

Usha crush BD Police

SPORTS REPORTER

Federation Cup winners Usha KC thrashed Bangladesh Police SC 12-0 in their Green Delta Premier Division Hockey League match at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday. Moinul Islam Koushik struck six goals including a hattrick while Aktar Ali scored two goals. Sarwar, Atik, Afas and Deen Islam scored one apiece. The win took Usha to joint second position in the league table with 15 points from six matches, six behind leaders Mohammedan SC.

In the other match, Bangladesh SC defeated Wari Club 3-0, thanks to a brace from Abdus Samad and one from Lubraj Alam.

'Broad could be the new Flintoff'

ANI, London

Complimenting Stuart Broad as England's most improved performer, Proteas batsman and now wicketkeeper AB de Villiers has said that the Nottinghamshire pacer can replace Andrew Flintoff to trouble the South African batsmen.

Ahead of a series billed as a battle of the bowlers, de Villiers admitted the batsmen could find life extremely tough.

He is delighted that he won't have to worry about the threat of Flintoff anymore after Freddie's heroics in 2008, but is wary that Broad can send the ball down at an equal pace and from the same height and will be just as much of a handful, the Daily Mirror reports.

"Flintoff is not there any more, thank goodness for that. He was one of the best bowlers I ever faced but Broad has improved a lot. And there's Jimmy Anderson and Tim Bresnan -- they are all good," said de Villiers.

Isner aces into semis

AFP, Newport

Defending champion John Isner hammered 12 aces to defeat Izak van der Merwe 6-4, 7-6 (7/2) and reach the semifinals of the ATP Tour's Hall of Fame Tennis Championships on Friday.

Top-seeded Isner will square off against fellow American Ryan Harrison who was leading 6-4, 3-0 in his quarterfinal when Benjamin Becker, of Germany, retired with an injury.

"He mixed up the serve and volleys more than I anticipated. I thought he was going to do it every time, so that threw me off a little bit," said Isner.

The 26-year-old Isner is seeking to reach his third final of the year and defend a title for the first time in his career. He finished runner up earlier this year to Roger Federer at Indian Wells.

Isner, who beat Belgian Olivier Rochus in last year's final, won 85 per cent of his first-serve points against the South African qualifier on the grass courts.

German Becker retired from his match after 57 minutes with a left hamstring injury.

Australian veteran Lleyton Hewitt will face American Rajeev Ram in Saturday's other semifinal.

Hewitt is a two-time major championship winner and Ram won this event three years ago.

Isdair class

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and Lotto, BFF president Kazi Salahuddin and other dignitaries -- kicked the ball from the penalty spot against the two goalkeepers to mark a festive start to the final. Little did they know that the final would also end in shoot-outs.



PHOTO: STAR

Action from yesterday's Green Delta Insurance Premier Division Hockey League match between Usha and Police at the Maulana Bhasani National Stadium.

Serena in last four

Tennis

AFP, Stanford

Serena Williams fought off fatigue to post a 6-4, 6-0 win over Chanelle Scheepers Friday to reach the semifinals of the WTA hardcourt tournament in Stanford.

Williams, the top seed and defending champion, won a 43-minute first set punctuated by five breaks of serve against her sixth-seeded South African opponent.

She said she was still feeling the effects of her triumph at Wimbledon last weekend and the subsequent flight to California.

"I still have major jet-lag," said the 30-year-old US star, who said she awoke in the early hours of Friday and watched a DVD of popular series "Desperate Housewives".

"I've been up a long time," she said. "I'm tired now and ready to sleep, but it felt good to be out here -- and especially good to win."

"I didn't want to take anything, so I was wide awake just like as if I was in Europe. I started the match slow and sluggish, but I expected that. I just stayed in there until I began moving better."

"I told myself just to get through it, win quickly. I'm a fighter, I just click -- the mentality just kicks in."

Williams, whose first title upon her return last summer from a series of health problems came in Stanford, swept through the second set.

On Saturday she'll face Sorana Cirstea after the Romanian roared back to upset Slovak third seed Dominika Cibulkova 6-7 (5/7), 6-2, 6-0.

Yanina Wickmayer pounced on nine double-faults from Marion Bartoli to knock



American Serena Williams makes a forehand return against Chanelle Scheepers of South Africa during their quarterfinal engagement of the WTA hardcourt tournament in Stanford on Friday.

PHOTO: AFP

Future bright: Misbah

Cricket

AFP, Lahore

Captain Misbahul Haq Saturday said Pakistan's future was secure with the emergence of promising young players despite losing the Test and one-day series on their tour of Sri Lanka.

Pakistan lost the five-match one-day series 3-1 and three-Tests 1-0 on the tour which ended on Thursday. They levelled a two-match Twenty20 series 1-1.

The Test defeat ended Pakistan's unbeaten run of seven series since losing to England on the 2010 tour which was marred by spot-fixing allegations in the Lord's Test.

Unbeaten streak also included a 3-0 whitewash of world number one Test team England earlier this year.

Misbah, who captained Pakistan since their defeat against England in 2010, deplored the defeats on the Sri Lanka tour.

"Defeats in the one-days and Tests are disappointing," Misbah told reporters on the team's return home Saturday. "We could have won the one-day series but our fielding

let us down in the last two matches."

Pakistan hired former Australian batsman Dav Whatmore as head coach and Englishman Julian Fountain as fielding coach earlier this year, but their fielding has still been a gray area.

"The Test defeat was also unfortunate. But the performance of young players like Azhar Ali, Asad Shafiq and Junaid Khan assured Pakistan has a good future," said Misbah.

"Our junior players did very well in the Tests. Ali, Shafiq and Junaid have done well in the series and with their performance we can say that our future is secure," said Misbah.

"In difficult situations these players performed well for us. The way Adnan Akmal played [in Pallekele Test] with a fractured finger is a good sign. Junaid is a big plus."

Ali scored two hundreds in the Tests, while Shafiq hit a match-saving century in the final Test at Pallekele which ended in a draw.

Sri Lanka won the first Test in Galle by 20 runs while the rain-hit second Test in Colombo also ended without a result.

Left-arm paceman Junaid took 14 wickets in the three Tests, including five-wicket hauls in the second and third Tests.

A Village in name, if not reality

REUTERS, London



When the first wave of athletes arrive in the Olympic Village on Monday they will find their new home from home bears little resemblance to anything found in the English countryside.

In terms of physical size, it may meet the strict dictionary definition of a settlement larger than a hamlet and smaller than a town.

The sort of village familiar through the ages of literary fiction - ducks on the pond, cricket on the green, bell ringers in the churchyard and locals enjoying a lazy pint outside the pub on a summer's afternoon - it is most definitely not.

There is a 'pub', but it serves no alcohol. The landscaped green is surrounded by modern apartment blocks and for church read multi-faith centre.

There are green spaces, wetland pools and wildflowers but there are no farms or fields beyond the wire perimeter fence, only the gritty reality of one of the poorest parts of east London. The city centre is just seven minutes away by train.

None of this will matter to the world's leading athletes, for whom the main priorities will be a good night's sleep, food on demand and reliable transport to venues within easy reach.

On those three counts, and more when the recreational facilities are considered, the Village ticks all the boxes even if the real world stops at the airport-style security checkpoints.

"This knocks Club Med into a cocked hat," declared London mayor Boris Johnson in typically boisterous and flag-waving fashion on a recent visit.

The Village 'shops', including a hairdresser and florist, have as a backdrop the giant mass of the nearby Westfield shopping complex - Europe's largest urban mall - and the adjacent Olympic Park with its new stadium and showcase venues.

You can forget the Ploughman's Lunch. The main 'dining facility' here is big enough to cater for most villages at one sitting and serve them a range of cooking from every corner of the world.

The biggest canteen in Britain, it is the largest facility of its kind in the world outside

of the military arena.

"You could fit 880 double decker buses in here," Janet Mathews - the head of catering, cleaning and waste who previously worked for the British Army in Germany - told reporters on a recent visit.

"So you can seat 5,000 people and through Games times we will be operating 24/7. On our busiest day, we will feed 65,000 people and over the time of the Games we will serve 1.2 million meals."

Games organisers, ever ready with the statistics, say they expect to serve 1,300 different types of dishes during the Olympics.

They will get through 25,000 loaves of bread, 232 tonnes of potatoes, 75,000 litres of milk and more than 330 tonnes of fruit and vegetables.

