

# Naseem becomes youngest to take hat-trick as BD collapse dramatically

Stumps Bangladesh 233 and 126 for 6 (Shanto 38\*, Mominul 37\*, Liton 0\*, Naseem 4-26)



RAWALPINDI: President Dr Arif Alvi and PCB Chairman Ehsan Mani busy in conversation during the third day of the first cricket Test match.

**RAWALPINDI:** Teenage paceman Naseem Shah became the youngest player to record a Test hat-trick as Pakistan closed in on victory against Bangladesh in Rawalpindi on Sunday.

Just when Bangladesh seemed to have fought their way back into the match at 124-2 minutes before the close on the third day, Naseem destroyed them with three wickets off successive deliveries. Aged 16 years and 359 days, he becomes the youngest player to record a Test hat-trick, besting Bangladeshi Alok Kapali who achieved the feat aged 19 in 2003.

Naseem trapped Najumul Hossain Shanto leg before off the fourth ball of his seventh over for 38, then followed up with dismissals of Taijul Islam (lbw) and Mahmudullah (caught) with the next two deliveries. Naseem had figures of 4-26 before he left the field with a shoulder injury.

Shanto and Mominul Haque, unbeaten on 37 at the close, had added 71 for the third wicket after they lost Saif Hassan on 16 and Tamim Iqbal on 34. At the close, Bangladesh were 126-6 and needing another 86 runs to avoid an innings defeat with two days to play. Naseem, who burst onto the scene on Pakistan's Australia tour last year, is also the youngest fast bowler and second bowler overall to take five wickets in a Test innings.

He achieved that feat at 16 years and 307 days against Sri Lanka in Karachi last year. Pakistan were bowled out for 445 in their first innings with Babar Azam scoring 143 and Haris Sohail 75. Saif, playing his first Test, was on a pair after his second-ball duck in the first innings but he started confidently to reach 16 with four boundaries before he



RAWALPINDI: Naseem Shah celebrates after his hat-trick during the third day of the first Cricket Test match between Pakistan and Bangladesh.

# Serena, Kenin give US 2-0 Fed Cup lead over Latvia

**LOS ANGELES:** Newly minted Australian Open champion Sofia Kenin and 23-time Grand Slam winner Serena Williams gave the United States a commanding 2-0 lead over Latvia on the opening day of their Fed Cup qualifying tie. Williams survived a late wobble to beat 2017 French Open champion Jelena Ostapenko 7-6 (7/4), 7-6 (7/3) in the final match of the night in Everett, Washington.

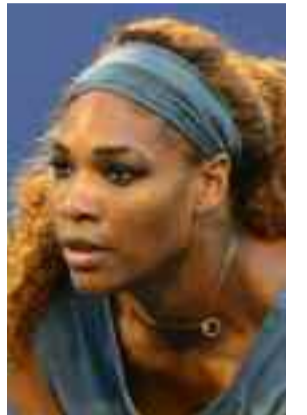
Kenin had put the United States up 1-0 with a brisk 6-2, 6-2 victory over Anastasija Sevastova. Williams followed with a hard-fought win over Ostapenko that improved her perfect record in Fed Cup singles to 14-0.

"I'm really proud of being able to get the win for the team," said Williams, who was ousted in the third round of the Australian Open in her latest bid to match Margaret Court's record of 24 major titles.

Williams needed two tiebreakers and one hour and 46 minutes to do it. She appeared poised to finish Ostapenko off after breaking for a 6-5 lead in the second set, but she was broken herself in the next game and dropped the first two points of the ensuing tiebreaker.

But Williams won five straight points to take a 5-2 lead in the decider, and Ostapenko double-faulted to give her a match point that Williams seized. Two double-faults had been costly for Ostapenko in the first-set tiebreaker as well, giving Williams the upper hand after an opening set in which they went toe-to-toe after an early exchange of breaks.

Williams is playing in her first Fed Cup match since 2018 -- when she played doubles with her sister, Venus. She hadn't played singles in the women's nations event since 2015, but with the Tokyo Olympics on the horizon the US veteran was all-in on tennis as "a team sport now." In that vein she added thanks to her "incredible partner" Kenin.



Williams said of seeing Kenin capture her first Grand Slam title just six days earlier with an upset of two-time major winner Garbine Muguruza in the Australian Open final. Kenin needed only 68 minutes to get past 41st-ranked Sevastova, showing no sign of a let down after her Melbourne triumph.

