

Udhampur to meet Samba in Women's Volleyball final



Chief Guest, Rashid Ahmed Bhat SSP, ACB interacting with players, posing with participating girls teams and volleyball match in progress at MA Stadium, Jammu on Saturday.

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
JAMMU: District Udhampur shall take on Samba in the women's final of the ongoing 35th J&K UT Junior Volleyball Championships, organised by Volleyball Association of J&K (VAJK) in collaboration with J&K Sports Council (JKSC) at MA Stadium, here tomorrow.

Earlier, in the semifinals, Udhampur defeated Jammu district 3-0 (25-23, 25-23, 25-21) while Samba outplayed Srinagar 3-2 (14-25, 25-22, 22-25, 25-22, 15-12). In boys section, quarterfinals line-up has been drawn with Jammu, Kathua, Srinagar, Ganderbal, Samba, Anantnag, Poonch,

Rajouri district teams qualifying for the last eight stages of the competition. In total, 30 teams, including 19 teams in boys section are participating in this three-day event. Earlier, Rashid Ahmed Bhat SSP, ACB was the Chief Guest in today's matches, who interacted with the semifinalist teams

and officials of the Association. Among other prominent present were Abdul Ahad Shah, Madan Lal Toofan, Ramesh Sharma, Mohd. Tariq, Akbar Ali, Suresh Chib, Subash Shastri, Veena Kumari, Manpreet Kour, Rajeev Dogra, Prateek Kumar and Naresh Kumar.

Today's matches were officiated by the technical including Amarjeet Singh, Mulkhraj Sharma, Amit Sharma, Neeraj Sharma, Intizar Ali, Mohd. Shabir, Sidharth Hussain, Wasim Akram, Parvinder Singh, Manzoor, Jagit Singh, Shah Faisal and Abdul Qayoom. The Results:

MEN: League: Poonch beat Pulwama 25-21, 25-17; Anantnag beat Shopian 25-19, 25-22; Kathua beat Baramulla 25-15, 25-22; Kupwara beat Kishtwar 25-12, 25-10; Kulgam beat Doda 25-19, 27-25; Udhampur beat Ramban 16-25, 25-21, 15-18; Kupwara beat Budlipora 25-17, 26-24; Pulwama

beat Kulgam 25-20, 25-23; Udhampur beat Shopian 25-18, 25-16; Baramulla beat Budgam 25-18, 25-16; Rajouri beat Kishtwar 25-12, 25-13; Ganderbal beat Doda 25-23, 25-16; Samba beat Ramban 27-25, 25-18; 14 Jammu beat Rajouri 25-17, 25-21; Srinagar beat Kathua 20-25, 25-22, 16-14. WOMEN: Semifinals:

Udhampur beat Jammu 3-0 (25-23, 25-23, 25-21) and Samba beat Srinagar 3-2 (14-25, 25-22, 22-25, 25-22, 15-12). Quarterfinals: Jammu beat Rajouri 2-0 (25-08, 25-14); Samba beat Baramulla 2-0 (25-11, 25-20); Udhampur beat Shopian 2-0 (25-06, 25-13); Srinagar beat Budgam 2-0 (25-10, 25-10).

Administrative Officer JKSC honours winners

Samba lifts Sr Men's Softball title, Jammu bags Women's trophy

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
JAMMU: J&K UT Softball/Baseball5 championship 2023-24, organized by J&K Softball Association in collaboration with Jammu & Kashmir Sports Council concluded at GGM Science College Football ground, here on Saturday.



Participating teams posing for a photograph with Administrative Officer JKSC Sheikh Reyaz Ahmed and other officials.

In Sub Junior Boys, District Srinagar clinched the title, Samba emerged runners-up and the third place was bagged by Jammu, while in Sub Junior Girls, Jammu emerged winner, Udhampur runners-up.

In Junior Boys, Samba bagged the title, Srinagar claimed runners-up trophy and the third place went to Kathua, while in

Junior Girls, Pulwama bagged the title, Jammu claimed runners-up trophy and the third place went to Samba.

In Senior Men's, Samba emerged the winner, Jammu runners-up and the third place went to Srinagar, while in Senior Women, Jammu claimed title, Srinagar won runners-up trophy and the third place went to Pulwama.

