

WOMEN'S NAT'L CRICKET

Khulna crush Jhenidah in opener

SPORTS REPORTER

Khulna came out victorious against Jhenidah by 209 runs yesterday in the opening match of the 1st Women's National Cricket Championship in Bagerhat.

Batting first, Khulna piled up a huge total of 244 runs losing only one wicket in the allotted 30 overs. Shayla Sharmin struck a century while Ripa scored 62 runs.

In reply, Jhenidah were all out in the 24th over for only 35 runs. Shampa took 4 wickets for the winning team.

In today's match, the hosts Bagherhat will face Chuadanga.

SUB take on Stamford in final today

SPORTS REPORTER

State University of Bangladesh reached the final of the ULAB cup cricket tournament beating North South University by 26 runs in the semifinal at the ULAB (University of Liberal Arts Bangladesh) cricket ground yesterday.

Batting first, State University scored 158-5 in 20 overs with the help of Maruf Sunny's unbeaten 82 off just 43 balls. He was later adjudged man of the match. NSU finished their 20 overs on 132 for 7.

Earlier in the day, Stamford University beat hosts ULAB by ten runs in a low-scoring match. Stamford scored 116 runs and defended it with some brilliant bowling from Liton who picked up four wickets.

State University will face Stamford in the final today.

Prime Bank badminton

SPORTS REPORTER

Five more players advanced into the second round in the men's singles of the Prime Bank Pallima Badminton Tournament beating their respective rivals at the Pallima Sangsad Premises in Khilgaon yesterday.

Nuruzzaman beat Babir Ahmed 21-14, 21-12, Momen defeated Jonny 21-12, 21-15, Mamun routed Minhaz 21-14, 21-11, Ronny beat Wahid 21-13, 21-15 and Anik outplayed Jonny 21-5 and 21-21-14.

Roger's rich discomfort

AFP, Melbourne

Roger Federer says he is embarrassed by the fabulous riches he has amassed as the greatest Grand Slam winner in men's tennis.

The Swiss great has earned a phenomenal 61 million US dollars in disclosed career prizemoney and is estimated to have a net worth at between 100 and 160 million dollars -- and all before the age of 30.

"Yeah, sure. I never expected myself to earn so much money," Federer said. "This is where I always thank the older (tennis) generation for all their hard work where prize money wasn't so high yet, but they were doing it basically for the love of the game because that's what it was."

"It was just more living a dream, trying, because you know, okay, you could make a bit of money. Maybe that could help you travel, and then you go from there."

He was also asked at his press conference where he invested all his tennis earnings.

"What do you expect what a Swiss guy would say?" he laughed.

"We put it in the banks, yes, that's what we do. And we sit on top of it. Then we'll see later on what we do with it."

"I'm not going to tell you, no. Sorry."



PHOTO: AFP
Australia batsman Shaun Marsh acknowledges the crowd's applause after scoring a century in the second ODI against England at the Bellerive Oval in Hobart yesterday.

Aus thrive on Marsh ton

Cricket

AFP, Hobart

Shaun Marsh batted himself into contention for next month's World Cup with a match-winning solo effort in Australia's 46-run win over England Friday at the Bellerive Oval.

Marsh, left out of Australia's World Cup squad named on Tuesday and the only player not in that squad playing on Friday, posted his second one-day international century as Australia made 230 from 48.2 overs after being sent in to bat by England.

In reply, England never recovered from an early double-strike by pacer Doug Bollinger (4-28), who also contributed valuable tail-end runs with the bat. They were dismissed for just 184 in 45 overs as Australia took a 2-0 lead in the seven-match series.

But the win came at considerable cost for Australia, with spinner Nathan Hauritz, in his first international of the season, appearing to dislocate his right shoulder in the field and place his World Cup hopes in jeopardy.

All summer, Australia's best performances have relied on just one or two brilliant individual efforts.

In game one of the series, it was Shane Watson's 161 not out, and this time it was the recalled Marsh.

Batting at number six, the left-handed Marsh brought up his century in the best fashion possible, lofting Michael Yardy over mid-wicket for six from the 101st delivery he faced, having hit the previous two balls for four.

Marsh was the last man to fall, caught on the boundary having faced 114 balls, hitting eight fours and two sixes.

