

SPORT



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Pakistan top order batsman Matloob Quraishi scored an eloquent 55 not out to guide his side to an eight-wicket victory over Afghanistan in the ICRC International Cricket Tournament for People with Physical Disabilities at BKSP yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

'This is special'

SPORTS REPORTER

The scenes at ground number three of BKSP depicted a kind of joy that defied several boundaries. The beautiful grounds at the venue have seen several victories in the past, however the celebrations that took place after Bangladesh beat England by 14 runs on the first day of the ICRC International Cricket Tournament for People with Physical Disabilities was something different all together.

In front of an encouraging crowd, the men in green, led by their skipper Alam Khan, finished on 117 for 8 after 20 overs. Apurbo Kumar, batting at number four, top-scored with a 26-ball 22. The skipper though was the highlight of the batting order with his 17-ball 19.

Admittedly, the total didn't seem

like it would bother the visitors at first. The English had built a good platform, scoring 43 runs for the loss of just 1 wicket after seven overs.

However, once England's number three Jamie Goodwin was trapped by Alam for 31 in the eighth over, things started to change. The spinners were brought in and wickets fell one after another. The visitors were pegged back by the turners and were eventually struggling to score at 96 for 4 after 18 overs. They ended on 103 for 7.

Bangladesh's Drupam Tirtho was the key destroyer with figures of 3 for 12. That each and every wicket meant a lot to these players was evident from the wild celebrations that ensued every time the umpire raised his finger.

"We were confident since the day before the competition. We knew that we would be able to do something special. And this is special," a smiling Drupam told The Daily Star. The slow

left-armed, who plays first division cricket, said that found cricket for the physically challenged competitive.

"I may have a problem with three fingers in my right hand, but I can give the ball quite a bit of turn with my left," he grinned.

"This England team has been playing cricket for many years. They have a good system. We have just begun and I am sure this tournament will create and encourage many players," he added.

In the day's other game Pakistan beat Afghanistan by eight wickets at ground number four in BKSP. Batting first, the Afghans were bowled out for 118 in 19.4 overs. Afghanistan's Mohammadullah top-scored with a 24-ball 43. Pakistan's Rao Javed scalped excellent figures of 4 for 21.

In reply, an unbeaten 55 from Matloob led Pakistan to victory with four overs remaining.



As fans across the globe brace for the Rugby World Cup, scheduled to begin in Britain later this month, students in Bangladesh take nascent steps in this exotic sport during an inter-university tournament at the Paltan Maidan in the capital yesterday.

PHOTO: BANGLA CHOKH

Wade powers Oz to big win

AFP, Southampton

Matthew Wade's unbeaten 71 laid the platform for World Cup-holders Australia's 59-run win over England in the first one-day international in Southampton on Thursday.

Wade and all-rounder Mitchell Marsh (40*) shared an unbroken stand of 112 in 13 overs to guide Australia to 305 for six.

England threatened at times during their chase but were eventually dismissed for 246 with 27 balls left in their innings when last man Steven Finn was bowled by Pat Cummins.

SCORES IN BRIEF
AUSTRALIA: 305 for 6 (Warner 59, Wade not out 71; Rashid 4-59)
ENGLAND: 246 all out in 46.3 overs (Roy 67, Taylor 49; Watson 2-39)
Result: Australia won by 59 runs
Man-of-the-match: Matthew Wade (AUS)

IN A NUTSHELL

The Tendulkar Stadium?

The Kerala Cricket Association (KCA) is all set to name one of its stadiums after Sachin Tendulkar.

KCA president T.C. Mathew said on Friday that while there was a pavilion at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium here named after Tendulkar, the KCA was going to name a stadium after him.

"The decision about which stadium will be taken shortly. He [Sachin] will also be consulted," Mathew said.

Tendulkar co-owns Indian Super League (ISL) team Kerala Blasters and is reportedly planning to buy a home there.

Federer cleans court

Fans that had turned up to watch tennis legend Roger Federer practice on Thursday night at the US Open witnessed a unique sight.

The Swiss maestro and his team were seen cleaning up the mess left behind by other players on the court.

Before leaving the court after hitting a few balls, the World No. 2 cleaned up the court that was littered with towels and bottles.

