

Star SPORT

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007 visits Andy

Scotland's own Sean Connery and Alex Ferguson crashed Andy Murray's post-match news conference after he won his U.S. Open semifinal Saturday. "Excuse me for interrupting," Connery, the Oscar-winning actor best known for his portrayal of Ian Fleming's James Bond, said right after the Scottish tennis star answered a question about getting a day of rest before the final. He then introduced Murray to Ferguson, the Manchester United manager. Murray and his mother, Judy, posed for pictures with the two. The two watched Murray beat Tomas Berdych 5-7, 6-2, 6-1, 7-6 (7) to reach



Hosts fall flat

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

If one were to measure the performance level of the Bangladesh women's cricket team in the three-match ODI series against South Africa then the all-important last match, which South Africa won by seven wickets at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday by chasing a paltry target of 61, would definitely be considered the worst.

Right from winning the toss and choosing to bat on a pitch that aided the South African pace bowlers to some abysmal fielding by the women in green, it was a match that Salma Khatun and co. will want to forget.

After deciding to bat first, the Bangladeshi players found themselves in all sorts of trouble courtesy of some good bowling by the Proteas. 23-year-old medium pacer Shabnim Ismail was the chief destroyer as she ran through the Bangladesh middle order. She finished the game with four wickets and was adjudged the player of the match.

Disaster struck as Bangladesh lost half their side with just 27 runs on board. Lata Mondol, who was the home-side's in-form player this series, failed to repeat her heroics as she was run-out for just one.

In reply, the South Africans initially found it a little difficult to cope with the Bangladeshi spinners. The home side, however, continued their bad run on the field as they dropped three catches, two of which were sitters.

The pitch was a lot easier to bat on once it dried out and the Proteas took full advantage. Trisha Chetty, who top-scored with 30 runs, hit a flurry of boundaries to take South

Africa home.

Salma Khatun picked up two wickets for the home side and briefly troubled the visitors. Her performance, however, wasn't good enough to change a rather inevitable outcome -- an easy victory for the visitors.

The Bangladesh women's team will next play three T20Is against the same opponents on September 11, 12 and 14 at the same venue.

SCORES IN BRIEF

BANGLADESH: 60 all out in 24.1 overs (Rumana 16; Shabnim 4-10, Kapp 2-05)

SOUTH AFRICA: 61-3 in 20.4 overs (Chetty 30, Benade 21; Salma Khatun 2-20)

Result: South Africa won by seven wickets.

'Not just a walk in the park'

SPORTS REPORTER

South Africa's tour of Bangladesh didn't exactly start according to plan. They only managed to score 75 runs in the first game and had to work hard to win the second. The deciding game, however, brought the best out of the Proteas.

Salma Khatun, captain of the Bangladeshi side, was expectedly disappointed about their performance in the last game, in which they were all out for 60. "We would have put in a much better show had our batters survived the initial half an hour or so. We hope to perform better in the upcoming T20 games."

Despite the seven-wicket defeat, Mamatha Maben, consultant of the Bangladesh

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Bangladesh women's cricket team captain Salma Khatun dejectedly walks back to the pavilion during the 3rd and final ODI against South Africa at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR



Andy Murray of Great Britain thanks the heavens after winning his US Open semifinal against Tomas Berdych of Czech Republic at Flushing Meadows in New York on Saturday.

It's Novak v Andy final

AFP, New York

Defending champion Novak Djokovic swept into his third consecutive US Open final, setting up a title showdown with Britain's Andy Murray, with a 2-6, 6-1, 6-4, 6-2 win over Spain's David Ferrer on Sunday.

Ferrer had led 5-2 in the first set overnight when the semifinal was suspended due to violent storms which battered New York, but Djokovic thrived under clear blue skies on Sunday, allowing the Spaniard just eight more games.

The victory gave the second-seeded Serb a year-leading 60th win and extended his winning run at hardcourt Grand Slams

to 27 matches.

Djokovic will be aiming for a sixth major in Monday's final while third-seed Murray, who trails the Serb 8-6 in career meetings, is bidding to become Britain's first men's Grand Slam champion since Fred Perry in 1936.

Olympic champion Andy Murray withstood blustery conditions Saturday to beat Tomas Berdych and reach the US Open final.

Third seed Murray advanced by defeating the Czech sixth seed 5-7, 6-2, 6-1, 7-6 (9/7).

"It was brutal," Murray said, after a tornado warning had been issued earlier in the day.

"Some of the hardest conditions I have ever played in, and I come from Scotland so

SAFF WOMEN'S FOOTBALL BD scrape past Bhutan

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh scraped to a 1-0 win over minnows Bhutan in their second match of the 2nd SAFF Women's Football Championship at the Ceylon Rugby and Football Ground in Colombo yesterday.

Suinu Pru Marma struck the all-important goal for Bangladesh in the 19th minute.

Bhutanese players played defensive football and managed to foil relentless attacks from Bangladesh, apart from the Suinu effort.

In the other match of the day, India thrashed Sri Lanka by 5-0 goals. Bangladesh will have to beat Sri Lanka in their last group match on Tuesday if they are to qualify for the semifinals. A draw in that match will mean the hosts will qualify as they have a superior goal difference over Bangladesh.

Bangladesh had beaten Bhutan by 9-0 goals in the inaugural edition of the SAFF Women's Football Championship in Cox's Bazar in 2010.