The menus have been developed with nutritionists and dieticians from the various sports and then been validated and checked off by the International Olympic Committee.

At full capacity, the Village will house up to 16,000 athletes and officials from 203 countries plus a workforce of up to 7,500. There will be as many as 3,500 visitors a day.

The Village in Stratford, billed as the most compact in recent Games history, cost about 1.1 billion pounds (\$1.71 billion) of public funds to build and is divided into 'Country-side', 'Seaside' and 'Heritage' zones.

There is a 'Victory Park', a 'Celebration Avenue' and a 'Cheering Lane'. Sculptures, including an 'Olympic Spirit', are dotted around.

Once the athletes take residence, in 2,818 apartments spread over 11 blocks in distinct architectural styles, the Village will come alive with flags hung from balconies in bursts of national pride.

The beds, extendable to cater for the tallest athlete, have been tried and tested and the apartments kitted out from a lengthy shopping list that includes 170,000 coathangers and 5,000 toilet brushes.

The light and functional rooms have blackout curtains, the beds covered with duvets carrying the words 'Excellence, friendship and respect.'

Some 150,000 condoms will also be distributed.

What Miss Marple, Agatha Christie's fictional elderly spinster in the idyllic English village of St Mary Mead, would make of all is anyone's guess.

Akhtar applauds Lee

Cricket

AFP, Karachi

Pakistan express fast bowler Shoaib Akhtar Saturday paid tribute to pace rival Brett Lee who has announced his retirement from international cricket, saying the Australian was a fierce competitor.

The 35-year-old Lee said Friday he was quitting, ending a glorious career that was marred by injury problems.

Lee sent down the second-fastest delivery on record at 99.9 miles per hour (160.8 kph) at Napier in New Zealand, only surpassed by Akhtar who hit the 100-mile barrier on two occasions, first in 2002 and then in 2003.

"Lee was a fierce competitor and became an identity for express bowling with his passion and love for the game and for fast bowling," Akhtar, who retired last year after a career plagued by injury and controversy, told AFP.

Akhtar said Lee's retirement was a sad day for the game.

"Friday was a sad day for international cricket because a bowler with express pace has retired, someone who was loved by the fans around the world, and he will be

missed," said Akhtar.

"Lee gave everything to cricket and was a true Australian: fierce and battle-hardened. He was always willing to bowl fast and like all the fast bowlers had injuries, which is part and parcel of fast bowling."

Akhtar said cricket would be less attractive with the absence of express pace.

"Cricket had very few express pace bowlers and now after the retirement of Lee we don't have any bowler who can bowl 99 mph and the terror on the batsmen will be less," said Akhtar.

Akhtar, 36, remembered his good times with Lee.

"I had very good friendship with Lee and spent some good days with him in Sydney and he was always warm and cordial whenever we met, so I wish him all the best in his future," said Akhtar.

Lee retired from Tests in February 2010 as Australia's fourth-highest Test wicket-taker but played on in one-day and Twenty20 cricket up until Friday's announcement.

He took 310 Test wickets at 30.81 from 76 matches and 380 one-day international wickets at 23.36 from 221 matches.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