Nobody, including Novak Djokovic, bothered to do so when they previously used the same court for practice.

Drone drops at US Open

A drone buzzed over the court during a U.S. Open match in Louis Armstrong Stadium on Thursday night and crashed into an empty section of seats.

U.S. Tennis Association spokesman Chris Widmaier said no one was injured and that the New York Police Department was "conducting an ongoing investigation."

The incident occurred during a game which Italian Flavia Pennetta won 6-1, 6-4 over Monica Niculescu of Romania.

Her initial reaction, she said afterward, was that it might have been a bomb.

"A little bit scary, I have to say," Pennetta said.

"With everything going on in the world... I thought, 'OK, it's over.' That's how things happen," she said.



Compiled by Star Sport Desk

Booters return 'wiser'

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh football team returned home in the early hours today after their Australian mission and will get no time to linger on their performance as they immediately start preparing for the September 8 fixture against Jordan at home. The Jordanians, who were held to a goalless draw by Kyrgyzstan on the same night, are scheduled to arrive here by afternoon today.

While Bangladesh's 0-5 defeat at the hands of the Socceroos proved to be a baptism by fire, the men in red and green by no means humiliated themselves, especially when one considers the fate of some of the lower-ranked Asian teams on the night. Qatar's 15-0 bashing of Bhutan showed how yawning the gap is between the top-tier and the lowest-tier nations in Asia is. The same script was enacted elsewhere as UAE

thrashed Malaysia 10-0, Kuwait outplayed Myanmar 9-0, Korea put eight past Laos, Saudi Arabia mauled newcomers East Timor by seven goals while Iran brought down a high-flying Guam team with a 6-0 drubbing.

Bangladesh Football Federation Kazi Salahuddin felt the scoreline for Bangladesh was not at all lamentable.

"The result is all right because the team Bangladesh played against (Australia) spends millions of dollars every month (on their players and coaching staff). Our players tried their best in this match and I think we will be able to reach a certain level with collective effort," said the BFF boss yesterday.

Skipper Mamunul Islam felt the speed and the pressing football of the opposition proved their undoing.

"We were awestruck by the speed of the Socceroos in the beginning and by the time we got used to it, we were already down by four goals and there was not much to salvage," said Mamunul while talking to reporters on the eve the team's departure from Perth.

While Bangladesh conceded five goals, goalkeeper Shahidul Alam Sohel made sure the margin of defeat stayed at a decent level by making a string of fine saves.

"We all were nervous from the beginning and could not understand what was happening. It was tough to understand the situation after conceding so many goals right at the start. I was thinking of not going down mentally. We tried to slow down the pace of the game, which gave us some footing in the second half," said Sohel.

Head coach Lodewijk de Kruijff, who watched the match from stands due to a touchline ban, said this experience will auger well for future as the players will be able to take pressure in big matches.

"We have to understand the reality. The result is understandable because we were playing against a top team. Now the boys can absorb the pressure in big matches and it will be easier for them to play against lower ranked teams," said de Kruijff.

Fahad wins sub-junior chess

SPORTS REPORTER

FIDE Master Fahad Rahman emerged champion in the 34th National Sub-Junior (U-16) Chess Championship at the Bangladesh Chess Federation yesterday.

Fahad and Anata Chowdhury had secured equal 6.5 points from seven matches before Fahad was declared champion in tie-breaker. Subrata Biswas, Kindgshuk Das and Nayeem Haque finished third, fourth and fifth respectively.

In the girls' section, Jannatul Ferdous became champion while Jhorna Begum and Nawshin Anjum finished second and third respectively.

Venus in last 16 Federer, Murray blaze thru'

AFP, New York

Two-time champion Venus Williams defeated highly-rated Swiss teenager Belinda Bencic for the fourth time on Friday to reach the US Open last 16.

Williams, 35, hit 31 winners in a 6-3, 6-4 win over the 18-year-old 12th seed and goes on to face either compatriot Madison Brengle or Anett Kontaveit of Estonia.

Dominant Frenchman Jo-Wilfried Tsonga is yet to drop a set at the US Open as he executed a 6-3 7-5 6-2 victory Sergiy Stakhovsky of Ukraine to reach the fourth round at Flushing Meadows today.

The second set was tighter as neither could take advantage until Tsonga converted on his third break point in the 11th game, which was all that was needed for him to take a two-set advantage.

Tsonga began dominating the court as he broke serve immediately in the third set and eased to a 3-1 lead before eventually cruising to victory.

Five-time champion Roger Federer strolled into the US Open third round on Thursday as fellow old-timer Lleyton Hewitt bid farewell in trademark fighting style.

On a dramatic day which saw a record created for the longest women's match, and a new Grand Slam high for retirements from the men's tournament, Andy Murray escaped his earliest exit in 10 years when he came back from two sets down to make the last 32.

After midnight, 2009 and 2014 runner-up Caroline Wozniacki, the fourth seed, was knocked out by Czech world number 149 Petra Cetkovska who saved four match points to win 6-4, 5-7, 7-6 (7/1).

Cetkovska, who recently missed seven months of action with a hip injury, committed 60 unforced errors but unleashed 60 winners.

World number two Federer, the 17-time Grand Slam champion, needed just 80 minutes to rout Belgium's Steve Darcis 6-1, 6-2, 6-1.

The 34-year-old Swiss star, who was

champion from 2004-2008 and runner-up in 2009, goes on to face German 29th seed Philipp Kohlschreiber.

Federer has lost just nine games in the first two rounds, his fewest in 16 appearances.

Darcis later tweeted that playing Federer was like facing "a Martian."

Third seed and 2012 champion Murray came back from two sets down to defeat tiring Frenchman Adrian Mannarino 5-7, 4-6, 6-1, 6-3, 6-1 on Arthur Ashe Stadium.

Murray goes on to face Brazilian 30th seed Thomaz Bellucci for a place in the last 16.

Murray, 28, who had needed four sets to beat Nick Kyrgios in the opening round, fired 21 aces while Mannarino was undone by 61 unforced errors.

Former world number one Hewitt, the champion in 2001, made a dramatic farewell battling from two sets down and having two match points before losing to fellow Australian Bernard Tomic on a rocking Grandstand court.

In his final match in New York, the 34-year-old fell 6-3, 6-2, 3-6, 5-7, 7-5 after three hours and 27 minutes after his 57th career five-set match.

America's Jack Sock and Denis Istomin retired from their matches as they wilted in the 33-degree Celsius (91.4 F) heat.

Sock, the 28th seed, collapsed on the court, where he was treated with ice packs by US Open medical staff before being helped off to the shade of the Grandstand.

Bemelmans next plays fifth-seeded French Open champion Stan Wawrinka who beat South Korean teenager Chung Hyeon 7-6 (7/2), 7-6 (7/4), 7-6 (8/6).

Istomin called it quits on Court Seven against Austrian 20th seed Dominic Thiem, who was 6-4, 6-4, 1-0 up at the time, with his win coming on his 22nd birthday.

Britain's world number 97 Johanna Konta made history when she defeated Wimbledon runner-up Garbine Muguruza in the longest women's match in US Open history.

Asian U-14 tennis starts today

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Tennis Federation will host two tournaments titled Bengal Asian U-14 Series Tennis Competition at the National Tennis Complex in Ramna this month.

The first tournament will get underway today while the second one will start on September 12, a day after the completion of the first, where 46 players including 14 girls from India, Hong Kong, Japan, USA, Malaysia and Bangladesh will be competing in four categories.

PCL excites Wasim

AFP, Karachi

Legendary Pakistani pace-man Wasim Akram said Friday he was excited that Pakistan would host a Twenty20 league, where he will be an ambassador.

The league, which will be staged in Doha, was proposed to give Pakistani players an opportunity to compete with and against top foreign players, since international cricket was suspended in the country in 2009.

Akram said he was very keen to support the event.

"I have been offered to be the ambassador of the league and I am excited about the league as it will help our players game-wise as well as financially," Akram told AFP.

"Pakistan needed such a league so we all have to support the league and I am sure it will help lift Pakistan cricket," he added.



Andy Murray of Britain came back from the jaws of defeat to beat Frenchman Adrian Mannarino in the 2nd round of the US Open at Flushing Meadows yesterday. PHOTO: AFP