In Open Men, Baramulla, Kupwara and Kulgam won first, second and third place respectively, while in Open Women, Baramulla, Kupwara and Kulgam won the first three places respectively.

Meanwhile, in Baseball5 Sub Junior Category,

Srinagar bagged the title, Samba wins second place and Pulwama claimed the third place.

Over 400 athletes from 14 districts of Jammu and Kashmir Divisions participated in 3 (Three) days UT Level Softball/Baseball5 Championship.

Speaking on the occasion, the chief guest congratulated J&K Softball Association for organizing such a beautiful championship in the most professional and befitting manner.

He said that regular tour-

naments will continuously be organised by the Association with the support of J&K Sports Council for taking this medal winning sport of Softball to great heights in UT of Jammu & Kashmir.

He also appreciated the initiative taken by the association for the development of Softball in J&K.

Later-on, Chief Guest Sheikh Riyaz Ahmad distributed Medals & Trophies among the winners, runner-up and third place holders in all categories of both events and encouraged them for further upgrading of their sports skill in this potential sport of Softball.

The vote of thanks was given by Waseem Raja Khan, General Secretary of J&K Softball Association who extended thanks to the dignitaries and all for their support.

The proceedings of the closing ceremony were beautifully conducted by BK Tiekoo.

Players show composure in JKCA's Women's Talent Hunt Camp

■ **STATE TIMES NEWS**
JAMMU: The budding cricketers showed composure, promise and serenity in the Jammu and Kashmir Association's (JKCA's) 2-day selection trials of the ongoing Women's Talent Hunt Camp 2024 at JKCA Hostel ground, here on Saturday.

Ying for the top honours to get the selectors nod, 84 girls took part in the Camp.

While trying to give their best, the players displayed extraordinary batting and bowling skills, besides showing sharp reflexes, motorability and anticipation.

The selectors nominated for the Talent Hunt Camp and the Cricket Advisory



Committee (CAC) Member observed the Camp and checked the skill of the players.

Member CAC Roopali Slatthia and the Selectors including Surabhi Dadheechi, Ankita Jalla and Pratibha Bhasin said that the players will be shortlisted

and trained before the conduct of 2-day matches.

They were all praise for the Sub Committee Members including Brig Anil Gupta, Mithun Manhas and Sunil Sethi, for providing them all kinds of facilities to hold the Talent Hunt Camps in a most befitting manner.

Real Kashmir FC's fluent win confirms NEROCA FC's relegation

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

SRINAGAR: Real Kashmir FC dished out a fine performance to outclass NEROCA FC 3-0 in the I-League here on Saturday, the result relegating the Manipur outfit to the second division following a poor season.

Goals from Real Kashmir's Gnohere Krizo (35'), Hyder Yousuf (45') and Shaher Shaheen (67') sealed the fate of NEROCA FC in the league.

This loss left the Orange Brigade in 12th place, with a total of 13 points from 21 matches. Their record of four wins, one draw, and 16 losses reflects the challenges they faced throughout the season.

With only three matches left to play, NEROCA find themselves in an insurmountable position, and even if they were to win all their remaining fixtures, they would only earn a total of 22 points, falling short of overtaking Churchill Brothers, as Namdhari are exempt from relegation this season. The other team to have been relegated is their city rivals TRAU FC. Real Kashmir, on the other hand, finally notched up a win after playing out consecutive draws in their last four matches. They also extended their unbeaten streak to nine matches. The last time the Snow Leopards had lost a match in the league was against Rajasthan United FC back on February 9. The win took them to second spot in the standings even though they are out of the title race. They now have 40 points from 22

matches with 11 wins, seven draws and four losses. NEROCA came into the match on the back of two derby wins over TRAU and were in a do-or-die situation. However, they failed to put up a meaningful challenge on Saturday. The Snow Leopards dominated from the outset and created a flurry of chances before taking the lead in the 35th minute. Carlos Lomba launched a long ball from the deep towards the direction of Krizo. The Ivory Coast striker controlled the ball with his head and surged past two NEROCA players Baoringdao Bodo and Ronaldo Nongthombam to set himself up in a one-on-one position with goalkeeper Khoirum Jackson Singh.

