

Dhaka regain kabaddi title

SPORTS REPORTER

Dhaka clinched the title of 13th Meizan National Youth Kabaddi, beating Rajshahi 30-18 with two creditable 'lona' in the final at the Kabaddi Stadium yesterday.

This was the second triumph for Dhaka in national youth kabaddi after their maiden title in 2006.

President of Bangladesh Kabaddi Federation and IGP Hasan Mahmud Khandker distributed prizes as chief guest while marketing manager of sponsors Bangladesh Edible Oil Limited Faria Yasmin was present as special guest at the function.



Dhaka team players celebrate with the champions' trophy along with the guests, organisers and sponsors at the end of the final match of 13th Meizan National Youth Kabaddi at the Kabaddi Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: COURTESY

Murray ready for pressure

AFP, London



Andy Murray insists he can cope with the pressure of being Britain's only hope of ending 75 years of hurt in the men's

singles at Wimbledon.

It would be understandable if Murray looked a little burdened when he launches his title campaign at the All England Club as the Scot will be carrying the weight of a nation's expectations on his shoulders.

With the rest of men's tennis in Britain still lagging way behind Murray, the world number four will be out on his own as he tries to become the first British man to win Wimbledon since Fred Perry in 1936.

For the next two weeks the 24-year-old can expect to be front page news in the national media as his every move is analysed and debated.

Tim Henman, the last serious British contender for Wimbledon, took years to get used to that kind of suffocating pressure and was known to feel uncomfortable during his time in the spotlight at the grass-court Grand Slam.

Murray, however, has a more relaxed attitude to the extra stresses that come with leading the challenge for a country that develops a rapacious appetite for tennis success for the two weeks of Wimbledon then ignores the sport for

the rest of the year.

"Dealing with the public's expectations has never been an issue for me," Murray said.

"I grew up watching Tim Henman a lot so I knew that if I was to get to that level, it was something I must expect. "It wasn't something that came as a great surprise and the more years you are around it, the better you know how to deal with it.

"It's part of the job and part and parcel of being a sportsman in this country.

"It's never an excuse for playing badly, you just have to do your job and get on with it."

At least Murray's confidence going into Wimbledon is sky-high after he won the annual warm-up event at Queen's Club for the second time in three years.

The quality of Murray's play in his Queen's semifinal demolition of Andy Roddick was higher than at any time in his career and he followed that imperious victory with a gutsy fightback to beat Jo-Wilfried Tsonga in the final.

It was a remarkable transformation considering Murray turned up at Queen's just seven days earlier nursing serious concerns over an ankle ligament injury suffered at the French Open.

Still troubled by the ankle, he thought about pulling out of the tournament after his second round match. But opted to play through the pain and

the injury is now almost healed.

"Winning Queen's has helped my confidence heading into Wimbledon. I got in four matches on the grass and it's definitely very good preparation," he said.

"I'm not sure if this is the best I've felt heading into Wimbledon, but it's definitely the best I've felt in the last two or three months. Hopefully by the time Wimbledon comes round I'll be in 100 per cent shape."

Although Murray has faith he can win Wimbledon, he has fallen short in his three previous Grand Slam final appearances -- including this year's Australian Open -- and has also been beaten in the semifinals at the All England Club for the last two years.

Murray, who is seeded fourth, knows that to win Wimbledon he is likely to need to beat at least two of world number one Rafael Nadal, six-time champion Roger Federer and 2011's form player Novak Djokovic.

That means endless hours on the practice court before the nation fixes its' gaze firmly on him once again.

"Winning Queen's didn't crank up my own expectation levels and that's what's important," he said.

"We knew what the goals were for the grass court season when we went to Queen's and that hasn't changed just because I won there.

"I need to get back on the practice court, work hard and get myself ready for Wimbledon, which is the priority."

Basketball league

SPORTS REPORTER

Wraiths defeated Josephites by 52-36 points in the latest match of the Citycell First Division Basketball League at the Dhanmondi Basketball Gymnasium yesterday. Troy scored 17 points while John netted 9 for the winners, who led the first half 27-11.

In the matches played on Friday night, Mohammadpur Basketball Club defeated Wraiths Club 63-45 while Rangers outplayed Cantonians by 72-42 points.

School h'ball

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The opening ceremony will be held at 4pm with Sunnydale School and Ispahani Girls' School and College taking part, it was announced at a press conference yesterday.

A total of 14 schools, split into four groups, will compete in the boys' section while 13 teams, also divided into four groups, will compete in the girls' section, initially on a league basis.

Sk Jamal duo

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match-fixing. "We were shown the video footage of the match and were asked if we knew anything about 'alleged' fixing, which we denied."

