

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE  
**First win for Spartak**

AFP, Moscow

Russian side Spartak Moscow gained their first win of this season's Champions League campaign after losing their first two matches with a hard fought 2-1 win over Portuguese opponents Benfica here on Tuesday.

First-half goals by Rafael Carioca and an own goal by his Brazilian compatriot Jardel gave the hosts the much needed three points after two successive 3-2 defeats away at Barcelona and then at home to Scottish champions Celtic.

Benfica, who had levelled through Lima, look highly unlikely to repeat their achievement of reaching the Last 16 last season as they have just a point after three games.

Barcelona host Celtic later with the Catalan giants on six points and the Scottish side on four.

Spartak caught Benfica napping in the third minute, taking full advantage of a poor pass by Nemanja Matic just inside the hosts half.

**NSC saves**

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true decentralisation of Bangladesh cricket.

The absence of such a provision is perhaps the only weakness of the present constitution.

Today, the new BCB president Nazmul Hassan Papon will have his first board meeting and he will definitely discuss the constitution. Cricket lovers hope he will at least keep in mind that the board's constitution is not changed and mutilated like the constitution of our country.

**37 called**

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said coach Saiful Bari Titu.

Defender Kesto Kumar and midfielder Mohammad Jamal are also virtually new faces in the national squad as they have previously been in the preliminary squad of the national team.

The 37-member preliminary squad comprised 17 players from Federation Cup champions Sheikh Russel and runners-up Sheikh Jamal DC while ten came from Abahani, six from Mohammedan, two from Team BJMC and one each from Muktijoddha Sangsads and Brothers Union.

**Johnson still**

FROM PAGE 16  
reporters at Bellerive. "I think he's started the season really well in terms of Sheffield Shield cricket.

"He bowled very well in our tour to Dubai in the one-day tournament."



Perth Scorchers batsman and England veteran Paul Collingwood plays a square drive on his first appearance in the Champions League T20 against Auckland Aces at the SuperSport Park in Centurion yesterday.

PHOTO: INTERNET

## Aces fail to pace it up

### Daredevils, Titans in semifinals

INTERNET, Centurion

**CHAMPIONS LEAGUE**  
Auckland Aces let slip a slim chance to edge Nashua Titans out of the Champions League, crashing to a 16-run defeat to Perth Scorchers at the SuperSport Park on Tuesday.

Perth were already out of the title hunt, and the best they could achieve from this game was beating Auckland and thus put Delhi Daredevils and the Titans in the semifinals.

Having restricted Perth to 140-7, Auckland needed to chase down the runs in under 15 overs to improve on their poor net run rate of -1.035. A quick win would have brought them level with the Titans on points and ahead of them on run rate.

But the Aces' chase never took off.

The reassuring presence of Martin Guptill and Azhar Mahmood in the middle took the Aces to 61-1 in the 10th over. But both batsmen then fell trying to attack left-arm spinner Michael Beer.

Perth used the wickets to tighten things further, and on a sluggish batting conditions, the required rate shot past

Auckland's grasp.

Perth Scorchers, who were runners-up to Sydney Sixers in the Big Bash League back home, finished the tournament with a distinctively un-Australian record of three losses from four games.

The Aussie outfit left out the Marsh brothers, Shaun and Mitchell, and pacer Nathan Rimmington, who'd done well in their three games of the competition.

This allowed England veteran Paul Collingwood a hit and his 38 along with captain Marcus North's 37 formed the core of the Perth innings.

The wicket and outfield were on the slower side and Perth found it difficult to lift their scoring rate. Kyle Mills bowled three overs for six runs after which Michael Bates took 4-34.

#### SCORES IN BRIEF

**PERTH SCORCHERS:** 140 for 7 (Collingwood 38, North 37, Katich 21, Beaton 22; Bates 4-34)

**AUCKLAND ACES:** 124 for 8 (Guptill 36, Mahmood 23, Munro 23; Beer 3-13, Mennie 2-23)

**Result:** Perth Scorchers won by 16 runs.

## Darker days await Lance

### Cycling

AFP, Paris

World cycling's decision to strip Lance Armstrong of his record seven Tour de France wins could cost the shamed US rider millions, amid calls for tougher action to restore the sport's shattered image.

The International Cycling Union (UCI) on Monday gave its backing to a damning US Anti-Doping Agency (USADA) dossier that placed the Texan at the heart of the biggest doping programme in sport, erasing his record back to August 1, 1998.

But as the 41-year-old's major triumphs were scrubbed from the history books and officials vowed to up the fight against banned substances, moves began to recoup his prize money, bonuses and

other pay-outs.

Tour de France director Christian Prudhomme on Monday said they would seek the repayment of nearly 2.95 million euros (3.8 million dollars) from Armstrong's successes in cycling's most gruelling and celebrated race between 1999 and 2005.

During Armstrong's dominant period, Tailwind Sports, the parent company of his US Postal Service team, took out a policy with sports insurance firm SCA Promotions, paying a premium to cover bonuses paid for his Tour victories.

SCA withheld a 5-million-dollar bonus due after Armstrong's sixth Tour win in 2004 because of doping allegations in Europe. The rider took the Dallas, Texas, firm to court and was awarded the cash, plus 2.5 million dollars in legal fees and interest.

And it has already started to pay off in the beginning of the season through clinching the maiden title of the Federation Cup.

"It has been proved that the inclusion of experienced and national players was a right decision," said Sheikh Russel KC president Nurul Alam Chowdhury over the phone from China yesterday.

"Look at the semifinal and final, it would not have been possible to come back in those matches without the national and experienced players after conceding a lead in both games," said Chowdhury.

Coach Maruful Haque believes the spectators will see an improved Sheikh Russel in the upcoming Bangladesh Premier League as they have kept their sight on the remaining domestic titles.

After failing to win a major title at any stage of top-level football since their appearance in the 2003-4 season, the management of Sheikh Russel realised that no success would be achieved until a team is formed

with the players who have match temperament as well as experience of winning trophies in past. And they gave their dream a real shape after roping in nine national players along with some experienced players.

With the crowd-pulling traditional powerhouses Abahani and Mohammedan failing to reach the season's curtain-raising tournament final for the second consecutive season, the Federation Cup final between Sheikh Russel and Sheikh Jamal is apparently indicating a new order in country's football.

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## Russel enjoy the morning after

FROM PAGE 16  
The players and officials along with their neighbours had a late-night celebration at the temporary club tent situated besides Hosni Dalan in Chankharpul. The players, coaching staff and officials were awarded a dinner by the club management at a

city hotel for their triumph.

"It was a big day for all of us -- club, players, officials and fans. We enjoyed it very nicely as the neighbours of Old Dhaka also joined our DJ Party that continued till late night," said captain Biplob Bhattacharjee.

The players were also immediately rewarded with US\$ 6,000 (Tk 5 lakh).

The Blue and White outfit with a bunch of national and experienced booters put up a brilliant performance to come from behind to beat Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club 2-1 in the Federation Cup final to begin the season on the right foot.

"The onus was on our shoulder to prove ourselves and we did just that.

Now our focus is on the professional football league to prove that we have come here to stay," said veteran Biplob, a national discard goalkeeper who has a vast experience of playing for big teams like Abahani, Mohammedan and Muktijoddha.

Sheikh Russel also saw the rebirth of star striker Zahid Hasan Emily who topped the score list with seven goals as the national striker was almost in the wilderness for the last two seasons.

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## Dead rubber abandoned due to rain

INTERNET, Centurion

The final group fixture of the 2012 Champions League T20 between Delhi Daredevils and Nashua Titans was abandoned without a ball being bowled, after being washed out by rain at the Supersport Park on Tuesday.

The game was rendered inconsequential after both teams made it to the semi-finals, courtesy Auckland's loss to Perth by 16 runs in the first match of the day. This was the fourth game in the tournament that failed to generate a result because of rain.

Delhi Daredevils will now take on the Highveld Lions in the first semifinal on October 25 in Durban, while the Sydney Sixers will take on the Nashua Titans on October 26 in Centurion.

### Warne will

FROM PAGE 16  
inaugural season the same year and has continued playing with them.

"I have to never say 'never' because in 2007 I said I'd never play cricket again," Warne told reporters in Melbourne.

"But 18 months later the IPL came up, so that was something that interested me, to captain-coach and do it the way I always thought it should be done."

Warne, who remains Australia's highest ever wicket-taker with 708 Test scalps, said each time he thought he might have played for the last time, another competition came along that sparked his interest.

"I do love cricket, I'm passionate about the game and if I can help Australian cricket in any way, shape or form then I will," he said.

Warne returned to training on Tuesday ahead of the BBL, which will kick off on December 7 when the Melbourne Stars play the Melbourne Renegades.

### Zia NIT

FROM PAGE 16  
with seven points while FM Taibur Rahman, FM Mehdhi Hasan Parag, FM DEbaraj Chatterjee and FM Nasir Ahmed finished 44th, 47th, 48th and 50th respectively.

Taibur, Parag, Debaraj and Nasir earned 6.5 points each.

CHITTAGONG vs DHAKA METRO  
The batsman-friendly wicket at Bogra saw five centuries and one double-century, including hundreds in each innings by Tamim Iqbal. The dashing left-hander's exhilarating innings ended the game with

a bang. Tasamul Haque was the other centurion of the day with an unbeaten 135 for Dhaka Metro, who declared the innings after scoring a mammoth 632. In reply, Chittagong played out the day with the score at 163 for 6. Tamim was declared the man of the match for his twin tons.

Rangpur vs Sylhet

The last day of the game witnessed half centuries by Nasir Hossain and Sohravardi Shuvo as Rangpur ended the day at 258 for 6. Enamul Haque Jr staked his claim for a call-back to the national side with six wickets in the game.

Naeem Islam, who scored a total of 181 runs in the match, including an unbeaten 137 in the first innings, was declared the man of the match.

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