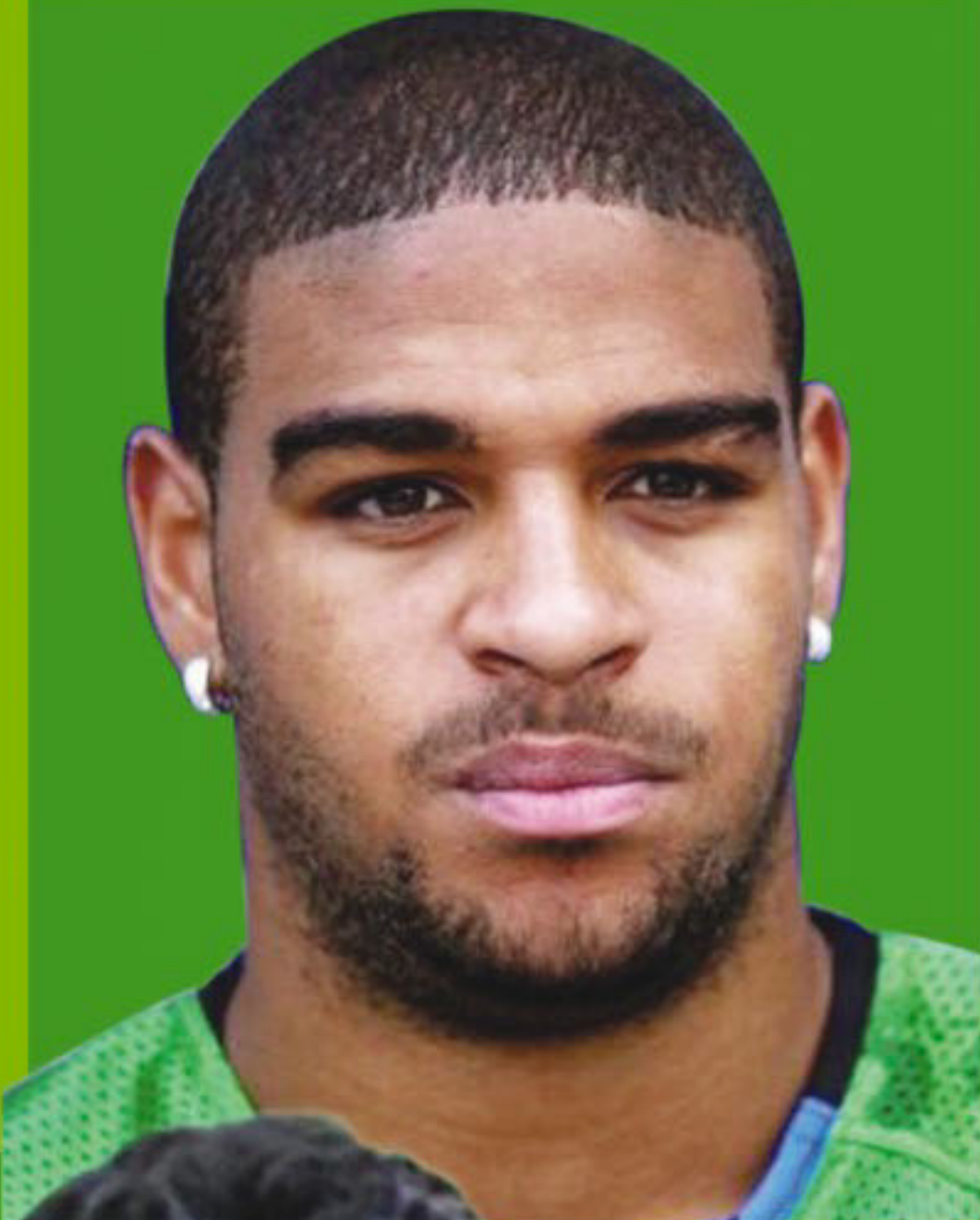


Star SPORT

DHAKA THURSDAY APRIL 21, 2011, E-MAIL: sport@star.com

Adriano damages Achilles tendon

Former Inter Milan and AS Roma striker Adriano, who had hoped to make his Corinthians debut next month, will be out for five months after suffering an Achilles tendon injury, the club said on Tuesday. "The player was examined by the club's medical department who confirmed the need for surgery, which will be carried out on Wednesday," they said on their website (www.corinthians.com.br). The injury to his left leg during training is yet another blow for the 29-year-old, who had only just recovered from a shoulder injury. He signed for



