

'Messi not as good as Neymar'

Pele says Lionel Messi isn't the best player in the world today - much less of all time. That debate has long centered around Pele and Diego Maradona, but many have started including Messi after a series of outstanding performances with Barcelona. Pele, however, said at an event celebrating the centennial of Neymar's club Santos that "there's always this Maradona comparison, saying that he's better than Pele. Now some are saying that Messi is better than Pele. Well, he has to be better than Neymar first, which



Mohammedan's Nigerian striker Basden Wilcox, who scored two goals, fights off a challenge from an Arambagh defender during their Bangladesh Premier League encounter at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

MSC up to fourth

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammedan Sporting Club posted their third victory in the Grameenphone Bangladesh Premier League when they handed an easy 3-1 defeat to neighbouring Arambagh KS at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. The outcome also lifted the Black and Whites to fourth position in the 11-team points table with 12 points from nine outings while Arambagh with two consecutive defeats stuck glued to the previous seventh position with eight points from nine matches. Fresh from a 4-0 win over Rahmatganj MFS, Mohammedan SC put up another dazzling performance against minnows Arambagh in the one-sided affair with Nigerian striker Basden Wilcox striking twice and young striker Wahed Ahmed adding the other

for the Motijheel-based outfit. Nigerian midfielder Ujumefun Joel pulled one goal back for Arambagh, who were reduced to 10 men in stoppage time of the second half. Mohammedan built up most of their attacks through the right flank as winger Shariful Islam threatened the Arambagh backline with his speed and relentless crosses. Mohammedan went ahead through a spot kick when Shariful whipped in a well-judged cross from the right flank and Wahed attempted to nod the cross home but was pushed by defender Abul Kashed. Referee Azad Rahman didn't hesitate to award a penalty kick and Wilcox sent the goalkeeper the wrong way to give Mohammedan a 20th minute lead. Afterwards, Wilcox failed to beat opponent goalkeeper Shawon twice in one-on-one situations while defender

Biplob Das made a goalline save off a Wahed goal-bound shot. But Wilcox soon doubled the margin as the tall striker raced inside the area from the right and danced past defender Deen Mohammad and Biplob Das to take an angular grounder that skidded past goalkeeper Shawon in the 64th minute. On 72 minutes, Wahed made it 3-0 after availing a cut-back from Shariful Islam while Arambagh pulled back a goal in 90th minute through a penalty shot. Substitute Mohammad Rony bought down Jahidul Hasan Dalim inside the area and Joel converted the spot kick to reduce the margin. Arambagh were reduced to 10 men when Prashanto Day fouled on Edozue Kenneth Ochendo from the back and was sent off in the stoppage time of the second half.

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Chennai win a thriller

INTERNET, Chennai

Albie Morkel turned the game on its head with some lusty hits as Chennai Super Kings snatched a sensational five-wicket victory in the very last ball against Royal Challengers Bangalore in a dramatic IPL match here on Thursday. Chasing a stiff 206, Morkel blasted three sixes and two fours off the penultimate over bowled by Virat Kohli as the hosts overhauled the target in the last ball to record the second highest run chase in IPL history. Faf du Plessis (71) and skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni (41) were the other notable scorers for Chennai who have now got their campaign back on track after two successive defeats. The home team changed the complexion of the game in the 19th over with Morkel racking up 28 runs and needed 15 runs in the last over. Morkel perished in the second ball of the last over bowled by Vinay Kumar but Dwayne Bravo (25) did the star turn by taking the team to the victory in the tense dying moments of the cliffhanger. With two runs needed in the last ball, Ravindra Jadeja edged the ball to the boundary to send the home crowd in a frenzy and trigger wild celebrations in the Chennai dug-out. It was a remarkable come-from-behind victory for Chennai, who looked down and out at one stage but RCB skipper Daniel Vettori's gamble to give Kohli the 19th over backfired in a big way. Earlier, Chris Gayle hit a blistering 68 and shared a

