



Jewel Ahmed sets the pace on way to setting a record in the 400m individual medley in the National Swimming Championships at the National Swimming Complex in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

CCC XI win

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Chittagong City Corporation (CCC) XI made a solid start in the Chittagong Premier Division Football League defeating Muktijoddha Sangsad 1-0 at the MA Aziz Stadium yesterday.

CCC XI's foreign recruit Ejike Francis scored the only goal of the match in the 12th minute.

Chittagong Jela Krira Sangstha (CJKS) and Chittagong District Football Association (CDFA) are jointly organising the football league.

Earlier AJM Nasiruddin, general secretary of CJKS, inaugurated the competition which is being participated by 10 teams.

Bangabandhu kabaddi

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Women's Kabaddi team made a winning start in the Bangabandhu Invitational Women's Kabaddi Tournament in Kolkata as they defeated Biddyasagar Sonapur Kabaddi Club yesterday.

Bangladesh recorded a 29-13 win against Sonapur KC with two 'lonas'.

A Jewel

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skipped the 400m medley due to a lack of preparation owing to his professional training, even though he would compete against Jewel in today's 100m backstroke, which is the favourite event of both the swimmers.

While other swimmers complained about the lack of preparation and cold water for their poor performance, Jewel ruled out the excuses saying, "It doesn't matter whether it is winter or summer, rather it depends on the individual and how he prepares for the competition."

Jewel's feat also put Bangladesh Army on top of the medals table at the end of the first day with four gold, four silver and one bronze medals followed by Bangladesh Navy with two gold, two silver and one bronze medals. Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Protisthan were in the third position with two gold, four silver and six bronze medals.

MSC keep

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Duronto Rajshahi were in second position with 10 match points as they beat Air Destiny Ltd in straight 4-0 games.

Titus Club and Access Group Chess Club were jointly in the third position with 8 match points each. Access Group Chess Club beat Destiny 2000 Ltd by 3.5-5 points.

Top spot still at stake

Aussies must win, SA can afford a draw

Cricket

AFP, Perth

South Africa and Australia will both be forced to call on fringe players when the number one ranking in Test cricket goes on the line in the final Test starting Friday in Perth.

After a tame draw in the series opener in Brisbane, South Africa's batting heroics in Adelaide, led by a defiant unbeaten century from debutant Faf du Plessis, ensured the second Test also ended all-square despite a tense and dramatic last day.

And it means both sides will tread the WACA ground with the chance to end the series as the top team in Test cricket.

A win for South Africa, or a draw, would see the Proteas retain their position atop the rankings, while an Australian victory would put them back in the number one spot they last held more than three years ago.

Complicating matters are several forced changes as the competitive nature of the first two Tests takes a heavy toll, with just a three-day break between matches.

South Africa are likely to be without all-rounder Jacques Kallis, who played a crucial role in saving the Adelaide Test with the bat and exacerbated a hamstring injury. But skipper Graeme Smith is

leaving the door open.

"He is definitely not going to bowl but he could play as a batter," said Smith.

All-rounder Ryan McLaren, who played one Test against England in 2010, has been added to the squad as cover.

The tourists are also waiting on the fitness of seamer Vernon Philander, who was a late withdrawal from Adelaide with a sore back.

Rory Kleinveldt replaced Philander at the last minute and after dismissing the Australian top three in the second innings is hoping for a berth in Perth.

Spinner Imran Tahir faces the axe after a demoralising outing in Adelaide.

Australia go into the Test without young quick James Pattinson, ruled out for the rest of the summer with a side injury.

Pattinson joined fellow paceman Pat Cummins (back) on the long-term sidelines and there is concern that experienced fast bowlers Peter Siddle and Ben Hilfenhaus will struggle in Perth after their final day exertions in Adelaide.

The Australia selectors have added three fast bowlers to a 14-man squad for the final Test.

Uncapped pair Josh Hazlewood and John Hastings, who have both represented Australia in limited overs cricket, come in along with forgotten quick Mitchell Johnson, while Mitchell Starc, 12th man in the first two Tests, looks to win promotion.

