

# Ton-fest continues

SPORTS REPORTER



Ton-fest continued in the Ispahani Premier Division Cricket League matches yesterday as young batsman

Asif Hossain slammed a big hundred in a losing cause for Orient Sporting, and Mominul Haque slammed one in a winning cause for Victoria. Another youngster Asif Ahmed shone with both bat and ball to give BKSP a hard-fought victory.

**ORIENT SC v SURJO TARUN**  
At the Sheikh Kamruzzaman Stadium in Rajshahi, Orient's Asif Hossain played a brilliant knock of unbeaten 134 to guide his team to a challenging total of 252. Asif struck 12 boundaries and 8 sixes to amass the runs off just 129 balls, while opening batsman Robiul Islam contributed with 59.

Surjo Tarun's successful reply got modest contribution from all down the order with opener Imtiaz Hossain scoring the highest 59 and wicket-keeper batsman Dhiman Ghosh chipping in with a quickfire 39.

**VICTORIA SC v KALABAGAN KC**  
Victoria bagged a second consecutive victory when they handed an 8-run defeat to Kalabagan at BKSP. Former U-19 batsman Mominul Haque was the driving force with a 121-ball 100, supported by Fahadul Haque's 52. Mominul's spin proved vital too as he struck twice to leave Kalabagan 8 short of the chase as no batsman could muster a big innings.

**BKSP v PRIME DOLESHWAR SC**  
BKSP all-rounder Asif Ahmed's unbeaten 85-run knock from just 57 deliveries, coupled with Ashiqul Islam's 71 at the top of the order set up a challenging total of 276 before Prime Doleshwar to chase. But as with the bat, Asif shone with the ball

too, taking three important wickets to thwart Doleshwar's run chase 28 runs short of the target. Zakaria Masud too took three wickets including the vital one of Uttam Sarker who scored 61 runs.

**SCORES IN BRIEF**  
**ORIENT SC:** 252 for 7 in 50 overs (Asif 134 not out, Robiul 59; Rizwan 3-67)  
**SURJO TARUN:** 253 for 8 in 48.5 overs (Imtiaz 56, Dhiman 39; Robiul 2-45)  
**Result:** Surjo Tarun won by 2 wickets.  
**VICTORIA SC:** 216 for 9 in 50 overs (Mominul 100, Fahadul 52; Sharif 4-45)  
**KALABAGAN KC:** 208 all out in 49.1 overs (Mahmudul 37, Sadat 31, Monir 3-37)  
**Result:** Victoria won by 8 runs.  
**BKSP:** 276 for 5 in 50 overs (Asif 85, Ashiqul 71; Nazmul 3-53)  
**PRIME DOLESHWAR SC:** 248 all out in 49.2 overs (Uttam 61, Zahid 50; Asif 3-59)  
**Result:** BKSP won by 28 runs.



Belgium tennis star Kim Clijsters (C) walking with her family during a visit to a Buddhist temple in Hua Hin yesterday. Clijsters and Caroline Wozniacki of Denmark will play an exhibition match in Hua Hin today.

## Sydney Test sold out

AFP, Sydney

The first three days of the next week's final Ashes Test at the Sydney Cricket Ground have been sold out, officials said on Friday.

Officials said that just over 4,000 tickets were left for day four in the 46,000-capacity SCG.

"To see the way the public has responded to the Sydney Test is excellent news for the game, and it shows that people still want to watch exciting Test match cricket," Cricket New South Wales Chief Executive David Gilbert said.

England are chasing their first series triumph in Australia for nearly a quarter of a century after retaining the Ashes with their huge win in this week's fourth Melbourne Test.

The fifth Test starts on Monday.

## Muktis off

FROM PAGE 16

availing a clearance played Alamu Bukola on the right side and the Nigerian striker entered the box to send it to an unmarked Mithun, who just tapped into an open net.

Muktijodha came close to a third but a header from Bukola went narrowly wide of the far post on 66 minutes while Mithun missed his hat-trick chance after spoiling a one on one chance.

After going two goals down, Brothers brought three changes but it had no impact on the game and they admitted defeat despite playing better than their mighty opponents.

