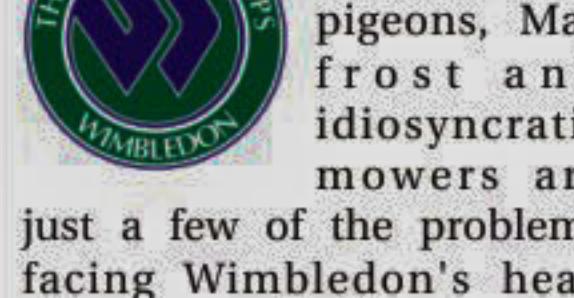
To ensure top conditions and make sure the lawns look good too, Seaward allots each of his staff a court to mow with the same mower throughout the buildup and the tournament itself.

All machines were different, he explained, and all operators had their own way of mowing. If a different machine or cutter were used, the lines would not be perfect, the light and shade would not match and the court would look wrong.

"We want to get everything just right."

Foxes, pigeons & Wimbledon Championships begin today

REUTERS, London



Urinating vixens, greedy pigeons, May frost and idiosyncratic mowers are just a few of the problems facing Wimbledon's head groundsman in the run up to the world's most famous tennis championships.

Most tournaments, even if they once were played on grass, now use easier-to-manage hard or clay courts, but for Eddie Seaward the yearly cycle of growth and tending is part of the joy of his job, wildlife notwithstanding.

Foxes who roam freely round leafy and prosperous Wimbledon, in southwest London, are regular visitors to the All England Club, even seen creeping across the commentary boxes high on Centre Court. They are welcome as long as they keep off the grass.

"We put an electric fence round here and the showcourts most of the year," Seaward told Reuters as his staff and an army of cleaners and contractors busied themselves round the pristine green sward of Centre Court preparing for Roger Federer on Monday's opening day.

"It's the vixens that are the problem, if they urinate on the court it just kills the grass off," he added.

Centuries-old methods, in keeping with Wimbledon's love of tradition, are used to keep at bay the pigeons, who would otherwise gorge on newly sown seed.

"We have a hawk to scare off the pigeons. It flies three times a week and that deters them," he said. The falconer and his hawk are kept busy even during the championship fortnight so that the pigeons do not come back



PHOTO: AFP
A groundsman mows a court on the eve of the Wimbledon Championships at the All England Tennis Club yesterday.

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CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 1 Mahal, 4 Piglets' parent, 7 Former attorney general, 8 Retract a comment, 10 Billing cycle, often, 11 Godly beverage, 16 Abbr. for Elizabeth II, 17 Bake eggs, 18 Unclose, in verse, 19 Sulk, 20 Snatched, 21 Genghis and Kublai, 23 "Loves me (not)" flower, 25 Encount.

