



Action from yesterday's opening match of the CityCell Federation Cup Basketball Championship between Europa Youth and Wraiths at the Dhanmondi Indoor Basketball Gymnasium.

PHOTO: STAR

Kapali, Nafis

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TEAMS

SHAHEED JEWEL XI: Alok Kapali (captain), Nasir Uddin Fauque, Tasamul Haque, Nur Hossain, Junaid Siddiqui, Rokibul Hasan, Forhad Hossain, Anamul Haque (wicketkeeper), Enamul Haque, Saqlain Sajib, Shuvashis Roy, Syed Rasel and Alauddin Babu.

SHAHEED MUSHTAQUE XI: Nafis Iqbal (captain), Rony Talukder, Shohag Gazi, Soumya Sarker, Asif Ahmed, Shuvogata Hom, Mahamudul Hasan, Dhaman Ghosh (wicketkeeper), Mosharraf Hossain, Arifat Sunny, Mohammad Sharif, Kazi Kamrul and Mahbubul Alam.

Fed Cup on

SPORTS REPORTER



Citycell Federation Cup Basketball Championship kicked off at the Dhanmondi Basketball Gymnasium yesterday.

In the day's first match, Europa Youth beat Wraiths 54-40 after leading the first-half by 21-20 points. Mithun scored maximum 25 points for Europa Youth while Tanvir scored 12 points for Wraiths.

Earlier, David Lee, chief operating officer of Citycell, formally inaugurated the meet which is being sponsored by Pacific Bangladesh Telecom Limited. Bangla-desh Basketball Federation president Dr. Mostafa Jalal Mohiuddin MP and officials of the federation and Citycell were present.

Citycell will be the sponsors of two more competitions this month, three-on-three basketball tournament starting on the 24th and Victory Day Basketball Competition starting on the 27th.

LOCAL snippets

Niaz, Zia lead

SPORTS REPORTER

Grand Master Niaz Murshed and Grand Master Ziaur Rahman assumed joint lead of the Walton 37th National Chess Competition with full three points at the end of the third round at the BOA media room yesterday. Niaz beat Sohel Chowdhury while Zia defeated Mahtabuddin Ahmed in this round.

The other Grand Master in the tournament, Rifat Bin Sattar beat Shafik Ahmed to take his points tally to two as he was joined by Minhzuddin Ahmed Sagar who beat Javed in this round.

In the other matches, Abu Sufiyan drew with Mehedi Hasan, Mahfuzur Rahman drew with Golam Mostafa and Debraj Chatterjee drew with Monir Hossain.

V-Day volleyball

Titas Club and Bangladesh Army won their respective matches of the KFC Pizza Hut Victory Day Volleyball Tournament at the Volleyball Stadium yesterday.

In the day's first match, Titas Club beat Border Guard Bangladesh in straight 3-0 sets (25-11, 26-24, and 25-17) while defending champions Bangladesh Army also defeated Bangladesh Air Force in straight sets (25-21, 25-16, and 25-23).

V-Day kabaddi

Border Guard Bangladesh defeated apprentices by 33-19 points with two creditable lona while Bangladesh Army thrashed Bangladesh Jail by 45-12 points with three creditable lona on the opening day of the Victory Day Kabaddi Competition at the Kabaddi Stadium yesterday. Earlier, secretary general of Bangladesh Olympic Associa-

Haze over Nimbus deal

Cricket

CRICINFO, New Delhi

A day after the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) reportedly terminated its contract with Nimbus Communications, the rights holders for cricket in India, there has still been no official statement from the board or Nimbus on whether their agreement has, in fact, been cancelled.

Nimbus, one of India's leading television marketing companies, did release a statement but said it could not discuss details of its contract with the BCCI. The statement said Nimbus could only "confirm that it has acted in compliance of its contractual obligations and variations agreed between the parties from time to time." One of the reported reasons for cancelling the contract, which was to run till 2014, was that Nimbus had run into issues regarding payments.

The company had reportedly asked the BCCI for an extension on their payment deadline recently. The board turned down the request and decided to scrap their deal at its working committee meeting in New Delhi on Monday.

Despite news of the termination of its contract, Nimbus's cricket channel Neo Cricket telecast the first day of the Ranji Trophy match between Gujarat and Tamil Nadu, though not the second day's play on Wednesday.