"I was obviously a little nervous coming in after Australia," Kenin said. "I felt tired, but I tried to get that out of my mind and just represent and do what I do best." Kenin will have a chance to seal the tie for the United States when she meets Ostapenko on Saturday, with a place in the finals in Budapest in April is on the line. —AFP

# Ibrahimovic set to play in derby after flu, says coach



**MILAN:** AC Milan's Zlatan Ibrahimovic is likely to feature in Sunday's Serie A derby with Inter Milan after flu said head coach Stefano Pioli who has urged his players to follow the striker's example.

The 38-year-old Swede, who joined the club for a second spell on a free transfer during the January transfer window, missed Milan's 1-1 draw with Hellas Verona last Sunday. But Pioli said Ibrahimovic should recover in time to feature in the 'Derby della Madonnina' between the city rivals.

"He has undergone an individual training programme," Pioli told a media conference on Saturday. "Today he is training with the squad and if he gets through that, he will be available tomorrow." Milan are undefeated since Ibrahimovic's arrival last month, with five wins and two draws in all competitions, and Pioli believes the veteran's presence can inspire his team mates. "We're facing a team that hasn't lost for some time," he said of Inter whose only league defeat this season was at home to champions Juventus on Oct. 6. "Tomorrow we must all have the face of Ibrahimovic, fired up and determined. We must maximise our potential." Pioli's side are ninth on 32 points, 19 adrift of second-placed Inter, who are hoping to close the three-point gap to leaders Juve. —Reuters

# Sweden's Armand Duplantis makes 6.17m world pole vault record

**PARIS:** Armand Duplantis of Sweden set a world pole vault record of 6.17 metres at an indoor meeting in Poland. Duplantis, the US-born 20-year-old who won silver at last year's world championships in Doha, cleared the bar on his second attempt in Torun to break the previous record of 6.16m set by French vaulter Renaud Lavillenie in February 2014.



"It's something that I wanted since I was three years old," Duplantis told the website of World Athletics. "It's a big year, but it's a good way to start it."

Lavillenie, the 2012 Olympic champion, said he was not surprised his record had been eclipsed. "It's not

the record at a meeting in Dusseldorf on Tuesday. His performance marks him out as a clear favourite for the Olympic title in Tokyo this year.

Long considered the man most likely to push the event forward, Duplantis began breaking age group records aged seven. He announced his prodigious talent to a wider audience when he won the European outdoor title in Berlin in 2018 with a vault of 6.05m, a world junior record.

Coached by his American father Greg — himself a former pole vaulter who cleared 5.80m — Duplantis was a product of a track and field-crazy family which had their own vaulting apparatus in the garden. —AFP

# 14th CNS Int'l Squash Championship culminates at Karachi

**KARACHI:** The 14th Chief of the Naval Staff (CNS) International Squash Championship was conducted at Pakistan Navy Roshan Khan Jahangir Khan Squash Complex Karachi. Fifteen players carrying international ranking from Egypt, France, Hong Kong, Kuwait, Malaysia and ten national players demonstrated their skills in the week long events of championship, said a press release issued by ISPR-Navy here. Commander Pakistan Fleet, Vice Admiral Asif Khaliq graced the closing ceremony of the championship as chief guest. Earlier, addressing the ceremony the Tournament Director Commodore Habib Ur Rehman appraised the audience about Pakistan Navy's long association with squash. He said Squash Championship was being conducted since two decade to keep the PN legacy alive that shows commitment for promotion of games in general and squash in particular. The Tournament Director also expressed his gratitude for the chief guest, Professional Squash Association, Pakistan Squash Federation and all sponsors & participants. Later, chief guest Commander Pakistan Fleet, Vice Admiral Asif Khaliq gave away the prizes to winner and runner up of the championship. He also congratulated them for their hard work and valued achievement. The final match of the tournament was played between Tayyab Aslam of Pakistan and Ivan Yuen of Malaysia. After a tough & thrilling competition Ivan Yuen won the match and was declared as Champion of 14th Chief of the Naval Staff International Squash Championship. —APP



RAWALPINDI: A cricket spectator enjoys during the third day of the first cricket Test match.

ALAM ZEB SAFI

After 15 years of persistent struggle, eventually Melbourne-based Lahore-born Usman Khan made Pakistan proud by qualifying for this year's Tokyo Olympics in eventing category of equestrian.

Eventing is a combination of cross country, jumping and dressage. Eventing is often known as the triathlon of the equestrian world. It is a truly complete sport that tests both the horse and the rider in all aspects of horsemanship. This is the first time that Pakistan will have a rider of equestrian in the world's most prestigious extravaganza.