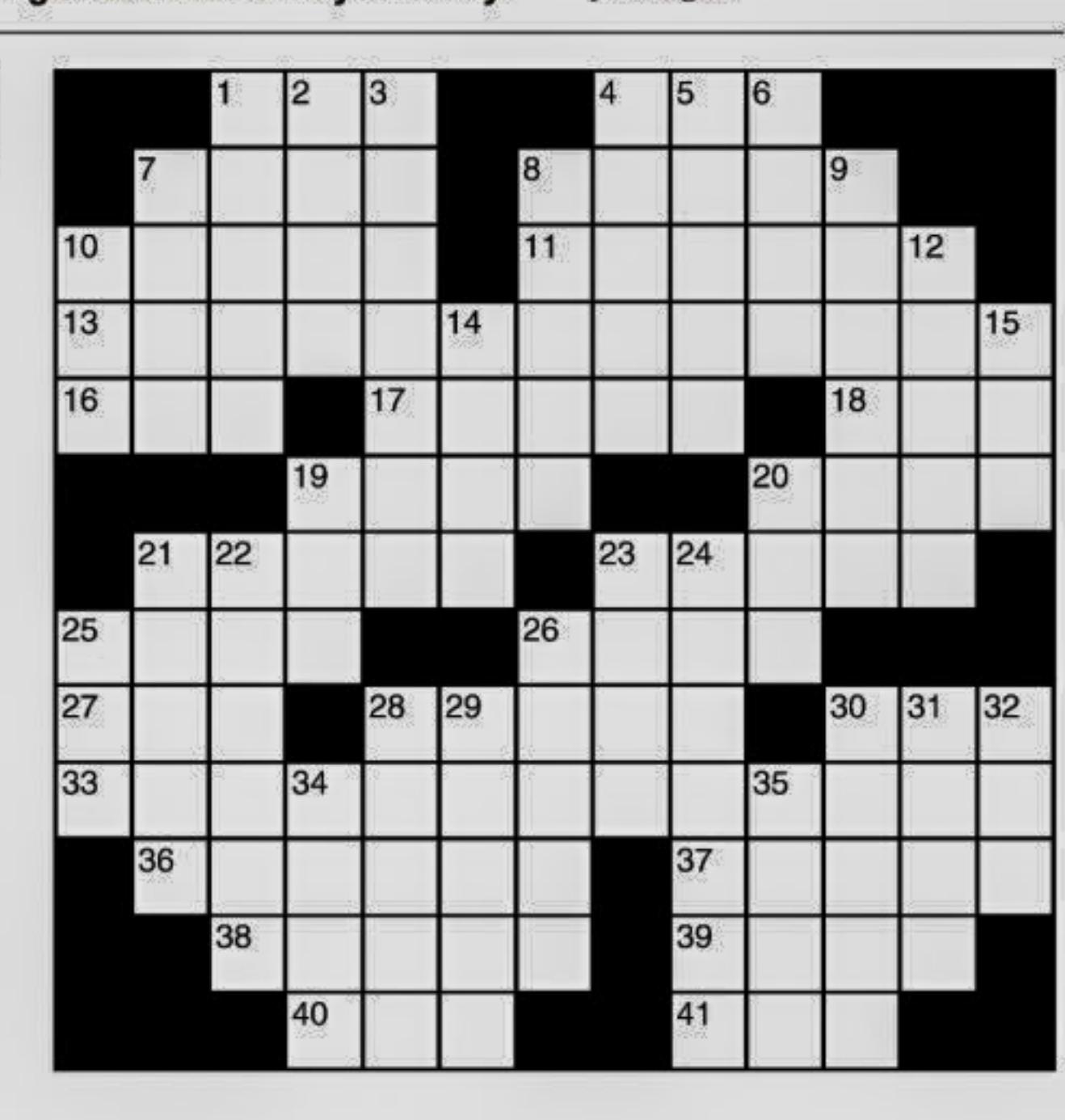
40 Shade provider, 41 Homer's neighbor, 27 Regis and Kelly's network, 28 Finnish hot spot, 30 Spy-novel org., 33 Phrase that prevents idea theft, 36 Shepherd of rhyme, 37 Likewise, 38 Pass along, 39 Sandwich cookie, 40 Sunk.

DOWN 1 First extra inning, 2 Initial chip, 3 Kennedy, 4 Villainous look, 5 Prize for Sandra Bullock, 6 1/746 horse-power, 7 Bellow, 8 Dark.

9 Boorish sorts, 10 Speed-ometer stat, 12 Answer, 14 So, 15 Scarlet, 19 Sajak or Summer-all, 21 Skewered entree, 22 Actor Elizondo, 23 Copenhagen resident, 24 Strand, 25 Chart, 26 Tiny fish, 28 Short fishing line, 29 First-stringers, 30 Gave as an example, 31 Grooving on Past, 32 Past, 34 Duel tool, 35 Catastrophic.

Solution time: 21 mins.

STIR OODA AGOG MALL RAT ICE CALL BOX AUOK SCADS TALL TALE AGUE GEMS USA NEW BALI PARK OASIS AIR TRENDR HALLWAY PSHAW PAP FALLGUY EASE AWN PEAL OPEAL PEAL EASE NESS



CRYPTOQUIP

G H F J P E D O E W D Q E Q R T O W D P T

H G T P O K K M H F E P K K H R P F E ,

Z O F M W P Q W K P O T P J O K K H F R ,

D H Z O G D O T W G D Q Q E P T ,

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: WHEN YOU ARE GREETING A CURMUDGEON WHO CONSTANTLY GRUMBLES, I WOULD SAY YOU'RE HAULING A CRAB.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: W equals P