

Star SPORT

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PSG sign Pastore for 43m euros

Paris Saint-Germain have signed Argentine international playmaker Javier Pastore from Palermo for 43 million euros (\$62 million), Italian news agency ANSA reported on Saturday. The agreement was struck at midnight, said the report, citing Palermo's president Maurizio Zamparini. Pastore, 22, is one of the most coveted players in world football and his transfer to Parc des Princes would announce PSG's arrival as serious players on the European scene. He was also being tracked by Chelsea. He played 35 matches for Palermo in Serie A last season, scoring 11 goals.

- AFP



Bangladesh victorious

SPORTS REPORTER

The small wooden floor basketball Gymnasium in Dhanmondi adjacent to the Abahani Club ground turned into an arena of celebrations yesterday as hosts Bangladesh overpowered West Bengal by 87-68 points in the title-deciding match to clinch the title of the Sheikh Kamal International Basketball Championship.

As soon as the final whistle was blown, the victorious Bangladesh players started a celebratory huddle while the losing side sat dejected and disgruntled.

Bangladesh dominated the proceedings for most of the match, taking a 32-21 lead in the first quarter. The hosts were finding the middle of the basket all too easily while a few of the efforts from the West Bengal side rebounded off the edge of the basket.

West Bengal though mounted a bit of a fightback in the second quarter and closed the gap to five points at one stage, but the momentum was eventually seized again by the hosts as the second quarter ended 41-32.

The momentum continued in the next two quarters as Bangladesh took the game by a 19-point margin.

The best player for Bangladesh was Aatur Rahman who scored 21 points in the game and the Bangladesh coach Mizanur Rahman gave him the most credit for the win.

"Even though we were the favourites at home, we did not think we would win the game easily. In fact Aataul's early effort helped us take a strong grip on the game."

Mithun Biswas and Shamsuzzaman Khan Shueb caged 15 points each for Bangladesh. However, West Bengal's Subhash tallied the highest points for the game with 26 while Pillai and Pal scored 15 points each for the losing side.

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Victorious Bangladesh team celebrate with the Sheikh Kamal International Basketball Championship Trophy after beating West Bengal in the title deciding match at the Dhanmondi Basketball Gymnasium yesterday.

TIGERS' 3-DAY WARM-UP MATCH

Mushfiqur stands tall

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER from Harare

Bangladesh found their first longer-version game in 14 months a tough one on the opening day of their three-day practice match against Zimbabwe XI at the Academy ground yesterday.

The Tigers limped to 188 all out in 60.1 overs, thanks mainly to Mushfiqur Rahim's dogged half-century and contributions from Nasir Hossain and Mahmudullah Riyad. The trio led the recovery after the top-order faltered in the first session.

The home side were 42 for four at stumps, though it could have been much worse. Off the first ball of the innings, Tino Mawoyo was dropped at gully off Shafiqul Islam, though the paceman clean bowled Sikander Raja Butt while Nazmul Hossain ran out Regis Chakabva.

Mushfiqur though, coming in to bat at No 7, took the hard-work route on a two-paced wicket. His initial toil of leaving as much as possible and playing with soft hands paid off as he gently rescued Bangladesh from a terrible position and possible embarrassment.

After Shakib Al Hasan decided to bat first upon winning the toss, openers Junaed Siddiqui and Imrul Kayes were dismissed by the fourth over. Imrul had his stumps splayed by a Keegan Meth inswinger after Junaed edged a simple catch to the slips off Kyle Jarvis.

Mohammad Ashraf was next to go, a low take at the slips

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THE WALL STANDS: India batsman Rahul Dravid is solid in defence against probing questions asked by England's seamers during the second day of the second Test at Trent Bridge in Nottingham yesterday.

Broad hat-trick brings England back

Cricket

AFP, Nottingham

England's Stuart Broad became the first bowler to take a Test hat-trick at Trent Bridge as India's progress was checked spectacularly in the second Test on Saturday.

Yet at the end of a dramatic second day, India were still 43 runs ahead as England closed on 24 for one in their second innings.

Fast medium-bowler Broad took five wickets for no runs in 16 balls on his way to Test-best figures of six for 46 in 24.1 overs.

His haul also saw him become the latest bowler to deprive Sachin Tendulkar of his 100th international hundred.

India were indebted to Rahul Dravid's elegantly constructed 117 -- his 34th Test century, equalling the record of fellow India great Sunil Gavaskar and his second in as many matches after his 103 not out during England's 196-run first Test win at Lord's.

It looked as if India would build a commanding first innings lead until the advent of the new ball in the day's final session with the tourists 258 for four off 80 overs.

Yuvraj Singh, playing his first Test in over a year, had played well for his 62, after being dropped by Kevin Pietersen on four, and helped Dravid add 128 for the fifth wicket.