## Tickets

FROM PAGE 16

Now, who are these different communities? Needless to say, these are the high-ups of the society: ministers, members of parliament, bureaucrats, sponsors and political leaders who have 'helped get things done to prepare for the showcase event'. But shouldn't it have been the duty and responsibility of the ministers, bureaucrats, sponsors and the like to get things done for the World Cup, or was it out of generosity that they did so?

The game of cricket thrives on its fans, and the fans are the biggest driving force for the Tigers. It is for those diehard fans, who think cricket and live with it, who scrutinise each and every game they play, eulogise and criticise at equal measure each of their action that the Tigers get their inspiration from.

These are the people who should get the priority for the tickets; not the high-ups from different communities who may have little time or passion for the game.

## Eng want series win



AFP, Sydney

Buoyant England will go into the final Ashes Test at the Sydney Cricket Ground on Monday intent on wrapping up their first series triumph in Australia for nearly quarter of a century.

As holders, Andrew Strauss's team are already guaranteed to keep hold of the Ashes after thumping Australia by an innings and 157 runs in the fourth Melbourne Test to take a 2-1 series lead with just one match to play.

But despite England's dominance throughout most of the series, the home side can still pull level at 2-2 under stand-in skipper Michael Clarke if they can turn around their miserable form and win in Sydney.

Strauss is aware that the tourists still have work to do as they seek to become the first English team since Mike Gatting's men in 1986/87 to win a series Down Under.

"Winning the Ashes in Australia has always been a bit of a Holy Grail for English sides," Strauss said. "Our objective was to come out here and win the series, so we haven't achieved that yet."

"It's very reassuring to know that the Ashes are going to remain in England for the next couple of years, but it would leave a very sour taste if we weren't able to go on and convert our position into a series win in Sydney."

England outplayed Australia in all departments at the Melbourne Cricket Ground to highlight the sorry state of Australian cricket.

Clarke will replace the injured Ricky Ponting and lead Australia for the first

time at Test level in Sydney.

X-rays revealed that Ponting had further damaged a fractured little left finger suffered earlier in the series while playing in the fourth Test.

Ponting's absence in Sydney could dampen incessant speculation over his Test future.

"I'm honoured. It's for this Test match and hopefully we can get Punter (Ponting) right as soon as possible," Clarke said.

"No doubt (England) are playing really good cricket but it's a great opportunity for us. It's a huge Test match."

Ponting's setback has also created an opportunity for Pakistan-born Usman Khawaja, 24, to become the first Muslim to play Test cricket for Australia and he is likely to bat at number three in the absence of Ponting.

"I'm not here to fill Ricky Ponting's shoes, I'm going to go out there and try and do the best I can," Khawaja said.

"To replace 12,000 runs is a big feat and I still haven't scored any."

The Australian team also view the Sydney Test as their big chance to pay back their disillusioned fans after two heavy defeats in Adelaide and Melbourne.

"We have to try and restore some pride. The Australian fans have come out to support us and we really haven't given them anything to support," opening batsman Shane Watson said.

"We really have to go out there in Sydney and try to keep some of our supporters and fans onside, because unfortunately the way we've played we might have turned a few people off, so we are going to have to restore that."

England's huge 225-run victory in 2003 is the only time Australia have lost at the SCG since 1995.

## Finally Shakib named

FROM PAGE 16

The world's number one all-rounder also said that he was looking forward to the 2011 World Cup where Bangladesh is one of the co-hosts along with India and Sri Lanka.

"Definitely my first target is to play good cricket in the World Cup and do something as a co-host. I have to take all the responsibility for good or bad result in this big event. I am however excited to lead the team in the World Cup," said Shakib.

The Bangladesh captain also believes that there will be a good partnership with Tamim.

"We have a very good relationship and hope we can work together to inspire the team for good results in the coming days," Shakib hoped.

Tamim was however quite surprised by the decision but he was delighted to do his duty.

"I'm surprised because I never thought about it. I will try my best to do my duty as

the vice-captain," said the left-hander, who just went through a very successful year with the bat.

BCB's media committee chairman Jalal Yunus explained the reason behind the board's decision of declaring the captain and vice-captain for one year.

"We took the decision because we thought that it will help our cricket and team performance. Shakib successfully led the team in the last couple of series and we have faith on him that's why we went for a long-term policy," explained Yunus.