Sheikh Jamal won that 'infamous' match 5-2, after falling 2-0 behind in the first half and took a strange hold on the Bangladesh League title.

Shaping young

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Playing cricket on the field is always exciting for Mominul but he is equally enjoying the experiences in the academy classes. "I think everybody is enjoying this camp because we learnt new things," said Mominul.

T20s to fill vacuum



AFP, Southampton

England could find themselves playing two extra Twenty20 internationals against the West Indies at the end of their current season in a bid to fulfil broadcast obligations three years after the collapse of the Stanford Super Series.

According to a report in Saturday's edition of Britain's Daily Telegraph, the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) face a problem in honouring a host 260-million-

pound (421 million dollars) broadcast deal with satellite station Sky, signed in 2008.

That was intended to include a Stanford Super Series every November, as well as an Indian Premier League (IPL) type Twenty20 tournament during each English summer.

However, within four months of the inaugural Stanford Super Series in Antigua in November 2008, where a dispirited England lost in the final to what was in effect a West Indian select XI, American businessman Allen Stanford was arrested and accused of being behind a 7-

billion-dollar (4.3 billion pounds) fraud.

He is currently in jail where he has been treated for drug addiction, and is due to stand trial in New York on September 12.

Siddikur

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holes, as well as a double bogey on the ninth. Today is the fourth and final round of the Queen's Cup, but Siddikur, who is six shots behind with a cumulative score of 211, is all but out of the race.

Tremlett, the new Big Bird



AFP, Southampton

England bowling coach David Saker said aspects of Chris Tremlett's game were reminiscent of West Indies great Joel Garner after the giant quick's Test-best return against Sri Lanka.

The 6ft 7in Tremlett added four more wickets on Friday's rain-marred second day of the third and final Test at the Rose Bowl -- making its debut in the five-day format -- to add to his first day double to take six for 42 in a total of 177 for nine.

Some 120 overs have already been lost in this match, taking place on the ground where Tremlett made his name before switching to Surrey last season, but England could yet end the series 2-0 winners after an innings victory in the Cardiff opener and the drawn second Test at Lord's.

Tremlett's steeppling bounce evoked comparisons with the performances of Garner, a star of the all-conquering West Indies teams of the late 1970s and 1980s, whose nickname of 'Big Bird' belied his ruthless effectiveness with the ball.

Former Victoria and Tasmania paceman Saker was immediately convinced of Tremlett's ability when he saw him bowling in the nets at The Oval before last year's third Test against Pakistan.

"I just watched two balls and went up to [England coach] Andy Flower and said 'this guy is a Test cricketer. I don't know what's happened in the past, but if we can keep this guy on the park...'

"I had no hesitation he could play good Test cricket if he could get his body right."

Saker, asked about Tremlett's similarities to Garner, added: "He's got a lot of attributes like Joel Garner, height and good bounce.

"It's a big call to compare him with Joel -- but with that height and the bounce he does get, he complements Jimmy [Anderson] really well.

"When he gets his length right, he's a huge handful," said Saker.

"He's challenging the stumps, the gloves, the splice of the bat.

"Batters really struggle against tall bowlers who keep hitting the splice regardless of length," the Australian explained.

Eng in early trouble

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England fast bowler Chris Tremlett, who until his move to Surrey last season played for Hampshire, took a Test-best six for 48 in 20 overs.

England lead this series 1-0 after an innings and 14-run win in the first Test in Cardiff.

Victory here will see them go joint second in the ICC Test rankings alongside South Africa with only India, their next opponents, above them.

But rain, which wiped out some 120 overs from the first two days' play, is threatening to have the final say.

SCORES IN BRIEF

SRI LANKA: First innings 184 (P Jayawardene 43, Fernando 39, Samaraweera 31, Tremlett 6-48, Anderson 2-56)
ENGLAND: First innings 69 for 2 (Cook 32 not out, Pietersen 27 not out; Welegedara 1-17)

Aminul hangs up

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side was against Hong Kong in the Asian Games in Guangzhou last November where Bangladesh lost 4-1.

He was also slotted in for the AFC Challenge Cup Qualifiers in March 2011, but withdrew himself due to injury at the eleventh hour.

Aminul had been part of the national sides that won the gold in the 1999 SAF Games, 2010 SA Games and also the 2003 SAFF Championship-winning team. Aminul paid tribute to George Kotan, the former Austrian coach of Bangladesh, for his role in resurrecting his career.

"He gave my football a new life after my career-threatening injury in 1999. I will always be indebted to Kotan."

