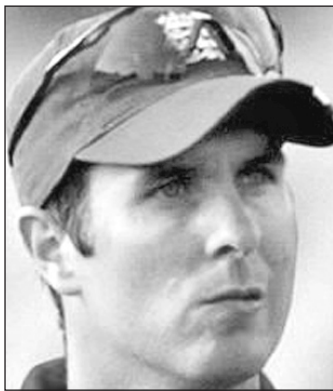




Did U Know?

Garry Kasparov became the youngest ever world chess champion at the age of 22.



Michael Vaughan
(England cricket captain)
"We are cramming cricket in but there's nothing we can do about it." On hectic schedule



TEN Sports
Euro 2004 Qualifier
Netherlands vs Scotland
Live at 12:25 am (Thursday)

ESPN
Sportscentre Hindi
Sport News
Live at 8:30 pm
TV Cup Triangular Series
Final India vs Australia
Highlights at 9:30 pm

STAR Sports
Sport News
Live at 8:00 pm

Star WHIZZ KID COMPETITION 201
Tick the correct answers, post to
The Daily Star
Win attractive prizes
Competition closes at 8 pm
Dec 5, 2003 and draw

1. How many runs did Bangladesh score against England in the last ODI?
143 190 182

2. Who is the International Cricket Council (ICC) president?
Malcolm Spence Ali Asghar Ehsan Mani

3. Who became Asian Under-19 cricket champions?
Pakistan Bangladesh India

4. Who clinched the women's title in the Asian Zonal Chess?

Name

Class Roll No.

School Address

Phone: (If any)

Gillespie coming back strongly

AFP, Adelaide

Test paceman Jason Gillespie made an encouraging comeback after injury here Tuesday, capturing two wickets as a strong New South Wales side collapsed for 267 in a Sheffield Shield game.

South Australia replied with 26 without loss by stumps on the opening day of the four-day match at Adelaide Oval.

Gillespie, who had been out of action with a side strain for five weeks, snapped up 2-46 from 19 overs in four spells with his first nine overs yielding only 10 runs.

He worked up to full pace in a performance suggesting he could be at his menacing best for the first Test against India in Brisbane from December 4-8.

With paceman Paul Rofe (4-62) in outstanding form, New South Wales were always on the back foot after captain Steve Waugh won the toss and batted.

Familiar foes in final

SPORTS REPORTER

Muktijoddha Sang-sad Kriya Chakra set up a final clash against defending champions Mohammedan Sporting Club when they ended the dream run of Sheikh Russell Kriya Chakra in the Tibet 19th Federation Cup football tournament yesterday.

A brilliant goal by Muktijoddha midfielder Bidyut settled the issue at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur. The hard-working midfielder, who joined from Abahani this season, let loose a first time right-footer from 35 yards that screamed into the near post leaving Sheikh Russell custodian Apel stranded in the 27th minute.

The goal however didn't diminish the spirit of the Premier League new boys, who had posted a few good results on route to their maiden semifinal appearance. They crushed Dhanmondi 6-0 in the group stage.

But a combination of poor finishing and a series of brilliant saves by the country's best custodian Aminul, denied Sheikh Russel any hopes of an

equaliser.

And for once their Brazilian striker Fabio, a revelation in earlier games in the tournament, could not impose himself on the crucial contest. The nimble and shaven-headed forward was never allowed to settle down by a tight Muktijoddha defence.

The game's only goal allowed the Reds to meet Mohammedan in Thursday's final at the same final venue. It will be the second successive year that both sides will face each other.

The second semifinal started predictably with Muktijoddha making all the running. Playing with a 5-3-2 formation, the Dhaka giants opted to give Ghanaian defender Ghansha an attacking midfield role and for the first ten minutes they dominated possession.

But in football it's no point keeping the ball if you cannot convert it into goals. And that's what happened with both strikers Kanchan and Moni misfiring after good build-up in the middle.

Match-winner Bidyut could have opened Muktijoddha's account but his powerful shot was saved by Sheikh Russel keeper in the 22nd minute.

However, he didn't have to wait long

before opportunity knocked again. After receiving a pass by Ghansha, the Muktijoddha midfielder had a shot and it proved decisive in the end.

Armed with the precious goal, the National League champions looked happy to sit on that slender lead apart from some occasional creativity in an otherwise insipid second half.

Kanchan, who missed the last game because of injury, got his share of chances in the 58th minute when Papel provided him with a defense-splitting pass from the left. But the nimble attacker, who scored a dream goal in the National League for Mohammedan against Abahani, could only manage to slip over the ball in front of an empty net.

Yellow card: Hasan Al-Mamun (Muktijoddha).

TEAMS
MUKTIJODDHA SANGSAD KC: Aminul, Hasan Al-Mamun (Papel), Prodeep, Harry, Riad, Gerald (Lajuk), Bidyut (Tipu), Matiur Munna, Ghansha, Kanchan and Moni.
SHEIKH RUSSELL KC: Apel, Biplab, Mintu, Narayan, Kamal, Tofazzal, Asif (Figo), Fatah, Fabio (Apu) and Bulbul.
Referee: R. Alam.



Muktijoddha's Ghanaian recruit Ghansha (R) tries to keep possession against a Sheikh Russel Kriya Chakra defender during their Federation Cup football tournament clash at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

Australia contained

Cricket

AFP, Calcutta

India restricted world champions Australia to 235-5 from 50 overs despite dropping five catches in the tri-series TVS Cup one-day final at the overflowing Eden Gardens here on Tuesday.

Spinners Murali Kartik and Harbhajan Singh played key roles in keeping the Australian batsmen silent with tidy line and length on a turning pitch in front of some 100,000 spectators.

The spinners shared two wickets, but conceded just 64 runs in 20 overs to ensure the dropped catches did not prove costly.

Damien Martyn defied the Indians with a gutsy 61, but was denied the freedom to play shots during his 101-ball knock.

The middle-order batsman hit six

'lives' while Bevan was let off even before he had reached double-figures.

Australia were under pressure immediately after winning the toss.

Seamer Ajit Agarkar bowled in-form opener Adam Gilchrist (seven) with a slow yorker, which hit the batsman's pad before crashing into the stumps.

Hayden then drove left-arm seamer Zaheer Khan to short cover where Laxman held the catch, much to the relief of his teammates.

Ponting also could not capitalise on his chance, edging left-arm spinner Kartik to Laxman in the slips.

Andrew Symonds (10) tried to hit his way out of trouble, playing one shot too many early in his innings and paid the penalty. His mistimed lofted shot off Harbhajan landed safely into Hemang Badani's hands at mid-on.

SCOREBOARD
Scoreboard of the Australian innings in the TVS Cup tri-series one-day final against India at the Eden

SEE PAGE 14 COL 5

U-19s make 232

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh under-19 team got off to a good start in a two-day match against visiting Asian Cricket Council (ACC) under-19 selection at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

The virtual second string side of Bangladesh under-19 elected to bat and scored 232 before being all out in 88.3 overs.

One-down Golam Rahman scored highest 53 with eight boundaries and he was followed by opener Zunaid Imrose who chipped in with 37.

Nazmul (25), Arif (24), Dhiman (23) and Mehabub (21) were the other notable run-getters.

Maxim took three wickets for the visitors while Shakti got two.

The tourists will bat today.

SCORES IN BRIEF
BANGLADESH U-19: 232 all out in 88.3 overs (Golam 53, Zunaid 37, Nazmul 25, Arif 24; Maxim 3-43, Shakti 2-46)

A genuine concern

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

After being whitewashed against England in the home series the general consensus was that our cricketers lacked the technique and temperament to cope with demands of international cricket.

The angry winds continued to blow for a few days before it died down and it was business as usual for the players, who are looking for a way out.

And the ideal platform to correct their flaws was to return to the domestic scene. The cricketers duly obliged and a number of them took part in a crucial match of the National Cricket Championship, the third biggest local tournament fixture, at Mymensingh on Monday.

But there was no respite for them as they came face to face with the reality of another sub-standard wicket.

"It will be flukish to come up with a good performance at the highest level after playing domestic cricket on such awful pitches," Bangladesh's top Test batsman Habibul Bashar told The Daily Star Sport yesterday.

The experienced campaigner battled his way to a match-winning unbeaten 46-run knock for Comilla against Chittagong but found batting a torrid test rather than pleasure.

"It was a worst possible track. You could hardly read the ball. Most of the times the ball kept outrageously low

and all of a sudden it would pop up from nowhere," said the right-hander.

Bashar thought that such tracks were seriously detrimental for unearthly fresh talents.

"It's flabbergasting how matches of a competition of such stature could be played on a wicket like that. You can't expect new players to develop this way," Bashar added.

Former national skipper Akram Khan, who played for losers Chittagong, also echoed the same sentiment.

"The wicket was unbelievably slow and low. The outfield also resembled a paddy field. It is unwise to arrange national competitions on a ground like this," said Akram who scored a painstaking 26 off 71 balls.

While criticism came from the country's top batsmen, Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB)'s advisor and tournament committee chairman Shah Nurul Kabir Shaheen took a totally different stance.

"I was present during the match and I feel that the players have no right to blame the pitch. Rather it was them who paid the price for playing cross-batted shots. The pitch was far better than it was during previous occasions," claimed Shaheen, who is also a Member of Parliament.

Shaheen was the key figure behind the controversial transformation of the four-day first class national championship to a one-day competition. Last season, the BNP lawmaker also shockingly decided to bring all the games of the National League to Dhaka by ignoring the call of the country's cricket fraternity of decentralising the game.

Shaheen had defended the decision by saying that wickets outside Dhaka were below standard and had vowed to improve the pitches before any more national level competitions are held away from the capital. But a year on, nothing seems to have changed.

His observations were also contradicted by the person most qualified to comment on the pitch issue, BCB's grounds committee member secretary Rafiqul Islam Babu.

"The local authority had assured us that they had the capability to prepare a good wicket. But they have failed. I have to admit it was not correct of us to entirely depend on them," said Babu.

The track at Mymensingh, which has traditionally been a rich cricket venue, was an eye-opener in terms of wickets on offer around the country and Babu is already concerned about holding the next high-profile competition, the four-day National League.

The tournament committee is thinking to start the League at six venues across the country from December 5 but preparations have not been ideal.

"Two of our venues at Barisal and Rangpur are not ready. Besides, International Cricket Council's pitch consultant Andy Atkinson has requested us to avoid the venues that will be used for the ICC Youth World Cup. This is a cause for concern but we are hopeful," said Babu.

England embarrassed

Cricket

AFP, Dambulla

Sri Lanka dismissed England for their second-lowest total of 88 to win their first one-day international by 10 wickets here on Tuesday.

England, electing to take first strike on a seaming wicket, slumped to 67-9 before the last-wicket pair of Ashley Giles and James Anderson guided them past their lowest one-day total of 86 against Australia two years ago.

Sri Lanka surpassed the easy target in the 14th over to take a 1-0 lead in the three-match series.

The second and third matches will be played at the Premadasa stadium in Colombo on Friday and Sunday.

Openers Sanath Jayasuriya and Romesh Kaluwitharana showed no signs of rustiness in Sri Lanka's first international match since June by making light of England's bowling.

Left-handed Jayasuriya hammered an unbeaten 46 off 41 balls, studded with six boundaries and six.

Kaluwitharana returned with 36 off 42

balls containing seven hits to the fence.

Sri Lanka captain Marvan Atapattu was delighted at the quick finish in the first day-night match at the Rangiri International Stadium.

"I can't ask for anything more," he said. "Everyone knows how explosive our openers are and they showed it here on Tuesday."

England, who swept both the Test and one-day series in Bangladesh, caved in against Sri Lanka's new pace duo of Dinusha Fernando and Nuwan Kulasekara, although veteran Chaminda Vaas was the chief destroyer with three for 15.

Fernando began the rout by taking a return catch to dismiss debutant opener Andrew Strauss and then bowled Vaughan with one.

Vaas removed left-handed opener Marcus Trescothick and stopped all-rounder Andrew

THE SORRY SCOREBOARD

ENGLAND	
M. VAUGHAN	02
J. ANDERSON	04
M. TRCSCOTTHICK	09
I. BLACKWELL	03
R. CLARKE	02
P. COLLINGWOOD	31
A. FLINTOFF	03
A. GILES	21
R. JOHNSON	06
C. READ	00
A. STRAUSS	03

SEE PAGE 14 COL 2



THE JOY THAT LASTED LONG: Sri Lanka cricketers celebrate the fall of an England wicket in Dambulla yesterday.

Hospitality comes first?

SPORTS REPORTER

Preparing good grounds for the upcoming National Cricket League is not the organisers' priority, they rather wish to spend more on the players and officials' accommodation.

Six divisional representatives, who met the tournament committee of Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) yesterday at the Bangabandhu National Stadium to discuss the preparations, put more emphasis on hospitality.

Sources also said that member secretary of the tournament committee Adnan Rahman Dipon offered a formula to solve the accommodation problem. But that was abandoned after refusal from Mahmud Jamal, the representative from Rajshahi.

The divisional organisers also requested to defer the date of the meet, but tournament committee chairman Shah Nurul Kabir Shaheen expressed his determination to start the country's lone first-class competition on December 5.

The six divisional venues are, Sylhet District Stadium, Barisal District Stadium, Rangpur Stadium for Rajshahi Division matches, Jessore Stadium for Khulna Division matches, Comilla Stadium for Chittagong Division matches, and BKS P/Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium/Fatullah for Dhaka Division matches.

After a season's gap the league is being brought back to its old shape with home and away basis matches. Last year the away matches overlooked citing ground crisis.

Meanwhile, BCB has appointed separate coaches for seven divisional teams.

SEE PAGE 14 COL 5

Div II hockey

BSS, Dhaka

Uttara Hockey Club blanked Dilkusha Sporting Club 3-0 in the Green Delta Insurance Second Division League at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium yesterday.

The winners led the first half 1-0.

Shuvo opened the account for Uttara with a field goal after 20 minutes. He struck again two minutes later.

Sajib trebled the margin just two minutes before the final whistle.



Bangladesh A cricketers warm up under the supervision of trainer Dean Woodford at the Maulana Bhasani National Stadium yesterday.