PHOTO: STAR

Scene from yesterday's inaugural match of the Meizan Kabaddi Mela between Bhuapur and Kalihati at the Tangail Stadium.

Kabaddi Mela kicks off

OUR CORRESPONDENT, *Tangail*

Bhuapur beat Kalihati 33-14 points in the inaugural match of the Meizan Kabadi Mela that began in Tangail Stadium yesterday.

The Mela started with a colourful rally that was started from the stadium in the morning and paraded through different streets in the town. The Mela will end in Feni.

Six districts, Kalihati, Bhuapur, Basail, Madhupur, Ghatail and Tangail, are taking part in the event.

Bangladesh Edible Oil Ltd (BEOL) in association with Bangladesh Kabaddi Federation organised the tournament across the country for the first time, to revive the country's national sport.

Tangail Superindent of Police Mizanur Rahman inaugurated the event as the chief guest while the event was presided over by Acting Deputy Commissioner (DC) of Tangail Mohammad Tajul Islam as the special guest.

Tangail Football Association president Fazlur Rahman Khan Faruque, BEOL marketing manager Faria Yasmin, and secretary of Tangail District Sports Association Kazi Zakerul Maula were also present during the ceremony.

On occasion of the Mela, there were on-stage games for visitors and games such as lidu, balloon shooting and dart for children. Besides, a free eye testing camp, several stalls of local handicrafts, clothing, food, and ceramic collection were also in the Mela.

Faria Yasmin, marketing officer of (BEOL) said they organised the Kabadi Mela to encourage and uphold Kabadi, country's national sport, as part of the country's national ethnicity and heritage.

Advantage Cavendish

Cycling

AFP, *Bordeaux*

Thor Hushovd's early abdication has given Mark Cavendish a boost as bids to close yet another impressive Tour de France campaign with the green jersey on Sunday.

Norwegian sprinter Hushovd has been swapping the points classification's prize with Italian Alessandro Petacchi throughout most of the race.

But after his 14th place on the penultimate bunch sprint on Friday the big Cervelo sprinter no longer believes in his chances of challenging for the prize he won in 2005 and 2009.

"The green jersey is over for me," Hushovd said after the 18th stage won in comfortable fashion by HTC-Columbia sprinter Cavendish.

"I just haven't been good enough in the sprints."

With Petacchi now leading the competition on 213 points, with a 10 point lead on Hushovd and 16 on Cavendish, the Italian is in prime position to win the points classification.

However, with the points awarded in descending order for the first finishers on Sunday -- 35 points for the stage win, 30 for second place etc -- the green jersey battle will really go right to the line.

Lampre sprinter Petacchi rolled back the years to win two stages in the opening week as Cavendish misfired, only for the Isle of Man rider to come charging back.

The ease with which Cavendish won Friday's stage, leaving Petacchi in third place, left the Italian doubting his chances of stopping the Manxman from becoming Britain's first ever green jersey winner.

"I am happy to have the green jersey again, but I know I need to make a strong sprint in Paris to win it. It will not be easy," Petacchi said.

Sunday's 20th and final stage, a 102.5km ride from Longjumeau in southwest Paris to the Champs Elysees, is usually a relaxed affair as most of the peloton celebrate simply surviving the race and the jersey winners drink Champagne.

Attacks are likely to come early once the peloton arrives in the capital, but they are likely to be brought to heel by the sprinters' teams before the eighth and final lap.

Cavendish came into the race aiming to win the green jersey, then lost hope only to be brought back into contention thanks to his stage successes.

In what seems to be an effort not to break the winning spell, he is trying to keep all talk of winning the points classification to a minimum.

"I've got to try and win on the Champs Elysees, whatever the situation," said Cavendish, who annihilated his stage rivals to win on Paris's most famous boulevard last year.

PHOTO: AFP

Swiss cyclist Fabian Cancellara sprints on the finish line at the end of the 52km individual time-trial and 19th stage of Tour de France yesterday.

