

**Rifat sinks  
Rajshahi**

SPORTS REPORTER

Salehin Rifat's 5-44 put BKSP in a position of strength against Rajshahi after the first day of their three-day match of the Young Tigers Under-18 National Cricket competition at the Faridpur District Stadium yesterday.

Batting first Rajshahi declared their score at 151-9. In reply BKSP made 107-5 with Jashimuddin making 56.

In the other matches, Dhaka were all out for 150 against Sylhet who were 45-2 in reply, Dhaka South declared at 103-9 to which Rangpur replied with 110-6 and Khulna were 137 all out to in reply to which Chittagong were 27-1.

**KCA, Khelaghbar  
promoted to  
Premier League**

SPORTS REPORTER

Khelaghbar and Kalabagan Cricket Academy have been promoted to the Premier Division Cricket League after they topped the First Division Super League tables with 26 and 25 points respectively. Kalabagan though lost their last game against Bangladesh Boys by ten wickets at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium yesterday.

Kalabagan were bundled out for a mere 69 runs in 23.3 overs with Mozammel doing the bulk of the damage taking 5-11. Bangladesh Boys reached their target in just 10.4 overs.

Khelaghbar though had a good finish to the season as they beat Baridhara by three wickets at the BKSP-3 ground. Put into bat, Baridhara scored 169-9 in 45 overs with twin fiftes from Hafizur Rahman (54 runs) and Saif Mahmud (50 runs) while Istiak Ahmed took 3-25.

In reply, Khelaghbar reached their target by 41.2 overs with Ruhul Amin leading the chase with 65 runs.

**Muktars shot**

FROM PAGE 16

most successful Abahani bowler with 3-40, to offer a simple catch to Nazmul at mid-off. Tamim made 86 off 102 balls with six fours and a six during his second half-century in the meet.

Shoaib Malik returned among runs with 121-ball 85 that saw three fours and a six before he fell victim of a run-out.

**SCORES IN BRIEF**

ABAHANI: 253-5 in 50 overs (Marshal 57, Riyad 109 not out, Mithun 15, Forhad 41 not out; Shakib 3-45, Alamin 2-30).

VICTORIA: 257-7 in 50 overs (Tamim 86, Shoaib 85, Mosharraf 18 not out, Muktars 24 not out; Peter Trego 3-40).

Result: Victoria won by three wickets.

**Questionable**

FROM PAGE 16

"Looking at the statistics, you'll see that he [Aftab Ahmed] hasn't played that well in the last 2-3 years. He also hasn't scored that quickly either. The same goes for [Faisal Hossain] Dickens," said the former national captain.

But the louder outcry is from those who were left out. The likes of Iftekhar Nayeem, Mianur Rahman, Uttam Sarkar, Talha Jubair, Nabil Samad, Monir Hossain and Tarek Aziz are not in the list and given that 20-25 cricketers will eventually be cut out, these players will miss the ride for the first season.

The inclusion of Rajin Saleh and Mohammad Sharif have also raised questions due to their style or future prospects while Avishek Mitra (one first-class game; one half-century in Premier League), Abul Bashar (91 first-class runs; 1 Premier League game) and Mohammad Shahzada (one first-class game, no Premier League games) are also strange picks.

# Kim's Melbourne bye?

*Year's first Grand Slam starts Monday*

REUTERS, Melbourne



Kim Clijsters, who is set to retire for a second time this year, hopes to say farewell to Australia by defending her title at Melbourne Park but the Belgian's swan song down under almost came a week early thanks to an injury sustained in Brisbane.

Instead of walking out to start her Australian Open defence on Monday, Clijsters could have brought the curtain down on her time in Australia with a shake of Daniela Hantuchova's hand at the Brisbane International last week.

Fortunately for 'Aussie Kim', the hip injury that forced her to withdraw from the Brisbane semifinal against the Slovak was not serious, and she knew she would be able to defend her title in Melbourne.

"I think what happened in Brisbane was something that I knew ... was something that would only need a few days to get better," the 28-year-old Belgian told reporters on Saturday.

"I had my scan just to make sure ... but that showed no problems. So I was relieved [and then] came to Melbourne and started hitting when I got here."

Clijsters has indicated this will be her last year on tour but has been cagey about exactly when she takes her final bow.