The home side were in deep trouble at 142-8, before Marsh and number 10 Bollinger rallied to the cause by adding an unlikely 88, a record ninth-wicket stand for Australia in ODIs.

Not for the first time in this southern hemisphere summer, Australia's top order was in early disarray, with captain Michael Clarke's atrocious season in all forms of the game continuing as he fell for just 10.

Marsh, called into Friday's team to replace the injured Mike Hussey, strode to the wicket with the home side in deep trouble at 33-4.

The left-hander struck the ball well from the time he arrived at the crease and looked a class above any of his top order teammates in a performance that will have done his chances of replacing Hussey in the World Cup squad no harm at all.

Hussey is in increasing doubt for the tournament after this week undergoing surgery to repair a severe hamstring tear.

Marsh survived a close shave on 23 from the bowling of James Tredwell, when he was given not out by the third umpire on a very close stumping appeal.

He and Cameron White put on 100 for the fifth wicket, but the batting collapsed again when White was caught and bowled for 45 by Michael Yardy, as Australia lost 4-9 to slump to 142-8.

Promising pacer Ajmal Shahzad celebrated his inclusion in England's World Cup squad by claiming 3-43, including the prized wickets of openers Shane Watson (5) and Brad Haddin (5).

England got off to a solid start, but Bollinger removed Andrew Strauss (lbw) for 19 and with his next delivery bowled Kevin Pietersen for a golden duck.

The tourists were 36-3 and never really recovered.

SCORES IN BRIEF
AUSTRALIA: 230 (White 45, Marsh 110, Bollinger 30; Shahzad 3-43, Tremlett 3-22, Bresnan 2-37)

ENGLAND: 184 (Strauss 19, Trott 32, Bell 32, Morgan 21, Yardy 22, Bresnan 19, Tredwell 16; Lee 2-39, Bollinger 4-28)

Result: Australia won by 46 runs and lead seven-match series 2-0.
Man-of-the-match: Shaun Marsh

Hauritz compounds Aussie worry

AFP, Hobart



Uncertainty over Australia's World Cup squad deepened Friday after off-spinner Nathan Hauritz hurt his shoulder and pacer Shaun Tait suffered a thigh strain, adding to injuries already plaguing the selection announced this week.

Hauritz, named on Tuesday as a member of Australia's 15-man squad for the tournament, was playing against England in his first game for Australia since his omission from the entire Ashes Test series.

He appeared to dislocate his right shoulder after sliding to field a ball in the outfield of the Bellerive Oval in Hobart, Tasmania.

Hauritz writhed in agony on the ground for several minutes before he was helped off the field and taken to hospital for X-rays.

The setback puts Hauritz among several injured Australian players now in doubt for the World Cup, complicating the selection for the tournament, which starts next month in India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.

Xavier Doherty has been Australia's first-choice spinner in recent times, but was overlooked for the World Cup despite playing Sunday in the first match of Australia's one-

day international series against England.

Then in the dying minutes of the match, the injury-plagued Tait, returning from a back problem, suffered a thigh strain and was forced off the field, unable to complete his sixth over.

Hauritz and Tait join Mike Hussey on a rapidly growing list of injured, with the veteran left-handed batsman in a race against time to prove his fitness after undergoing surgery this week for a severe hamstring tear.

The Australian selectors have already said a decision on Hussey's place in the squad will be left as late as possible.

Captain Ricky Ponting is also in doubt, after breaking a finger in the Ashes Test series, while allrounder Cameron White appeared to hurt the index finger on his right hand while batting Friday.

Further complicating matters for the defending World Cup champions was a stellar innings in Hobart by Shaun Marsh, the only man in Friday's team not named in the World Cup squad.

The 27-year-old left-hander, called in to replace Hussey in Friday's match, rescued the Australian innings with a sparkling 110, helping Australia to 230 runs by the end of their innings and a 46-run victory over England.

Murali to quit after WC

AFP, Colombo



Record-breaking Sri Lankan spinner Muttiah Muralidaran said Friday he would retire from international cricket after the 2011 World Cup.

"This World Cup will be my last outing," Muralidaran, 38, told reporters on the sidelines of a training session in Colombo.

"I am retiring totally from international cricket thereafter."

The mega one-day event, co-hosted by India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, starts on February 19.

