

Goals galore for Jessore

SPORTS REPORTER

A hattrick from Bilkis Khatun powered Jessore to a comprehensive 10-0 win over Faridpur in the National Women's Football Championship at the Shamsul Huda Stadium in Jessore yesterday.

Apart from Bilkis's treble, Rehana Khatun, Shilpi Khatun struck two goals each while Bely Khatun, Sheulee Khatun and Rupa Khatun netted one goal apiece for the winners.

Rangpur thrashed Kuri-gram 5-0 at the Thakurgaon Stadium, thanks to a treble from Rozina. Ashrafi Jaman and Mahfuz scored one goal each for Rangpur.

At the same venue, Thakurgaon beat Joypurhat 4-1. Gaibandha defeated Dinajpur 3-1 at the Dinajpur Stadium while Tangail routed Jamalpur 4-1 and Khulna blanked Gazipur 2-0.

Before the match at each of the four venues, a minute's silence was observed in remembrance of BFF's general secretary Al Musabbir Sadi, who breathed his last yesterday.

Open squash

SPORTS REPORTER

Ram Jagadish, Shahid, Sumon and Swapon Parvez won their respective premier division matches of the Grameenphone Open Squash Tournament at the Dhaka Club squash court yesterday.

Ram beat Dilu 11-3,11-5,11-2; Shahid beat Masud Rana 11-4,11-7,11-9; Sumon beat Zintu Ram 11-6,6-11,11-9,8-11,13-11 and Swapan beat Sumon 11-3,12-14,11-9,11-7.

In A Division matches, Mohit defeated Karim 11-8,11-6,9-11,11-6 and Anisul defeated Jagadish 11-12,11-5,11-7,10-12,11-5 while Sunny beat Ahmed 11-6,11-4,11-7 and Amol beat Iman 11-2,11-3 in U-18 group matches.

School rugby

SPORTS REPORTER

The semifinal line-up of the Cooline School Rugby Tournament was completed yesterday with Madertek School and College, SOS Shishu Palli, Cambrian High School and St Gregory's School moving into the last four.

Madertek defeated St Gregory's School 27-0 to emerge group champions to set up a semifinal clash against SOS Shishu Palli while Cambrian played out a goalless draw against SOS Shishu Palli to play the semifinal against St Gregory's.

In the day's other matches, Rahmatullah Model High School defeated Islambagh Ashraf High School 37-20 while Nabokumar Institute beat Nawabpur Govt High School 6-5.

A third crown

FROM PAGE 16 won a treble this season. It simply reflects the strength of the game in our region," said Rezaul.

"We (the Rajshahi cricketers) believe in hard work and our team spirit is fantastic and that's the reason Rajshahi was so successful in the domestic cricket.

"Another factor is the number of tournaments and leagues taking place in our region regularly," said a delighted Sabbir.

On the other hand, Mymensingh skipper Uttam Sarker once again blamed the organisers for not holding the league.

"We have had a tradition but gradually we are losing it. How can you expect more from a district when they failed to arrange a league?" vented Uttam.



(L-R) Serbian Ana Ivanovic, French Federation of Tennis president Jean Gachassin and Spaniard world No. 1 Rafael Nadal pose at the end of the French Open draw at the Roland Garros Stadium in Paris yesterday. Tournament will run from May 22 to June 5.

PHOTO: AFP

FRENCH OPEN

Djokovic, Federer on collision course



AFP, Paris

Novak Djokovic and Roger Federer were placed on a French Open semifinal collision course on Friday as defending champion Rafael Nadal was handed an opener against Wimbledon marathon man John Isner.

World number two Djokovic, on a run of 37 successive wins this year, was placed in the same half of the draw for the second Grand Slam event of the season as Federer, the 2009 champion and 16-time major winner.

Both men are seeded to reach the last four at Roland Garros, but despite the Serb's undefeated run in 2011, which has left him just five wins shy of John McEnroe's 1984 mark of 42, Federer will be feeling undaunted.

Third seed Federer has lost his last three meetings to Djokovic, the Swiss still holds a career 13-9 winning record over the Serb and is 2-1 on clay.

