

Rain and Englishmen

SPORTS REPORTER

It seems the weather gods are Englishmen. Ever since the England cricket team landed in this part of the world to play their maiden series in Bangladesh rain has been their constant companion. Michael Vaughan's men were given a wet reception when they arrived at the Zia International Airport on October 8.

They were hardly allowed to train outdoors. Their two practice matches lost precious time thanks to rain. But what happened on first morning of the first Test at the Bangabandhu National Stadium was stunning to say the least.

With only four overs bowled, a 15-minute heavy rain upset the whole scenario at the big bowl. It was like a bolt from the blue after the game started under glorious sunshine. But not many people were aware of the rain that spanned only a three-kilometre radius of city's commercial hub. Funnily there was hardly any drop of rain elsewhere.

The England cricket team returned to Sonargaon Hotel half an hour after the match was stopped. They must have wondered on way to the posh hotel, which is only a three-kilometre drive from the venue, as there was no evidence of rain whatsoever along the way.

There is more bad news for the



IT RAINS NOW, SUN SHINES THEN! The groundsmen at the Bangabandhu National Stadium (L) cover the pitches after it started raining heavily after only four overs' play on the first morning of the first Test between Bangladesh and England yesterday. (Top right) Bangladesh openers Javed Omar (L) and Hannan Sarkar scurry for shelter. A super sopper (bottom right) drains out water from the outfield of the BNS.



PHOTO: STAR



Did U Know?

The very first Olympic race, held in 776 BC, was won by Corubus, a chef.



What to WATCH

BTV
Bangladesh vs England
First Test, Day Two
Live at 9:30 am

ESPN
Sportscentre India
Sport News
Live at 8:30 pm
UEFA Champions League
Real Madrid vs Partizan
Live at 12:30 am (Thursday)

STAR Sports
Bangladesh vs England
First Test, Day Two
Live at 9:30 am
Sportsline Tonight
Sport News
Live at 8:00 pm
UEFA Champions League
Man United vs Glasgow Rangers
Live at 12:30 am (Thursday)



TALK TURKEY



Oliver Kahn

(German int'l goalkeeper)
"I accept one per cent of the criticism but I will not take the remaining 99 per cent because it comes from people who have no idea what goalkeeping is about."

Sharif going down under for surgery

SPORTS REPORTER

Right-arm paceman Mohammad Sharif will fly to Australia on October 26 to undergo surgery on his groin. Dr. David Young will perform the operation in Melbourne on October 30.

Sharif has been out of international cricket since January 2002 when he played his last Test series against Pakistan at home and suffered the groin injury.

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) at long last has arranged his treatment following the advice of team physio John Gloster.

Sharif will have his first session with Dr. Young on October 28. He will have to stay at least ten days in Australia after the operation.

The promising cricketer from Narayanganj has played eight Tests and as many one-day internationals.

Inzamam in, Yousuf out

AFP/REUTERS, Lahore

Pakistan's injury problems continued Tuesday as stand-in captain Yousuf Youhana was ruled out of the second Test against South Africa.

However the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) announced that team captain Inzamam-ul-Haq would return after missing the first Test, which ended Tuesday in Lahore with an eight-wicket victory for Pakistan.

"Youhana will miss the second Test starting from Friday at Faisalabad because of a hamstring injury and he could aggravate it if he continues to play," PCB spokesman Samiul Hasan told reporters.

Inzamam, who missed the first Test because of a hamstring injury, has regained full fitness and will lead the Pakistan side, Hasan said.

Pakistan however have added a 19-year-old rookie leg-spinner in Mansoor Amjad and all-rounder Abdul Razzaq have been included in the 18-man squad for the second Test.

SEE PAGE 14 COL 5

AB Bank TT

UNB, Dhaka

Azimpur Young Star, Dhaka Women's TTS and Biman (Green) won their respective matches in the AB Bank Metropolis Women's Table Tennis League at the Wooden-floor Gymnasium yesterday.

Azimpur defeated Swamibagh Girls and Women's TTS outplayed Brothers Union by straight 3-0 sets while Biman (Green) defeated Surf Knitting by 3-1.

In the day's Senior Division League matches, Russell KC registered a 3-0 victory over Ajax SC while Brothers Union defeated Armanitola JS by 3-2 sets at the same venue.

In the First Division Super League matches, Modhumita KS outplayed Dhaka TT Club and Swamibagh Boys beat North South University both by straight 3-0 sets while Mohammadpur Boys registered a 3-1 victory over Swamibagh TTS.

SERIES SALAD

HASAN MASOOD

The inaugural Test between Bangladesh and England began on the wrong foot at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

It started with the lady presenter of the brief opening ceremony repeatedly calling the Bangabandhu National Stadium as Dhaka Stadium although the mural of country's undisputed leader during the War of Liberation was not far away from her. Speaker Jamiruddin Sircar graced the ceremony.

