

**Gulshan crush
Kalabagan**

SPORTS REPORTER

Gulshan Youth's new-ball pair Tazia and Happy helped demolish Kalabagan Krira Chakra by taking six wickets between themselves in a group match of the 3rd Women's Club Cup cricket tournament at the City Club ground yesterday.

Tazia and Happy took three wickets each as Kalabagan were shot out for just 33 runs with extras contributing 13 runs.

Later, Gulshan Youth knocked off the required runs in 9.5 overs, though they lost four wickets in the process.

In the day's other match at the Gulshan Youth Club ground, Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club beat Azad Sporting Club by 26 runs.

**Khulna, Sylhet
in U-14 final**

SPORTS REPORTER

Khulna and Sylhet reached the final of the Young Tigers U-14 National Cricket competition after they strolled through their semifinals yesterday.

The final will be played at the Mymensingh Circuit House ground tomorrow.

At the same venue yesterday, Sylhet crushed BKSP by eight wickets with Shakur taking three wickets as BKSP were bowled out for just 84 runs. Sylhet reached the winning target in 10.3 overs with Sajib hammering an unbeaten 42.

Khulna's 194 all out was more than enough for Chittagong who were bowled out for 134 only. Talha took four wickets for Khulna.

MSC reunion on Thursday

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammedan Sporting Club have almost completed their preparation to stage a colourful get-together for their current members, former local and foreign players, well-wishers, invited guests from among different clubs and govt officials.

Sri Lanka's cricketer Arjuna Ranatunga and Sanath Jayasuriya, Nigerian footballer Emeka, Pakistani hockey players Shahbaz Ahmed and Kamran Ashraf, who all played for their respective national sides in World Cups and also represented Black and Whites at different times, are expected to be among the 1200 to attend the programme at the Bangabandhu International Conference Centre on Thursday.

"Mohammedan has been in state of inertia for long and the club need a vibration among its 213 members, who do not even know each other well. That is the reason we have planned a big reunion. I believe the successful completion of this programme will bring back enthusiasm among the members, players and fans," said Mohammedan SC's president Kutubuddin Ahmed after a board of directors' meeting at the club yesterday.

He also informed the election of the club would take place on June 14 where 213 members would elect 16 directors and a president. As per new constitution, the club will have to hold elections within 90 days from the date of registration with the register of joint stock companies and it must hold the election by June 24.

Amongst foreign sports organisers, Kolkata Mohammedan SC general secretary and vice president, Nepal Football Association president Ganesh Thapa would grace the programme, informed Lokman Hossain Bhuiya, members' in charge of administration.

Bhuiyan, who is also chairman of the ceremonies committee, said the programme would get underway through recitation of holy Quran followed by a theme song on the club written by Shahidul Azam.

Bhuiyan will then deliver a welcome speech to the guests before a 25-minute documentary on Mohammedian's past, present and future which will be shown on a giant screen.

Local and foreign guests will also recall their memories of Mohammedian followed by a cultural show.

Bhuiyan informed that an approximate Tk 50 lakh would be the expenditure of the programme, which will be fully borne by sponsors.

Axe irks Colly

Cricket

AFP, London

Paul Collingwood has revealed his despair after being axed as captain of England's Twenty20 team just a year after leading his country to their first ever success in a global tournament.

Collingwood feared the worst when he was called to a meeting with national selector Geoff Miller at short notice on Wednesday, but it still came as a massive shock to hear official confirmation that he would be replaced by Stuart Broad.

The Durham all-rounder, who captained England when they beat Australia in the final of the 2010 World Twenty20 competition, had retired from Test cricket to concentrate on staying fit and motivated for the Twenty20 role.

But now he has suffered a hammer blow which could cause him to consider walking away from international cricket.

"I was full of optimism about trying to regain my form and my place in the one-day side," Collingwood told the Mail on Sunday.

"As for the longer term, after retiring from Test cricket in the winter I had my sights set firmly on leading our defence of the World Twenty20 Cup in 2012."

"So when Geoff Miller told me, it was like a juggernaut had come along at full steam and completely wiped me out...just disbelief."

"I felt a bit uneasy when I took the call. The problem was, try as I might, I couldn't think what else he would need to see me about."

"Then again I thought to myself, 'Hang on, I've been captain of a side who've won the World Cup and set a world record. Can they really sack me after that?' All in all, I had a pretty sleepless night."

"We met at 8.30 and while I had prepared myself for the worst, no one can prepare themselves for the words when they come."

"What was so horrible was that I knew the decision had been made. It was not as if I could ask for a recount. I was devastated, gutted."

The decision to go with the younger Broad in place of 34-year-old Collingwood is part of an ECB move to have a different captain for each form of the game.

Andrew Strauss remains Test skipper but gave the captaincy of the one-day team to Alastair Cook.

Collingwood, who played in three Ashes-winning campaigns with England, admits he is likely to remain available for one-day international selection, but it will be some while before the wounds heal.

INDEPENDENCE CUP HOCKEY

Wari maul Rampura

SPORTS REPORTER

Wari Club mauled Rampura Krira Chakra 13-0 in the lone match of the Lyric Group Independence Cup Hockey Competition at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Hasan Jubayer Niloy scored highest four goals for Wari while Golam Mostafa Mani scored three, Sheikh Mohammad Nannu and Pushkar Khisha Mimo bagged a brace each goals for Wari while Ripon Kumar Mohanta and Ajit Kumar Ghosh scored one apiece for the winners. Wari led the first half by 5-0 and added eight more after the breather.

There are two matches in the competition today. Bangladesh Navy will take on Armanita Junior in the first match while Bangladesh Air Force will play against Shadharan Bimalater.

Wins for Kushtia, Khulna

SPORTS REPORTER

Nur Alam fashioned a five-wicket win for Kushtia over Chapainawabganj in the 31st Inter-district Cricket Championship in Bogra yesterday.

The right-handed batsman struck an unbeaten 38 as Kushtia reached their target in 35.5 overs after Chapainawabganj were bowled out for 123 runs in 41.4 overs.

For the losing side, Hasan made 52.

Away in Jessore, Khulna beat Rangpur by 14 runs. Batting first, Khulna rode on Reazul's 55 as they made 206 in 50 overs. Rangpur were almost there through Nasir's 60 but fell short as they were bowled out in the 49th over for 192 runs.

18 called for hockey camp

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Hockey Federation has selected 18 members and four standbys for the upcoming Obaidullah Gold Cup Hockey Tournament to be held from 22-29 May in Bhopal, India. The selected players have been asked to report to coach Kawas Ali and Abdullah Piru by 4:00pm today at the resident training camp.

The selected eighteen are: Zahid Hossain, Rafiqul Islam, Mashirul Islam, Taposh Barman, Mansur, Irfanul Haque, Sarwar Hossain, Shamsul Alam, Sheikh Md. Nannu, Russel Mahmud, Mosharrif Hossain, Ajit Kumar, Imran Ahmed, Mainul Hossain, Pushkar Khisha, Rimon Kumar, Krishna Kumar, Hasan Jubayer.

Dhaka South U-16 champs

SPORTS REPORTER

Dhaka South lifted the Standard Chartered Young Tigers National Under-16 competition after they beat Barisal on the basis of a first innings lead in the two-day final at Barisal yesterday.

Batting first, the Dhaka side made 251 runs to which Barisal could only reply with 154 in their first innings. Dhaka were 55 for one in the second innings.

Rabbi was declared the man-of-the-match for his 96 in the Dhaka first innings while Imtiaz, who scored 259 runs and also took 18 wickets, was named the man-of-the-tournament.

Shuvo was the highest wicket-taker with 33 scalps while Amir was the top-scorer with 340 runs.

Azarenka sets up final with Kvitova

AFP, Madrid

Fourth seed Victoria Azarenka moved to within one victory of a third title from her last four WTA events when she ended the hopes of Germany's Julia Goerges 6-4, 6-2 in the semifinals of the ATP-WTA Madrid Masters on Saturday.

Belarusian Azarenka, who won back-to-back trophies in Miami and Marbella last month, will play Czech 16th seed Petra Kvitova, who dispatched Australian Open finalist Li Na, the Chinese sixth seed, 6-3, 6-1 in 61 minutes.

The first five games went against serve, with Kvitova finally steadying to take charge in a bid for her fourth career title.

"We won first two matches with same combination but it does not work always. Somebody has to score down the order also. Moreover, we have specialist openers and Jesse Ryder has been doing well," he reasoned.

Yuvraj said he is "hoping to turn the tide" at his home ground against the team which he once led.

DHAKA MONDAY

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17



Serbian world No.2 Novak Djokovic stretches to hit a forehand during his victory over Brazilian Thomaz Bellucci in their semifinal match of the Madrid Masters yesterday. The win sets up a familiar final clash with world No.1 Rafael Nadal of Spain.

PHOTO: AFP

Final against Djokovic

Tennis

AFP, Madrid

Rafael Nadal overcame Roger Federer 5-7, 6-1, 6-3 to set up a Madrid Masters final against Novak Djokovic on an emotional day that had started with a tearful tribute to Seve Ballesteros.

World number one Nadal stood side-by-side with old rival Federer in a minute's silence at the Caja Magica before a showreel of Ballesteros's greatest moments played out on the giant court-side screens.

"It's a terrible day for Spain and the world. We lost a great champion, probably the greatest in the history of Spain," said Nadal of the 54-year-old golfing legend, who lost his brave fight against cancer.

"Seve was one of the pioneers in so many things... especially in golf. He was an example to everyone."

Despite the sombre occasion, Nadal, with a black ribbon pinned to his shirt as a mark of respect for his compatriot, went on to thrill his fans and reach his third Madrid final in three years.

His victory set up a familiar final for the world number one, with Nadal to face off for the third straight time at a Masters this season against world number two Djokovic.

The Serb overcame an early lapse to hold off unseeded Brazilian Thomaz Bellucci 4-6, 6-4, 6-1.

One way or another, a streak will be broken in Sunday's final with Nadal not having lost on clay in 37 matches and Djokovic undefeated on all surfaces in 2011 after 31 straight wins.

"I try not to think about losing. I try to think about winning and I think that's a positive state of mind. That's why I'm playing well," said Djokovic, who defeated Nadal in the Masters finals in Indian Wells and Miami earlier this year.

Nadal will be bidding for his third clay title of the spring after Monte Carlo and Barcelona.

He has now beaten Federer in 11 of 13 meetings on clay and stands 16-8 overall in their epic series.

It was the third straight year the all-star pair had played in Madrid, with Federer winning the 2009 trophy and Nadal doing the same 12 months ago.

"I'm glad to have won, but it was not our best match. It was an emotional day for me and Spain," added Nadal.

Federer now heads to the Rome Masters with a 26-7 record for the season and one title from Doha, having played his last final in Dubai in February.

"It was a good match, I had lots of chances. Everyone knows Rafa plays extraordinary on clay," said Federer. "I played aggressive and had lots of winners but lots of errors, that's how it goes."

"But I'm happy with my performance. I want to look ahead to Rome and Roland Garros. I'm sorry I lost but pleased to have played another semi-final against Rafa."

"It was very close. Maybe the result does not show it as such but I was right there until the end."

The Swiss world number three started the match poorly, losing his first service game, which was marred by a double-fault and an over-hit forehand.

The 16-time Grand Slam champion also failed to convert any of three break points in a lengthy fourth game, with Nadal eventually stretching his leading margin to 4-2 with a love game.

But the Swiss worked his magic to get back to level-pegging 4-4, and held in dramatic fashion after saving three break points in the 11th game for 6-5.

A sizzling Federer passing shot to the far reaches gave him a set point, which he finished cleanly with a down-the-line winner, breaking Nadal for the second time and taking the early lead after 64 minutes.

But the Swiss suffered a reversal in the first game of the second set, with Nadal breaking via a controversial ball deemed good by chair umpire Mohamed Layhani to the dismay of Federer, who argued the point before getting back to work.

Federer seethed quietly throughout

Australia held by India

AFP, Ipoh

World champions Australia were held to a 1-1 draw by India at the Sultan Azlan Shah Cup on Sunday thanks to a superb defensive performance against a second-half onslaught from the world's leading team.

Both teams now have four points after a win and a draw, but the Indians have played a game more, losing to South Korea.

Just six months ago India were thrashed 0-8 by Australia in the Commonwealth Games final in New Delhi and Australian coach Ric Charlesworth said the result was disappointing.

"But I am not surprised... India played good hockey but I think we too were responsible as we did not take our chances," he said.

It was a resilient performance by India who had to absorb tremendous pressure in the second-half as the Australians pushed for victory after being pegged back from a 14th minute lead.

Australia created early opportunities with Glenn Turner and Jacob Whetton having good shots at goal saved by India's Adrian D'Souza.

The Aussies took the lead through Whetton, who scored with a field goal after dribbling into the D.

India had several chances but the best opportunity came in the 19th minute when Shivender Singh missed the final touch.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 36 Song of praise

1 Chicken-king link

4 Jet forth

8 Welsh veggie

12 Sinbad's bird

13 Largest of the seven

14 Oppositionist

15 Cabbage variety

17 Pinto —