



Did U Know?

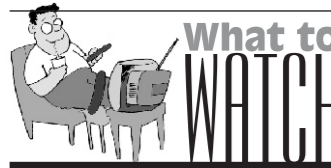
Brazil played in every World Cups. It is the only country who could do that.



Greg Chappell

(Former Australian cricket captain)

"If you try and build a technique for a particular delivery, it reduces your options against other kinds of deliveries. Batting is about having a technique that can deal with whatever a bowler bowls."



What to WATCH

- ESPN**
- English Premier Football League Man United vs Aston Villa Repeat at 3:30 pm
 - Leeds United vs Chelsea Repeat at 5:30 pm
 - Sportscentre Hindi**
 - Sport News Live at 8:30 pm
 - Primera Liga Barcelona vs Real Madrid Repeat at 9:30 pm
 - STAR Sports**
 - Australia vs India First Test, Day Five Live at 6:00 am
 - Sport News Live at 8:00 pm

Relishing the prospect

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh A team captain Mushfiqur Rahman wants to enjoy his new responsibility rather than thinking of it as a burden.

"I don't feel any pressure because I have successfully skippered my side in domestic competitions and I am hopeful that this assignment will also be an enjoyable experience," said the all-rounder from Rajshahi yesterday after a training session at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

Mushfiqur said that he was always trying to improve his game and captaincy won't hinder his progress as a player. "I don't believe that captaincy would effect my performance. It is just an additional job besides batting and bowling."

Mushfiqur however admitted that the responsibility can start playing on the mind if the team doesn't perform as expected.

"You have seen the effects of leading a non-performing side on even a strong person like Khaled Mahmud. His own performance has also suffered because of the pressure of losing."

Mushfiqur believed that his side had every chance of doing well.

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BCB takes stock

No cash boost for NCL players



SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB)'s advisory council met yesterday to review the progress of preparation for the forthcoming ICC Under-19 World Cup in Bangladesh next February and March.

Board president Ali Asghar chaired the meeting held at the BCB's management office in Gulshan.

Tournament director ASM Roquibul Hassan was present and reported on the overall preparation.

"We are not entirely satisfied with the way things are moving at the moment. We want preparation to gather pace. We have given certain directives to the tournament committee today so that everything is completed as early as possible," said BCB advisor and chairman media committee Riazuddin Al-Mamun after the meeting.

Mamun however, did not

mention the areas which they thought needed more attention.

The meeting also inquired from BCB's development committee member secretary Khan-dokar Jamiluddin about the state of training of the Bangladesh under 19 team.

A couple of other issues were also discussed. The proposed incentive of Taka 20 thousand at a time to each of the top 15 cricketers of six divisional teams of the National Cricket League (NCL) didn't get the approval of the advisors who thought that the time hasn't come still to implement the idea.

Instead they sanctioned Taka five lakh to be spent as prize money among National League players scoring fifties, hundreds or getting five or more wickets.

The Board also decided to give USD 2,000 (Taka one lakh approximately) to the family of Sri Lankan curator Nandasena who passed away in Dhaka last month. Nandasena had been working as BCB's curator for nearly one year.

India relieve BAAF

SPORTS REPORTER

India finally agreed to send a team to participate in the first-ever SAF Junior Athletics Competition beginning in Dhaka from January 22.

The South Asian powerhouse will compete in all 26 events.

"We are happy to hear of India's participation. Currently only Bhutan was the first country to confirm its entry. We hope that Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Maldives and Nepal will follow suit within a week," said Bangladesh Amateur Athletic Federation (BAAF) general secretary Shah Alam yesterday.

Alam informed that they are now trying to bring an electronic timing machine for the competition.

"But the device costs between Tk 12-14 lakh so we are trying to arrange the funds," he added.

The only timing machine in the country, which was bought for the 1995 SAF Games, today remains a piece of history.

Meanwhile, the 32 Bangladesh athletes that will vie for gold in all 26 events have started their preparations.

Surprised Gillespie!

AFP, Brisbane

Australian pace spearhead Jason Gillespie said he was surprised when umpire Steve Bucknor gave Indian batting superstar Sachin Tendulkar out leg before wicket in the first Gabba Test here on Sunday.

The crowd groaned when Tendulkar was controversially given out by Bucknor for his 11th duck in 108 Tests during the morning session of the fourth day.