Army nat'l boxing champs

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Army have become the champions of the SouthEast Bank 26th National Senior Boxing at the Mohammed Ali Boxing Stadium yesterday.

Army won seven gold medals and a silver and Bangladesh Ansar came in second with three gold medals, two silvers and a bronze medal.

A total of 150 boxers participated in the eleven different weight categories in this tournament.

Chairman of the parliamentary committee for Youth and Sports Jahid Ahsan Rasel handed over the prizes. SouthEast Bank managing director Mahbubul Alam was also present on the occasion.

Meanwhile, a women's boxing exhibition was held in the afternoon. Sharmin Akhter Runa, Farzana Sarmin Mitu and others participated in it.

Senior Div football

SPORTS REPORTER

League leaders Fakirerpool Youngmen's Club played out a goalless draw with Motijheel T&T Club in the opening Super League match of the Senior Division Football League at the Birshreshtha Sepoy Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamlapur yesterday.

In a tense affair, Rubel Rahman of the Motijheel outfit was sent off after receiving his second yellow card in the match.

Victoria Sporting Club will play Uttar Baridhara Club on Monday while Jatrabari Krira Chakra will face Wari Club on Tuesday.

Andy roars into semis

Tennis

AFP, *Atlanta*

Andy Roddick had to battle a slow start before bludgeoning his way into the semifinals of the Atlanta Tennis Championships Friday over the opponent he beat for the title in 2001.

The American rallied to defeat Belgian Xavier Malisse 4-6, 6-3, 6-4 in a re-run of the final nine years ago which marked the first career ATP title for a teenaged Roddick.

But Malisse, who turned 30 this week, made the American work for victory, claiming the first set on the back of a monster seventh game to break the top seed from Texas.

Roddick saved five break points and fired five aces before a back hand error handed over the game. Malisse carried the momentum to win the set but was broken for 2-4 in the second as Roddick regained equilibrium to claim his ninth victory in the decade-long series with Malisse.

It took just over two hours for Roddick to survive with 17 aces.

"Plan A wasn't working and the match was getting away from me," said Roddick. "I decided to make him work for the last nine or ten games.

"Nothing felt comfortable in the first set, but I tried to get aggressive, I wanted to grind back.

"He played well but he let me off the hook a bit. We were both gutting it out at the end."

The holder of 29 titles, including Brisbane and Miami this season, will play in the last four against sixth seed Mardy Fish who beat Taylor Dent 6-3, 6-0.

Wimbledon marathon man John Isner kept it short and sweet in 48 Celsius on-court heat, dismissing Michael Russell 6-1, 6-2.

Isner's win in 58 minutes was around 10 hours less than his Wimbledon epic of a month ago, when he won the longest match ever played in the sport.

The second seed, who admitted he was glad to get off court in a hurry, will play in semis against former university tennis opponent Kevin Anderson after the South African crushed Lukas Lacko 6-3, 6-4.

Isner said that after stuffing his racket bag in a closet for a fortnight following his second-round exit from Wimbledon, he came to Atlanta without much training.

"I felt better today than I did in my first match," said the graduate of the University of Georgia, quite at home with the local fans. "I knew that I would need to play better -- even in this ridiculous heat."

The huge hitter fired a modest 11 aces against his fellow American on the way to his fourth semifinal of the season. His unforced-error count remained low at seven, with more than 20 winners.

While he's tired of talking about the Wimbledon match that secured his name in the record books, Isner said that he is glad it's all over and he can concentrate on the upcoming US Open starting August 30.

"I'm back to hardcourt, which is my favourite surface," said the 25-year-old ranked 19th. "I want to focus on doing well over the summer. I think that Wimbledon made me a batter player.

"But the bottom line is that I did lose in the second round there."

Isner stands 3-0 lifetime over the 32-year-old Russell, winner of a dozen lower-level Challenger titles.

Isner and Anderson have a history both in colllege and on the ATP.

"I remember I took him out when we played Illinois for the (university) championship," said Isner.