With the custodian coming off his line, Krizo intelligently chipped the ball over Jackson's head to open the scoring.

Real Kashmir doubled their advantage at the stroke of half time.

Kashmir defender Shaher Shaheen saw Yousuf making a run on the overlap and sent a long ball forward.

Yousuf beat the offside trap brilliantly with a well-timed run before bringing down the aerial ball with a deft touch and unleashing a skilful left footer to score in the 45th minute.

The script didn't change much in the second half as Real Kashmir extended their lead through a set piece.

Jeremy Laldinpuia floated in a corner from the left and an unmarked Shaheen scored with a header at the far post.

GCW Gandhi Nagar, St. Xavier students take part in trekking

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

JAMMU: Tawi Trekkers J&K, the biggest trekking organization of J&K, in keeping with its policy of promoting heritage sites and lesser frequented beauty spots of Jammu, is regularly sending a group of students to one day short trek to Devi Pindian.

In this process four groups comprising about 150 students of Padam Shree Padma Sachdev Government College for Women (GCW), Gandhi Nagar and about 50 students of St. Xavier Convent Senior Secondary School, Barnai, Jammu successfully undertook the trek, on Saturday.

Sonam Sidharth, General Secretary of Tawi Trekkers J&K and a seasoned organiser of such treks led the group of trekkers along with trained mountaineers Shilpa Charak and Sunil Chakharria, Prerna Charak, Vikas Singh, Suksham Verma and Ananjan Raghav Khajuria.

Advisor of the Club, Ram Khajuria, Ashpreet Kour, president of GCW Gandhi Nagar along with three stu-



Trekkers enroute their trek to Devi Pindian, Panthal near Katra.

dent group leaders Saloni Kumari, Diya Chib and Mehak Sharma besides three teachers of St Xavier Convent Senior Secondary School namely Meenu Badam, Meenakshi and Anita also accompanied the trekkers.

With this group, the total participation in this programme has now gone up to about 500 students. Since some small groups have also enrolled themselves to face the call of the mountains to Devi Pindian the participation is likely to touch the 700 mark

T20 WC: Indian squad likely to be selected in last week of April

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: India's 15-member squad for the upcoming T20 World Cup in the USA and West Indies is likely to be named in last week of April as the ICC's cut-off date for submission of teams is May 1, a BCCI source said on Saturday.

However, every participating team will get a chance to change players in their initial squad till May 25.

"The Indian team will be selected some time during the last week of April, the time by which the first half of IPL will be over and national selection committee will be in a position to assess form and fitness of the contenders," the senior BCCI source told PTI on condition of anonymity.

"The first batch of cricketers will leave for New York immediately after the end of the league stage of IPL on May 19. Those players, whose teams won't qualify for the final four will be going early, like it happened during WTC finals last year," the source added.

With the tournament being held in the USA and West Indies, it is expected that a few of the stand-bys will also travel

with the team so that there is no logistical nightmare in case any player from the main squad gets injured or has to pull out due to unforeseen circumstances.

The four national selectors are travelling to watch most of the matches as this is the World Cup unlike other editions when they travel for a select few games but keep a track on TV.

It is learnt that there has been no instructions given to any of the Cup hopefuls about workload management as these two months they are under the franchise's control.

"Obviously, if any centrally contracted or targeted player gets injured, his case will automatically come under the purview of the NCA's Medicine and Sports Science team." Also for the centrally contracted players and targeted players (India A, Emerging India), the S&C coaches and physios need to keep NCA in loop. But when players are contracted with franchises, BCCI can't dictate how many matches they will play. As far as bowlers are concerned, it is only four overs," the source added.

■ STATE TIMES NEWS

VISAKHAPATNAM: Delhi Capitals will be aiming to rejig their out-of-depth batting order by bringing the flamboyant Prithvi Shaw in the mix against the defending champions Chennai Super Kings in what could be safely termed as a 'battle of unequals' on Sunday's Indian Premier League encounter.

In T20 format, reputations do go for a toss but DC in their last four meetings haven't been able to get past CSK and the margins of defeat -- 91, 27 and 77 runs respectively paints a sorry picture. One also needs to take into account that in those three heavy losses, the core of the Delhi team has been more or less same save their last meeting when Rishabh Pant wasn't available.