Then, there was no uniformity in playing the national anthems of the two countries. Fortunately, it was not a disaster like what happened at the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) conference in the city exactly two weeks ago where

the national anthem of Bangladesh could not be played.

While England's national anthem was played with the help of an audio tape, the rhythm was certainly upset when lady singer crooned our national anthem. The striking aspect was a guitarist playing the background music, which is very uncommon and doesn't fit with the spirit of the occasion.

Besides, there was frustration on the faces of media people as logistical support like fax and computers and even Internet facilities were not available until the afternoon.

BRavo CRICKET FANS
Despite Tuesday being a working day the turnout was very encouraging. There were about 10,000 cricket fans at the big bowl. Rain may have almost spoiled the whole day, but that did not deter those brave fans that never left their seats during the five-and-a-half hour loss

of play.

When play finally resumed at 4.15 pm they roared as the Tigers scored their second run.

While Test attendances these days are not large in numbers, the Dhaka crowd can be an exception as they showed equal passion for the longer version of game.

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) officials felt that the figure would have been doubled if play wasn't suspended due to rain after only four overs.

"I haven't yet got the exact number of tickets sold by the bank. It appears to me there was a good crowd. But again rain has stopped many more from coming to the stadium," said BCB ticket committee secretary Tariq Chowdhury.

WELCOME WASIM AKRAM

Wasim Akram moved into the commentary box with ease. The cele-

brated Pakistani fast bowler was in a jovial mood in his new role after terrorising batsmen world over for 17 years.

The finest left-arm bowler the world has ever seen has recently joined ESPN-STAR Sports team after announcing his retirement following the 2003 World Cup.

"It is a pleasure for me to become a TV commentator and that will definitely help me to stay involved with the game that I love so much," said the 'sultan of swing' while giving his first reaction at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Akram also offered a lot of encouragement for Bangladesh, which he thought, would become a strong Test playing nation sooner or later.

"I know Bangladesh cricket since 1986. Last time I was here in 2001. I also know coach Dav Whatmore because we worked together at

SEE PAGE 14 COL 1

Harmison all smiles!

SPORTS REPORTER

England fast bowler Stephen Harmison has already started to fall in love with the Bangabandhu National Stadium pitch.

The 25-year-old, regarded as England's fastest bowler removed two Bangladeshi top order batsmen in his seven over spell on a rain-shortened opening day of the first Test yesterday.

Harmison, who made his debut for England in April 2002 against

India at Trent Bridge, first got rid of opener Javed Omar with a short ball and then sent back Bangladesh's top batsman Habibul Bashar to put his side on top.

"I used my height to exploit the bounce in the pitch and that got me my first wicket," said Harmison after the day's play.

"It's a brilliant wicket. There is a lot of bounce and it helped me a great deal," said Harmison who has taken 34 Test wickets.

When asked how he had prepared for the match, Harmison revealed that he had sessions with coach Duncan Fletcher and former England captain Bob Willis before the start of the play. But the fast bowler insisted that he has his very own way of going about things.

"I always like to bowl the way I want and not in the manner others want me to bowl," said Harmison adding that his aim was to cement his side on top.

SEE PAGE 14 COL 8

BD-ENG SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the opening day of the first Test between Bangladesh and England at the Bangabandhu National Stadium on Tuesday:

BA	R	B	4	6
Hannan Sarkar not out	18	50	1	0
Javed Omar c Ricky Clarke b Stephen Harmison	3	27	0	0
Habibul Bashar c Marcus Trescothick b Stephen Harmison	2	10	00	00
Rajin Saleh not out	0	3	0	0
Extras: (b-1)	1			
Total: (For 2 wks in 15 overs)	24			

Fall of wickets: 1-12 (Javed), 2-24 (Bashar)

To bat: Alok Kapali, Khaled Mashud, Khaled Mahmud, Mohammad Rafique, Enamul Haque jnr, Mashrafe bin Mortaza, Mushfiqur Rahman

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Matthew Hoggard	8	3	14	0
Stephen Harmison	7	3	9	2

ENGLAND: Marcus Trescothick, Michael Vaughan, Mark Butcher, Nasser Hussain, Graham Thorpe, Ricky Clarke, Chris Read, Gareth Batty, Ashley Giles, Stephen Harmison, Matthew Hoggard.

Toss: Bangladesh.

Umpires: Aleeem Dar (Pakistan) and Ashoka de Silva (Sri Lanka)



PHOTO: STAR
BARMY ARMY IN TOWN: A group of English fans enjoy their time at the VIP Gallery of the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Vibrant Barmy Army

Cricket

LENNIN GANI

The Barmy Army was very noticeable at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday judging by the number of flags and banners inscribed with an array of messages best known to them. Some were singing and cheering.

Around hundred supporters have flown from all over the United Kingdom and some had crossed the Indian border checkpoint with one mission to stand by the English Lions in thick and thin, in good times and in bad.

They were located in three separate areas of the stadium - the VIP Gallery, non-AC hospitality boxes and the International Gallery.

This correspondent endeavored to find out what they were up to during their stay in Bangladesh

when rain stopped play.

"It's been okay so far but could somebody tell me where's the nearest pub," said the blond Nicky from Kent. A member for the past five years, she has traveled to Sri Lanka, Pakistan and India.

"I have been here for nearly two weeks and whenever I get a chance I've done some window-shopping in Gulshan. Hopefully I'll buy something nice before leaving Dhaka."

Her companions all had their own stories.

Mike, is self-employed and only recently became a Barmy.

"I haven't been to many countries yet but what I can say is that the hotels here are pretty cheap," said Mike whose favourite dish is dal.

It would be wrong to presume they appear like holidaymakers. They are very serious about the state of the English game.

"England needs to find world-

SEE PAGE 14 COL 5

National cricket Dhaka University reach zonal final

SPORTS REPORTER

Dhaka University moved into the Seba Zone final of the Emirates 27th National Cricket Championship with a massive 142-run win over Chittagong University at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium yesterday.

Put into bat, Dhaka University piled up a huge 259 for six in the allotted 50 overs with Anisul Hakim scoring highest 89.

Discarded Bangladesh opener Ehsanul Haque was the other notable scorer with 71.

In reply, Chittagong University were shot out for 117 in 39.5 overs.

Away in Chuadanga, Jessore had an easy outing against Narail as they recorded a ten-wicket victory while Mymensingh narrowly defeated Manikganj by nine runs at the Comilla Stadium in a rain interrupted match.

In the other match of the day,

SEE PAGE 14 COL 5

Maiden Pak home win

Cricket

AFP, Lahore

Left-handed opener Taufeeq Umar added 63 to his first-innings 111 as Pakistan completed an eight-wicket Test victory over South Africa at Gaddafi stadium on Tuesday.

Needing just 24 for victory on the final day for their first home Test victory over the tourists, Pakistan completed the formality in 6.5 overs with Shoaib Malik hitting the winning boundary off Graeme Smith.

"We started the match on the wrong foot with our captain Inzamamul Haq ruled out due to injury but the young boys did tremendously well," said stand-in captain Yousuf Youhana.

The victory gives Pakistan a 1-0 lead in the two-match series with the second Test starting at Faisalabad from Friday.

Pakistan added four runs after resuming at 137-1 before losing



PHOTO: STAR
NEW WASIM AKRAM: The celebrated former Pakistan fast bowler, who has taken up a career in TV commentary on Monday, makes a point to fellow commentator Athar Ali Khan (L) during a break yesterday.

Umar to a low delivery from Paul Adams which beat the batsman and hit the middle stump.

Adams, who took a career best 7-128 in the first innings, finished with 1-57 in the second.

Umar capped a successful comeback from a knee injury with his nine-boundary 63 compiled over 155 minutes.

He was named man-of-the-match along with leg-spinner Danish Kaneria, who took seven wickets.

"I was under pressure because this was my comeback match and the pitch too was not that good for batsmen, but I played with a positive approach and that paid off," said Umar, who missed the Multan Test against Bangladesh last month and one-day series against Bangladesh and South Africa.

Pakistan also found a dependable batsman in Asim Kamal who made 99 on his Test debut and justified his selection ahead of the experienced Younis Khan.

South Africa had made 320 in their first innings and Pakistan replied with 401, taking a crucial first-innings lead of 81.

Leg-spinner Danish Kaneria and Shoaib Akhtar shared nine wickets between them on the fourth day to sink the tourists' hopes.

The win is Pakistan's first against South Africa on home ground after losing 1-0 to South Africa in the previous series between the two nations in 1997-98.

SCOREBOARD
Final scoreboard on the fifth day of the first cricket Test between Pakistan and South Africa at the Gaddafi Stadium on Tuesday:

SOUTH AFRICA: First innings 320 (M Boucher 72, G Kirsten 53 retired hurt; S Malik 4-42)

PAKISTAN: First innings 401 (T Umar 111, A Kamal 99; P Adams 7-128)

SOUTH AFRICA: Second innings 241 (H Gibbs 59, G Kirsten 46; D Kaneria 5-46, S Akhtar 4-36)

SEE PAGE 14 COL 1

Zia shares 6th spot

SPORTS REPORTER

Grand Master Ziaur Rahman jointly finished sixth with other five players in the Tata International Open Chess tournament at Tata Sports Complex in Jamshedpur, India on Monday.

Zia earned eight points after the last round games.

Grand Master Niaz Murshed and Saifuddin Lovlu got 7.5 points each.

In this round Zia beat Viswaswaran of India, Niaz beat Arghyidip Das of India, Lovlu beat IM Rahul Shetty of India.

Indian Grand Master Dibyendu Barua and Grand Master Alexander Fominyh became joint champions with 9 points each.