Tendulkar, the fifth all-time greatest Test scorer with 8,882 runs, was stunned when the West Indian umpire slowly raised his finger to signal the end of Tendulkar.

Television replays suggested that the delivery would have cleared the stumps after Tendulkar did not offer a shot to Gillespie.

"I appealed for so long and I didn't get a response, so I assumed it was going to be given not out, yeah, it was a nice surprise," said Gillespie.

Gillespie was head and shoulders above his fellow bowlers on a trying day for the home side as Indian skipper Saurav Ganguly propelled the tourists to 362 for six with his first century against Australia.

Gillespie finished with 3-45 from 25 overs and claimed the key wicket of Tendulkar for a three-ball duck.

With Brett Lee and Glenn McGrath sidelined with injuries, Gillespie denied he was under any extra pressure to perform and defended the efforts of his fellow pacemen on a pitch that didn't seem to offer as much assistance as expected.

Bucknor appeared to make another contentious decision when he turned down a strident bat-pad catch appeal against Chopra, who appeared to get his bat to a stump from leg-spinner Stuart MacGill to Simon Katich at short leg when he was on 27.

Pak openers' distinction

AFP, Rawalpindi

Pakistan's new set of openers Yasir Hameed and Imran Farhat Sunday set a world record in limited-overs cricket when they registered their fourth consecutive hundred-run opening partnership in the fifth one-day against New Zealand here.

Hameed and Farhat followed their 115-run partnership in the second match in Lahore with 142 at Faisalabad and 134 in the fourth match in Rawalpindi with another domineering 197 in the fifth match.

They became the sixth set of openers to record century stands in two successive one-day matches.

India's Sachin Tendulkar and Virender Sehwag have the unique distinction of registering two-century stands in consecutive one-day games on two occasions while four other pairs achieved the feat.

Tendulkar-Sehwag put 107 and 134 versus England in 2001-2002 and then 103 and 182 against Australia and New Zealand last month.

Since one-day cricket started in 1971, Pakistan's Rameez Raja-Saeed Anwar, Salim Elahi-Taufiq Umer, Sri Lankan Marvan Atapattu-Sanath Jayasuriya and Australian pair Adam Gilchrist-Mark Waugh have registered two-century stands in successive one-day matches.

Farhat in the company of Umer equalled the world record of three century stands in successive Test innings against South Africa last month.

Pakistan had tried 12 different openers in the last two and a half years with Saeed Anwar, Shahid Afridi, Umer, Elahi, Hameed, Farhat, Abdul Razaq, Shoaib Malik, Imran Nazir, Faisal Iqbal, Naved Latif and Kamran Akmal.



Members of Dhaka district team (L-R, sitting) Al Shahrir, Jahangir Alam, Sanwar Hossain and Mohammad Ashraf, Mehrah Hossain (standing, L) and an unidentified player prepare to practise at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. They are preparing for the upcoming National Cricket League that starts on December 10.

PHOTO: STAR

Peaceful BHF AGM



SPORTS REPORTER

The storm that was anticipated before the annual general meeting (AGM) of the Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) never happened yesterday.

The councilors expressed their unwillingness to call for any changes in the elected executive committee and they agreed to abide by any decision taken by BHF president Air-Vice Marshal Fakrul Azam and general secretary Shamsul Bari.

A few days before the much talked-about meeting it was learnt that Mohammedan Sporting Club expressed their unhappiness at the naming of hockey secretary Sajad Adel to Khaja Rahmatullah, the BHF's number two joint secretary.

The popular Motijheel club was rather hoping to unseat Zahidur Rahman Pushkin as number one.

But in the end nothing hap-

pened when fifty-three out of a total of 64 councilors attended the four-hour AGM, which for the first time was held at the Bangladesh Air Force's Falcon Hall.

Now Bari in an apparent compromise move has said that aggrieved Mohammedan will be offered one of the two vice-president posts.

But the peace deal hardly pleased an influential Mohammedan hockey organiser.

"We deserve an active executive post that's why we are not interested in the ceremonial vice-president post," he said.

But the long-serving Bari believed that everything would be all right after a few days.

"The BHF president and I will discuss the various demands made by the councilors. If necessary we will replace those ineffective officials."

"Vice-president Noor Ali from Abahani didn't attend many meetings and it is most likely he will be replaced by a Mohammedan representative."

Samuels out of Windies tour

AFP, Bloemfontein

West Indian batsman Marlon Samuels will return home from the team's tour of South Africa to have an operation on a chronic injury to his right knee, the team management announced Saturday.

The same injury curtailed Samuels' involvement in the World Cup earlier this year. A replacement is expected to be announced Sunday.

Samuels is the second player to be sent home from South Africa during a tour which also included two Tests and five one-day internationals in Zimbabwe.

Fast bowler Jerome Taylor left because of a back injury and was replaced by left-arm spinner Dave Mohammed.

Fast-medium bowler Vashbert Drakes, who has been out of action because of a side strain, is expected to be fit for the first Test against South Africa which starts in Johannesburg on Friday.

Pakistan keep it clean



REUTERS/AFP, Rawalpindi

Pakistan completed a clean sweep of the five-match one-day series against New Zealand on Sunday with a 49 runs-win in the final match.

It was the eighth time Pakistan have recorded a clean sweep in a one-day series at home and their second of the home season after a 5-0 defeat of Bangladesh in

September.

The foundation on Sunday was laid by openers Yasir Hameed (127 not out) and Imran Farhat (107) who put on 197 to set Pakistan on their way to an imposing total of 277 for four.

It was a record fourth time in a row the two men had posted century opening partnerships and the stand also beat Pakistan's previous highest ever against New Zealand of 194.

The left-handed Farhat's maiden one-day century featured

12 fours and a six. Hameed's runs came from 154 balls, with nine fours and one six.

The 21-year-old Farhat, since returning to the Pakistan team after a year on the sidelines, has figured in seven century opening stands in his last nine innings in tests and one-dayers.

Although Hamish Marshall scored his third half century of the series (62 not out), the Kiwis were never able to chase the target once openers Craig Cumming and Richard Jones struggled to bring up 50 in the first 15 overs.

Three unnecessary run-outs in the innings did not help their cause, either.

By the time captain Chris Cairns came out to bat in the 36th over his team were struggling on 141 for three and in the last 10 overs they required 118 for an unlikely win.

Marshall and Pama Canning (23 not out) restored some pride by adding 49 undefeated runs in the last seven overs.

SCOREBOARD

Full scoreboard in the fifth and final day-night one-day international between Pakistan and New Zealand at Pindi Stadium on Sunday.

PAKISTAN			
Bowler	O	M	R W
Tuffey	8	1	48 0
Oram	6	1	23 0
Cairns	7	0	38 0
Hitchcock	9	0	56 1
Walker	10	0	45 0
Canning	10	0	59 2
NEW ZEALAND			
Cumming/lbw b Razaq	17		
Jones run out	49		
Sinclair run out	36		
Marshall not out	62		
Cairns c Shabbir b Akhtar	6		
Oram run out	1		
McCullum lbw b Mahmood	5		
Canning not out	23		
Extras: (lb-12, nb-7, w-10)	29		
Total: (For 6 wickets in 50 overs)	228		



MADE FOR EACH OTHER: Pakistan opener Imran Farhat kisses his helmet on reaching his maiden century in the fifth and final one-day international against New Zealand at Rawalpindi yesterday. His opening partner Yasir Hameed (R) also scored a hundred as they rewrote the record books.

PHOTO: AFP

Sun and Saurav shine



AFP, Brisbane

Skipper Saurav Ganguly exorcised his demons with a fighting century to steer India to a 39-run lead over Australia with a day to play in the first cricket Test at the Gabba here on Sunday.

Ganguly, who had not scored higher than 66 in 10 previous Tests and seven years against the Aussies, mastered the flat Australian bowling attack to remove the risk of defeat in the first of four Tests.

The 31-year-old left-hander, targeted as a weak link in a stellar Indian batting lineup, took particular satisfaction with his 11th Test century to virtually consign the match to a draw on Monday's final day after rain limited play to just 84 overs in the first three days.

Ganguly finally holed out for

144 to Jason Gillespie at deep mid-off leg-spinner Stuart MacGill just after last drinks. He cracked 18 fours in his 196-ball innings in just under five hours.

At the close of the fourth day, India were 362 for six with Parthiv Patel not out 37 and Agit Agarkar on 12 to reply to Australia's first innings 323.

Ganguly showed his elation at reaching his personal milestone when he swept MacGill for a bustling two nearing tea: he kicked his heels twice in the air as he scampered towards the team dressing-room, waving his bat excitedly.

Ganguly overcame some anxious moments early in his innings, particularly against spearhead Gillespie with a stacked field crouched behind the wicket.

But once he had negotiated those sticky moments, he flourished and was particularly severe on Andy Bichel, who went wicketless and was clouted for 118 runs on his home ground.

Ganguly's masterful batting overshadowed a glorious cameo by VVS Laxman, who showcased his artistry with 75, an innings replete with sublime strokeplay.

It also overcame the loss of master batsman Sachin Tendulkar for a duck to a highly contentious leg before wicket decision in the morning session.

Ganguly and Laxman blazed on 146 runs for the fifth wicket in 136 minutes and for a time looked as though they could build a testing lead over the Australians before Laxman was caught at backward point by Simon Katich off MacGill 20 minutes after tea.

Laxman, the hero of India's famous Calcutta Test victory over Australia two years ago with a career best 281, thrilled the crowd with his wristy strokeplay to provide Ganguly support with 11 fours off 113 balls.

The Indians rattled on 125 runs in the middle two-hour session.

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PHOTO: AFP

IN FULL FLOW: India captain Saurav Ganguly drives one through covers on way to scoring his maiden century against Australia on the fourth day of the first Test at Brisbane yesterday.

Ganguly's answer to 'em



AFP, Brisbane

Saurav Ganguly refused to seize the opportunity after scoring his watershed Test century in Australia to take aim at his Aussie critics here on Sunday.

The Indian skipper, criticised as being susceptible to the short-pitched ball, played one of his greatest Test innings on Sunday to steer India to a 39-run lead over Steve Waugh's Australians and wipe out the threat of defeat in the opening Gabba Test with a day to play.

Ganguly hit 144, his 11th Test century and first against Australia, to rid the doubts that existed here about his ability to score big scores on bouncy Australian wickets.

Banned Australian spinner Shane Warne, for one, said before the Brisbane Test that Ganguly had a weakness for short-pitched bowling and would be tested on the green-top Gabba pitch.

The 31-year-old left-hander more than answered his critics, hitting 18 boundaries in his near five-hour innings before holing out to Jason Gillespie at deep mid-off leg-spinner Stuart MacGill just after last drinks.

Asked what he would now say to his detractors, Ganguly said: "We have a job to do, they have a job to do, so life will go on, the game will go on, so I just want to play the game my way."

"I believe in my ability to score runs, and that's what I look to do, it happens sometimes that people get after you, but you have to take it in your stride and it's a professional sport, so go ahead."

Ganguly said his century was very important for the team as India attempt to win a Test in Australia for the first time since 1981.

"It's good that I scored a hundred, but (VVS) Laxman batted superbly, Akash Chopra, Virender Sehwag and Parthiv Patel all contributed and despite two of our best players not scoring runs (Rahul

Dravid and Sachin Tendulkar), that's a very good sign for the team," he said.

"If we can continue to do that for the rest of the series then we will do well, obviously you don't need to talk about Sachin and Dravid, you expect them to score runs, so it's a good sign."

Ganguly paid a glowing tribute to former Australian Test captain Greg Chappell for his work with him during the northern winter on his batting.

"It helped me a lot. I owe my thanks to Greg, we do talk quite often and he helped me quite a lot when I came to Sydney (last August)," Ganguly said.

"He's done a few things on my batting technique and my thought processes while batting, so far it's worked for me."

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Div I chess begins today

SPORTS REPOTER

The First Division Chess League will start today at the NSC chess room.

According to the draw, which was held yesterday, the number are: 1. Sonali Bank, 2. Destiny-2000 Limited, 3. Leonine Chess Club, 4. Bangladesh Ansars, 5. Rajshahi Daba Unnayan Sangastha, 6. Titas Club, 7. Kamalapur Samaj Kallayan and Krira Sangha, 8. Dhaka University Chess Team, 9. Bangladesh Biman, 10. Mohakhali Prodig Sangha, 11. Monipur Chess Club, Farashgonj Sporting Club, 13. Anushilan Daba Krira Chakra, 14. Narayanganj City Club, 15. F i g h t e r

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