"He's playing well now. He has rolled through the tournament. He has a huge serve and forehand. It will be tough."

Dhanmondi

FROM PAGE 17

confirmed are from Bangladesh League champions Abahani and Federation Cup champions Mohammedan Sporting Club.

The player's transfer window will be held between September 1 to 20 while the foreign players can do transfer through the internet till October 15 as BFF are already following FIFA's transfer matching system.

In another move, the league committee has decided that all the clubs must appoint a B-licensed coach instead of a C-licensed coach in this season.

The season will be start sometimes in the second week of October but BFF is yet to finalise which tournament will be held first.

Sangakkara

FROM PAGE 17

of the series. For example, if in the ongoing series India beat Sri Lanka, they will gain fewer points than they will concede if they lose the series. Same goes for Australia, who are facing a much lower-ranked Pakistan. Even if Australia end the series 1-1, they will concede three rating points.

The system, though, stands to work well only if the FTP works evenly. For example, if a side spends a year playing only home series, and uses the home advantage to win series against competitive sides, its rating points will tend to misrepresent the strength and quality of the team.

Anderson not available

Cricket

AGENCIES, *Wellington*

The search for a new head of world cricket took a step backwards Saturday when leading candidate and respected New Zealand administrator John Anderson said he was not available.

It is New Zealand and Australia's turn to nominate the next International Cricket Council (ICC) vice-president and ultimately president and Anderson was considered a certainty after original nominee John Howard was rejected.

Howard, the former Australian prime minister and a passionate cricket lover, was put forward ahead of Anderson after months of debate by Australian and New Zealand cricket officials over who would be their joint candidate.

But the ICC refused to accept Howard and called for a new candidate from Australia and New Zealand putting the spotlight back on Anderson.

However a statement from the Board of New Zealand Cricket (NZC) said Anderson did not want to be considered.

"In light of ICC's rejection of the nomination of John Howard, I approached Sir John Anderson to assess his availability for the role," NZC chairman Alan Isaac said.

"Unfortunately Sir John advised me that he is not available to be considered as a possible nominee.

"The NZC Board respects Sir John's position and acknowledges the outstanding contribution he has made to game of cricket. We have recommenced discussions with Cricket Australia around a proposed a way forward."

The ICC vice-president, chosen by the two countries this year under an international rotation system, will become the world governing body's president in 2012.

NZC and Cricket Australia (CA) have previously expressed "deep disappointment" at the ICC decision not to support Howard.

Haroon Lorgat, the ICC chief executive, has refused to reveal why Howard's name was rejected saying cricket's controlling body did not have to give a reason.

But it is understood that opposition from Asian and African nations sealed his fate as he had clashed with some of the countries opposed to his ICC bid when he was Australia's premier from 1996 to 2007.

Anderson chaired NZC for 13 years from 1995 to 2008 and also represented New Zealand on the ICC board.

CA and NZC have until August 31 to come up with a new nominee.

PHOTO: AFP

END OF AN ERA: Umpire Rudi Koertzen holds aloft a statue of himself after his final Test before retirement during the fourth day of the second Test between Australia and Pakistan at Headingley in Leeds yesterday. The 61-year-old's conducted 108 Tests, a record 209 one-day internationals and 14 Twenty20 internationals.

No blood

FROM PAGE 17

publication weighs 37 kilograms (82 pounds) and contains around 1,500 images and more than 300,000 words.

Tendulkar is the first cricketer to be given the Opus treatment. Previous works have been published on Ferrari, Manchester United, Diego Maradona, Michael Jackson and the Burj Khalifa.

Give Fabregas

FROM PAGE 20

Fabregas and Van Persie are not due to return to training until after next weekend's Emirates Cup, when Arsenal play Milan on the Saturday and Celtic on the Sunday, and so their only possible pre-season minutes will come in the friendly at Legia Warsaw on 7 August, a match that Arsenal are obliged to play under the terms of the goalkeeper Lukasz Fabianski's transfer from the Polish club.