But he fended at a good length delivery

from Broad, backing up his 64 Friday with the ball, and was caught behind.

Broad then transformed 267 for five into 273 for six to start his hat-trick when India captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni wafted outside off stump and was caught at second slip by James Anderson.

Next ball Harbhajan Singh was lbw, South African umpire Marais Erasmus raising his finger even though replays showed the batsman had got an inside-edge onto his pad.

But, because of Indian objections to ball-tracking technology, there are no lbw reviews this series so Harbhajan had to go.

However, there was no doubt when Broad then clean bowled Praveen Kumar to become the first England bowler to take a Test hat-trick since Ryan Sidebottom achieved the feat against New Zealand in Hamilton in 2007/08.

It was also the first ever Test hat-trick against India.

Broad ended the innings by having Ishant Sharma taken by Ian Bell at short leg as India were bowled out for 288 -- a first innings lead of 67 runs.

Broad's fourth five wickets in a Test innings haul surpassed his previous best of six for 91 against Australia at Headingley two years ago.

Broad, the son of former Test opener

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Heavyweight in name, lightweight in nature

ATIQUE ANAM



"We are not Malaysia U-18 side. We are Malaysia U-16 side, but you guys keep writing it again and again no matter how much I say."

Well that was the reaction yesterday from Gregg Gurr, a Development Director of the Federation of International Basketball Association who is in charge of the Malaysian side in the Sheikh Kamal International Basketball Championship.

"We were told that it was going to be an U-21 tournament, but you see it is not. But anyway we have had a good experience which will be good for the boys in future."

A similar reply came from the general secretary of Bhutan Basketball Federation Tokey Dorji.

"This is not our national team, it is a club team from Thimpu, one of the best clubs in Bhutan. We are preparing the national side for the upcoming FIBA qualifying match, so we instead sent this team to honour the invitation of BBF. But it's been a good experience for our side nonetheless."

So, it turns out that apart from Bangladesh, only Maldives were the other fully fledged national side, making the tournament rather lightweight in nature. Initially, the tournament was supposed to be an eight-team tournament, but two of the

teams backed off at an earlier stage while Nepal withdrew their name at the very last moment, turning it into a five-team round robin league. AK Sarker, the general secretary of BBF confirmed that argument.

"Well even though we are calling it an international tournament, it is only local/regional in nature. We wanted to make sure that the tournament is competitive and our boys don't get disheartened by losing by great margins."

But was the federation really prepared to host such a tournament? Or was it more of a one-off attempt to grab the headlines? The court and the arena were surely not prepared. Players were seen stretching by the court side ahead of their match while another match was going on. More surprisingly and embarrassingly, teams were spotted using the adjoining lawn as a changing room under an open sky.

Sarker justified it this way: "They might have used the open air for cooling off since temperature here is very high. Normally we use my room and the adjacent one as change rooms."

Let's see this tournament as a beginning and there are supposed to be some mistakes. But we see this as a move to create enthusiasm."

But how much enthusiasm can a one-off tournament like this generate, and more importantly, how long can the enthusiasm be kept up?

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Waiting for Tamim

Cricket

MOHAMMAD ISAM from Harare

A pair sat at the stands near the clubhouse, watching the game. One of them, who wore a Zimbabwe Cricket tracksuit, was curious to know why Tamim Iqbal wasn't playing.

"Well, we are just resting him. Don't worry, he will hit a double hundred in the real match," came a reply.

"I don't think so. I think he will only make ten," said the shorter youth.

An interesting conversation followed where both sides tried to take the mickey and at one point, the other guy among the two spoke out after bouts of laughter.

"You see this guy? He will take care of Tamim. He will play in the Test match," he said pointing towards his friend.

"How come?"

The one wearing the track and the slight mo-hawk spoke out. "I will play the Test match. My name's Brian Vitority."

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Zurkhaneh concludes

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammad Masudur Rahman bagged a silver medal while Sarot Roy earned bronze for Bangladesh in the 3rd Asian Zurkhaneh Sports and Koshti Pehlevani Championship which ended at the newly-built Wooden Floor Stadium yesterday.

Masudur finished second in the 80-90kg Koshti category, where Ammar Ibrahim Hossein of Iraq clinched the gold while Hasan of Iran and Navraj of Tajikistan jointly secured the bronze.

In the 70-80kg event, Sarot along with Ismail of Tajikistan finished third to secure the bronze while Mohammad Azad of Afghanistan bagged

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After two days of demonstrations, the battle for glory featured the final day of Zurkhaneh championship. Here Iran's Mostafa Hossein Nejad (L) and Filipino Luis Ansag grapple it out at the Wooden Floor Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR