

BD thumped by Nepal

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh were thrashed 4-1 by Nepal in their opening fixture of the AFCU-22 Group D Qualifiers at Dasrath Stadium in Nepal yesterday.

Nepal U-22 skipper Bharat Khawas gave his side a 15th minute lead with a wonderful header before Deepak Bhusal's suicidal goal helped Bangladesh level the score in the 48th minute. A long throw by Rayhan was headed by Rony before it took a deflection off the Nepal defender to find the back of Nepal goal. Jagjeet Shrestha gave the hosts the lead again in the 61st minute before Sujal Shrestha extended the margin five minutes later. Bangladesh had a chance around the 73rd minute when Sohel Rana got into an one-on-one position with Bishal but produced a weak shot. Sujal Shrestha sealed the victory in the stoppage time by scoring the team's fourth goal.

Bangladesh will face Uzbekistan in their second

Premier Div hockey start delayed

SPORTS REPORTER

The start of the Green Delta Premier Division Hockey League, which was scheduled for today, has been deferred to June 24, the Premier Division Hockey League committee said in a press release yesterday.

The start has been deferred as one of the two foreign umpires to officiate in the league could not reach Bangladesh in time.

Club Cup champions Usha KC and runners-up Abahani will kick off the League at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium on June 24. The 11-team league's first phase will feature 55 matches in round robin format where each team will take on all the others once.

BFF decides Executive Committee

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) crowned Arif Hossain (Moon), Toufiqul Islam Tofa and Azmal Ahmed Tapan winners of the three remaining posts of the executive committee after the re-election on Saturday. The voting took place on Saturday from 11am to 2pm and the results were announced at 3pm by BFF's chief election commissioner Mesbah Uddin. All three winners are representatives of Divisional Football Association (DFA). Nilfamari's Arif Hossain (Moon) received 94 votes, Chapai Nawabganj's Toufiqul Islam Tofa received 93 votes and Khulna's Azmal Ahmed Tapan received 85 votes. Former BFF general secretary Anwarul Huq Helal got 49 votes. The initial election that took place on April 30 saw four candidates tied on 56 votes for the three remaining positions, which led to the re-election.

Siddikur

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Varut produced a superb 66 to charge into the joint lead after starting the day six back while Tabuena overcame a double bogey and two bogeys with three birdies to ensure he has a chance of becoming the fourth youngest winner on the Asian Tour. Another five players are two shots off the leaders, any of whom can snatch victory with some drama on the final day today.

However, Siddikur, who is known to be a slow starter and a good finisher, believes he can take his good form into the final day to snatch his second Asian Tour title.

"My strategy is fairways and greens. If I can do well with my short game, then I can make a score. I'm looking forward to tomorrow," finished a confident Siddikur.



PHOTO: AFP
England opener Ian Bell celebrates reaching his century in the first ODI against the West Indies at the Rose Bowl in Southampton yesterday.

Eng win after Bell ton

Cricket

AFP, Southampton

Ian Bell marked his return to England's one-day side with a stylish century as they beat the West Indies by 114 runs under the Duckworth/Lewis method in their series opener here Saturday.

Man-of-the-match Bell hit a 119-ball 126 in an England total of 288 for six made after the hosts lost the toss.

Dwayne Smith looked to be making up for the absence of big-hitting opener Chris Gayle whose much anticipated international return after 15 months out following a spat with West Indies cricket chiefs was delayed by a shin injury.

However, when Smith was out for 56 it was the start of a slump that saw the tourists lose their last nine wickets for 77 runs.

West Indies, who were 127 for five off 23 overs when rain stopped play, were set a revised target of 287 in 48 overs after two overs were lost during the 71-minute stoppage.

But the tourists finished on 172 all out as England went 1-0 up with two to play ahead of Tuesday's match at The Oval.

Tim Bresnan, who led England's attack with four wickets for 34 runs, finished the match with more than 14 overs to spare when he had last man Sunil Narine well caught by diving wicket-keeper Craig Kieswetter.

Bell's hundred was only

the 30-year-old's second in his 109 one-day internationals, with his 126 not out against India in 2007 also made here at the Rose Bowl.

And this innings came just a day after Bell's participation was put in doubt when he was struck a severe blow on the chin while batting in the indoors nets.

But, overcoming fears of a broken jaw, Bell helped the hosts recover from the shock of losing opening partner Alastair Cook, England's one-day captain, for a third ball nought.

Bell was finally out when he top-edged a slower ball from seamer Dwayne Bravo and wicket-keeper Denesh Ramdin took his fourth catch of the innings to leave England 216 for five.

West Indies, after the early loss of Lendl Simmons, saw Smith drive fast bowler Steven Finn for four and next ball pull him for six.

But his entertaining 44-ball innings came to an end when he edged an intended pull off seamer Bresnan to Kieswetter.

Bresnan then made it two wickets for three runs in five balls when Ramdin, promoted because Darren Bravo was unable to bat at number three due to a groin strain, was bowled for 22.

Dangerman Kieron Pollard then fell for just three, well caught by a diving Eoin Morgan at backward point following a fierce cut off Broad.

After the rain break, Marlon Samuels holed out off Anderson and wickets continued to fall steadily as England completed a commanding victory.

SCOREBOARD

ENGLAND				
Cook c Ramdin b Rampaul	0			
Bell c Ramdin b Dwayne Bravo	126			
Trott c Ramdin b Narine	42			
Bopara c Ramdin b Samuels	8			
Morgan b Samuels	21			
Kieswetter not out	38			
Bresnan run out (Smith/Ramdin)	21			
Broad not out	22			
Extras: (w9, nb1)	10			
Total: (6 wickets, 50 overs)	288			
Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-108, 3-136, 4-187, 5-216, 6-245				

WEST INDIES				
Simmons b Anderson	15			
Smith c Kieswetter b Bresnan	56			
Ramdin lbw b Bresnan	22			
Samuels c Swann b Anderson	30			
Dw Bravo lbw b Finn	8			
Pollard c Morgan b Broad	3			
Sammy c Bopara b Swann	11			
Russell c Morgan b Bresnan	7			
Da Bravo not out	8			
Rampaul c Trott b Swann	9			
Narine c Kieswetter b Bresnan	0			
Extras: (w3)	3			
Total: (all out in 33.4 overs)	172			
Fall of wickets: 1-25, 2-95, 3-102, 4-118, 5-127, 6-137, 7-155, 8-157, 9-172, 10-172				

BOWLER				
Rampaul	10	0	68	1
Russell	6	0	43	0
Narine	10	0	47	1
Sammy	6	0	32	0
Dw Bravo	9	0	55	1
Samuels	9	0	43	2

BOWLER				
Anderson	8	0	48	2
Finn	6	0	29	1
Bresnan	7.4	0	34	4
Broad	8	0	40	1
Swann	4	0	21	2

Czech, Greece thru

FROM PAGE 16

won a header from Plasil's free-kick inside the six yard box only for his downward effort to bounce up into Tyton's chest.

The big breakthrough came 18 minutes from time as Murawski surged forwards from midfield but was dispossessed by Jiracek.

The Czechs countered three on three and Jiracek exchanged passes with Milan Baros before turning inside Wasilewski and slipping the ball under Tyton.

Wasilewski got up well to win a header in the box but it landed on the roof of the net as the hosts finally came alive.

With virtually the last kick of the match Michal Kadlec secured qualification for the Czechs as he headed Blaszczykowski's chip off the line.

In the day's other match in Warsaw, Veteran Greece captain Giorgos Karagounis halted Russia's Euro 2012 campaign in its tracks, as the underdogs unexpectedly beat the Group A early pacesetters 1-0 to reach the last eight instead.

Seconds before the end of stoppage time in the first half, the 35-year-old midfielder latched onto a throw-in that Russian defender Sergei Ignashevich failed to deal with.

Dodging between the Russian rearguard, he fired a powerful low cross shot past goalkeeper Vyacheslav Malafeev.

The 4,000 Greek fans in Warsaw's stadium, who up to then had largely been outstung by 20,000 Russians, went wild as Karagounis hit home to put his side through on the head to head rule -- both sides ending on four points behind group winners the Czech Republic.

Six minutes in, Karagounis fired a corner to Kostas Katsouranis, and Dimitris Salpingidis bundled goalwards, only for Malafeev to save.

Three minutes later, Russian captain Andrey Arshavin crossed to rising star Alan Dzagoev but he was beaten by Greek goalkeeper Michalis Sifakis -- brought in to replace Kostas Chalkias, injured in their defeat by the Czechs.

Dzagoev tried again a minute later, but fired over the bar, before Aleksandr Kerzhakov shot wide.

Five minutes from half-time, Yuri Zhirkov took a superb short corner, only to shoot over the bar.

With two minutes added on, Karagounis's strike came just seconds before Swedish referee Jonas Eriksson's half-time whistle.

Russia came within a whisker of equalising in the 56th minute, but Igor Denisov was off-target.

There was gloom for Karagounis when he received a yellow card for being harshly adjudged to have dived in the box, meaning he will miss their quarter-final as he was also booked against the Czechs.

Greece's Giorgos Tavellas came close to putting them further ahead in the 69th minute, but hit the post.

Five minutes later, Sifakis saved a shot from Igor Denisov, while Russia were again foiled in the 83rd minute when Dzagoev latched onto an Arshavin cross but fired wide. With Eriksson adding four minutes' stoppage time, a desperate Russia battled to save face, but Sifakis denied Denisov again on his line.

Tigers take on Zimbabwe in opener today

SPORTS REPORTER

Life beyond Asia Cup begins today for the Tigers when they take on Zimbabwe to tee off the Twenty20 triangular series at the Harare Sports Club.

The match begins at 5:00pm (Bangladesh Standard Time) with Channel 9 providing live TV coverage, although this is an unofficial tournament.

It was learned that pace-man Abul Hasan and all-rounder Ziaur Rahman will be in the playing eleven while Jahurul Islam and Mohammad Ashraful will also take up positions in the batting order. Junaed Siddiqui, Nazmul Hossain, Anamul Haque and Forhad Reza will be missing out the first match.

It will be Bangladesh's first campaign since becoming runners-up in the Asia Cup back in March, but they will be without Shakib Al Hasan, the lynchpin, who decided to take a break from competitive cricket during this series.

The Tigers lost both their practice Twenty20s against Zimbabwe Select XI on Friday, by three wickets and by 24 runs, though one shouldn't read too much into a couple of practice games. After the first game, they will take on South Africa, the third team in the

IFIC Bank comes to shooting

SPORTS REPORTER

IFIC Bank 26th National Shooting Championship begins at the National Shooting Complex in Gulshan tomorrow as a partnership between National Shooting Federation (NSF) of Bangladesh and IFIC was forged.

Close to 400 shooters -- male and female -- from across the country will participate in the six-day championship which will feature seven different events.

The bank will provide a sum of Tk 6.6 million for organising tournaments, training of shooters and supplying them with shooting kits, it was announced at a press conference at the NSF complex in Gulshan yesterday.

As part of the deal, IFIC Bank will provide Tk 2.5 million for the National Shooting Championship, Tk 1.1 million for the 5th Airgun Shooting Competition, Tk 3 million for overseas training of shooters and Tk 0.5 million to supply kits and jerseys for the two shooters Sharmin Akter Ratna and Sadia Sultana who are currently training in UK for the 2012 Olympics.

Perera treble sinks Pak

Cricket

AFP, Colombo

Thisara Perera bagged a hat-trick to bowl Sri Lanka to a dramatic 44-run victory over Pakistan in the fourth one-day international in Colombo on Saturday.

Pakistan were strongly placed at 166-2 in the 38th over before they collapsed to 199 all out chasing a 244-run target in the day-night contest, with man-of-the-match Perera finishing with 4-42.

Opener Azhar Ali carried his bat through the innings with an unbeaten 81, adding 113 for the third wicket with skipper Misbah-ul-Haq.

Pakistan's slide began with the dismissal of Misbah, with Nuwan Kulasekara taking a brilliant catch to his right at mid-off off paceman Lasith Malinga.

Malinga also dismissed Mohammad Hafeez with his fifth delivery and left-arm spinner Sajeeva Weerakoon trapped Asad Shafiq (25) leg-before for his maiden wicket in one-day internationals.

Perera had Younis Khan caught behind and then had Shahid Afridi caught in the

covers before completing the hat-trick with the wicket of Sarfraz Ahmed, caught by skipper Mahela Jayawardene in the slips.

He also ran out Sohail Tanvir in the same over and then ended the innings with the wicket of Saeed Ajmal.

Kumar Sangakkara earlier top-scored with a 130-ball 97 for Sri Lanka, who now have an unassailable 2-1 lead in the five-match series.

He went for big shots after completing the half-century, scoring his last 47 runs off just 31 balls. He looked set to reach his 14th one-day hundred before he was caught by Azhar Ali in the deep off spinner Ajmal.

Pakistan had put in a disciplined bowling performance as they restricted Sri Lanka to 125 off 35 overs before Sangakkara and Mahela Jayawardene stepped up the run-rate and helped their team score 118 in the last 15 overs.

Off-spinners Mohammad Hafeez and Ajmal, and Tanvir each took two wickets.

SCOREBOARD

SRI LANKA				
Tharanga c Younis b Gul	4			
Dilshan lbw b Hafeez	24			
Sangakkara c Azhar b Ajmal	97			

Chandimal b Hafeez	18			
Jayawardene b Tanvir	40			
Perera c Akmal b Ajmal	8			
Mathews not out	10			
Thirimanne run out	13			
Kulasekara b Tanvir	3			
Malinga not out	0			
Extras: (b5, lb10, w11)	26			
Total: (for 8 wickets in 50 overs)	243			
Fall of wickets: 1-9, 2-64, 3-90, 4-200, 5-204, 6-214, 7-237, 8-243				

PAKISTAN				
Mohammad Hafeez c Kulasekara b Malinga	0			
Azhar Ali not out	81			
Asad Shafiq lbw b Weerakoon	25			
Misbah-ul-Haq c Kulasekara b Malinga	57			
Umar Akmal c Sangakkara b Kulasekara	0			
Younis Khan c Sangakkara b Perera	1			
Shahid Afridi c Chandimal b Perera	0			
Sarfraz Ahmed c Jayawardene b Perera	0			
Sohail Tanvir run out	0			
Umar Gul c Sangakkara b Mathews	0			
Saeed Ajmal c Thirimanne b Perera	12			
Extras: (lb9, w14)	23			
Total: (all out in 45 overs)	199			
Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-53, 3-166, 4-169, 5-176, 6-176, 7-176, 8-176, 9-179, 10-199				

BOWLER				
Malinga	7	0	30	2
Kulasekara	9	0	36	1
Mathews	9	0	33	1
Weerakoon	10	0	49	1

Fed flies into final

Tennis

AFP, Halle

Roger Federer cruised into the final of the ATP grass-court tournament here for the seventh time with a 6-1, 6-4 victory against unseeded Russian Mikhail Youzhny in Saturday's semifinal.

The Swiss second seed showed few signs of fatigue despite scraping past Canada's Milos Raonic in a third-set tie-break in the last eight on Friday, and needed barely an hour to see off the world number 31 Youzhny.

Federer fired down eight aces, and remains on course to win the Wimbledon warm-up event for the sixth time.

He later claimed that saving three break points in the fifth game of the opening set was

vital to his ultimately comfortable win.

"The key for me was coming back from 0-40 then holding that and going 4-1," said the 30-year-old, who was beaten by Novak Djokovic in the semifinals at the French Open last week.

"That was a big ten minutes for me and then, once in the lead, I played a bit more aggressive and he was missing quite a few shots, making it easier for me.

"Overall, I think I played a good tough solid match, especially after yesterday's shoot-out [against Raonic]."

Federer's previous victories in Halle came in 2003-06 and again in 2008, while he also lost the final to Lleyton Hewitt in 2010.

The Swiss world number three now awaits the winner of Saturday's second semifinal between defending champion Philipp Kohlschreiber and another German, Tommy Haas.

3 ODIs and 3 T20s

Venue for Pak-Aus series not yet fixed

Cricket

ANI, Karachi

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has decided to play a series of three one-day internationals and an equal number of Twenty20 matches against Australia in August-September, but the venues for the matches will be decided in the next few days, a senior PCB official has said.

"Since now we are playing three Twenty20 matches, we don't require any special permission from the International Cricket Council (ICC)," a PCB spokesman said.

He added that a decision on whether the matches would take place in Malaysia or the United Arab Emirates (UAE) would be taken within the next two or three days.

There were reports that Pakistan and Australia could approach the ICC to allow them to play a series of five Twenty20 Interna-

tionals, The Daily Times reports.

The spokesman explained that since it had been decided to play the series immediately after Ramadan ends, both the teams have space to play six matches. Initially, Pakistan had planned five ODIs and three Twenty20 internationals.

Pakistan has been forced to host the series against Australia at a neutral venue after the Australians refused to tour Pakistan due to security concerns.

Australia has not played in Pakistan since 1998 due to security concerns.

Pakistan had earlier sent a request to the ICC to allow them to host a series of seven Twenty20 internationals against Australia, but cricket's governing body rejected the move, asking the PCB to take their proposal to the ICC chief executives meeting.

As per ICC regulations, a maximum of three Twenty20 internationals are allowed in a bilateral series.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Egyptian fertility goddess

5 Lingerie item

8 Go bankrupt

12 Less than bi-

13 Started

14 Discourteous

15 Many eBay sales

17 Geometry calculation

18 Speedometer

19 Father

20 Rascally sort

21 Lustrous black

22 Stick out

23 — New Guinea

26 Starbucks employee

30 Luke Wilson's brother

31 Energy

32 Piece of work

33 Skirt slit

35 Pesky insects

36 Cowboy nickname

37 — de deux

38 Unadorned island neckpiece

42 Witness

45 Continental coin

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48 "— go brag!"

49 Khan title

50 YouTube offering

51 Cincinnati team

52 Triumphed

53 Vortex

20 South (Sp.)

21 Meeting places

22 Toast topper

23 Burst

24 Pier