Nadal, however, leads Federer 16-8 in head-to-heads, 11-2 on clay and is 4-0 at Roland Garros.

World number one Nadal, bidding to equal Bjorn Borg's record of six French Open titles, tackles giant American Isner in his opener.

Isner set a Grand Slam record at Wimbledon last year when he won a 11 hour five minute second round tie against Nicolas Mahut of France.

Djokovic, twice a semifinalist in Paris, begins his campaign against Dutchman Thiemo de Bakker, the world number 71

while Federer faces Spain's Feliciano Lopez.

World number four Andy Murray, who was within two points of beating Djokovic in the Rome Masters semi-finals last week, faces a qualifier in his first round.

Former US Open champion Juan Martin del Potro, who made the 2009 semi-finals before losing a five-setter to Federer, is a dangerous floater in the draw and the big Argentine tackles Ivo Karlovic in his opener.

Del Potro, who has been struggling with a hip injury, is a potential third round opponent for Djokovic.

Missing from the draw, however, was America's former world number one Andy Roddick and Spain's 2003 champion Juan Carlos Ferrero who both pulled out late Thursday with right shoulder injuries.

In the women's draw, top seed Caroline Wozniacki begins against Japanese 40-year-old Kimiko Date-Krumm who became the second oldest woman to win a match at Roland Garros when she knocked out Dinara Safina last year.

Safina is one of a host of major names missing from the women's draw this year.

Both Serena and Venus Williams are absent, leaving US Open and Australian Open winner Kim Clijsters amongst the favourites.

Clijsters, who has been bothered by an ankle injury, faces Anastasia Yakimova of Belarus in her first round while triple major winner Sharapova takes on Croatian veteran Mirjana Lucic, a Wimbledon semifinalist in 1999.

Defending champion Francesca Schiavone of Italy begins against Melanie Oudin of the United States.

'I saw Lance take EPO'



THE GUARDIAN

A former teammate of Lance Armstrong has told the 60 Minutes television programme in the US that he used performance-enhancing drugs with the seven-time Tour de France winner to cheat in cycling races, including the Tour.

Tyler Hamilton says Armstrong took the blood-booster erythropoietin in the 1999 Tour and before the race in 2000 and 2001. Armstrong won the race every year from 1999 to 2005.

The interview with Hamilton was broadcast on the CBS Evening News on Thursday.

Armstrong has steadfastly denied doping and has never failed a drug test. He responded on Twitter shortly after the programme was broadcast: "20+ year career. 500 drug controls worldwide, in and out of competition. Never a failed test. I rest my case."

Federal investigators are examining whether Armstrong and his former US Postal team engaged in a systematic doping programme, which he denies.

"I saw [EPO] in his refrigerator ... I saw him inject it more than one time," Hamilton said, "like we all did. Like I did, many, many times."

Hamilton told the 60 Minutes reporter Scott Pelley: "[Armstrong] took what we all took ... the majority of the peloton. There was EPO ... testosterone ... a blood trans-

fusion."

EPO is a drug that boosts endurance by increasing the number of red blood cells in the body.

Armstrong's lawyer Mark Fabiani said Hamilton "just duped the CBS Evening News, 60 Minutes and Scott Pelley all in one fell swoop".

"Hamilton is actively seeking to make money by writing a book, and now he has completely changed the story he has always told before so that he could get himself on 60 Minutes and increase his chances with publishers," Fabiani said.

"But greed and a hunger for publicity cannot change the facts: Lance Armstrong is the most tested athlete in the history of sports: he has passed nearly 500 tests over 20 years of competition."

Hamilton won the time-trial gold medal at the 2004 Athens Olympics, but failed a drug test later. He was allowed to keep his medal, however, because problems at a laboratory meant his backup sample could not

be tested.

Months later he tested positive for blood doping and served a two-year ban which ended in 2007.

Hamilton returned to racing and won the 2008 US road championship but retired last year after admitting he took an antidepressant that contained the banned steroid DHEA. He was officially banned from cycling for eight years, and has since founded Tyler Hamilton Training, a company that helps coach all levels of cyclists.