In 2004 Athens Olympics, Pakistani rider Nadeem Noon had to feature on wild card but he missed the event after his horse got injured. At the Wallaby Hill in December 2019 Usman and his horse Azad Kashmir did well to complete the CCI4\*-L, finishing 13th and that was enough to earn their Minimum Eligibility Requirements (MER) and achieve Tokyo 2020 qualification. In qualifiers in September 2019, Usman ended 15th. In October 2019 at the Lynton Horse Trials in Goulburn the organising committee had agreed to run a CCI3\*-L specifically for Usman and Azad Kashmir so that they could try and achieve an MER at this level, enabling them to compete at Wallaby Hill CCI4\*-L.

The 38-year-old Usman, who has also worked in the Australian parliament as an IT consultant, has achieved the milestone on his own. He has no sponsors and what he has been earning is being spent on his growth in equestrian. Usman, son of a retired Army Major, is a self-made athlete and believes in constant struggle. Having also played athletics as sprinter at national level Usman knows the importance of a sportsman who acts as an ambassador of a nation. In 2006 Usman had a meeting with the president of Pakistan Olympic Association (POA) Lt Gen (retd) Arif Hasan in Melbourne. He expressed his desire that he wanted to represent Pakistan in Olympics. Arif, in response, told him that he must do this. For over a decade Usman did not meet Arif. He recently informed him through a message that he has qualified for the 2020 Tokyo Olympics. Strong nerves, determination, valour, patriotism and self-earned money were behind Usman's amazing success in the field of equestrian.

The name of the horse is Azad Kashmir which Usman would be using in Olympics. Usman had also qualified for the 2014 Incheon and 2018 Indonesia Asian Games with



Usman Khan riding his horse Azad Kashmir

Al-Buraq but due to high travelling cost he decided against featuring in those major events. Usman is again facing the same issue. Around 400,000 dollars is required for ensuring his Olympics' participation. The horse will also have to be transported to Tokyo. His coach will also accompany him. He will have to pay all his costs within four months. It's a big issue for Usman. As he has achieved the milestone for the country, it is now the responsibility of the Pakistan govern-

ment to support him by meeting his financial expenses. If the state supports other foreign-based athletes in their Olympics bids why can't it do the same for Usman who is also a great asset of the country and has made the nation proud?

Without any support Usman has developed a course over six acre in Melbourne. He has hired a coach. And the amazing thing is that his coach lives 170 kilometres away from

Usman. Whenever Usman needs instruction he goes to his coach, gets advice and returns to his home to apply that in practice. From 2007 to 2010 Usman did not ride as he exclusively focussed on earning money, which has now enabled him to qualify for Olympics.

Let's ask Usman and he will let you know about the rest of the things. "I am the only unpaid athlete of Pakistan who has qualified for Olympics. I have been spending from my pocket for years on the sport," Usman told private news paper from Melbourne.

"I had been working hard to achieve this target for the last 15 years. Nobody expected me to manage this, but I remained determined. When I met the POA chief General Arif Hasan in 2006 I promised him that I would take Pakistan into the Olympics in equestrian and today I am very happy that I have done this through the grace of God Almighty," Usman said. "It's a tough game. I competed in a number of events, meeting all the costs myself. I will feature in a few more events to prepare for Olympics," Usman said.

"I have done this not for myself but for my country. I don't want to become the richest man of the world. Through the money I spent on this sport I could have purchased huge property in Pakistan but I wanted to do something big for my country as an athlete.

This time I qualified for the world's major Games and InshaAllah next time there will be talk of a medal," Usman said. "Between Tahajjud and Fajr prayers I am on the course. For the last five months I have not worked and instead focussed on my game. My vision was always clear. The cause is greater than myself," Usman said.

"It's a very expensive game, you know. For the last 15 years my annual expenses on the sport was around 150,000 Australian dollars. Personally I have spent so far 3.5 million dollars from my own pocket," revealed Usman who will be the oldest athlete of the Pakistan's contingent for Olympics. As Usman has named his horse Azad Kashmir, India is trying to politicise his participation. Indian Olympic Association (IOA) has sought legal opinion whether the matter would fall under the purview of the Olympic charter Rule 50 which provides a framework to protect the neutrality of sport and the Olympic Games.

Pakistan's sports authorities should take a firm stand as Usman has named the horse he bought in Australia last year Azad Kashmir while following the rules of Australian Equestrian Federation and international equestrian govern-