

Star SPORT

DHAKA TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 11, 2012, E-MAIL: sports@thedailystar.net

Keeper scores stunning goal

Frem goalkeeper Jakob Kohler proved to be his side's secret weapon in a Danish Second Division East match against Birkerød. In the 92nd minute, with Birkerød up 1-0, Kohler came forward for Frem's last-ditch effort to equalize off a corner kick.

After the ball was headed away from goal and a Frem cross was floated Kohler's way, he executed a beautiful overhead kick and, to the surprise of everyone, scored an equalizer. The Frem supporters went nuts and Kohler celebrated by doing some gymnastics before taking a celebratory jog back to his net.



Mixed buildup for Tigers



NAIMUL KARIM

The defeat against Trinidad & Tobago in the last match of the quadrangular series was the worst possible way to end the Tigers' preparation for the T20 world cup. The tournament -- won by Afghanistan -- has reaffirmed the fact that, on a given day, any team can emerge victorious in this format of the game.

Despite the series loss, chief selector Akram Khan remained positive about Bangladesh's performance. "Anything can happen in T20 cricket. The loss will perhaps encourage our players to work harder in the world cup," he said. Khan further said that the team is in a much better position to play T20 cricket today, courtesy of the preparatory matches that they played in the last couple of months.

He was also happy about the individual performances of a number of players in the team, and Mohammad Ashraful's in particular. The game against Trinidad saw Ashraful score a 21-ball 30, which included four boundaries and a six. He had earlier scored 47 runs in quick time against Afghanistan. "It's good to see our prime players coming to form right before the tournament. I hope they can carry the confidence into the world

cup," said Khan.

Amongst the bowlers, young Abul Hasan picked up three wickets in the series and will definitely be in contention for a place in the starting eleven. Abdul Razzaq was the pick of the bowlers for Bangladesh on this tour. He picked up four wickets in two games and bowled at a decent economy rate of below five.

The Tigers, who'll reach Colombo on Wednesday, will be playing two more warm-up games before the start of the tournament. They'll face Zimbabwe on September 15 and Ireland on the 17th. The cricketers will then play their group matches against New Zealand and Pakistan -- at the Pallekele International Cricket Stadium -- on September 21 and 25 respectively.

The last three months saw the cricketers play three different T20 tours, starting with the tri-nation series in Zimbabwe. While the Men in Green did beat both South Africa and Zimbabwe in the series, they failed to get a berth in the finals. The European tour saw Bangladesh whitewash Ireland but lose one game each to Netherlands and Scotland.

While certain analysts claim that Bangladesh's failure to defeat teams like the Netherlands and Trinidad are warning signs of a possible catastrophe in the upcoming world cup, others state that the different

SEE PAGE 17 COL 5



PHOTO: AFP

Serena Williams of the United States hugs the championship trophy after defeating Victoria Azarenka of Belarus in their US Open final at Flushing Meadows in New York on Sunday.

Minister discusses BCB amendments



SPORTS REPORTER

State Minister for Youth and Sports Ahad Ali Sarkar met with different stakeholders yesterday to discuss about the amended constitution of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB).

The minister first met with district, division and club officials, who talked in favour of approving the amended constitution as it is.

While the officials of CWAB (Cricketers Welfare Association of Bangladesh) voiced in favour of representation of the former cricketers in the board and they requested the minister to keep the clause which empowers 15 former cricketers with councillorship in the board.

According to sources, the minister didn't make any comments rather he learnt the different opinions regarding the amended constitution.

Radical changes had been brought to the constitution in the last Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) of the BCB last March and the abolishment of the clauses, which gave 15 former cricketers councillorship in the board, generated widespread condemnation in the cricket arena.

As per the amended constitution, the post of president will also be democratically contested and the post of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) turns into Chief Operating Officer

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4

Serena's Summer Slam

AFP, New York



Serena Williams captured her 15th Grand Slam title and fourth career US Open crown with a 6-2, 2-6, 7-5 victory Sunday over World No. 1 Victoria Azarenka.

In the first three-set final at the US Open since 1995, American fourth seed Williams joined her sister Venus and Steffi Graf as the only women to win Wimbledon, the Olympics and the US Open in the same year.

Pushed to her limit for the only time in the Flushing Meadows fortnight, Williams was down a break twice in the third set but battled back to win after two hours and 18 minutes when Azarenka swatted a backhand long.

"I honestly can't believe I won," Williams said. "I was preparing my runner-up speech. I'm so shocked. It's remarkable."

Williams, who turns 31 on September 26, became the second-oldest US Open women's champion in the Open era. Australian Margaret Court was one month past her 31st birthday when she won the 1973 title.

Not since Martina Navratilova in 1987 had a woman won the US Open title past her 30th birthday.

Taking home a top prize of 1.9 million dollars, Williams won her 45th career title after finishing second to Australia's

Samantha Stosur in 2011 following a year of health problems that included blood clots on her lungs.

Williams won prior US Open titles in 1999, 2002 and 2008 and added Grand Slam crowns at the 2002 French Open, the 2003, 2005, 2007, 2009 and 2010 Australian Opens and Wimbledon in 2002, 2003, 2009, 2010 and 2012.

Olympic bronze medalist Azarenka, whose 1-9 record against Williams in prior matches included losses in this year's Olympic and Wimbledon semi-finals, won her first Grand Slam title at this year's Australian Open.

But no women's top seed has won a US Open title since Justine Henin in 2007 and none has won a Grand Slam title since Serena Williams in 2010 at Wimbledon.

"Serena deserves to win. She showed how true a champion she is," Azarenka said. "I definitely gave it all today. Stepping off this court I will have no regrets."

Williams, in a third set at the US Open for the first time since 2006, exchanged early breaks with Azarenka in the final set.

Azarenka, unbeaten in 12 prior three-set matches this year, broke Williams at love for a 4-3 lead, but was broken back when she served for the match in the 10th game, netting

SEE PAGE 17 COL 8



Bangladesh women's cricket team players go through a regulation stretching exercise during their training session at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday. The Tigresses will take on South Africa women's team in the first T20I today.

Focus on fielding

BD-SA women's 1st T20I today

SPORTS REPORTER



Having lost the three-match ODI series against South Africa, the Bangladesh women's cricket team will hope to make amends in the upcoming T20 games -- namely improve their fielding and batting in what will be his second T20 series this year. The match will begin at 10:15 am and will be telecast live on ATN Bangla.

The last match of the ODI series saw Bangladesh drop three catches, an unpleasant statistic especially when the top order of the team has constantly failed to make a mark. The home side will try to draw some encouragement from the first ODI, in which they beat the Proteas by two wickets.

"T20 cricket is an unpredictable game. We can compete if we hold on to our catches," said Oshadee Weerasinghe, coach of the Bangladeshi team.

The South Africans, on the other hand, will be looking to test their squad ahead of the T20 world cup. The visiting captain had earlier stated that while they were happy with a victory in the ODI series, the T20 matches would garner their main focus.

"We are looking to be a little more aggressive up front. We will try to score around 120 or even more, depending on the pitch," said skipper Mignon Du Preez.

The Proteas will be hoping that their pace bowlers can put in a similar performance in the T20 series and that their players get adjusted to the 'subcontinental' wicket. "We want to get used to the pitches on this side of the world. I don't think the pitches in Sri Lanka will be too different," said Du Preez.

BANGLADESH SQUAD: Salma Khatun (Captain), Ayesha Rahman, Sharmin Akter Supta, Rumana Ahmed, Farzana Hoque, Jahanara Alam, Lata Mondol, Nuzhat Tasnim, Khadijatul Kobra, Ritu Moni, Lily Rani, Tajia Akter, Sanjida Islam, Tithi Rani

Miron, Azad lose FIFA badge

SPORTS REPORTER

Country's top three referees have lost their FIFA badges after they failed to pass their annual examination on Sunday but two national referees secured the prestigious FIFA badges which gave them right to conduct international matches in 2013.

Abdul Hannan Miron, Azad Rahman and Bharat Chandra were the three mentionable names who lost their badges. National referees Jasimuddin and Jalauddin also failed to pass the FIFA examination held in Bangladesh on Sunday.

Only Tayeb Hasan Shamsuddin retained his FIFA badge while Mizanur Rahman and Bhuvan Mohan Tarafder secured the FIFA referee badges for the first time.

Before the start of the professional football league in November, the former FIFA badge-referees will have to prove their fitness to

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4



PHOTO: AFP

Fireworks light up the sky above the London Olympic Stadium during the closing ceremony of the London Paralympic Games on Sunday.