A BCCI official revealed that the board would begin discussions with Nimbus soon to

ensure that Ranji Trophy games could be telecast until the end of the tournament on January 23. The BCCI owns the production rights of its domestic matches and has a separate deal with Nimbus to produce the live TV footage of domestic matches. Under this deal, Nimbus receives payment by the board.

The reports of the termination of the BCCI's contract with Nimbus has no direct effect on television coverage of India's international matches at home. The team's engagements in India have concluded for the next ten-odd months; the lengthy gap between the final ODI against West Indies and India's next scheduled home series in September, 2012 would give the BCCI plenty of time to solicit fresh bids for the India rights.

The first sign of payment problems with regard to television coverage of Indian cricket began this season on October 14. The telecast of the one-day international between India and England in Hyderabad started after three overs had already been bowled. This was due to a dispute over the payment of a bank guarantee from Neo Sports, Nimbus' channel, to Prasar Bharati, the government agency responsible for uplinking live telecasts out of India.

Nimbus also said it was working to resolve its differences with the board and was hopeful of reaching a solution over the next few weeks. At the same time, the company said it has "fully reserved all its rights and options, including invoking the arbitration process if need be."

Brothers' smart

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although there was no plan to sign players from the national pool. I don't have any monetary deals with them," he added.

National discard Rokibul Hasan has signed up for CCS from Kalabagan Krira Chakra apart from Pakistani veteran Rashed Hanif, Imrul Mustakim and Robiul Islam.

Bhajji gets

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early during the tour of England because of an abdomen injury and was then left out of the home series against England and West Indies. Harbhajan was also not selected in the Test squad for the upcoming tour of Australia.

First Test from today

SL should not be a big issue for SA

Cricket

APP, Centurion

South Africa will seek to end a sequence of disappointing results in home series when they take on Sri Lanka in the first of three Tests at SuperSport Park from Thursday.

South Africa have lost one and shared three of four most recent home series, with a loss against Australia in 2008-09 followed by drawn series against England, India and Australia.

Sri Lanka, though, should not provide too stiff a challenge for the home side.

The tourists have had more than a year of poor results and appear to be particularly vulnerable in bowling since the retirement of world record-breaking off-spinner Muttiah Muralidaran, whose last Test match, against India in Galle in July 2010, marked Sri Lanka's most recent win.

Since then Sri Lanka have lost four and drawn 10 of 14 Tests.

The large number of drawn games is an indication that Sri Lanka's batting is stronger than their bowling -- but they will be up against a strong South African bowling attack in conditions expected to favour pacemen.

"The main thing we need to adapt to is the bounce and the pace," Sri Lanka vice-captain Angelo Mathews said.

He admitted the team had not played well recently but said there was a confident mood in the side.

"The team is in a good mood but we need to show it out there on the field."

Much would appear to depend on the form of Kumar Sangakkara and Mahela Jayawardene, who have been Sri Lanka's leading batsmen for the past decade -- and who shared a world-record third-wicket stand of 624 when the sides last met five years ago in Sri Lanka.

Sangakkara suffered a hand injury in his team's only warm-up match at the weekend but is expected to play.

South African fast bowler Dale Steyn refused to go as far as to say it was "payback time" for the bowlers, including himself, who had struggled in steamy Colombo five years ago, but he said the South Africans had made a close study of the Sri Lankan batsmen on video.

Steyn said he had been building up his pace during the season after a long break and was feeling no twinges from a troublesome right elbow.

"In the last two domestic games I bowled the quickest I have this season. The elbow is fine and my rhythm is good."

Steyn said his new ball combination with the steady Vernon Philander was working well.

"Then you have Morne Morkel bowling thunderbolts from about 10 feet high and Jacques Kallis is bowling well too."

Rain restricted Sri Lanka's only warm-up match, against a South African Invitation XI, to less than two days.

Left-arm spinner Rangana Herath was the only bowler to impress, with unorthodox spinner Ajantha Mendis

taking only two wickets and conceding 142 runs in 31 overs.

But Mathews said he was not concerned about Mendis' form.

"He was coming back from two or three months of injury. We all know what a good spinner he is. He can turn a match around."

Sri Lanka's pace bowling resources have been hit hard by injuries, with four players ruled out before the tour and Nuwan Pradeep suffering a tour-ending injury in the warm-up game.