Muralidaran, the world's leading wicket-taker in both Tests (800) and one-dayers (517), bowed out of Test matches in July last year after the opening match against India in Galle. "My time is up. I have signed up to play for two years in the IPL (Indian Premier League). I am also looking at similar work in New Zealand and perhaps England," the off-spinner said.



MUTTIAH MURALIDARAN

Muralidaran said that he was currently focusing on the World Cup, which ends on April 2.

"This is my fourth World Cup. We won in 1996 and came close in 2007 by reaching the final. This would be a memorable one for me and for Sri Lankan fans," he said.

Sri Lanka will host 12 Cup matches, including three at a new 22,000-seater stadium in Murali's home district of Kandy.

The other nine matches will be played at the renovated Premadasa Stadium in Colombo and a new cricket facility in Hambantota in the island's south.

Muralidaran said he had no immediate plans to switch to coaching despite reports last year that he was planning to team up with retired Indian spinner Anil Kumble to start a spin academy for youngsters.

"There are plenty of coaches and lots of talented people out there. I will take things as they come. For the moment, no coaching stints."

Federer sets record

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last week's Sydney International raised new questions about the Dane's credibility as world number one.

Wozniacki was broken three times but cashed in on an even higher error-rate by Cibulkova, the top 100's shortest player at five foot three inches (1.61 metres), wrapping it up 6-4, 6-3 in 1hr 32min.

Afterwards, the 20-year-old Dane turned on journalists who accused her of giving boring press conferences.

Wozniacki then stunned media by rattling off a monologue answering the predictable questions she knew she would face.

French Open champion Francesca Schiavone eased past Monica Niculescu 6-0, 7-6 (7/2) and Latvian Anastasija Sevastova

beat Vesna Manasieva 6-1, 6-3 to set up a last-16 meeting with Wozniacki.

Sharapova fought back from a set down before subduing Germany's Julia Goerges 4-6, 6-4, 6-4, while China's Li Na downed Barbora Zahlavova Strycova 6-2, 6-1 to revive memories of her run to last year's semifinals.

Meanwhile Andy Roddick came from behind to see off Dutchman Robin Haase 2-6, 7-6 (7/2), 6-2, 6-2, and Swiss number two Stanislas Wawrinka beat French 12th seed Gael Monfils 7-6 (7/4), 6-2, 6-3.

Serbia's Troicki joined a growing injury list after Marcos Daniel retired from his match with Nadal, Karol Beck was forced out while playing Andy Murray and a dizzy David Nalbandian gave up on his encounter with Richard Berankis.

SA post 265

STAR SPORT DESK

Jean-Paul Duminy slammed unbeaten 71 as South Africa posted a challenging total of 265 for 7 in the fourth ODI against India at St. George's Park in Port Elizabeth yesterday.

After a very good opening start given by Hashim Amla (64) and Graeme Smith (18), South Africa lost their way in the middle, losing five wickets for 16 runs to become 118 for 6 in the 23rd over. From there, Duminy took the mantle on his shoulders and with contributions from Johan Botha (44) and Robin Peterson (31), helped his side to post the decent enough total of 265. Duminy's knock had two fours and a six.

Yuvraj Singh was the best bowler for India with three wickets for 34 runs.

SCORES IN BRIEF
SOUTH AFRICA: 265 for 7 (Smith 18, Van Wyk 15, Duminy 71 not out, Botha 44, Peterson 31; Yuvraj 3-34)

SL eager to test WC venues

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka are eager to test the island's new cricket venues ahead of next month's World Cup, skipper Kumar Sangakkara said Friday.

Sri Lanka, who were runners-up in the last Cup in 2007, will stage 12 matches of the showpiece event, in Hambantota, Pallekele and Colombo. The remaining games will be held in India and Bangladesh.

"The Premadasa stadium (in Colombo) hosts most of our big matches," Sangakkara told reporters after a training session in Colombo.

"We are impatient to play there as well as at the other two venues to be able to get an understanding of how they are playing, especially when it comes to fielding the right combinations."

The wicketkeeper-batsman said the players were keen to see how the wickets would behave under lights to discover the "idiosyncrasies" of defending or chasing totals and the dew factor.

