

Asif, others absolved from case

SPORTS REPORTER

Commonwealth Games gold medallist shooter Asif Hossain Khan and others were discharged from a case filed by the Gulshan police station following an appeal from the National Shooting Federation.

Centring a police officer's parking inside the shooting range, shooters including Asif and cops were involved in a scuffle on October 2, 2006 and later shooters Asif and Soyebuzzaman were taken to the Gulshan police station to be assaulted.

Police had filed case against Asif, Soyebuzzaman, Ali Hossain, canteen-boy Jahangir and Ansarman Ferdous in the allegation of obstructing work of law enforcers.

All accused persons were later released on bail but Asif's career was threatened but received treatment in Bangkok and returned to the shooting range after one year.

Women's kabaddi Sept 28

SPORTS REPORTER

A three-day Meizan National Women's Kabaddi Championship will get underway from September 28 at the Kabaddi Stadium court.

Sixteen teams, who will take part in the meet, are Barisal, Satkhira, Magura, Mymensingh, Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation, Tangail, Bagura, Narail, Bangladesh Ansar, Comilla, Bagerhat, Jhenaidah, Rajshahi, Gazipur, Kushtia and Rangpur.

The participating teams have been requested to report at the Dhanmondi Women's Sports Complex on September 27 to attend the managers' meeting.

Hockey transfer postponed

SPORTS REPORTER

The players' transfer for the First Division Hockey League has been postponed following the appeal from seven participating clubs.

The League Committee has finalised the transfers from September 11 to 13 for the First Division Hockey League, which has yet to take place in three years under the existing executive committee led by Khondoker Jamiluddin.

The league committee will now sit on September 15 to discuss the matter with the clubs' representatives and decide a fresh date.

SRK brushes aside Nasser comments

PTI, Mumbai

Bollywood star Shah Rukh Khan Friday played down former England skipper Nasser Hussain's controversial "donkey" remarks against some Indian players, saying they should not be taken at face value.

"Some of the expressions in English language are different. They should not be taken at face value," said the actor at a media conference relating to Nokia Champions T20 League here on Friday.

Hussain's comments on TV during the course of the ongoing ODI series in England, terming some of the Indian players as "donkeys" in fielding, had enraged a lot of former cricketers and the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI).

"We are one of the finest teams in the world. One does not turn into a donkey from a tiger just because some one says so," he added.



Five-time US Open champion Roger Federer waves to the crowd after beating France's Jo-Wilfried Tsonga during their quarterfinals tie in New York on Thursday.

PHOTO: AFP

ASIAN CHAMPIONS TROPHY

Indo-Pak showdown



PTI, Ordos

India staged a remarkable fightback to hold Pakistan to a 2-2 draw in their last league match before depending on Malaysia's heroics to set up a summit showdown with their archrivals in the Asian Champions Trophy hockey tournament in Ordos, China on Friday.

While the 2-2 draw was enough to give Pakistan a berth in the final, India's passage came only because Malaysia came from the dead to beat Japan 3-2 in their last league game. Malaysia was required to get the better of Japan to help India reach the final.

Unbeaten in the tournament, India dominated the barren first half but conceded two goals in two minutes to trail 0-2 by the 42nd minute only to come from behind to draw the match under chilly and windy conditions.

Pakistan took a 2-0 lead through

Muhammad Waqas (40th minute) and Muhammad Irfan (42nd) but India responded immediately with Rupinder (46th) finding the target from an indirect penalty corner while Danish Mujtaba scored the equaliser in the 53rd minute.

Pakistan on 10 points and India with 9 points will battle for supremacy in the final on Sunday. Japan and Malaysia will now again play for the 3rd/4th position as they finished on an identical seven points.

Korea will play China for the 5th/6th position. Korea has seven points but an inferior goal difference (-1) pushed them down the table.

The India-Pakistan clash turned out to be a thriller as both teams played their hearts out.

Mujtaba's equaliser, a deflection from his stick, was a tad controversial as New Zealand umpire Simon Taylor did not initially award a goal. But the Indians appealed and the South Korean umpire, after consultations with Taylor, let the goal stand.

Marsh shines on debut

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Seekkuge Prasanna over mid-on to take Australia past Sri Lanka's total.

Two successive boundaries off Prasanna, a lofted shot and a straight drive, gave Marsh his half-century from 133 deliveries.