They do not have the fast bowling firepower of the hosts but Proteas batsman Hashim Amla warned that in South African conditions no seam bowlers could be taken lightly.

"We haven't seen them before so that makes them dangerous and our task a bit more challenging."

TEAMS

SOUTH AFRICA (probable): Graeme Smith (captain), AB de Villiers (vice-captain), Jacques Rudolph, Hashim Amla, Jacques Kallis, Ashwell Prince, Mark Boucher, Vernon Philander, Dale Steyn, Morne Morkel, Imran Tahir.

SRI LANKA (from): Tillakaratne Dilshan (captain), Angelo Mathews (vice-captain), Tharanga Paranavithana, Kumar Sangakkara, Mahela Jayawardene, Dinesh Chandimal, Kaushal Silva, Lahiru Thirimanne, Dimuth Karunaratne, Chanaka Welegedara, Dilhari Fernando, Thisara Perera, Ajantha Mendis, Rangana Herath, Thilan Samaraweera.

Twin scare for Aussies

Cricket

APP, Sydney

Australia's beleaguered batting line-up faces fresh problems ahead of their series against India with Shaun Marsh unlikely to be fit for the first Test and question marks over Shane Watson's role.

Left-hander Marsh and opener-cum-all-rounder Watson had been expected to return from injury to shore up the top order after Monday's humiliating loss to New Zealand, when the hosts threw away their last eight wickets for 74 runs.

The first home defeat to New Zealand in 26 years was a heavy blow for a team which will face India on December 26 with veterans Ricky Ponting and Michael Hussey in the firing line, and the young

batsmen also mostly in poor touch.

As ex-Test great Shane Warne called for "brave decisions", new coach Mickey Arthur urged the selectors to decide where injury-prone Watson would bat and how much he would be asked to bowl.

"It has been speculated about a huge amount," the South African said.

"We have to come to a point where we make a decision where Shane is going to bat in the batting order and how many overs we expect of him so there is no more debate about the issue."

Arthur added that Watson needed a "clear role definition" before the Melbourne Test, indicating he may be moved down the order.

"We have to balance out how many overs we can possibly get out of him -- that is going to determine the balance of the

IPL yet

FROM PAGE 16

the BCCI after the third season on charges of financial irregularities.

"The BCCI has made a U-turn on my contract," Gavaskar told the NDTV news channel. "I am baffled after reading reports that the BCCI has refused to pay me my dues."

"My faith in the BCCI has been shaken."

The IPL, which features leading players from around the world in a franchise-based contest, is facing a government probe into financial mismanagement and money laundering.

The BCCI has declined to comment on Gavaskar's demand.



Grand Master Niaz Murshed (R) makes a move against Sohel Chowdhury during their match in the Walton 37th National Chess Competition at the BOA media room yesterday.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