Drogba

FROM PAGE 20

The 32-year-old is therefore expected to miss the 8 August Wembley meeting with Manchester United and probably also the beginning of their title defence at home to West Bromwich Albion on 14 August.

The centre-back Alex and the goalkeeper Petr Cech are also expected to miss the beginning of the season with injuries.

Malinga out of second Test

Cricket

AFP, *Colombo*

Sri Lanka suffered a major blow on Saturday when a knee injury ruled sling-arm fast bowler Lasith Malinga out of the second Test against India.

His absence means the hosts will be deprived of both architects of their 10-wicket win in the first Test at Galle -- Malinga and the retired Muttiah Muralidaran -- for the second match.

Malinga claimed 5-50 in the second innings, while world record holder Muralidaran grabbed eight scalps to end his Test career with 800 wickets.

The duo will be replaced by unorthodox spinner Ajantha Mendis and fast bowler Dilhara Fernando for the Test starting at the Sinhalese sports club ground on Monday.

Mendis had taken 6-67 against the Indians in a practice match ahead of the first Test and is regarded as a match-winner in the Muralidaran mould.

Sri Lanka's chairman of selectors Aravinda de Silva said Malinga had been rested on the advice of team physiotherapist Tommy Simsek after the bowler complained of stiffness in his right knee.

"We have to be cautious with Malinga," de Silva said. "He was not feeling fit to go through a five-day Test. He has complained of stiffness in his knee.

"We are closely monitoring Malinga's fitness and we are hopeful he will be fully fit for the third Test."

The third Test starts at the P. Sara Oval in Colombo from August 3.

Meanwhile, Sri Lanka named former captain Mahela Jayawardene as skipper Kumar Sangakkara's deputy, a position held earlier by Muralidaran.

"We want Mahela, who has a good cricketing brain, to be part of the decision-making process in the middle," de Silva said.

SQUAD

Kumar Sangakkara (captain), Tillakaratne Dilshan, Tharanga Paranavitana, Mahela Jayawardene, Thilan Samaraweera, Angelo Mathews, Prasanna Jayawardene, Ajantha Mendis, Dilhara Fernando, Chanaka Welegedara, Suraj Randiv, Rangana Herath, Thilina Kandamby, Dammika Prasad, Lahiru Thirimanne, Nuwan Pradeep.

A Pakistan win finally

FROM PAGE 17

Azhar Ali resumed on 47 not out, with Umar Akmal unbeaten on two.

Ali, off Bollinger's third ball Saturday, cover-drove a full toss to the boundary to complete a maiden Test fifty off 108 balls with six fours.

But next ball, he could only edge Bollinger to keeper Tim Paine.

Ali was out for 51 and Pakistan were 146 for four.

Bollinger appealed for caught behind and lbw against Kamran Akmal, still on nought, in successive balls but Rudi Koertzen, in the South African umpire's 108th and last Test before retirement, correctly rejected both pleas.

Shoaib Malik -- on 10 -- was brilliantly caught at the second attempt off a well-hit drive by Marcus North at short extra-cover off Hilfenhaus and Pakistan still needed 19 to win, with four wickets standing.

Kamran Akmal, with three boundaries, took Pakistan to the brink of victory.

Pakistan now have a short turnaround before a four-Test series against England starts at Trent Bridge on July 29.

Australia have to two Tests away to India in October before attempting to regain the Ashes from England on home soil, in a five-Test campaign that starts in November.

This series was played in England after international cricket in Pakistan was effectively suspended after an armed attack on Sri Lanka's team bus in Lahore in March last year.

SCORES IN BRIEF

AUSTRALIA: First innings 88 (Paine 17, North 16, Katich 13, Smith 10; Aamer 3-20, Asif 3-30)

PAKISTAN: First innings 258 (Butt 45, Farhat 43, Ali 30, Malik 26; Watson 6-33, Hilfenhaus 2-77)

AUSTRALIA: Second innings 349 (Clarke 77, Smith 77, Ponting 66, Paine 33; Aamer 4-86, Kaneria 2-74, Asif 2-83)

PAKISTAN: Second innings 180 for 7 (Farhat 67, Ali 51, Butt 13, Kamran 13; Hilfenhaus 3-39, Bollinger 3-51)

Result: Pakistan won by three wickets and series drawn 1-1.

Toss: Australia.

Men-of-the-match: Mohammad Aamer and Shane Watson.

CROSSWORD *By Eugene Sheffer*

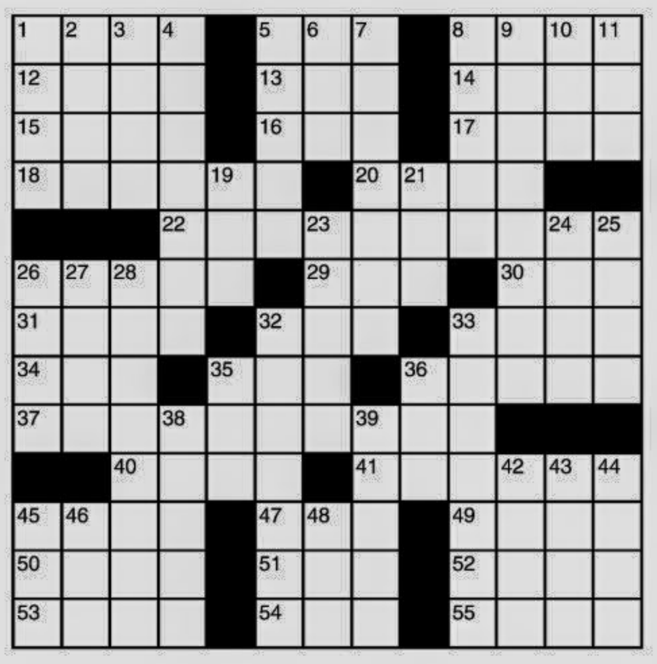
ACROSS

1 Hearts or darts
5 Cistern
8 Unwanted e-mail
12 Grad
13 Eggs
14 Poi base
15 Speech impediment
16 Symbol of intrigue
17 Bullets and such
18 Not out on the town
20 Seniors' org.
22 "Greed is good" movie
26 Expand laterally
29 Lemieux milieu
30 Uncultured
31 Farmer, at times
32 Important numero
33 Actress Gilpin
34 $ dispenser
35 Mimic
36 Failed to
37 Sinclair Lewis novel
40 Gag
41 Nude
45 Asian nation
47 Wire measure
49 Something about Mary?
50 Rue the run
51 Opposite of post-
52 Tend texts
53 Repair
54 Scull tool
55 Decorates Easter eggs

DOWN

1 Festive
2 Settled down
3 Dog-sledder's command
4 Authorize
5 "Wheel of Fortune" purchase
6 Rd.
7 Hot sauce
8 Harrison cohort
9 Molly-coddled
10 Branch
11 Remark from Bossy
19 Fellow
21 Chowed down
23 Eye cosmetic
24 Deserve
25 Foolish one
26 "Pow!"
27 Tiny amount
28 Narrow-necked bottle
32 Fast, as music
33 Threw
35 Request
36 Lair
38 Got snoopy
39 Swiss mathematician
42 Word shouted by Jerry Lewis mimics
43 "It's a Sin to Tell —"
44 Specks
45 Felon's flight
46 Expert
48 401(k) alternative

Solution time: 25 mins.



CRYPTOQUIP

OE FXB'YL BHHOAC GSL TQUXSXQ UXAGLAG XE FXBY WYOAR, O YLURXA GSTG'J UTQQLW YTOJOAC GSL HYXXE.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: ASSUMING A GOVERNMENT AGENT FAVORS A CERTAIN DECONGESTANT, DOES SUDAFED SUIT A FED?

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: G equals T