

# Goalless draw in table top clash

SPORTS REPORTER

Sheikh Russel KC held Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club to a goalless draw in the Grameenphone Bangladesh League encounter at the Bishreshtha Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

A win for any side could have put them on top of the 12-team table along with leaders Abahani but both sides had to be content with their third draw in eight matches and that means both sides are in joint third position with 15 points each, two less than leaders Abahani.

Star-studded Sheikh Jamal enjoyed better ball possession throughout the game and created a few scoring chances but Jamal's national striking pair Zahid Hasan Emily and Enamul Haque were not up to the mark to give their side a victory. Emily was too late to collect a Mishu cross in stoppage time of the

first half while Federation Cup second-highest scorer Enamul was totally anonymous and later was replaced by Komol.

The real scoring chance for Sheikh Jamal came in the second half when winger Zahid Hossain let loose a powerful drive outside the box that forced goalkeeper Mamun to fist it but the ball went to unmarked left-winger winger Shakil Ahmed, who just sent the ball wide in a one-on-one situation. Russel's goalkeeper Mamun later foiled a side-volley from Zahid to help his side secure a point.

"I am happy with the outcome and the boys executed the strategy of counterattack well," said Sheikh Russel coach Mahmudul Haq Lition.

However, Sheikh Jamal coach Packeer Ali was not happy with the result.

"The poor finishing from the strikers led to a draw though the boys dominated the game. As most of my players are from the national squad they should have availed the chances they got today," said Packeer.

## By default?

Kapali for the foreseeable future. It was the perfect opportunity for Ashraful to stamp his authority on the team and make his presence felt as a leader. But with his form spiralling down at an alarming rate and the advent of Tamim Iqbal, Shakib Al Hasan, Junaed Siddiqui and Rokibul Hasan, he slowly got squeezed out and after one too many dabs against Ireland in the 2009 Twenty20 World Championship, his captaincy followed suit.

Nine months later, Ashraful was dropped from the home series against England, only to return as a replacement for the injured Rokibul in England a few months later.

Since that comeback (incidentally Bangladesh won that encounter in Bristol), he has played in two one-dayers scoring 13 and six, the last of which was the terribly thought out late-cut against Zimbabwe in December last year. Ashraful fought hard to be picked in that Zimbabwe series but squandered a golden opportunity. There is a suggestion that he should've been picked for

at least another game but that need never came to pass.

His selection in the World Cup squad was mildly questioned in the announcing ceremony, with the big questions largely concerning Mashrafe Bin Mortaza and (surprisingly) Alok Kapali. But Ashraful was solely picked on experience and the fact he was in the 2007 World Cup squad. If that was merit enough to pick a player in the bygone era when all we ever wanted was to play a good game of cricket, it would have been justifiable, but not now. Yet, Ashraful claims he's in fine nick from the Premier League and is waiting for a small window to get back among the big runs.

There is a huge lack of support for Ashraful but nobody is denying his ability of waking up on the big day. This obviously means that the old Ashraful, who created the big day with his bat, would be nowhere in sight and it would all depend on a new version of the batsman who is casually called once-in-a-generation.

## Nat'l tennis

The final line-up of all events in the Sony National Tennis Tournament completed yesterday at the National Tennis Complex in Ramna.

Top seed Amol Roy and Alamgir Hossain moved into the men's singles final as Amol beat Laxman 6-3, 6-2 and Alamgir defeated Ranjan Ram 3-6, 6-2 and 6-3.

In men's doubles, Anwar Hossain and Dipu Lal pair beat Delwar Hossain and Laxman Lal pair to move into the final.

Top seed Sarda Alam beat Nadia Afrin 6-4, 6-3 to set the final clash against Sathi Sarkar.

## Pepsi brings trophy to consumers

Countless Pepsi consumers were delighted to have a snap with the ICC World Cup trophy on Wednesday when the coveted trophy was taken to Bashundhara City by the soft-drink giant.

A massive crowd lined up at the atrium of Star Cineplex at Bashundhara City to catch a glimpse of the coveted prize as Pepsi helped to add to the World Cup excitement in Bangladesh.