Hence a win against CSK would be considered as a big upset in the tournament.

If CSK once again looks like a team to beat with all its bases nicely covered, it has been quite the opposite for the Ricky Ponting coached Capitals, which has been out-



played in both departments of the game.

DC's co-owners GMR and JSW have been completely messing up the team composition at the auction table itself for some years and there is hardly anything that Ponting or Director of Cricket Sourav Ganguly could do with domestic talent that lacks quality.

CSK got an uncapped Sameer Rizvi for 8.40 crore and the two sixes in his first IPL innings against Punjab Kings showed why the franchise was desperate to get him on board. Among all franchises, DC probably has had the weakest talent scout program and it is paying a

huge price for poor recruitments.

The gulf between domestic cricket and IPL once again became evident with Ricky Bhui, the highest scorer in Ranji Trophy with 902 runs in the just concluded season.

That Bhui is out-of-depth at this level was cruelly exposed by young South African pacesman Nandre Burger of Rajasthan Royals. The manner in which he set up with a fast full delivery to peg Bhui on the backfoot and then a well-directed bouncer that was aimed for his skull left the burly Andhra captain both scared and scarred.

Shaw, who made a comeback to competitive cricket

during second half of Ranji Trophy, might not exactly conform to the fitness standards set by Ponting and his support staff but even the biggest 'punter' in the DC change room knows where to put his money if the choice is between Shaw and Bhui.

There is too much on the plate of David Warner, who is well past his prime and skipper Rishabh Pant, who will take some time to find his groove. Mitchell Marsh's time with DC for the past two seasons can't exactly be termed consistent and the presence of Shaw will indeed add some muscle to DC's batting against an attack comprising Mustafizur Rahman, Deepak Chahar,

Matheesha Pathirana and Ravindra Jadeja. Add to it, Daryl Mitchell's seam-up stuff and Rachin Ravindra, whose bowling potential hasn't yet been unlocked by CSK's 'spiritual captain' Mahendra Singh Dhoni.

If DC bring in Shaw, they can push Marsh as one down, which could lend a bit more solidity to the top-order but

the real challenge will be facing the pace-off deliveries bowled by Mustafizur, who cleverly mixes his variety of cutters to make life miserable for the batters.

The problem with DC is lack of quality power hitters among domestic talents in case Pant fails to fire and also there isn't much difference between Shai Hope and Tristan Stubbs, both of whom take time before going for the jugular.

Similarly DC's death bowling is one of concern and save Axar Patel, whose economy rate is less than six in two games, none of the other bowlers have gone for anything less than 7.50 per over. Anrich Nortje couldn't hit the right length in the Royals game where DC lost it in the last five overs of their bowling innings. DC would need Ishant Sharma to come back as he could have some questions for Rachin Ravindra, who has started the tournament in imperious fashion.

Shivam Dube's pyrotechnics will meet its match in Kuldeep Yadav's guile and that will be one battle that

cricket lovers would be waiting for.

Teams
CSK: MS Dhoni (c), Moeen Ali, Deepak Chahar, Tushar Deshpande, Shivam Dube, Ruturaj Gaikwad, Rajvardhan Hangargekar, Ravindra Jadeja, Ajay Mandal, Mukesh Choudhary, Ajinkya Rahane, Shaik Rasheed, Mitchell Santner, Simarjeet Singh, Nishant Sindhu, Prashant Solanki, Maheesh Theekshana, Rachin Ravindra, Shardul Thakur, Daryl Mitchell, Sameer Rizvi, Mustafizur Rahman and Avanish Rao Aravely.

Delhi Capitals: Rishabh Pant (c), David Warner, Prithvi Shaw, Yash Dhull, Abhishek Porel, Axar Patel, Lalit Yadav, Mitchell Marsh, Pravin Dube, Vicky Ostwal, Anrich Nortje, Kuldeep Yadav, Jake Fraser-McGurk, Khaleel Ahmed, Ishant Sharma, Mukesh Kumar, Tristan Stubbs, Ricky Bhui, Kumar Kushagra, Rasekh Dar, Jhye Richardson, Sumit Kumar, Swastik Chikara and Shai Hope.

Match Starts: 7:30 pm.