Aminul said he was looking forward to playing five to six more years in club football, before he hangs up his footballing gloves.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	38 Military higher-ups	2 Rainbow	24 Second person
1 Temperate	41 Zero	3 Not so much	25 E-mail address component
5 Tennis ball container	42 Ballpoint, e.g.	4 Medic	
8 Pedestal part	45 Billions of years	5 Small flock	26 Discordance
12 Sandwich cookie	46 Reveal	6 Attention getter	27 Beavers' construct
13 Surprised cry	48 Carry	7 Neither partner	
14 Press	49 Autumn mo.	8 Drag through the mud	28 Have bills
15 Find	50 "My bad"	9 Met melody	29 Type measures
17 Ledge	51 Late-braking development?	10 Barbie, e.g.	31 Buddhist sect
18 Curvy letter	52 Firmament	11 Sans siblings	34 Day portions (Abbr.)
19 Jewel	53 Wherefore's mates' fates	16 Shrek, for one	35 Body powder
20 — anteater		20 — Diego	37 Johnny Mathis classic
21 Parched		21 Talked about	38 Wagers
22 Scratch		22 Navigation aid	39 Chess piece
23 Singer		23 Recede	40 Opposed to
26 Unknown woman			41 Shaving mishap
30 Greets the villain			42 Milne bruin
31 Use a ray gun			43 Catch sight of
32 Sunrise			44 Capone foe
33 Meat dealer			46 Two, in Tijuana
35 London newspaper			47 De-pressed
36 Coffee vessel			
37 A welcome sight?			

Solution time: 21 mins.

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TESTS THROUGH TIME



HANIF MOHAMMAD

Ruling the 50s

By the early 1950s, cricket had become a serious sport among many Commonwealth countries and with Pakistan playing their inaugural Test in 1952, the elite group now had seven members.

Their entrance was marked by Hanif Mohammad's 16-hour special 337 against West Indies in Bridgetown. He had to bat in tremendous heat and save Pakistan from a humiliating defeat.

Teammate Fazal Mahmood wrote in his book From Dawn to Dusk, "It was the true test of a batsman and making of a master." Two years later, he would score the highest first-class score, 499, being run out while attempting his 500th run.

The old forces, Australia and England, remained the most talked-about sides with new stars coming through after the Second World War. England lost in Don Bradman's last Ashes but after conceding one more (1950-51), won the next three. At the peak of their dominance during this period, Bradford-born off-spinner Jim Laker delivered what most call the 'perfect' performance. On a tacky surface at Old Trafford, he bowled Australia into dust in the first innings (84 all out) with 9-37 from 16.4 overs.

To make matters a little more superhuman, he bowled 51.2 overs to pick up all ten wickets in the second innings. What was even more fascinating about his work was that Tony Lock, an accomplished left-arm spinner, bowled 55 wicketless overs from the other end on a raging turner.

What would interest viewers today was his demeanour after each of his wickets. He would turn back on his heels and chat with the umpire before the next batsman came in. The story goes that Laker was so understated as a person that nobody even recognized him when he walked into a Manchester pub after his 19-wicket haul.

Bowling from round the wicket, he would time and again toss up the ball and the likes of Neil Harvey and Keith Miller had no answer.

Miller, though he made just 6 and 0 in this game, had earlier established himself in the hearts of Australians with his debonair all-round skills but more poignantly, his valour in the War.

Nicknamed Nugget, Miller was a fighter pilot and survived many close shaves and hence, his famous line, "Pressure? Jeez! A Messersschmitt up your a***, that's pressure."

Miller was the original heartthrob to Don Bradman's quest for perfection. He often rose to the occasion, simply because it never got the better of him.

He formed part of a great new-ball combination with Ray Lindwall that added to the all-conquering 1948 Invincibles. His 36 and 22 average with bat and ball respectively meant that he was the first great Test all-rounder.

Two years before Miller's retirement, Richie Benaud made his Test debut. In his 12-year career as a leg-spinner, the Penrith-born made a slow start to his career but took over Miller's mantle in South Africa three years later and was the captain who won back the Ashes for Australia the next season.

As a leg-spinner, he took 248 wickets and possessed a fine googly. His unruffled exterior often calmed down players in the heat of battle.

While Miller and Benaud inspired with their skills, Hanif was Pakistan's first great batsman. Laker embodied the quiet exterminator, a breed that has always eluded England since then.

-Mohammad Isam

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CRYPTOQUIP

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Yesterday's Cryptoquip: I FOUND SOME SMALL RAISINS ON THE SEAFLOOR. I SUPPOSE ONE COULD CALL THEM OCEAN CURRANTS.
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: H equals F