

Cricket bowls over HS kids

By DAVID ANDREATTA
Education Reporter

New York City public schools have gone googly-eyed for cricket — the sport of googly-eyed and over with breaks for tea.

Next year, the city will become the first school district in the country to recognize cricket as an official varsity sport, giving the world's second-most popular game behind soccer a high-profile foothold in the land of baseball.

As many as seven schools in Brooklyn and Queens have expressed interest in fielding teams when the Public Schools Athletic League launches the season in the spring, education officials said, and recent weekend clinics have drawn scores of students.

"When I saw the ad on the wall I said, 'Damn, I've got to be dreaming,'" said Avinash Sookhwa, 18, a junior at John Adams HS in Queens who emigrated from Guyana in 2004.

"It was a feeling like being down to the last point and the game is in your hands. All I wanted to do was play."

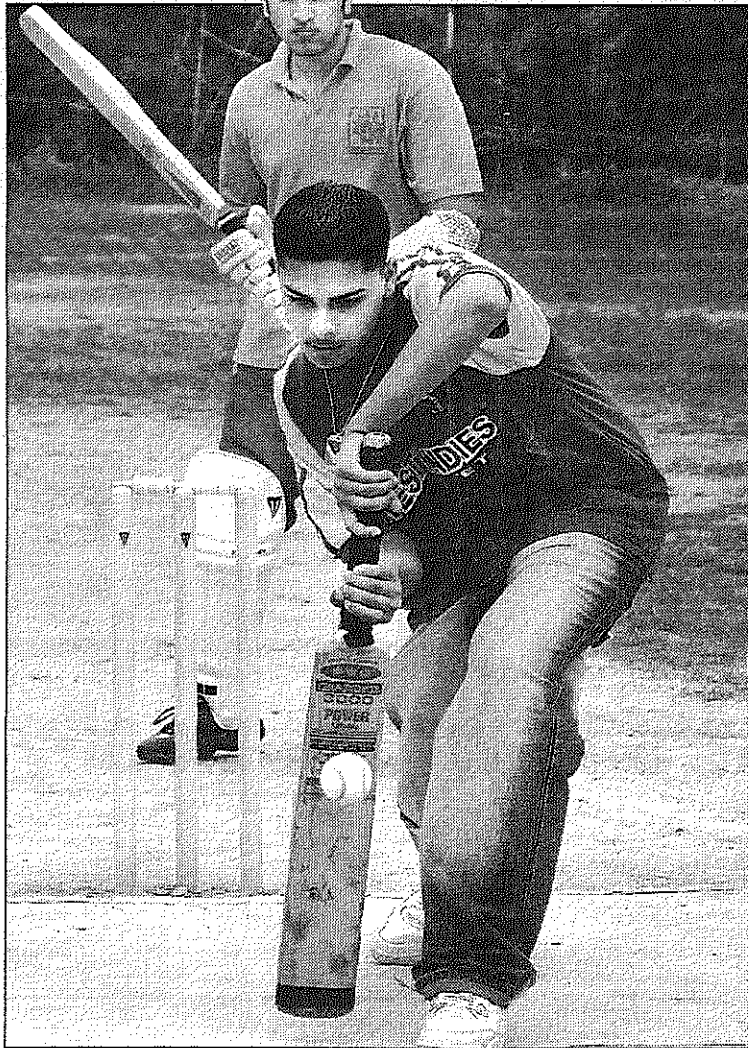
Sookhwa was one of about 80 students who gathered yesterday around a 22-yard-long packed dirt pitch in Cunningham Park in Queens for a chance to defend wickets against fast-moving flippers and top-spinners (which is cricket lingo for off-speed pitches).

It was the second clinic organized by the PSAL and run by the United States of America Cricket Association in an effort to gauge interest in the sport among high school students.

Most of the participants were immigrants, or children of immigrants, from the Caribbean and South Asia, where cricket is king and starry-eyed youngsters dream of growing into all-rounders (a complete player in cricket speak).

"In India, we played when it was cold and when it was hot, it didn't matter," said Vivek Sharma, 17, of Long Island City HS, who immigrated here when he was 10.

They are also the children of a growing number of immigrants who mark off makeshift cricket



WICKET FUN: Thakur Singh gets his innings in as pal Mohamed Farsi looks on at a cricket clinic at Cunningham Park in Queens yesterday.

field boundaries in neighborhood parks on weekends to reconnect with their native lands.

"Just driving around Brooklyn, Queens and The Bronx, you see a lot of people playing cricket," said Eric Goldstein, who oversees the PSAL for the city Department of Education.

The seven schools looking to field teams are Franklin D. Roosevelt and William E. Grady high schools in Brooklyn, and Aviation, John Adams, Long Island City, Richmond Hill and Queens Teaching high schools in Queens.

david.andreatta@nypost.com

NYPD DAILY BLOTTER

Brooklyn

■ The body of a man surfaced in the waters off Sheepshead Bay, police said.