Soheli Rana, the young Farashganj striker who scored a vital goal in their quarterfinal victory against Abahani, chests the ball during a practice session at the Birshrestha Mostafa Kamal Stadium yesterday. The Old Dhaka club will be looking to the youngster to repeat his heroics in their semifinal against Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club today.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

Ashraful's blast from the past

Cricket

CRICINFO

Mohammad Ashraful shone with both ball and bat to lead his Bangladesh A side to a six-wicket victory against South Africa A on Tuesday night at Buffalo Park in East London, in the first of five unofficial ODIs.

Only ten days ago South Africa had been battering Bangladesh in a four-day match, and in their home conditions were firm favourites to dominate the 50-over matches as well. However, the experienced Ashraful, who has alone played more one-day internationals than the entire South Africa A side combined, took 3 for 27 with his part-time spin to restrict South Africa to 226, and then scored an unbeaten century to help his side chase the target in 43.3 overs.

The target started looking steep for Bangladesh when they found themselves 40 for 3 in the 12th over. Ashraful, coming in at No 5, was watchful early on, taking 28 balls before striking his first boundary. He had reached 21 off 44 before he suddenly exploded with Bangladesh at 84

for 3 in the 23rd over. Ashraful hit the next six balls he faced for boundaries, and Bangladesh seized control of the chase. Ashraful continued to attack in bursts, with Junaed Siddiqui rotating the strike at the other end.

The two put together 149 before Siddiqui fell for 60, but by then the



ASHRAFUL...118 n.o

game was Bangladesh's to lose. Ashraful reached his century soon after Siddiqui's dismissal, and then ended the game with two consecutive boundaries in the 44th over, finishing 118 not out off 99 balls. It was a significant performance from a man who was once considered the future of Bangladesh cricket, but has

now found himself relegated to the A team.

Earlier, Ashraful put South Africa A in to bat and after his frontline bowlers couldn't get an early wicket, it fell to him to come on in the 10th over and dismiss his opposing captain Jacques Rudolph. Ashraful struck twice more in a seven-over spell, leaving South Africa reeling at 52 for 3. Things got worse for the hosts as Farhaan Behardien was bowled by left-arm spinner Elias Sunny, Vaughn van Jaarsveld was run out, and Heino Kuhn was caught trying to drive 19-year-old off-spinner Nasir Hossain. At 73 for 6, South Africa looked like they would struggle to get 150.

There was a recovery though; Dean Elgar, fresh from his 169 not out in the rain-affected second four-day game between the two sides, put together a 121-run partnership with allrounder Vernon Philander. The two batted until the 49th over, when Elgar fell for 76. Philander then hit three consecutive sixes off Farhad Reza in the same over, and South Africa took another 11 runs off the 50th to finish with a fighting total of 226 for 8. Philander finished 79 not out.

INDEPENDENCE CUP: FIRST SEMI TODAY

Farashganj dreaming big

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

The second edition of the Independence Cup football tournament rolls into the semi-finals stage today when an unfancied Farashganj Sporting Club takes on a star-studded Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club in the first semifinal at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

This match on paper should be an easy outing for the Dhanmondi Club, since they have been the form team of the tournament, barging past their opponents comfortably, including the 4-2 victory over Farashganj in the very first match of the tournament. But the Old Dhaka club, to their credit, have played some good football since, especially in their victory over Abahani.

Sheikh Jamal's Sri Lankan coach Packeer Ali was quietly confident about repeating their earlier feat to move into the final. Packeer feels the inclusion of their new African recruits have given them the solidity

and eased out the lack of communication that was visible during the Bangladesh League.

"Farashganj are a good side. We are not taking them lightly," stated the former Sri Lankan star player.

"But we are on a high, as the players are doing a good job. The four foreigners have managed to make our combination right. We are looking forward to an interesting match," added Packeer.