She said she did not have a feeling of finality when she left home to travel to Australia, a country that adopted her as one of

their own during her relationship with Lleyton Hewitt earlier in her career.

"I just felt very focused on why I'm here, and that's obviously to play good tennis and try to stay healthy throughout the whole season, not to have major injuries where my season might be a question mark, which I would kind of like to end on my terms," she added.

"So, yeah, I'm not thinking about it [retirement] at all."

Clijsters, who along with 30-year-old Serena Williams are part of the older brigade as a generational change takes place on the WTA Tour, said the playing field had levelled out in recent years.

"It's definitely a completely different situation than we had let's say eight years ago or so where it was kind of easy to almost pencil in quarterfinalists or semifinalists in the draw," she said.

"I think that's completely different now, which makes it more fun. ... I think on any given day, whoever just plays that little bit better can win."

"I think that's why a lot of girls have belief in their chances to win a grand slam is because they have beaten some of the girls that have won grand slams before."

"I think that's something that this year, you know, a lot of the top players are going to have to be very careful with."

"There's going to be a lot of lower ranked players who are still going to have big opportunities to beat some top players and get chances in grand slams."

## What if the team loses

Cricket

AFP, Perth

Emerging Indian paceman Umesh Yadav took little solace from a Test-best performance as his side slid towards another heavy defeat in the third Test against Australia in Perth on Saturday.

Yadav, 24, claimed his first five-wicket haul in Test cricket in the Australian first innings to give his team brief hope after a disastrous first day, before the Indians again capitulated with the bat.

"Even if I take five wickets and the team is on the verge of losing, it doesn't make me

happy," he said through an interpreter.

Yadav, who is playing in just his fifth Test and has been one of the few standouts for the Indians with 12 wickets at 32.66, said he reaped the rewards for deciding to bowl a fuller length on the second day.

With India set to go a decisive 3-0 down in the series, Yadav refused to lay blame on the misfiring Indian top-order.

"They have been trying their best, but have not been succeeding," he said.

"That happens in the game."

India are already down 2-0 in the series and seemingly headed for another innings defeat -- and with it the loss of the Border-Gavaskar Trophy.



Action from yesterday's National Hockey Championship match between Patuakhali and Comilla at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium.

## Chris awaits his chance

Cricket

AFP, Dubai

Lanky paceman Chris Tremlett said on Friday he did not expect to be selected to play in the first Test against Pakistan starting in Dubai next week due to the nature of the pitch.

Tremlett said England, who won the tour opener against a ICC Combined XI in July last year, took two wickets in each innings during England's 100-run win over Pakistan Cricket Board XI here on Friday.

But with a slow, spin track expected for Tuesday's opener against Pakistan, England will be keen on playing two spinners -- Graeme Swann and Monty Panesar.

The latter increased his chances of playing by taking eight wickets in the second tour match.

"The competition [for places] is tight, and you have to be on the ball all the time. I guess I'm not expecting to play, but just waiting to see what happens," said Tremlett, who overcame back trouble to

get a place on the tour.

Tremlett said England will assess the conditions before deciding on the final eleven for the Test.

"We'll assess conditions when we get to the stadium. All I can do is put my name in the hat. I'm back fit and hope I will get selected," he said.

Tremlett said England, who won the tour opener against a ICC Combined XI in July last year, took two wickets in each innings during England's 100-run win over Pakistan Cricket Board XI here on Friday.

But with a slow, spin track expected for Tuesday's opener against Pakistan, England will be keen on playing two spinners -- Graeme Swann and Monty Panesar.

The latter increased his chances of playing by taking eight wickets in the second tour match.

"The competition [for places] is tight, and you have to be on the ball all the time. I guess I'm not expecting to play, but just waiting to see what happens," said Tremlett, who overcame back trouble to

with eight wickets.

Tremlett said his eye infection had improved and did not hinder his bowling.

"It [infection] was pretty severe when I got here but it has improved, and I see the eye specialist pretty much every day. It hasn't affected my bowling too much. It's been more my batting and fielding side of things."

### MSC, Gazi

FROM PAGE 16

CCS: 132 all out in 37.1 overs (Amrit 30, Rokibul 34; Sami 4-26)

GAZI TANK: 135-5 in 29.3 overs (Nasir 62 not out, Shahzaib 28; Robi 2-31)

Result: Gazi Tank won by five wickets.