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Start delayed again

Abahani place four demands

SPORTS REPORTER

The farce surrounding the resumption of the Dhaka Premier Division Cricket Super League continued as the Cricket Committee of Dhaka Metropolis (CCDM) said yesterday that it will not be possible for them to restart the league today. After an emergency meeting the BCB has directed CCDM to resume the league from April 10 but later a new date was announced (April 13) citing weather conditions but CCDM coordinator Aynul Islam Tiash looked helpless when asked about the new date after Abahani placed four demands which included the start of the league from April 17. "You have to wait one more day for our decision. Actually I can't communicate with our acting chairman (Hanif Bhuiyan). You know five clubs wanted to start the league from April 17, so we have to think about it. Our main target is to make sure the league finishes," said Aynul, who earlier expressed his determination to start the league from today. Earlier Abahani cricket committee chairman Nazmul Hasan Papon said in an

official press conference at the Dhanmondi club tent that in a meeting he had with the other super league clubs yesterday, with the exception of Victoria Sporting Club, they had agreed to the four demands. "The league must resume from April 17 as the clubs will need time to prepare the teams again and also to confirm the foreign player's participation. The board must re-constitute the CCDM (Cricket Committee of Dhaka Metropolis) for its failure to act according to the laws. "The board must identify the individuals who played a role in confirming the registration of Pakistan batsman Mohammad Yousuf for Victoria despite the fact that the clearance letter was fake. And the board must award two points to Abahani as it (the board) admitted that Mohammad Yousuf's clearance was not legal," informed Nazmul Hasan, also a ruling party lawmaker. Nazmul Hasan however could not clarify their stance when asked whether they will play or not if the demands are not fulfilled. "We are in favour of playing the league and we want to play but simultaneously we can't accept any wrongdoing. BCB gave a conflicting statement regarding registration

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Abahani's cricket committee chairman Nazmul Hasan (C) speaks during a press conference at the club premises yesterday.

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Siddikur stutters

Golf

SPORTS REPORTER

South African Charl Schwartzel shot a red-hot eight-under-par 64 on the opening day of the Maybank Malaysian Open to take a one-shot lead from India's Jeev Milkha Singh at the top of the table at the Kuala Lumpur Golf and Country Club yesterday. Bangladesh's ace golfer Siddikur Rahman meanwhile wallowed in joint 53rd position with an even-par 72. Schwartzel, the 2011 Masters Tournament champion reeled in an astonishing nine birdies over the eighteen holes, with the only blip in his scorecard a bogey on the fifteenth. It was however, an indifferent day for Siddikur. The 2010 Brunei Open winner is looking for his elusive second win on the Asian Tour, and yesterday's returns have decreased the likelihood of that happening in the 2.5 million-dollar event. The 28-year-old, eighth on the Asian Tour Order of Merit, bogeyed the second hole before pulling things back with a birdie in the fourth, then going on to break par on the rest of the front nine. The back nine was the same story in reverse; Siddikur birdied the tenth hole to go one-under but undid the good work when he bogeyed the fifteenth. Singh finished second with a seven-under-par 65, while South Africa's Louis Oosthuizen, India's Jyoti Randhawa and United States' Jason Knutzon shared third spot with six-under-par 66s.

LOCAL SNIPPETS

SPORTS REPORTER

The Samsung National Tennis Championship will get underway from Sunday at the National Tennis Complex in Ramna with 280 players from 32 teams taking part. The tournament includes eight events - men's singles and doubles, women's singles and doubles, boy's and girl's U-16 singles, boy's and girl's U-14 singles. Some Tk 1,68,000 will be distributed as prize money with the winner of men's singles event getting highest Tk 25,000 and runners-up Tk 12,000. The winners of women's singles event will be awarded Tk 10,000 while the runner-up will be given Tk 5,000. Bangladesh Tennis Federation (BTF) vice president Mohammad Ali Deen revealed it at a press conference at the federation conference room. Of estimated budget of Tk 4 lakh, sponsors Samsung will provide Tk 3.5 lakh while the rest will be provided by the federation. Communications minister Obaidul Kader will declare the seven-day meet open as chief guest while secretary of Sports

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* A family of four members will win an attractive '4 days-3 nights trip' to Thailand through coupon draw every week. Visa, Passport and other responsibilities will be taken care by the winners. ** Conditions Apply