

Star SPORT

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Schwarzer breaks 100-caps barrier

Australia goalkeeper Mark Schwarzer became the first Australian to win 100 international caps in the 3-0 friendly win over Lebanon on Thursday. He had one of his easier nights in the Australia goal and is targeting a third World Cup final appearance in Brazil in 2014. Schwarzer started his soccer career at Sydney club Marconi Stallions before moving to Germany in 1994 to play for Dynamo Dresden and Kaiserslautern. He moved to England in 1996 with Bradford City before making the switch to Premier League side Middlesbrough a year later.

- REUTERS



South Africa draw level



SPORTS REPORTER

The South Africa women's cricket team bounced back to level the series with a four-wicket victory in the second one-day international at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

The Bangladesh women's cricket team, who won the low-scoring first game by two wickets, were thumped by the Proteas as their modest total of 179 runs was not enough to hold the South Africans at bay.

Bangladesh won the toss and chose to bat and managed to post a fairly impressive 179 runs for the loss of 7 wickets in their stipulated fifty overs. The start was shaky, as it was in the first ODI as the home side found themselves three wickets down within a span of the first 15 overs.

While Sharmin Akhter provided the proper ignition before being castled by van Niekerk, it was the partnership of Lata Mondol and Farzana Haque that helped the hosts to set up a decent target for the away team.

Lata, who achieved her debut half-century, continued her impressive form with the bat following on from her heroics in the previous ODI.

South Africa's main concern once again stood to be giving away too many extras, 23 runs this time compared to the 17 that they had doled out in the last encounter.

Van Niekerk was the outstanding bowler for the Proteas

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Siddikur makes good ground

SPORTS REPORTER

Siddikur Rahman put on the best performance of the day with a six-under, but that was only good enough to put him on joint 11th position, seven shots off the leader at the end of the third round of the Worldwide Holdings Selangor Masters.

The 27-year old golfer, who was on par after the first two rounds, turned on the style yesterday with six birdies, three each on the front and back nine, at the Kota Permai Golf and Country Club.

However, Siddikur (6-under-210 overall) will have to make more ground on the last day today if he has to replicate last year's performance when he finished fifth.

Thailand's veteran star Thaworn Wiratchant holds the lead at 13-under-203 with Swedish rookie Jesper

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Tigers top in short match



SPORTS REPORTER

Mushfiqur Rahim's men posted a comfortable seven-wicket victory in their rain-interrupted first match against Barbados in the Trinidad Quadrangular T20 competition at the Queen's Park Oval, Port of Spain on Thursday night.

The match was reduced to an 8-over-a-side affair due to the delayed start following rain. In the curtailed over match, Barbados XI scored 65 runs for four wickets in eight overs. Kyle Mayers took charge smashing two sixes during his 6-ball 18 while Ashley Nurse contributed an unbeaten 15 off 6 balls that contained three boundaries.

Mashrafe Bin Mortaza conceded only eight runs in two overs without any success while his new ball partner Shafiul Islam was expensive giving away 19 runs in 2 overs. Pacer Abul Hasan captured two wickets for 14 runs in two overs and left-arm spinner Shakib Al Hasan took one for 11 runs in 1 over.

In reply, BCB XI easily reached the target by scoring 71 runs for the loss of three wickets in 6.3 overs. Shakib opened the innings with Tamim, who made a run-a-ball 14, and smashed one four and a six during his 4-ball 13 while captain Mushfiqur added 18 off 13 balls with the help of three boundaries.

Riyad smote one boundary and a six to score an unbeaten 13 from 6 balls and Ziaur Rahman was not out on 8 off 4 balls that also included an over-boundary.

Kemar Roach bowled one over and gave away 13 runs without any success while his new ball partner Ryan Hinds took two wickets for 22 runs in 2 overs.

The Tigers, who are playing the tournament under the banner of BCB XI, were scheduled to play their second match against Afghanistan on Friday night at

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Who will be the lucky 12?



SPORTS REPORTER

The Airtel Rising Stars football tournament might have been completed yesterday with Khulna Division emerging champions by beating Dhaka Division-2 by a single goal but the real attraction begins today as footballers bid to fulfil their dream to visit and train at Manchester United.

12 booters will be selected from a pool of 200 who will train and play today and tomorrow at the Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Protisthan under the watchful eyes of the three-member coaching staff of Manchester United Soccer School (MUSS).

Kevin O'Conwell, Mick Bennett and Mike McClean arrived in the city on Thursday from Sri Lanka and watched the 60-minute final match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday but all three will be more focused today and tomorrow as they bid to sift through the 200 or so U-16 talents who have come to this stage after beating numerous odds.

The Airtel Rising Stars programme which offers up the chance of a 7-day training at the Soccer School of Manchester United has created a huge buzz among the youths. An unbelievable 60,000 football crazy youths had registered their names for this opportunity. This comes at a time when the popularity of the game in the country is waning day-by-day.

The coaches of Bangladesh Football Federation had first selected 16 football-

ers from each of the 64 districts from a huge quantity of participants. Selections were completed through short trials and the district teams played among them before emerging divisional champions. After that divisional teams were formed, and these comprised the best 25 from each division.

The 200 selected footballers of the eight divisions could hardly learn anything from the Airtel Rising Stars programme as the youngsters were really busy with the matches at different stages to prove themselves before the players of two finalists got some tips from their respective coaches ahead of Friday's final at the BNS.

As there had been no arrangement of training for the youngsters at the any level in the tournament, the local coaches could hardly make any judgements on who the future stars could be. It was then left to the teammates who proved to be in the best position to judge their opponents and team members.

It was understandable then, that most players picked out their peers who had already been in the system for a long time. Most players who their peers identified as stars had already been picked for the national teams such as U-13, U-14 and U-15 teams. However, there were some exceptions to this rule.

In eye of the players, defenders Mithu, Ripon, Shohag and Saikat and goalkeeper Rony are the best players of Dhaka Division-1 team with Mithu, Shohag and Rony playing

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PHOTO: STAR

Khulna Division and Dhaka Division-2 players, who became champions and runners-up respectively, pose with their trophies after the Airtel Rising Stars football tournament final at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.



PHOTO: REUTERS

Defending champion Novak Djokovic of Serbia exults after beating Juan Martin Del Potro of Argentina in the US Open quarterfinal at Flushing Meadows on Thursday.

SAFF WOMEN'S FOOTBALL Bangladesh lose against India

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh women's football team lost to defending champions India by 3-0 goals in the opening match of the 2nd SAFF Women's Football Championship at the CR & FC ground in Colombo yesterday.

Bangladesh kept India under pressure in the first half and created a couple of chances but could not capitalise on them. The match was played under heavy downpour and was halted for more than half an hour during the first half. The first half ended goalless.

Indian women stepped up the attack in the second half and took the lead in the 64th minute, courtesy of a perfect strike from inside the box by Kamala Devi which took goalie Sabina Akhter by surprise.

Bembem Devi doubled India's margin in the 77th minute, with a powerful left footed shot, utilising a pass from Sasmita Mallik. Alochana Senapati put the final nail in the Bangladesh coffin in the 90th minute to make it 3-0.

Bangladesh will play against minnows Bhutan in their next match on Sunday.

Perils await the Djoker

AFP, New York



Defending champion Novak Djokovic tackles Spanish bulldozer David Ferrer for a US Open final spot Saturday determined to preserve the Grand Slam stranglehold of himself, Roger Federer and Rafael Nadal.

The world's top three have confidently parcelled out 29 of the last 30 majors between them but, for the first time in more than eight years, a Grand Slam has reached the last-four stage without either Federer or Nadal still involved.

Federer, the 17-time Grand Slam title winner, was knocked out in the quarterfinals while Nadal, the holder of 11 majors, never even made it to New York, forced to rest his increasingly troublesome knees at home in Spain.

That leaves 25-year-old Djokovic, battling to win a sixth major, as the sole survivor of the golden generation at Flushing Meadows.

The Serb has certainly looked the part, reaching a sixth successive US Open semi-final -- and 10th in a row at all Grand Slams -- without dropping a set.

On Thursday he demolished 2009 champion Juan Martin Del Potro 6-2, 7-6 (7/3), 6-4 in the quarter-final to set-up a date against Ferrer, whom he has beaten eight times in 13 meetings with a 7-2 hardcourt advantage.

If he gets through, either Andy Murray, four-times a runner-up at the majors, or Tomas Berdych, Federer's conqueror and a major finalist just once, will be waiting in the Sunday's championship match.

"Murray, Berdych, Ferrer, myself, we're all top 10 players. Maybe for some people it was surprising to see Roger lose because he's been so consistent and dominant a player in the last couple of years," said Djokovic.

"He's always expected to get to at least semi-finals of every Grand Slam. But Berdych deserved to win. He came up with incredible tennis. I have never seen him play that well."

Djokovic said he would not be under-estimating Ferrer who has equalled his best Grand Slam performance of a run to the semi-finals in New York in 2007.

"David is a fighter. He's one of the biggest competitors we have in the game. People overlook him," said the world number two.

Meanwhile, Murray admits he has nothing but respect for

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CHESS OLYMPIAD Both teams lead

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh's both teams, men's and women's, were leading by 2-0 games in the 10th round of the 40th Chess Olympiad in Istanbul on Friday. Men's team were leading against 109th ranked Thailand, thanks to victories by GM Niaz Murshed and GM Enamul Hossain while Nazrana Khan Eva and Sharmin Shirin Sultana made sure women's team too took a 2-0 lead against Ireland, by the time this report was filed.

Earlier on Thursday, Bangladesh women's team beat Jordan by 3-1 points while the men's team drew 2-2 with Dominican Republic in the ninth round.

After nine rounds, men's team had 18 board points while women's team had 16.5 board points.