### Kapali to lead

FROM PAGE 16

Gazi, Nur Hossain, Nazmul Hossain, Farhad Reza and Al Amin

5TH ONEDAYERSQUAD

Alok Kapali (captain), Imrul Kayes, Nasir Uddin Faruque, Junaid Siddiqui, Rokibul Hasan, Mohammad Mithun (wicketkeeper), Naeem Islam, Mosharraf Hossain, Shohag Gazi, Nur Hossain, Nazmul Hossain, Farhad Reza, Al Amin and Nazmul Hossain

## T20 could be in Olympics

AFP, Perth

The strong emergence of the Twenty20 format has the ICC considering a bid to have cricket return to the Olympics after more than a century, ICC chief executive Haroon Lorgat said on Saturday.

Cricket has been played only once at the Olympics, in 1900, although it was not officially recognised as an Olympic sport until 12 years later.

The International Cricket Council (ICC), the sport's world governing body, was officially recognised as a federation by the International Olympic Committee in 2010, meaning the ICC can bid to join the 2020 Games.

Speaking on radio at the third Test between Australia and India in Perth, Lorgat said Twenty20 was the first international cricket format suitable for the Olympics.

"We have never had a format that would lend itself to playing in the Olympics until Twenty20 came to the fore," he said. "We are starting to have a look at that."

### Ferrer keeps Auckland title

APP, Auckland

Top-seed and defending champion David Ferrer retained his Auckland ATP title Saturday with a comfortable victory over Olivier Rochus 6-3, 6-4 in a rain-disrupted final.

The match had just started with Ferrer 1-0 up when the players had to leave the court because of the wet weather.

When play resumed, Ferrer raced to a 5-3 lead but Rochus had a break point with a chance to strike back when rain interrupted play a second time.

Back on court when the rain cleared, Ferrer saved the game and took the first set. He then made a decisive break mid-way through the second set to wrap up the match in an hour and 34 minutes.

It is the third time the Spaniard has won in Auckland, having also won in 2007.

England rose to the top of ICC (International Cricket Council) Test rankings after beating India 4-0 on their home grounds last year but face a stiff challenge against a resurgent Pakistan on the slow tracks of United Arab Emirates.

PCB appointed a three-man committee headed by former captain Intikhab Alam, which shortlisted five candidates for the post.

"Whatmore has reached here and we will talk to him on the issue," Alam told AFP, without giving further details.



PHOTO: AFP

Sri Lanka batsman Dinesh Chandimal plays the scoop on his way to 92 not out against South Africa during the second ODI at Buffalo Park in East London yesterday.

## Proteas clear further

Cricket

STAR SPORT DESK

JP Duminy struck an unbeaten 66 and opener Hashim Amla made a polished half-century as South Africa strolled to a 2-0 lead in the 5-match series with a five-wicket win against Sri Lanka at Buffalo Park in East London yesterday.

Duminy struck only one six in his workmanlike knock while a classy Amla hit five fours and two sixes for his run-a-ball 55.

AFP adds, earlier Dinesh Chandimal and Upul Tharanga hit half-centuries in a battling Sri Lankan performance.

Seeking to come back after a record defeat in the first match in Paarl, Sri Lanka made 236 for six after being sent in on a slow pitch on an overcast day.

Chandimal hit only one four in reaching his fifty off 84 balls but added five more boundaries off the remaining 31 balls of his innings to finish tantalisingly short of a third one-day international

century in 19 matches.

The match started after 26 minutes because of rain. The third match will be played in Bloemfontein on January 17.

### SCOREBOARD

#### SRI LANKA

Tharanga c De Villiers b Morkel 66  
Dilshan run out (Du Plessis) 0  
Sangakkara c De Villiers b Tsotsobe 3  
Chandimal not out 92  
Jayawardene c Steyn b Morkel 19  
N Kulasekara c Peterson b Tsotsobe 22  
Mathews c Morkel b Steyn 28  
Extras: (lb-1, w-5) 6  
Total: (For 6 wkt in 50 overs) 236  
Fall wickets: 1-0, 2-21, 3-105, 4-140, 5-164

Did not bat: K Kulasekara, Malina, Herath, Prasad

Bowler O M R W  
Steyn 9 1 54 1