SUB-JUNIOR CHESS Siam takes solo lead

SPORTS REPORTER

Current sub-junior runner-up Ikramul Haque Siam is now in solo lead of the Azim Uddin Bhuiyan Trust 32nd National Sub-Junior Chess Championship with maximum 6 points after the end of the sixth round at the Chess federation hall room yesterday.

Siam beat rival and national junior champion Abdullah Al Saif in this round to grab the solo lead. Six players including Abdullah Al Saif are in second position with 5 points each. They are: Mohammad Fahad Rahman, Saad Junayed, Tanzina Akter Tani, Rafsan Bin Omer and Mridul Kanti Buddhah.

Men's best finish ever

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh's men's chess team recorded their best ever performance ever by finishing 33rd in the in the 40th Chess Olympiad that concluded at the Istanbul Expo Centre in Turkey yesterday.

Their previous best finish was 34th in 2002 Chess Olympiad, while the last edition in 2010 in Moscow saw them finish a disappointing 73rd.

This time Bangladesh team, buoyed by the return of the two Grand Masters Enamul Hossain Rajib and Abdullah Al Rakib, turned the table to collect 26 board points and 14 match points. Bangladesh finished as the 7th best Asian country, 9 places ahead of mighty India. They defeated Bosnia and Herzegovina by 2.5-1.5 points in their last round on Sunday.

In the last round matches, GM Ziaur

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Rahman defeated GM Bojan Kurajica while Abdullah Al Rakib, Rajib and Niaz Murshed, all GMs, drew their boards against GM Emir Dizdarevic, IM Dalibor Stojanovic and IM Bosko Tomic respectively.

Interestingly enough, Rajib and Rakib, who refrained from the game for a couple of years, were the best performers for Bangladesh with 6.5 points each from 10 rounds they played.

Armenia became champion, Russia runner-up and Ukraine finished third.

The women's team from Bangladesh too did fairly well as they finished in the 52nd position out of 125 countries. In the last round, they drew with Turkmenistan by 2-2 points. The women's team collected 24.5 board points and 12 match points. They became the 12th best performing country from Asia.

In the last round, Bangladesh's Sharmin Sultana Shirin and IWM Rani Hamid

School hockey starts in Ctg

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

A five-day long School Hockey League featuring six schools from the metropolitan started in Chittagong yesterday.

In the inaugural match at M A Aziz Stadium, J M Sen School defeated Shah Waliullah Institute 5-0 while in the second match Chittagong University School and College defeated Hate Khari School and College 2-1.

Earlier, AJM Nasiruddin, general secretary of Chattogram Jela Krira Sangstha (CJKS) inaugurated the league as chief guest where Ershadul Hoque, managing director of Lia Properties Limited, the sponsoring organisation was present as special guest.

12 in the theatre of dreams

Football

ANISUR RAHMAN

Having sat in orderly queues on the football pitch at the Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Protisthan, some 200 budding footballers were staring up intently at the temporary dais. The only common emotion emanating from them was anxiety. Within minutes, the five-week wait would be over and the dream of 12 young boys would come true -- they would get a chance to visit and train at the Manchester United Soccer School under the Airtel Rising Stars Program.

Like all announcements, this too was preceded by drama as the

announcer milked his time on the stage. Receiving the first slip of paper he looked at it and only said "Mohammed". The youngsters clearly didn't have time for this game though and when "Sujoy" was mentioned closely after the first name, there was suddenly an even more rapt silence.

Mohammed Sujoy was stunned for a second, but as all eyes drifted to him, he raised his fist jubilantly in the air and punched it a few times. It was a football celebration for the ages -- the dream of visiting the Red Devils would now come true.

"Initially I could not believe what I heard," said Sujoy. "I thought that maybe there was someone else by that

name, but when no one else responded, I went up to the stage," said the boy who hails from Kuliarchar of Kishorganj.

"It is the biggest achievement in my life and I think it is a new start for me," said Sujoy who lives in his grandmother's house ever since his father passed away in 2006.

Razib Hossain, the son of Lungi seller Abdul Malek, burst into tears when his name was announced as the seventh footballer. The student of class seven had sat for his final examination on Saturday and was waiting for the result.

"I didn't expect to get a chance but the dream has come true. Now I can meet Rooney and Nani," said Razib.

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Tigers lose final T20

Afghanistan emerge champions

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh frittered away a golden opportunity to win the Trinidad Quadrangular T20 competition when they let Trinidad & Tobago escape from the perils of 12 for five to lose their last game of the competition by four wickets at the Queen's Park Oval in Port of Spain on Saturday.

Instead, it was Afghanistan who emerged champions by beating Barbados by five wickets earlier in the day at the same venue. A victory over Trinidad & Tobago would have

given Bangladesh the trophy as they had won their first two matches -- against Afghanistan and Barbados -- but the loss meant that Afghanistan finished on top by dint of a superior net run-rate in the league-based competition.

The Tigers, officially playing the tournament as BCB XI, seemed likely winners for more than half their match against the home team. They had scored 124 after being put in to bat -- a decent score considering the conditions and the Tigers' battery of spinners -- and had sent back half the opposition batsmen with only twelve runs on the board.

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The 12 delighted rising stars pose for a photo at BKSP yesterday, after being chosen through the Airtel Rising Stars Program to visit and train at the Manchester United Soccer School in England.

PHOTO: STA