Napier equals six-hitting record

AFP, London

Essex all-rounder Graham Napier equalled Andrew Symonds' world record tally of 16 sixes in a first-class innings in his team's English county championship match against Surrey on Thursday.

The 31-year-old smashed 196 off 130 balls in an Essex total of 548 all out at the Whitgift School ground.

His feat matched the number of sixes Australian Andrew Symonds hit for Gloucestershire against Glamorgan at Abergavenny in 1995.

"It's been hard these past 11 months and there were low points when I wondered if I would get back out on the field again, but you play mind games with yourself in an effort to stay motivated," said Napier, who has struggled with a back injury.

Smooth sailing for big guns

SPORTS REPORTER

Abahani posted a massive ten-wicket victory over Gulshan Youth Club in the super league match of the 3rd Women's Club cricket competition at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium yesterday.

Gulshan Youth Club were bundled out for a paltry 34 runs with 15 runs coming as extras. Jahanara and Khadiza claimed three wickets each.

In reply, Abahani reached the target with 38 for no loss in 5 overs. Lata made an unbeaten 30 off 20 balls with six boundaries.

Mohammedan also secured a comfortable eight-wicket victory over Azad Sporting Club at the City Club ground.

Suktara hit an unbeaten 53 as Mohammedan scored 124 for two in 29.1 overs in reply to Azad's 123 for nine in 40 overs.

In the day's other match at the BKSP cricket ground, Farzana Haque's unbeaten 64 runs was not good enough for BKSP to salvage from a five-wicket defeat at the hands of Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club.

BKSP made 134 for seven in 40 overs and Sheikh Jamal reached the target of 135 for five wickets in 36.4 overs.

Chamilly was not out on 39 and Panna made 36 for Sheikh Jamal.

Condolences

FROM PAGE 16 Federation, Dhaka Metropolitan Football League Committee and Sammilito Krira Paribar also expressed their commiserations at the death of Sadi.

"The BCB fondly recalls Sadi's contribution to cricket and sports as a journalist and administrator and prays for the salvation of the departed soul," said a statement of country's cricket governing body.

"The sports arena lost a devoted soul of sports through the death of Sadi, who was an idol in sports journalism. We pray for his departed soul," said a statement of the Sammilito Krira Paribar.

Former Bangladesh national football coach Edson Silva Dido also conveyed his sorrow over the unexpected death of Sadi.

"I offer my genuine condolence to his family and to the Bangladesh football family," said the Brazilian in an email to the Daily Star.

Pakistan 46 for 3 at lunch



AFP, Basseterre

Pakistan's top-order batting was again undermined by Ravi Rampaul, as the visitors limped to 46 for three in their first innings at lunch in the second Test against West Indies on Friday.

Azhar Ali and Pakistani captain Misbahul Haq were both not out on 12 after the visitors were left reeling following a devastating opening burst from Rampaul, who claimed all three scalps for 13 runs from nine overs.

Greeted by a helpful Warner Park pitch, Pakistan were set back, when Taufeeq was caught behind for 11, too late in lifting his gloves out of the way of a rising delivery in Rampaul's fourth over.

The Pakistanis were under further pressure, when Mohammad Hafeez edged a forward defensive shot, and was caught at third slip for eight in the West Indies fast-medium bowler's fifth over.

Asad Shafiq then cut a short, wide delivery, and was caught at gully for a duck in Rampaul's seventh over to leave Pakistan

wobbling on 24 for three.

But Azhar and Misbah stemmed the fall of wickets, when they resolutely batted through the remainder of the morning period, interrupted by a 10-minute stoppage for rain.

The Pakistanis made one change, replacing Umar Gul with left-arm fast bowler Tanvir Ahmed.

West Indies suffered a setback with veteran Shivnarine Chanderpaul sidelined with a sore shoulder to be replaced by Marlon Samuels as one of two changes.

The other sees Kraigg Brathwaite making his debut at the expense of left-hander Devon Smith.

Brathwaite becomes the fifth youngest West Indies Test player ever.