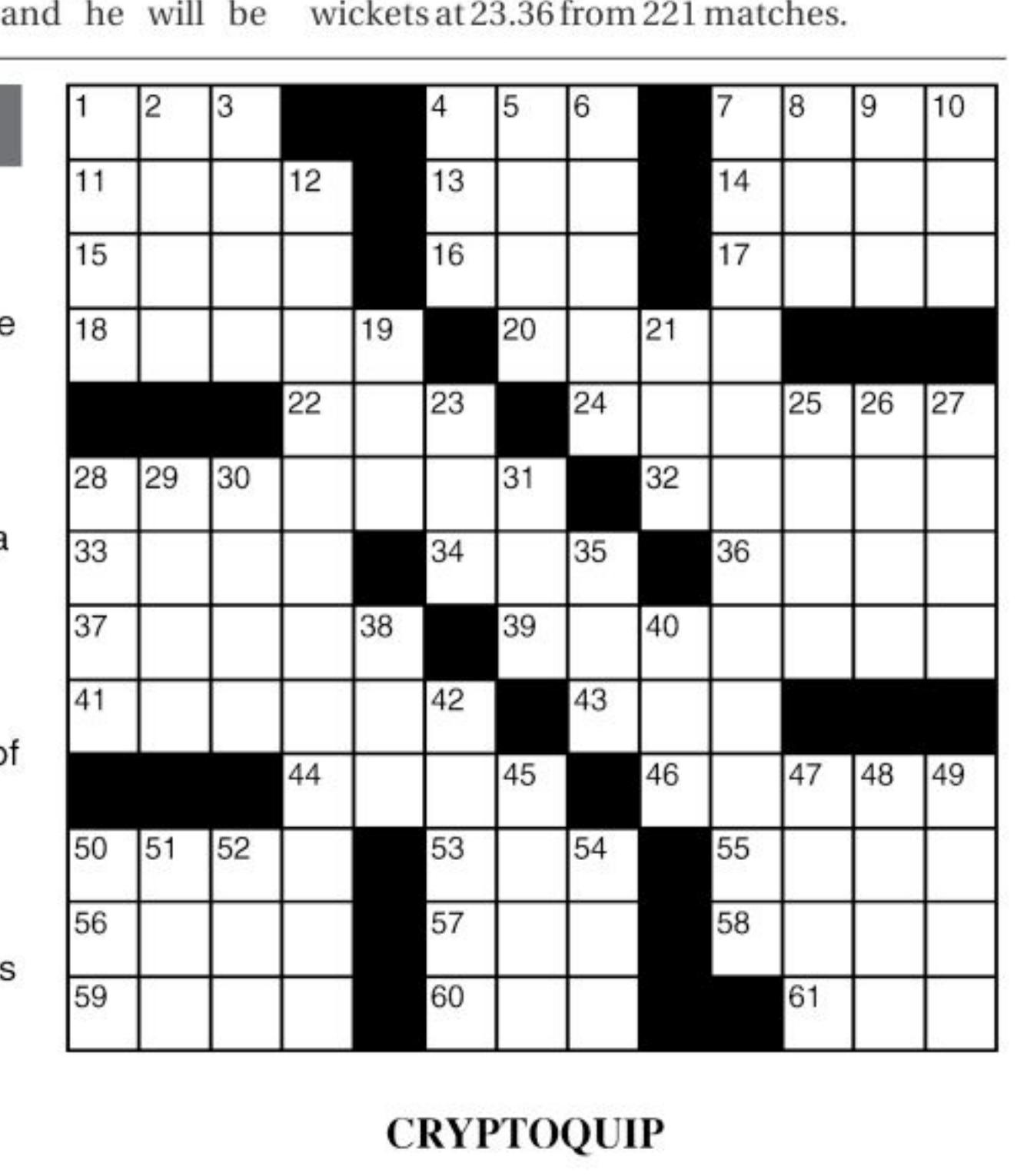
ACROSS

1 Boxing legend
4 Moreover
7 Soft drink
11 "Fiddler on the —"
13 Madam's counter-part
14 A deadly sin
15 New Zealand bird
16 Past Relinquish
17 Trap
20 Vagrant
22 America's uncle
24 Canal country
28 Ballroom dance
32 Improvise
33 Land measure
34 Cushion
36 Remedy
37 Coloration
38 Slip preventer near the tub

DOWN

21 54-Down's remark
23 Swab the deck
25 Grad
26 Actress Sorvino
27 Help in a crime
28 Quick Eight (Sp.)
29 Eight (Sp.)
30 Picture of health?
31 Bill
35 Slight touch
38 Compass dir.
40 —-la-la
42 Travel-ocity mascot
45 Helen's home
47 Lass
48 Stuffing herb
49 Horn sound
50 Unruly group
51 Exist
52 "Holy cow!"
54 Ram's mate

Solution time: 24 mins.



CRYPTOQUIP

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ZL Z UZTGOVMD UDQE, V

LDVT LDNX UDQBIG EJQAZAIX

BUN LDN GNIIV - E D Q T N .

Saturday's Cryptoquip: WOULD YOU BE ABLE

TO IDENTIFY WHICH DREADFULLY STINKY SMELLS THESE ARE? IT'S ALL REEK