The Premadasa and Hambantota venues will be tested when Sri Lanka host the West Indies for three one-dayers that were rescheduled due to heavy rains in December last year. The first match starts in Hambantota on January 31.

"It will be interesting to see what challenges they present. Playing on these grounds with the West Indies will give us an idea of what to expect and how to prepare for the World Cup," said Sangakkara.

Venus out with injury

AFP, Melbourne



American Venus Williams retired hurt with a muscle strain after just one game of her Australian Open third round match against Germany's Andrea Petkovic on Friday.

The seven-time Grand Slam winner screamed in pain and stopped playing while receiving at 0-1 down, after being broken in the first game. She limped to her chair and quickly conceded defeat after seeing a trainer.

Petkovic was stunned at the retirement by Williams, her first in 251 Grand Slam matches. Williams had needed treatment to a psoas muscle, which runs from the abdomen to the groin, in her previous match.

"I am very surprised she retired," said the German. "I saw she got injured in her last game but she finished that match so I figured she was going to play tonight."

The retirement continues a miserable run for the older Williams sister in Melbourne and marks a bleak day for US tennis, as it is the first time in the Open era that no American woman has reached the fourth round of a Grand Slam.

While sister Serena is a five-time champion, the best Venus has managed is a runner-up finish to Serena in 2003. She has only reached one semifinal, back in 2001.

On a court that should

suit her she has often been bundled out by players ranked well below her.

In 2009 she lost to Spaniard Carla Suarez Navarro in the second round and last year she was beaten by Li Na in the quarter-finals.

Petkovic, 23, has now reached the last 16 at a Grand Slam for the second time in succession. She was beaten at the same stage of the 2010

US Open by eventual runner up Vera Zvonareva.

She had a good start to the year when she made the final of the Brisbane International, going down to Petra Kvitova.

She will take on former champion Maria Sharapova in the fourth round following Sharapova's three-set win over Germany's Julia Goerges earlier in the day.



PHOTO: AFP
Venus Williams of the US walks off the court after sustaining an injury at the beginning of her third round match of the Australian Open against Andrea Petkovic of Germany in Melbourne yesterday.

Agassi in Hall of Fame

Tennis

AFP, Newport

Eight-time Grand Slam singles champion Andre Agassi, among only seven men to achieve a career Grand Slam, has been elected to the International Tennis Hall of Fame, officials said Thursday.

Agassi's induction ceremony will be conducted July 9 at the Hall of Fame in Newport, Rhode Island, during the ATP Hall of Fame Championships grass-court event. He will be the only enshrinee in the recent player category.

Former world number one Agassi, the husband of 2004 Tennis Hall of Fame inductee Steffi Graf, announced the honour at Agassi Prep, the public charter school he founded in Las Vegas in 2001 for at-risk youth.

"I'm truly honoured to be recognised alongside the greatest players of tennis," Agassi said. "My tennis career afforded me the

opportunity to make a difference in other people's lives and it was truly special to share this exciting moment with the students of Agassi Prep.

"Tennis has given me everything in my life. It has given me my wife. It has given me my life's work by allowing me the resources to build this school."

The 40-year-old American topped the rankings for 101 weeks and went 870-274 with 60 titles in his career, including four Australian Opens, two US Opens, one Wimbledon and one French Open plus the 1996 Olympic singles gold medal.

Agassi won Australian Open titles in 1995, 2000, 2002 and 2003, the US Open crown in 1994 and 1999, Wimbledon in 1992 and the French Open in 1999.

"During his 20-year career Andre Agassi recorded some of the most incredible achievements in tennis," Hall of Fame chairman Christopher Clouser said.

"The energy and excite-

ment that he personally brought to the game inspired generations of players. Andre is a true champion of the game and we are delighted to honor him for his contributions and achievements."

Street cricket

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on the occasion. CWAB general secretary Debabrata Paul moderated the colourful opening ceremony.

Polar COO Toufique Islam and Spellbound CEO Sadequul Arefeen were also present.

The tournament is being held under the six-a-side format.

In the day's first two games, Cricket Kids defeated Street Boys by 78 runs while Kathalbagan Royals beat Royal Champs by three wickets.

The semifinals and final will be held on February 2. The champions will receive Tk 50,000 and the runners-up and third position teams will get Tk 25,000 and Tk 15,000 respectively.