Hussey reached his second half-century of the series by smashing off-spinner Suraj Randiv to the square-leg fence for his sixth boundary.

Hussey was all praise for his friend and West Australian team-mate Marsh, saying he was rock-solid in the middle.

"I think he played really well," said Hussey. "He batted with tremendous concentration. It was tough to score runs out there because the Sri Lankans bowled very tight."

"Knowing Shaun, he won't be bothered that he is on 87. He will be very content with how the day went and will start again tomorrow knowing there is a lot of work to do."

The hosts missed their two first-choice spinners, Ajantha Mendis and Rangana Herath, who were forced to skip the match with injuries.

Sri Lankan captain Tillakaratne Dilshan tried seven bowlers, including part-timers Kumar Sangakkara and Thilan Samaraweera, to try to contain the tourists. Sangakkara, who had gone wicketless in 98 previous Tests and has just one first-class

wicket to his credit, also bowled the first over with the second new ball.

Australia lost Shane Watson before they had added to their overnight score of 60 for no loss, and the other opener Phil Hughes fell shortly after the drinks break.

Watson had made 36 when he left alone a delivery from seamer Lakmal that dipped in to uproot his off-stump.

Left-hander Hughes carried his overnight score of 23 to 36 before he was snapped up at forward short-leg by Tharanga Paranavitana off Randiv.

It soon became 116-3 as skipper Michael Clarke (13) attempted to drive seamer Chanaka Welegedara outside the off-stump and edged a low catch to Mahela Jayawardene at second slip.

Clarke has now gone 22 Test innings without a century since making 168 against New Zealand at Wellington in March last year.

Australia lead 1-0 in the three-match series, Clarke's first as captain, having won the first Test by 125 runs last week.

SCORES IN BRIEF

SRI LANKA: First innings 174 (Mathews 58, Sangakkara 48; Harris 3-38)

AUSTRALIA: First innings 264 for 3 at stumps (Marsh 87 not out, Hussey 76 not out, Watson 36, Hughes 36; Welegedara 1-45)

India reach 234 for 7

AFP, London

Ravindra Jadeja and MS Dhoni led India's fightback as the tourists recovered from a dismal start to reach 234-7 in the third one-day international against England here at The Oval on Friday.

Dhoni's beleaguered team looked in dire trouble after slumping to 58-5 in the early stages, but the Indians hit back impressively thanks to an aggressive innings of 78 off 89 balls from all-rounder Jadeja.

Jadeja's 112-run partnership with Dhoni lifted India after James Anderson had taken three wickets to put the tourists on the back foot.

India arrived at The Oval still waiting for a first victory over England on this tour after losing all four Tests to surrender the number one spot to their hosts.

They then crashed in the lone Twenty20 international and the second one-day match at the Rose Bowl on Tuesday, after the first match was rained off.

With eight players, including star batsman Sachin Tendulkar, already ruled out for the rest of the series, the last thing Dhoni's team needed to see was a green wicket and overcast skies in south London.

SCORES IN BRIEF

INDIA: 234 for 7 (Jadeja 78, Dhoni 69, Ashwin 36 not out, Raina 21; Anderson 3-48, Bresnan 1-32)
ENGLAND: Cook, Kieswetter, Trott, Bell, Bopara, Stokes, Bresnan, Swann, Broad, Anderson, Dernbach.

U-16 booters leave for Iraq

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh U-16 squad left here for Iraq yesterday night to take part in the AFC Under-16 Championship qualifiers meet, which is starting on September 12.

Earlier, Bangladesh Football Federation announced the final squad on the eve of their departure.

Mohammad Emon will lead the side who will play against Iran, hosts Iraq, Qatar and Palestine. Mohammad Sabbir was named as his deputy.

SQUAD

Zahidul Islam Kiron, Adib Anik, Emon (Captain), Shushil Chandra Shil, Sujon, Sabbir (Vice-Captain), Rohit Sarker, Swapon Hossain, Alam Didarul, Ragon, Mohaiminul Islam Mieshu, Repon Shaik, Alamin, Bijoy Kumar Sarkar, Hossain Suzan, Juwel, Obayed Hossain Shuvow, SM Monjurur Rahman, Faisal Ahmed and Akash Kumar Shaha
Coach: Md. Nurul Islam Manik.

Caroline sets up semi with Serena

AFP, New York



World number one Caroline Wozniacki said her quarterfinal appearance out on Flushing Meadows'

modest Court 13 on Thursday took her back to her junior days.