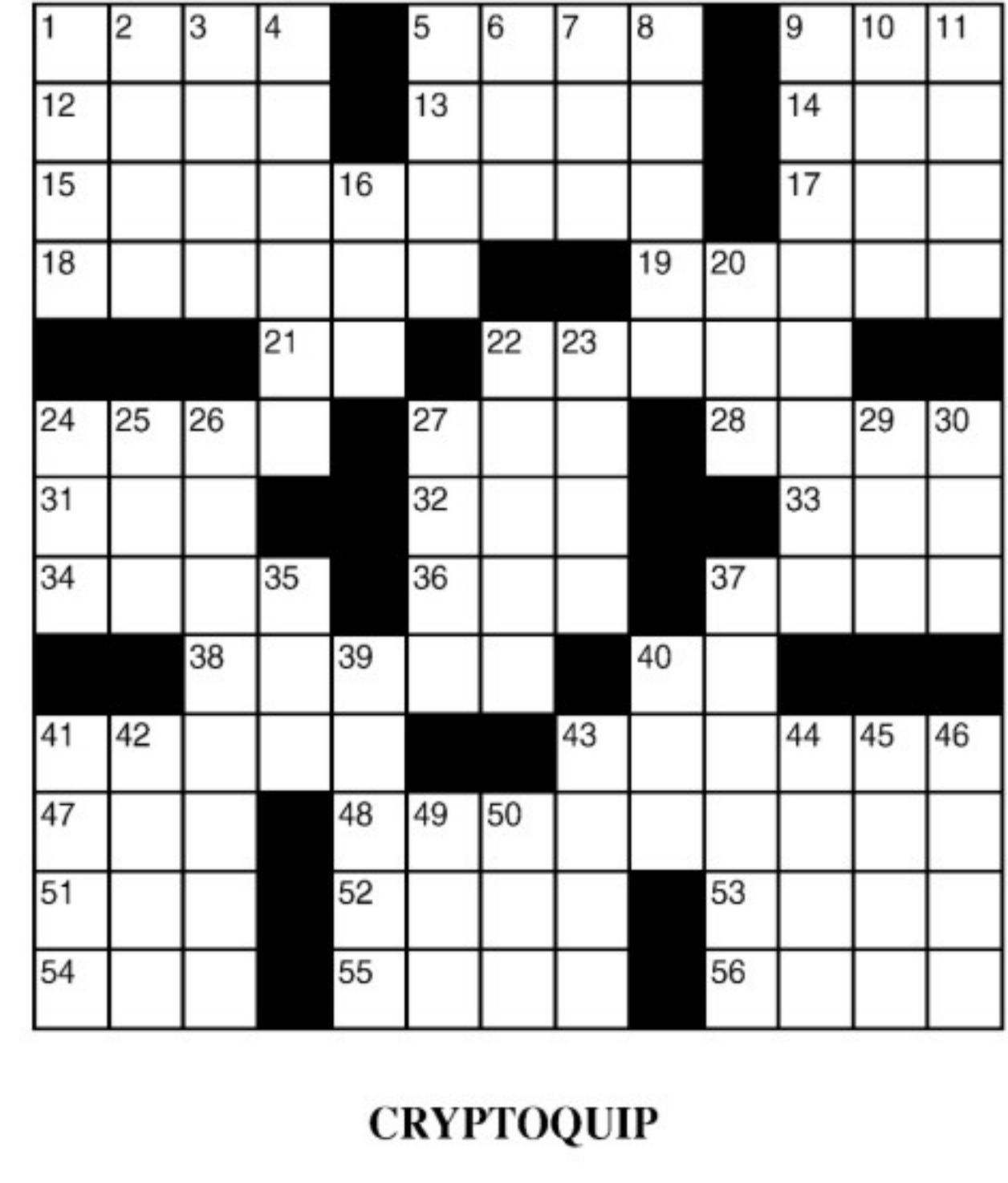
1 Navigator's stack
5 Deck in the ring
9 Upper surface
12 Oil cartel
13 Leading man?
14 "Hail, Caesar!"
15 Pianist's ticker
17 Barbie's companion
18 Agreement
19 No stay-at-homes
21 Lindbergh book
22 Plot
24 Back talk
27 Greet the villain
28 Grant's—
31 Thickness
32 Once around the track
33 Long March leader
34 Yin counterpart

36 Salt Lake athlete
37 Titanic's destroyer
38 Knighted women
40 "Monopoly" square
41 Increase in troop levels
42 Leading man?
43 Antenna
47 Yoko of music
48 Houston sports venue
51 Poorly lit
52 Squad
53 Rams' fans?
54 Chowed down
55 Stitches

56 Carry on
1 NYC cultural center
2 "Planet of the —"
3 Household critters
4 Threaded nails
5 Philosopher Immanuel
6 Big bother
7 Sweet potato
8 Last letter
9 After-taxes
10 Finished

Solution time: 25 mins.

SCUM BOA ABUT
OLLAS AND ANAPA
PUNIS NAB MER
HEADER EDGING
LONER PAR DEN
OFF TIN TAHOE
IRIS NAB MER
PUNIS NAB MER
HEADER EDGING
LONER PAR DEN
SEASME ONE DGE
ECHT VANISHED
TREE EYE TONE
SUDS NET OWEN



CRYPTOQUIP

K J D Z S E C P N Z X Y A E J Y S E A K X A

Y I R R J Y N K X H D J M A P J

M J J D S E C X C Y J X A H J E H J

I M X B B I P Z D S B J - P J E A

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: THINGS BECAME SO

ABNORMALLY SILENT AT THE RECYCLING PLANT THAT YOU COULD HEAR A BIN DROP.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: B equals C