It is an effort from Pepsi so that thousands of cricket lovers could fulfil their dreams by getting a closer look at the trophy and take pictures with it, said a press release yesterday.

Pepsi, being the official global partner of the ICC World Cup 2011 has brought exciting new campaigns for its consumers. This trophy activation was brought by Pepsi to the cricket fans of the nation as part of the hugely popular campaign "Pepsi Change the Game".

Khurshid Irfan Chowdhury, executive director, Arif Hossain, market development manager of Transcom Beverages Limited and Prateek Sabharwal, country manager of PepsiCo Bangladesh were present on the occasion.

## Canadian dreams

Bagai leads the side against hot favourites Sri Lanka but the New Delhi-born batsman thinks he is not too concerned as there's a neutralising factor.

"We play Sri Lanka in Hambantota which is a new venue so I think even they don't know what to expect. But it's going to be tough. We get there days before. Hopefully, we'll get used to the conditions. The team is prepared to play them mentally. Lasith (Malinga) and (Muttiah) Muralidaran are obviously the main threats to our batting. But I still think we have a good chance," he added.

Former England all-rounder Trevor Bailey has died in a house fire, the England and Wales Cricket Board confirmed Thursday.

Bailey, 87, who played 61 Tests during a 10-year international career, died early Thursday in a fire at his home, the ECB said in a statement.

Bailey, who also enjoyed a 21-year career with Essex before finding success as a cricket writer and broadcaster, was known as "bar-nacle" following several stubborn stints at the crease.

Arguably his most famous innings came in the Lord's Test against Australia in 1953, when along with Willie Watson, he helped stave off defeat which enabled England to retain the Ashes.

After assuming power in April 2008, the Salahuddin-led committee had started a practice to appoint former footballers as manager of the national side but this time the BFF backtracked from its decision.

"We have picked him (Amirul Islam) according to Salahuddin's will," said National Team management committee chairman Badal Roy.

Defending his position, Salahuddin said, "A former footballer often interferes the activities of the coach when he is appointed manager and to avoid it, we this time have picked a person, who has experience of managing the team of Mohammedan SC."



PHOTO: STAR  
The World Cup trophy is displayed at the capital's Bashundhara City shopping mall on Wednesday, as part of a road show organized by tournament sponsor Pepsi.

## Ervine blow to Zim

AP, Harare

Zimbabwe are banking on helpful subcontinent pitches for their spin bowlers and the expertise of West Indies great Brian Lara after a late change of heart from all-rounder Sean Ervine dented the country's World Cup hopes.

Ervine was included in Zimbabwe's final squad and was set to return to international cricket at the World Cup after a seven-year absence, before he withdrew at the last minute, citing "personal reasons," and returned to English county side Hampshire.

## Shaheed Smriti hockey

SPORTS REPORTER

Usha Krira Chakra blanked Bangladesh Police AC 3-0 in the Chowdhury Group Shaheed Smriti Hockey Tournament at the Maulana Bhasani National Stadium yesterday.

Niloy put Usha ahead in the ninth minute and doubled the margin in the 56th minute before Sujun sealed the fate of the game in the 64th minute.

## Residential Model world champions!

SPORTS REPORTER

Residential Model High School became Mini World Cup champions when they beat Willes Little Flower School by six wickets at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium yesterday.

Nipun played the vital knock as his 47 made sure Willes reached the winning target of 85 runs off the last ball of the match. He was adjudged the man-of-the-match.

BCB president AHM Mustafa Kamal was present on the occasion as the chief guest.

## Tragic death of Bailey

AFP, London

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## BNS for

cricket should be played there," said BCB media committee chairman Jalal Yunus.

"Since there are two big events coming up -- the Twenty20 World Cup and the Asia Cup -- in the near future, we need grounds and she said that the capacity should also be increased. She asked for the ground to be shared by both cricket and football.

"Prime Minister's announcement has made us happy because we also think that cricket should be played at the BNS," said Yunus.



PHOTO: AFP  
India opener Gautam Gambhir dives to catch the ball during a training session at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bangalore yesterday.

## 'We can handle the heat'

AFP, Bangalore

India captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni said Thursday his team is well-equipped to handle the pressure of playing in a World Cup in front of home crowds.