"What we believe is that this decision will also help Shakib to become a good leader because he will get enough time to think about his captaincy. On the other hand we picked up Tamim as vice-captain because he is a performer and has a good future and we want to give him an opportunity so that he can prepare himself as a leader," he added.

## Public support was remarkable

FROM PAGE 16

in 1997 till the World Cup was just fantastic.

**DSS:** How different was the atmosphere compared to other matches or tours?

**MA:** There was a huge difference. We only play against one country in a series so we have one strategy. In the World Cup, there has to be six different strategies. Then there is the atmosphere, expectations of the public and the memory it creates. People remember a World Cup moment more than that in other series. Plus, this tournament is unpredictable.

**DSS:** Was there a sad moment?

**MA:** No sad memories. It was a happy journey throughout. You know, I have one unfulfilled dream that was to play Test cricket. It didn't happen because of some people's personal grudge.

**DSS:** Recall your sweetest memory then...

**MA:** I didn't get to play against New Zealand, didn't do well against West Indies. But against Scotland, I think I gave my best performance with both bat and ball. The fact that I contributed in that match was great. If we had lost that game, our cricket would have gone back a few years. But thankfully, we won that game. Off the field, it was the support of the public that was just remarkable. And when one mentions 1999 World Cup, the Pakistan match always comes up.

**DSS:** What do you expect from the Tigers in the 2011 World Cup?

**MA:** I think they will reach the quarterfinals. But one disadvantage is that they are out of international cricket for two months before the World Cup.

## Hameed sorry for accusations

AFP, Karachi

Former Pakistan opener Yasir Hameed said on Friday he had apologised to cricket authorities over an interview with a British tabloid in which he accused fellow players of fixing matches.

"I was trapped into it but I should not have said all that before a stranger and I apologise to all the players who were hurt because of that," Hameed told AFP.

Hameed was secretly filmed telling undercover reporters from the News of the World in September that his fellow players fix matches with impunity.

"They were doing it (fixing) in almost every match," Yasir said. "God knows what they were up to."

"Scotland Yard was after them for ages. It makes me angry because I'm playing my best and they are trying to lose."

## Roddick back to defend Brisbane title

AFP, Brisbane

American Andy Roddick will put behind him a season dogged by illness to launch the new year with the defence of his Brisbane International title starting on Sunday.

Roddick, 28, believes he is finally his old self again after fighting a bout of mononucleosis, an infectious viral illness, which restricted him to just two titles in 2010.

The 2003 US Open champion and three-time Wimbledon finalist flew into Brisbane four days before the other tournament top seeds to practise ahead of the new year's first tournament on the road to January's Australian Open in Melbourne.

"I definitely didn't feel well prepared for the last little bit of last year and it showed," Roddick said.

## Renat hits

FROM PAGE 16

Metropolis School Football at the BAF Shaheen High School ground yesterday.

In the day's other matches, Agargaon Adarsha High School beat Bangladesh International School 1-0, Nahar International School beat Happy Times International School 2-1, Islambagh Ashraf Ali High School routed Rasulpur International School 3-0, Segunbagicha High School beat T&T High School 3-2, Milan Academy thrashed Barnamala Adarsha High School 4-0, A Latif Charitable School blanked Shaheed Nabee High School 6-0 and Shaheed Kazi Aref High School beat Tejaon Govt. High School 2-1.

## Aus desperate to level



AFP, Sydney

Out of the gloom of failing to regain the Ashes and Ricky Ponting's travails comes the feel-good story of Usman Khawaja's emergence into an Australian team desperate to level the series.

Khawaja gets his chance to make his Test debut in the Sydney match, the fifth and final clash of the Ashes, after skipper Ponting was ruled out with complications to a broken little finger.

Pakistan-born Khawaja, 24, is in line to become the first Muslim to play Test cricket for his adopted country.

The player himself says he thinks little about it, but his father cannot ignore the significance. "Obviously, it will have a positive impact," Tariq Khawaja said. "It's good for the (Muslim) community."

"It shows that it's a fair system and whoever puts in effort can achieve anything in this country. Not only Muslims, any religion. As a youngster, if you have passion and if you have dreams, you can make it work."

Many have touted Khawaja's Test potential and he comes into the Australia team as the leading scorer in this season's domestic Sheffield Shield competition with 598 runs at 74.75.

