

Star SPORT

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Els eases into Hall of Fame

Ernie Els, whose deceptively effortless swing has earned him the nickname the "Big Easy" -- and three major golf titles - led a class of six inducted into the World Golf Hall of Fame on Monday. "It's been a long journey coming from South Africa," said Els, whose globetrotting game has so far netted him 62 titles around the world including two US Open victories and the British Open. Els, who is still trying to add to his cache of golf's most prestigious titles, was elected to the Hall of Fame in his first



Abahani overcome Farashganj

Sheikh Russel, Rahmatganj draw

SPORTS REPORTER



Ghanaian playmaker Twum Frank slammed a hat-trick as defending champions Abahani overcame the hurdle of Farashganj SC with a 4-2 win in their Grameenphone Bangladesh League fixture at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Frank completed his treble in the second half to join top-scorers Mithun Chowdhury and James Moga of Muktiyoddha Sangsad on 13 goals each, after striker Shakawat Hossain Ronny had given Abahani a one-goal lead in the first half. Promising striker Sohel Rana pulled two back for the Old Dhaka outfit who defeated the Sky Blues in their first meeting of the league and then ousted them from the quarterfinals stage of the Independence Cup.

In the day's other game, Rahmatganj MFS held Sheikh Russel KC to a 2-2 draw at the Birshreshtha Mostafa Kamal Stadium.

Idris Kasirye put Rahmatganj in front in the 37th minute before Mezbabul Haq Manik equalised in the

71st minute. Abbas Inusa added a second for Sheikh Russel five minutes later. But Idris struck again from the penalty spot three minutes from time to snatch a valuable point from Russel, who are in fourth position with 26 points from 14 outings.

Certainly Abahani were haunted by their two losses at the hands of Farashganj and fielded five defenders in a bid to avert further humiliation from a side who are still in the relegation zone. Farashganj, on the other hand, went into the game without their Independence Cup hero Sohel Rana, though the youngster came on after 35 minutes and made an impact, scoring two goals.

Abahani controlled the midfield once Ghanaian playmaker Aminu substituted Habibur Rahman Sohag after 37 minutes. The tall midfielder proved his effectiveness providing two sharp passes but striking duo Awudu Ibrahim and Shakawat Hossain Ronny failed to cash in on those chances.

Awudu, however, initiated the first goal after a Siraji lob from the right flank fell to him inside the box and the Ghanaian striker, who was restricted by

three defenders, cut it back to the unmarked Ronny who hammered an angular shot past the Farashganj goalkeeper to give Abahani a 20th minute lead.

Abahani could have gone three nil up by the first half, but the woodwork kept them from furthering the lead.

They continued their domination after the breather and doubled the lead in the 53rd minute when Twum Frank converted a spotkick. The curly-haired midfielder was in action again five minutes later, making it 3-0.

Sohel reduced arrears in the 71st minute, breaking an off-side trap from the right flank before placing the ball home, but Frank took the game away from Farashganj's reach completing his hat-trick in the 75th minute with a close-range shot.

Two minutes later, Sohel struck his second of the match converting a penalty kick which however did little to avert the ninth defeat for Farashganj. The Old Dhaka club lie in 11th position with 10 points from 14 matches. Abahani have cut the gap with leaders Muktiyoddha Sangsad to three points having 32 points from 14 games.

Afridi denies any rift

Cricket

INTERNET, Karachi

Pakistan's limited-overs captain Shahid Afridi has played down reports of a rift within the team management involving him and coach Waqar Younis.

A day after Afridi was sent a show-cause notice by the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) for his comments over the differences in team management, the seasoned all-rounder said the team and officials should develop 'better coordination' for next year's World Twenty20 Championship in Sri Lanka.

Afridi told the News that his team will have to put aside all distractions and shift the focus on reclaiming the World Twenty20 title they had won in 2009.

"I always say everyone should do their own job and it is not appropriate to interfere in the matters of others. I am responsible for my work and the others are responsible for theirs," he told reporters on his return from Guyana Sunday.

Though Afridi didn't take any names, his statement irked the board, which came out with a statement, saying: "Pakistan Cricket Board has taken notice of the statements made by Shahid Afridi in the media about the differences within the tour management in West Indies."

"It is a violation of the Code of Conduct on part of Mr. Afridi and an explanation has been sought from him for the reasons to make such statements publicly. PCB will take appropriate action after submission of the tour report at the conclusion of the tour."

In reply, Afridi said that he would give his side of the story to PCB chairman Ijaz Butt when he meets him in Lahore later this week.

"I am hoping to meet the chairman soon to discuss a number of issues, including our preparations for the

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INDEPENDENCE CUP HOCKEY

Wari, Police win

SPORTS REPORTER

Wari Club overcame Bangladesh Army 3-2 while Bangladesh Police thrashed Rampura KC 4-1 in the two matches of the Lyric Group Independence Day Hockey Competition at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Wari took the lead through Hasan Jubayer in the 14th minute before Sabbir Hossain equalised four minutes later from a penalty corner. Jubayer scored again in the fifth minute of the second but two minutes later Krishna Kumar equalised from another PC for the Army. However, Golam Mostafa Manik scored in the 65th minute to ensure that Wari take the full three points from the entertaining encounter.

In the other match, Rampura managed to hold Police goalless for the first half. However, after the breather Prince struck three times as Police took stranglehold on the game. Rana struck the other goal for Police while Jewel netted the consolation for Rampura.