Pakistan trail 1-0 in the two-Test series, following a 40-run defeat inside four days in the first Test, which ended last Sunday at the Guyana National Stadium, crushing the visitors' dreams of a maiden Test series victory in the Caribbean.

SCORES IN BRIEF

PAKISTAN: First innings 46 for 3 at lunch (Umar 11, Hafeez 8, Azhar 12 batting, Misbah 12 batting; Rampaul 3-13)

Warne's last act

FROM PAGE 16

widely thought to have cost him the Australian captaincy.

"The way Warney is bowling now, he would continue to dominate world cricket," current Australian Test star Shane Watson, a Rajasthan Royals teammate, told The Melbourne Age on Friday.

"If he ever came out of retirement, which he's not going to do, he would still dominate," he added.

His retirement is expected to include more sports commentating for television, commercial work, charity, and possibly coaching.

Among other things, he has an advertising deal with McDonald's in Australia, promotes a poker website and also finds time to design a range of men's underwear.

"My decision to retire has got nothing to do with my bowling. I think I'm still bowling pretty well, it's more about all the other stuff and time," he told NDTV. "I want to do some other stuff in my life."

FACTFILE

Factfile on Australian Shane Warne, who plays the final match of his career for Rajasthan Royals in the Indian Premier League on Friday:
Full name: Shane Keith Warne
Born: September 13, 1969 in Melbourne

Rajshahi: Different

FROM PAGE 16

Rahman and the experienced Anisur Rahman made it past the 300-run mark. Mizanur Rahman and Avishek Mitra's brilliant showing against Dhaka in the second phase was not enough to guarantee them places in the final but the opening duo have been quietly praised for their diligence.

Nasir Hossain and Sabbir Rahman Rumman were hardly missed with both bat and ball, the sort of talent the other divisions crave for. Saqlain Sajib, the left-arm spinner, and the seaming all-rounder Forhad Reza ran in everyday and delivered the wickets. It is to the team's credit that Forhad has made a return among the wickets, bagging 19 this season.

Rajshahi are the benchmark of cricketing excellence in the country and their success should serve as the perfect example for teams to follow. They will break up into two next season and it will be a challenge for the organisers and players there to keep the consistency going.

BRUSSELS OPEN

Peng in final

AFP, Brussels

Peng Shuai of China upset third-ranked Vera Zvonareva 6-3, 6-3 to reach the final of the Brussels Open.

Peng will play the winner of the second semifinal between top-ranked Caroline Wozniacki and French Open champion Francesca Schiavone.



Peng Shuai of China pumps her fist after beating Russian Vera Zvonareva in the Brussels Open semifinal yesterday. Peng won 6-3, 6-3.

PHOTO: AFP

Big win

FROM PAGE 16

with another legend, Indian batting superstar Sachin Tendulkar, their first encounter being in the Sydney Test in 1992.

Skipper Tendulkar, the world's leading run-getter in both Test and one-day cricket, was batting on 18 after having survived two confident lbw appeals, when Warne came on to bowl in the ninth over.

Tendulkar was the first to pay tribute to the Australian great.

"He (Warne) is a true champion, a wonderful friend. I have not been privileged to play with him in the same team, but it's been a real treat to play against him," Tendulkar said at the toss.

"Congrats Warne for a wonderful career and I wish him all the luck for his future."

Warne's teammates then gave him a guard of honour, standing in two lines to salute the legend.

Warne, who quit international cricket in 2007, spent four seasons with Rajasthan who will always remember his contribution as a spinner, captain, coach and mentor.

He led a bunch of no-hopers to the title triumph in the inaugural edition in 2008 before eventually ending his IPL career with 57 wickets in 55 matches.

SCORES IN BRIEF

MUMBAI INDIANS: 133-5 in 20 overs (Sharma 58, Tendulkar 31, Pollard 20; Watson 3-19, Warne 1-30)

RAJASTHAN ROYALS: 134-0 in 13.1 overs (Watson 89 not out, David 43 not out)
Result: Rajasthan Royals won by 10 wickets.
Man-of-the-match: Shane Watson.