Khawaja's inclusion would reflect the multicultural nature of Australian society and he comes highly regarded by his New South Wales teammates and coaches.

"It's fantastic that Usman is in the team," Cricket Australia chief executive James Sutherland said.

"He's a role model for Australian kids, no matter what background they are."

Test and NSW batsman Simon Katich rates Khawaja as one of the most accomplished young batsmen in the Australian game.

"I have been raving about him for some time and I have always thought technically he is one of the best young batsmen going around," Katich said. "He has a lot of time, he is very stylish and great to watch."

"He is very good off the back foot which is a good sign for a batsman from Sydney and he is very strong against the short stuff and is a very good all-round player."

The Sydney Test will be a daunting assignment for Khawaja, who emigrated with his family from Pakistan when he was just three years old.

He is expected to fill the troublesome number three batting spot, where Ponting has struggled throughout the series, scoring just 113 runs in eight innings at an average of 16.

Ponting himself has been impressed by Khawaja.

"Everything I've seen of Usman, I've been very impressed with what he's been able to do. His first-class record is very, very good," Ponting said.

"Technically, he looks as good as any of the young blokes we've got around Australia, probably better."

"You need to have that really solid technique if you want to stand up at number three at Test level."

Khawaja is deeply respectful of Ponting and his achievements.

"He is a legendary cricketer and a legendary bloke," he said. "Me taking Ricky's spot? I highly doubt that."

"I'm not here to fill Ricky Ponting's shoes, I'm going to go out there and try and do the best I can."

"To replace 12,000 runs is a big feat and I still haven't scored any."

Khawaja also has an eye on his future, taking time away from the game to complete his bachelor of aviation degree and qualifying as a commercial pilot before returning to cricket in February 2008.

## City Bank urges calm

FROM PAGE 16

the dark over certain vital issues.

"They (BCB) did not specify to us how many tickets are available for public consumption. Actually we didn't get any clear picture from them about ticket selling at all," informed Arefin.

City Bank will sell tickets from their fifty branches across the country while Agrani Bank will also sell tickets from thirty branches.

Arefin informed that they would be able to issue a maximum of 480 tickets from each branch per day and stated they do not have any pre-printed version of tickets but would only issue a voucher for confirmation.

"We know the demands are very high but we have certain limitations as the ticketing will be totally controlled by RTKTS system, an online website of ICC ticketing partner KyaZoonga," said Arefin.

"We don't have any control over the internet speed, so it can take more than three minutes to issue tickets to one person. It can test his patience and may result in some chaos which will be very tough to handle," he said.

He also said that they are hugely concerned about their security and urged the people to understand the reality and be patient.

"We have asked the BCB about our own security, but they failed to give us any guarantee. We repeatedly asked them about it but they did not pay any heed to us. There was no way other than holding this press conference because we are hapless. We contracted with the Dhaka Metropolitan Police Commissioner, who suggested to us that we should make our concern public," he said.

"We understand that there will be a lot of emotions attached but we have to make ourselves clear so that there is no misunderstanding between us and the valued customers," he added.

Sales will start at 10am everyday and will continue till 6pm. People have to stand outside the branches in queues from where the bank will bring people inside in groups of five to ten at a time.

One person will be eligible to buy a maximum of two tickets per match and they must bring some identification like National ID or passport or driving license to buy the ticket. But the people, who do not possess any of these IDs, can still purchase the tickets by stating the purchaser's father or mother's name or date of birth. But in all cases a mobile number is mandatory.

## IPL cuts 56 from auction list

CRICINFO

The IPL has pruned its auction list for the next season from a preliminary 416 to 350, and also increased the base prices of Sourav Ganguly and VVS Laxman. All 80 players named in the top three price bands of the preliminary list have retained their place in the final list for the auction, which is scheduled to be held in Bangalore on January 8 and 9.

In the preliminary list, 21 players including former West Indies batsman Brian Lara had been in the highest bracket of US\$400,000, a bunch that Ganguly has now joined after his reserve price was raised from \$200,000. Laxman, who has had a vintage year in Tests in 2010, also had his base price bumped up from \$200,000 to \$300,000.

Ganguly and Laxman are not the first players to modify their reserve prices. Rahul Dravid and Anil Kumble had earlier changed their base price from \$200,000 to \$400,000. An IPL official confirmed that the players had the right to choose their reserve price.