Mominul takes Shakib's place

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delights his backers.

In yesterday's match against the West Indies he scored 43 off 57, in itself not a huge achievement, but he seemed the only one at ease with the venom that the West Indians spewed. When the fast bowlers dropped short, he seemed to have ample time to rock back and play the pull. He would not often have faced bowlers of this speed, but the time available to him seemed to set him apart.

And equally encouraging perhaps is his demeanour off the field. He comes off as shy from a distance, but talking to him reveals something more beneath -- a strain of defiance perhaps, more likely a refusal to get flustered whatever the question, a trait he displays during batting. Refreshingly, he was not over-excited about his big break.

"I feel how I normally feel. I don't get too excited; if you get excited then that may open the door for conceit and pride," deadpanned the little man. When pointed out that he should be excited as he has just achieved a cricketer's dream, his answer revealed that just making the national team was not going to be enough.

"Dreams vary from person to person. I may have bigger dreams, maybe that's why I am not over-excited."

When asked about the man he was

replacing -- who he lists as one of his idols along with Mushfiqur Rahim and Tamim Iqbal from Bangladesh, and Australian skipper Michael Clarke from the international arena -- he was almost embarrassed as he said, "Shakib Bhai (Shakib Al Hasan) is Shakib Bhai, I am nowhere near him, I don't even think like that."

Chief selector Akram Khan said that Mominul was picked because of his consistency and that the team management and selection panel thought that a batsman should take Shakib's place.

"Among the batsmen who are in form, we have seen that his (Mominul Haque) consistency is good. Mominul has played well recently as well as over the last one-and-a-half years. Although Shakib is an all-rounder, the team management thought that an extra batsman is needed," said Akram. "Of course there is no one to fully replace Shakib. As I said he plays two parts for us, as a bowler and a batsman. We do have a lot of part-time bowlers to try and fill the void."

It does not do to get too excited about a new prospect, and Mominul may well fail in his first test as an international cricketer. However, as he showed yesterday, he is not out of his depth facing the West Indians. At any rate, his addition will add a new level of interest when the series gets underway on Friday.

A pleased Pollard

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much out of the game by the end of the first innings when the tourists amassed 361 in 50 overs. "The guys supported me. There were a lot of runs on the board so you can try different things. The game was already over by the 35th or 40th over. The guys had a good run out and those sitting it out are well rested for the ODI series that's coming up."

The five-match ODI series starting on Friday will also see the new ODI rules -- two bouncers per over, a maximum of four fielders allowed outside the 30-yard circle during non-Powerplay overs of which there will now be two blocks instead of

three -- in effect. Pollard believed that the reduction in the number of fielders allowed outside the circle will make things more taxing for bowlers, while also benefiting the power hitters in his team.

"The bowlers have to watch their p's and q's. They can't let it stray because there's not many guys outside. Having said that, the rules have been set and players have to just follow so I think it is a matter of something that we have to get used to," he said.

"We have a lot of power hitters. Clearing the boundary and the ball falling in gaps are important for us. So hopefully we can capitalise on it until there's any further change."

Kiwis strongly placed

Cricket

APP, Colombo

Tim Southee and Doug Bracewell rocked Sri Lanka with two wickets apiece to boost New Zealand's chances of posting a series-leveelling win in the second and final Test on Wednesday.

The hosts, needing 363 to win, were struggling at 47-4 in their second innings at stumps on the penultimate day when 17 wickets fell at the P Sara Oval in Colombo.

Fast bowler Southee, who took five wickets in the first innings, continued to trouble the Sri Lankan batsmen as he removed openers Tharanga Paravita and Tillakaratne Dilshan in his lively opening spell.

Pace man Nuwan Kulasekara had Kane Williamson (18) caught by Paravita in the slips and then trapped Daniel Flynn leg-before with the last two balls of his eighth over.

Left-arm spinner Rangana Herath then struck with the second delivery of the next over, having Kruger van Wyk caught by Paravita at leg-slip for a duck.

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