The unidentified victim, described as a white man in his 40s, was found near Emmons and Ocean Avenues shortly before 3 p.m., cops said.

The Medical Examiner's Office will determine the cause of death.

■ A young man was stabbed to death walking with a friend in Bedford-Stuyvesant early yesterday, investigators said.

Roberto Duncanson, 20, was stabbed once by an unknown suspect at St. Marks Avenue near Brooklyn Avenue shortly after midnight, police said.

Duncanson, who lives blocks from where he was attacked, was taken to Kings County Hospital and died an hour later.

Police had made no arrests by last night.

The woman then reached into the car to take the baby and Mahepath allegedly tried driving away, sources said.

No one was injured but cops were called and Mahepath was later arrested and suspended.

■ A Flushing man was arrested for allegedly raping a teenager in his home, police said.

Richard Gagliardotto, 40, met the 14-year-old victim on an adult phone "party line" in March, sources said.

They both lied about their ages at first — she claimed to be 23 and he said he was 28.

After several phone conversations, the suspect asked to meet the girl.

She refused and admitted to being a teenager, yet he repeatedly asked that she meet him at his house.

The girl then went to his 151st Street home and he sexually abused her.

Manhattan

■ A teenager was arrested for allegedly fatally shooting a man in a Harlem Chinese restaurant, police said yesterday.

Jaquan White, 17, turned himself in three days after the shooting that left Malik Murray, 38, dead in the New Aroma restaurant at West 125th Street near Amsterdam Avenue, sources said.

Murray was shot twice and later died at St. Luke's Hospital.

White, a Harlem resident, was charged with murder and criminal possession of a weapon.

Staten Island

■ A man allegedly punched a livery driver and ran from the car without paying the fare in Linden Park, authorities said.

Xavier Campbell, 26, asked to be dropped off at Reid Avenue and Parkinson Avenue at about 1 a.m. Friday, cops said.

Campbell fell asleep in the back seat during the ride.

The driver tried waking Campbell, which prompted the suspect to punch him in the face.

Campbell then allegedly said, "I'm going to shoot you, I'm going to kill you," and walked away without paying the fare.

Queens

■ An off-duty cop was arrested for endangering the welfare of a child and harassment in Elmhurst, authorities said yesterday.

Anthony Mahepath, 36, was dropping off his 2-year-old daughter at her mother's workplace Friday evening.

The woman works as a police officer based out of an NYPD medical division on Junction Boulevard, sources said.

The woman, who was not identified, stepped out to pick up the toddler, who was strapped in the back seat of the car.

Mahepath told her he didn't want his daughter inside the medical offices when he learned the woman was going back inside, sources said.

■ A West New Brighton man was arrested after a cop caught him with 15 stolen credit cards, law-enforcement officials said.

The cop spotted Douglas Simmonds, 26, sorting through the stack of cards at Jersey Street and Corson Avenue Thursday evening, sources said.

After the cop questioned Simmonds, the suspect admitted to finding them in two stolen bags.

He also admitted to taking a watch, backpacks and numerous other items from three parked cars after checking for unlocked doors, police said.

Simmonds was charged with criminal possession of stolen property and petit larceny, the DA's spokesman said.

Tatiana Deligiannakis

Crime Stoppers offers rewards of up to \$2000 for your help in solving violent crimes. You don't have to reveal your identity. Call Crime Stoppers at (800) 577-TIPS.

'Killer' nabbed in '83 B'klyn double slay

By BRAD HAMILTON

A Brooklyn man who allegedly killed an in-law and his pal in 1983, then eluded cops for the next 24 years, is behind bars after police found him in the Dominican Republic.

Authorities say that on March 14, 1983, Rafael Collado gunned down in-law Norberto Guridy and Guridy's friend, Manuel Timental, inside the victims' building at 325

Bleecker St. in Bushwick.

"There is a verbal argument about something," said a source familiar with the case.

"Timental and Guridy don't want to keep arguing, so they start to walk away. That's when Collado pulls out a gun and shoots and kills them both."

Cops said they had no doubt Collado, 56, was the killer. "There were numerous witnesses who saw

what happened," a law-enforcement source said.

Collado was arrested two days later and confessed, cops said.

But he made bail and bolted for the Dominican Republic, they said.

Authorities conceded Collado might never have been caught had he not applied for a visa in 2003 to visit the United States.

His name popped up on an FBI watch list, prompt-

ing the Brooklyn DA to request extradition.

But Dominican cops couldn't find him for four more years.

Finally, Collado was arrested two weeks ago on an unrelated offense.

U.S. marshals detained him on a bench warrant, put him on a plane to JFK, and cold-case detectives had him back in Brooklyn Wednesday afternoon.

brad.hamilton@nypost.com