India, champions in 1983, disappointed millions of their fans four years ago when they were knocked out in the first round, following a shock defeat against Bangladesh in their opening match.

This time the hosts have raised fans' expectations after doing well both at home and abroad with Dhoni and coach former South Africa batsman Gary Kirsten at the helm.

"Pressure is an added responsibility. Whenever you play for India, there is always pressure," said Dhoni, whose team is one of the favourites for the title.

"But the good thing is we have a very experienced team. Most of the guys have

been there for five-seven years and know how to handle pressure. We have some talented youngsters who can change the course of any game."

The Indian skipper said the responsibility of leading the side was not a burden.

"I have been doing for some years. There is a lot of hype and expectation around the World Cup," said the wicketkeeper-batsman.

"Every series we have played so far, there is always a lot of expectations. Expectations will always be there, but we need to consider it just as a big tournament."

The big hitting batsman said planning would be the key to success in the World Cup.

"It is very important to have right strategy, always be ready with Plan B or Plan C and at the same time not take any added pressure," he said.

He conceded the team would miss "street-smart" paceman Praveen Kumar,

who was ruled out of the event on Tuesday after failing to recover from an elbow injury.

"But you can't really control injuries. A few players are still suffering from slight niggles, which is always there but nothing is serious. Hopefully, nothing major happens to any player."

Key batsmen Sachin Tendulkar, Virender Sehwag and Gautam Gambhir missed recent one-dayers in South Africa, but were expected to be fit for India's opening match against Bangladesh in Dhaka on February 19.

India will also play England, South Africa, the West Indies, the Netherlands and Ireland in the preliminary league with the top four qualifying for the quarterfinals.

"For us, the World Cup will start from game one and not the quarter-finals," said the Indian captain. "There is no question of taking any team lightly."

## As if it starts tomorrow

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of view, it all was not a pleasant sight as the ball rolls on to the green turf only in two days.

But one will definitely be impressed with the improvement of the field, courtesy of golf course experts and local boy Tamim Iqbal was no exception.

"The ground now looks beautiful. I'm really impressed with the greenish outfield that was not the case when we last visited. Actually the stadium now looks beautiful and I believe it would be fantastic when all the works would be done. I'm really proud as a Chittagonian," said Tamim.

The dashing left-hander can't wait to start their World Cup campaign.

"We can now feel the heat of the tournament and eagerly waiting to play the first practice match [against Canada]," said the Bangladesh vice-captain.

"The wicket looks to be very good," observed Bangladesh coach Jamie Siddons.

Top-order batsman Junaed Siddiqui, who was talking with the press after the day's practice session in the afternoon, informed that the local heroes were eagerly waiting to get the campaign kicked off.

"Everybody is keen on putting up their

best in the World Cup. We can feel the heat as we are going to play our first practice match against Canada. The wicket and the outfield are really fantastic," said Junaed.

The left-handed batsman however could not recall the memory of Bangladesh's ignominious defeat against Canada in the 2003 World Cup in South Africa.

"I can't remember that match. I just passed my SSC exam at that time," said a smiling Junaed.

When the players were praising the wicket and the outfield of the 18,000-plus capacity ground, venue chairman and director of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) Sirajuddin Mohammad Alamgir expressed his satisfaction at the fact that they could install the chairs on time.

"The stadium is now ready for play and the most satisfying fact is that we could install the chairs on time because we were really concerned about that," said a relieved Alamgir.

The local organiser also hoped that everything would fall in place before the tournament proper got underway.

"We are hopeful that the roads and beautification work of the city and stadium will be completed on time," he added.

## Club Cup cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Bir Bikram Yamin Krira Chakra of Sylhet and Rajshahi's Mukti Sangha reached the semifinals of the inter-district Club Cup cricket tournament yesterday.

The Sylhet club got a walkover from Young Society Club of Comilla in the Group B encounter in Mymensingh.

In the Group D game in Kushtia, Mukti Sangha crushed Shaheed Sufi Samaj Kallyan Samiti of Faridpur by 182 runs.

## Cricket's

FROM PAGE 16

Australian players called him a b\*\*\*\*\*. Woodfull turned to his team, pointed to Jardine and asked: "Which one of you b\*\*\*\*\* called this b\*\*\*\*\* a b\*\*\*\*\*?"

**Sunil Gavaskar of India and West Indies' Viv Richards:**  
Gavaskar, normally an opener, had decided to bat at number four, but Malcolm Marshall dismissed Anshuman Gaekwad and Dilip Vengsarkar for ducks, setting the stage for Gavaskar to walk in at 0-2. Richards said: "Man, it don't matter where you come in to bat, the score is still zero."

**Richards and England fast bowler Greg Thomas:**  
Thomas: (Describing the ball) "It's red, round and weighs about five ounces, in case you were wondering." Richards: (Having smacked "ball out of the ground") "You know what it looks like, now you go and find it."

## Warm-ups shifted from Pallekele

AFP, Colombo

Heavy monsoon rains have forced the International Cricket Council to move World Cup warm-up matches from Sri Lanka's Pallekele Stadium, tournament organisers said Thursday.

Sri Lanka has been hit by monsoon downpours since December hampering preparation of the pitches at the newly-built Pallekele venue in the island's central district.

Pallekele was to host practice matches between Sri Lanka and the Netherlands on Saturday and Kenya and the Netherlands on Tuesday. A new venue for the two matches will be announced shortly, the organisers said in a statement.

## CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

- |               |                         |                       |                            |                              |                             |                          |                         |                            |                      |                    |                          |                               |                                 |                               |                          |                                    |                             |                        |                          |                                      |                             |                      |   |                      |                     |                   |                                |                   |                   |                               |                              |
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| <b>ACROSS</b> | <b>39</b> Bill opposite | <b>41</b> Roman 1,052 | <b>42</b> In the same bird | <b>43</b> Reach by telephone | <b>44</b> Urban disturbance | <b>45</b> "Gilligan's —" | <b>46</b> Lyng prone    | <b>47</b> Stead in Germany | <b>48</b> That woman | <b>49</b> Paradise | <b>50</b> Shril bark     | <b>51</b> Turf making pioneer | <b>52</b> Individual            | <b>53</b> King, queen or jack | <b>54</b> Pinnacle       | <b>55</b> Listener                 | <b>56</b> Beatles' "— Fine" | <b>57</b> Anger        | <b>58</b> Caprice        | <b>59</b> Hockey goalie's protection |                             |                      |   |                      |                     |                   |                                |                   |                   |                               |                              |
| <b>DOWN</b>   | <b>1</b> Jog            | <b>2</b> Verdi opera  | <b>3</b> Indigent          | <b>4</b> Bitter discord      | <b>5</b> Rabble             | <b>6</b> Harem room      | <b>7</b> Imogene of old | <b>8</b> Poolside hut      | <b>9</b> Baldness    | <b>10</b> Swag     | <b>11</b> Albanian money | <b>12</b> Tokyo's old name    | <b>13</b> Points of convergence | <b>14</b> Night vision?       | <b>15</b> A mere handful | <b>16</b> "That feels so-o-o good" | <b>17</b> Fault-finding     | <b>18</b> Just said no | <b>19</b> Wife's address | <b>20</b> "A mouse!"                 | <b>21</b> Hawaiian garlands | <b>22</b> Improvised | <b>23</b> "King of the Road" singer Roger | <b>24</b> Foundation | <b>25</b> Uncertain | <b>26</b> Exposed | <b>27</b> Rolling stone's lack | <b>28</b> Staffer | <b>29</b> Require | <b>30</b> Presses for payment | <b>31</b> Personal question? |

Solution time: 24 mins.



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## CRYPTOQUIP

HFV BRE IRTAVG HN MVBTH  
FTD ZFRMVV ZRMG URPBVEH  
INM DN ANEW HFRH HFV  
ZNBUREP GTD-ZMVGTHVG FTB.

**Saturday's Cryptoquip:** THE FELLOW COMPLETELY ADORES THAT CALIFORNIA CITY. HE WANTS TO CHANGE HIS NAME TO STAN DIEGO.  
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: H equals T