But her 6-1, 7-6 (7/5) victory over determined German Andrea Petkovic lined up a semifinal clash with Serena Williams that is anything but small-time.

Wozniacki and Petkovic were pushed out to Court 13 because of water seeping to the surface of the Louis Armstrong Stadium Court, which was water-logged after days of heavy rain.

"It actually reminded me of juniors," Wozniacki said of the small court with bleacher seating and shade trees, where Petkovic had an enthusiastic following.

However, she didn't feel slighted not to be on Armstrong or the main Arthur Ashe Stadium.

"Well, Andy Roddick was playing on Court 13 as well. I heard somebody say the last nine years he hasn't been playing on any other courts than [Ashe]. If he's not complaining, I'm not complaining either."

Wozniacki, seeking a first Grand Slam title to back up her number one ranking, will be back in the brightest spotlight the US Open can offer when she takes on 13-time major winner Williams in the semifinals, which

have been pushed back from Friday to Saturday night because of the rain delays, with the women's final now slated for Sunday.

"She's playing great," Wozniacki said of Williams, who missed a year with various health concerns but has roared back this summer with two tournament titles.

"I think she's in great shape. She's been proving that she's back on fire. I'm excited to be out there and play, and hopefully it will be a good match."

Wozniacki, whose runner-up finish at Flushing Meadows in 2009 remains her best Grand Slam finish, survived a hiccup while serving for the match at 5-3 against Petkovic.

She dropped that game and her next service game before putting it away in the tiebreaker.

After playing Wozniacki, Petkovic said she thought the Dane had a chance to beat Williams, even though she lacks a powerful serve or other weapon with which to challenge the American.

"If Caroline plays really well and changes up the rhythm and plays as consistent as she always is, she has chances," Petkovic said.

"I think Caroline is one of the most underestimated players out there, because you have to win each and every point against her. If you don't do it, you lose."

Williams herself said much the same.

"I think her weapon is the fact that she never gives up," Williams said. "That's probably the biggest weapon I think you can have in all of tennis."

Novak-Roger blockbuster

AFP, New York



World number one Novak Djokovic and five-time champion Roger Federer set up a US Open semifinal

blockbuster on Thursday as the rain-ravaged event opted for a fourth successive Monday men's final.

Top seed Djokovic, the runner-up in 2007 and 2010, booked his place in a fifth successive semifinal when Serbian Davis Cup-winning teammate Janko Tipsarevic retired with a left thigh injury.

Djokovic, who was 7-6 (7/2), 6-7 (3/7), 6-0, 3-0 ahead at the time, will face Federer for the fourth year running after the Swiss star demolished Frenchman Jo-Wilfried Tsonga 6-4, 6-3, 6-3.

The winner of that tie will play in a Monday final after besieged organisers surrendered their desperate attempts to shoehorn the remainder of the tournament, which had seen Tuesday and Wednesday washed out, into four days.

The women's final will take place on Sunday instead of Saturday with both men's and women's semifinals on Saturday.

Djokovic claimed his 62nd win of 2011 when Grand Slam quarterfinal debutant Tipsarevic's brave bid was undone by a thigh injury in the third set.

"I sensed early in the third set when I got a break that he lost some pace on his serve and he wasn't moving as well," said Djokovic.

Federer gained revenge for his landmark Wimbledon loss to the Tsonga where the Frenchman had become the first man to defeat the 16-time Grand Slam title winner from two sets to love down.

It will be the fourth successive US Open semifinal meeting between Federer and Djokovic and first since the Swiss ended the Serb's 43-match winning run at the French Open in June.

"I don't know if what happened in Paris will help him or me. It was a great match and a special win. It was one of the matches of the year," said Federer.

"It's the biggest challenge in the sport to face him but I'm up for it and I'm playing well."

US Tennis Association officials extended the tournament after leading stars such as Rafael Nadal, Andy Murray and Andy Roddick, who were all facing playing on four consecutive days to make a Sunday final, protested over the schedule.

"The matches, quarterfinals, semifinals, four rounds of a Grand Slam normally are tough matches. If you don't have rest, you



The Under-16 booters pose for a team photograph in front of the BFF House yesterday ahead of their AFC Under-16 Championship qualifiers campaign in Iraq from September 12.

PHOTO: BFF