NATIONAL CRICKET LEAGUE

Rajshahi on front foot

SPORTS REPORTER

Elias Sunny hauled up Dhaka through a late revival after Rajshahi dominated much of the opening day of the National Cricket League final at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

Defending champions Rajshahi were two for no loss in the only over they batted after Dhaka were bowled out for 280 runs in the first innings.

Sunny, the left-handed all-rounder, struck a 107-ball 57 but crucially, he stuck together important partnerships that gave Dhaka some score to defend after their top- and middle-order lost out to Rajshahi's patience.

Dhaka were 145 for five in the middle session when Sunny walked in and immediately, he started batting freely despite the score. Mahmudullah Riyad reached his fifty, in the meantime, but gave his wicket away six balls later when Johurul Islam latched on to a chance at silly mid-off for 57.

With Mohammad Sharif, Sunny added 42 for the seventh wicket before the Dhaka skipper threw away his wicket for 22 runs off 40 balls. But Sunny stuck firm though maintaining some force on the Rajshahi bowlers. He added 25 with Mosharraf Hossain and another 30 with Mahbubul Alam Robin for the last wicket when he got run out after a mix-up with the No. 11.

Sunny's rearguard effort was the saving grace as Dhaka batted poorly from the

onset, literally from the first ball of the game. Rony Talukdar gave first slip Farhad Hossain a catch off Shafiul Islam's first ball.

Shamsur Rahman and Anamul Haque Bijoy counter-attacked and added a quickfire 55 off 70 balls before the opener gave Farhad another catch off his namesake Forhad Reza.

Left-arm spinner Saqlain Sajib then got into work, removing Mehrab Hossain for a duck before lunch. He continued a long spell after the break to end Anamul's innings of 49 runs off 84 balls before Ashraful too fell victim to him, stumped for 40 when he was starting to look settled at the crease.

Saqlain's 29 overs fetched him three wickets while seamer Forhad made good use of the low bounce of the wicket as he too got three wickets. Farhad's off-spin was vital too as he dismissed Riyad for 57, Dhaka's top-score, and Sharif.

Junaed Siddiqui and Jahurul Islam, Rajshahi's most trusted opening pair, saw out Robin's only over without any trouble as the defending champions will look to take the all-important first innings lead when the second day's play starts today.

SCORES IN BRIEF

DHAKA (first innings): 280 all out in 86 overs (Riyad 57, Sunny 55, Anamul 49, Ashraful 40; Saqlain 3-92, Forhad 3-41, Farhad 2-33)

RAJSHAHI (first innings): 2-0 in 1 over (Junaed 1 not out)



Rajshahi left-arm spinner Saqlain Sajib is about to bowl during the first day of the NCL final against Dhaka at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday. PHOTO: STAR



A gap more than the width of the table separates these two chess players, as seventh grader Tanzina Akter Tani (R) pits her wits against veteran International Women's Master Rani Hamid (L) during the 32nd National Chess Championship at the Chess Federation yesterday. Hamid, who won the match, expressed her wish to see the rookie grow up to surpass her achievements. PHOTO: STAR

Liza, Eva share lead

SPORTS REPORTER

Shamima Akter Liza and Nazrana Khan Eva jointly held on to their lead in the Arlene Developer 32nd National Chess Championship after winning their respective boards in the seventh round at the National Chess Federation yesterday.

Liza beat Arifa Khatun while Eva defeated Roksana Titly in this round to collect 6 points from seven matches each. Rani Hameed and Sharmin Sultana are in joint second position with 5.5 points each. Hameed defeated Tanzina Akter while

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Hard work for Pak bowlers

Cricket

AFF, Georgetown

Pakistan's bowlers discovered that the conditions in the Caribbean can be unforgiving, when they drew their tour match against Guyana on Monday.

Saeed Ajmal took two wickets for 41 runs from 15 overs, but no other bowler made an impression on the docile Bourda Oval pitch, as Guyana reached 252 for six, in response to Pakistan's first innings total of 330 for seven declared on the final day of the two-day match.

The visitors' bowlers toiled before rain stopped play about 40 minutes before the scheduled close, after Guyana's batsmen resisted with Shemroy Barrington leading the way with 58, and fellow opener Trevon Griffith supporting with 55.

Pakistan also faced resistance from veteran West Indies batsman Shivnarine Chanderpaul in a knock of 44, and fellow West Indies left-hander Narsingh Deonarine with 40.

Griffith shared 77 for the first wicket with Barrington before he was caught behind off Tanvir Ahmed.

Barrington then put on 63 for the second wicket with Deonarine before he was lbw to Ajmal, leaving Guyana 140 for two.

The Guyanese continued to bat resolutely with Chanderpaul holding court for almost three hours, but Junaid Khan bowled him just prior to the change in the weather that prompted an earlier than scheduled close.

The match was Pakistan's only warm-up prior to the first Test against West Indies which opens on Thursday at the Guyana National Stadium.

Pakistan are searching for their first Test series victory on Caribbean soil.

SCORES IN BRIEF

PAKISTAN: 330 for 7 declared (Misbahul 101 not out, Azhar 57, Hafeez 52, Gul 40 not out, Akmal 26, Shafiq 21; Amir 3-88, Zaheer 2-64)

GUYANA: 252 for 6 (Barrington 58, Griffith 55, Chanderpaul 44, Deonarine 40, Ramdeen 25; Ajmal 2-41)

Result: Match drawn.