Sheikh Jamal will be missing the services of Cameroonian midfielder Steve Samnick though suspension, while Shahed Ahmed is expected to start the match after resting his injured knee.

Cameroonian strikers Emmanuel Ayuk and Stephan Bouga are certain to make the start while Enamul Haque and Zahid Hasan Emily warm the benches for their lack of form.

Farashganj coach Kamal Babu was looking to playing an attacking game, unlike the defensive strategies employed in their famous win against Abahani.

SEE PAGE 17 COL 6

Shakib, Pathan tie down Kochi

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh captain Shakib AL Hasan continued his fine IPL form, picking up three wickets in his four over spell while conceding 28 runs as Kolkata Knight Riders restricted Kochi Tuskers Kerala to a sub-par 132 for 7 in the first innings at the Eden Gardens in Kolkata yesterday.

At the filing of this report, Kochi had fought back somewhat to keep Kolkata to 37 for three at the end of the sixth over, with Jacques Kallis, Gautam Gambhir and Manvinder Bisla back in the hut.

After picking up two wickets apiece in his first two matches against Rajasthan, yesterday's three wickets took the left-arm spinner to joint second place with Kolkata teammate Yousuf Pathan in the league wickets table. Pathan though has played two matches more than Shakib, who missed the team's first two games because of the home series against Australia.

Kochi were cruising towards a big total with their stellar opening pair of captain Mahela Jayawardene and Brendon McCullum batting with ease to reach 49 for no loss when Shakib struck, deceiving McCullum in flight to pop an easy catch to point. That started the slide for Kochi with the next three wickets falling to the off-spin of Pathan, who trapped Jayawardene and Parthiv Patel in front while clean bowling Brad Hodge.

Kochi seemed to be recovering with a partnership of 35 between Kedar Jadhav and Ravindra Jadeja, but it was again Shakib who brought Kolkata back into the match by sliding an arm ball through Jadhav's back foot defence to rattle the stumps.

Brett Lee then ended Jadeja's hard-hitting innings of 29, before Shakib completed a fine effort by clean bowling a charging Vinay

SEE PAGE 17 COL 6

Big guns dominate

Athletics

SPORTS REPORTER

As expected, the veteran athletes stole the show in the two-day National Athletics Championships that ended yesterday at the Bangabandhu National Stadium, again reflecting the dismal scenario of young athletes not holding their own in top-level competition in the country.

Athletes like sprinter Nazmun Nahar Beauty, high-jumper Sajib Hossain, long-jumper Al Amin, runner Rawshan Ara Putul won their respective events and no fresh blood was unearthed in those events, though fit-again Mohon Khan came to the limelight after winning the 100m sprint.

Those veteran athletes are now part of teams like Bangladesh Army, Bangladesh Ansar, Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation, Bangladesh Navy, Bangladesh Air Force, and Border Guard of Bangladesh, and these teams are basically hogging all the gold in national meets.

Surprisingly, 80 teams took part in the championships this time but only 15 teams, most of them from services teams, won medals (at least one bronze medal), with the

other 65 teams returning empty-handed. Bangladesh Army became champions with 14 golds followed by Bangladesh Ansar & VDP's 7, BJMC's 6 and Bangladesh Navy's 5.

Of the 36 gold medals up for grabs, only one went to a district sports association when Hosna Akhter of Khulna DSA picked up the highest honour in the Javelin Throw event. Even that was possible because of the disqualification of 10-time champion Akherun Khatun of BJMC.

On the concluding day, Bangladesh Ansar & VDP's Putul added three more gold medals to raise her gold medal tally to four, while Beauty of BJMC won two more gold medals in the 200m and 400m sprint after winning the 100m sprint on the opening day to finish behind Putul, who won golds in the 800m run, 1500m run, 3000m run and 4X400m relay.

Both Putul and Beauty were happy to add more feathers to their long careers but at the same time they were disappointed at having no competitors around them.

"I have almost lost interest in athletics and any time I can leave it," said Beauty after winning the 200m sprint.

She alleged that the athletic federation and the sports governing body are reluctant

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4



Ansar and VDP athlete Shathi Parveen clears 1.61 metres to win the gold in the high jump event of the National Athletics Championship at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR