



Did U Know?

Badminton took its name from Badminton House in Gloucestershire, the home of the Duke of Beaufort, where the sport was played in the last century. By coincidence, Gloucestershire is now the base for the International Badminton Federation.



What to Watch

- TEN Sports**
India vs Pakistan
Second Test, Day Two
Live at 10:45 am
- ESPN**
Australia vs Sri Lanka
Fifth ODI
Live at 9:15 am
- English Premier Football League
Man United vs Liverpool
Live at 9:55 pm
- STAR Sports**
Australian Open
Men's/Women's Fourth Rd
Live at 6:00 am
- English Premier Football League
Chelsea vs Charlton Athletic
Live at 7:24 pm



Talk Turkey



Stuart Carlisle

(Ex-Zimbabwe cricket captain)
"This is very embarrassing for cricket in Zimbabwe. I put 95 per cent of the blame on the ICC. They could have done a lot more and avoided this. But they just didn't want to get involved."
After the interim committee of Zimbabwe Cricket announced they would not play any more Test in 2006.

India need a genuine fast bowler: Greg

PTI, Faisalabad

Having transformed the Indian team into a winning unit, coach Greg Chappell rues the absence of a genuine fast bowler in the line-up who he believes will help his team bridge the gap with world champions Australia.

Chappell said a tearaway fast bowler would be a more potent weapon in the bowling arsenal as he could win matches in all sorts of conditions.

"To me Australia still is the number one team in the world, they are the benchmark. I am pretty happy with the progress we have made in recent months, be it in ODIs or in Test matches. But we would need a genuine fast bowler," the 57-year-old former Aussie captain said.

"History tells us that teams with tearaway fast bowlers are the ones which win in all sort of conditions. At the moment we are keeping our eyes on a couple of bowlers. But so far our bowlers have done what could be asked of them," he told PTI in an interview.

"In Zimbabwe, our fast bowlers did what was required of them and in India our spinners made good use of the conditions.

"Men like Ajit Agarkar might not get many wickets but they get important breakthroughs," Chappell said that on flat tracks like the one at Gaddafi Stadium for the first Test, the bowlers, of either the fast or the slow variety, need to show patience, a virtue best exemplified by Anil Kumble.

Mashrafe returning

Named in A side to play UAE

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Injured paceman Mashrafe-Bin-Mortuza is set to return to action after a four-month lay-off.

His return to competitive cricket was confirmed on Saturday when the national selectors, after getting the green signal from Bangladesh team physio Paul Close, drafted the Narail quick in the 15-member Bangladesh A team against the visiting United Arab Emirates team.

The UAE reached Dhaka yesterday to play four limited-overs matches. But Mashrafe, who broke down at the start of Bangladesh's away series against Sri Lanka in September last year, will feature in

one of the two limited-overs matches at the Khulna Divisional Stadium on January 26 and 27.

Mashrafe, who had his both knees operated on, returned from Sri Lanka after his back gave in a day before the first Test. Since then the 22-year-old embarked on yet another painful rehabilitation programme and only started to bowl in the nets at the Mirpur indoor facilities three weeks ago.

While the selectors wanted the Khulna match to assess his recovery from the long injury, Mashrafe was keen to get into action even before that.

"There is every chance for me to play the Super Six match of the Premier Cricket League on Monday," Mashrafe told The Daily Star Sport yesterday. Mashrafe is a registered player of Mohammedan.

Chief selector Faruque Ahmed also wanted the country's leading pace bowler to play in the Premier League.

"We actually included him in the A team to get the exact picture of his injury and he will play only one match against UAE. We have also no problem for him to play in the ongoing Premier League," said Faruque.

But Mashrafe's participation in the Premier League for Mohammedan would depend on a ruling of the CCDM. Mohammedan have already fulfilled their quota of three national pool players without Mashrafe. But the non-availability of Aftab Ahmed throughout the league due to jaundice might give him the opportunity to play as the third 'pool' player.

Faruque was however more interested about the Khulna match.

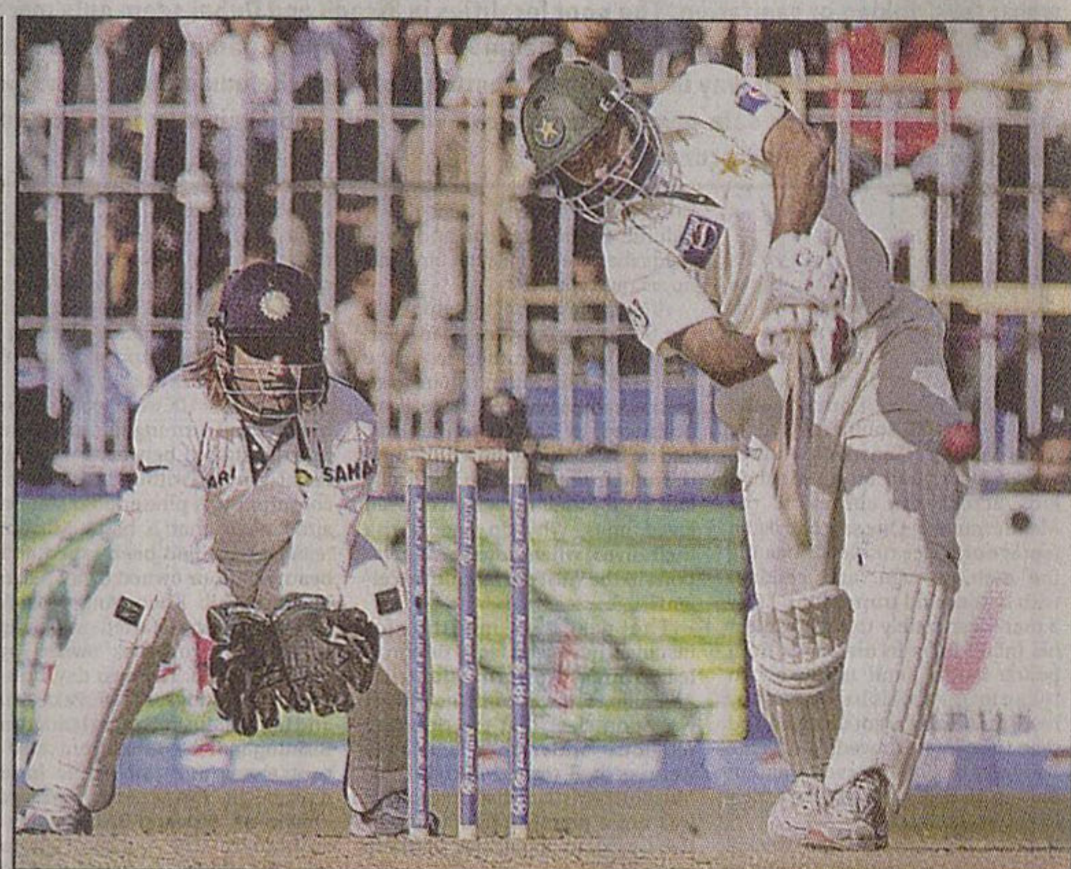
"We are keen to see how he bowls against UAE ahead of the important home series against Sri Lanka. But this time we want to handle him very carefully," he added. Sri Lanka will come here in February for two Tests and three one-day internationals.

Mashrafe on the other hand said that he was feeling no pain while bowling in the nets.

"Injury is nothing new in my career but it was really heartbreaking for me not being able to play against Sri Lanka last September. It was also very frustrating for me to sit out when others played in the exciting domestic cricket this year," said Mashrafe.

Mashrafe apart, the selectors included six more national caps in the second string Bangladesh team

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Pakistan's Shahid Afridi pulls one for four on way to hammering an unbeaten 85 on the first day of the second Test against India in Faisalabad on Saturday.

Div I cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Faruque hammered exactly one hundred as Kathalagan scored a four-wicket victory over Cricket Coaching School (CCS) in the First Division Cricket League at the Dhaka University ground yesterday.

Kathalagan made 253 for six in 49.5 overs to overtake CCS's 249-9. It was Kathalagan's fifth win in 13 matches while CCS have seven wins from same number of outings.

At BKSP, Eskaton Sabuj Sangha thrived on half-centuries by Rasel (79) and Ripon (62) to manage a four-wicket victory against Rupali Bank.

Eskaton scored 242-6 in 47 overs in reply to the bankers' 241 all out in 50 overs. Eskaton registered their fourth win in 13 matches while Rupali secured six wins in same number of matches.

JFA Cup soccer

SPORTS REPORTER

Dhaka made a flying start in the final round of the Second JFA Cup U-16 football tournament when they blanked Rangamati 3-0 at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Asif Hossain Rimon put Dhaka ahead in the very fifth minute while Jewel Rana doubled the margin after 25 minutes and Emon Mahmud sealed the game just before the lemon break.

In the day's second match at the same venue, Bagerhat came from behind to register a 2-1 victory over Gaibandha. The match was locked at 1-1 in the first half.

Nabib put Gaibandha ahead in the 26th minute while Parag restored parity two minutes before the breather.

Arafat scored the match decider in the 70th minute.

Earlier JFA international committee member Ichiro Fujita inaugurated the eight-team final round as chief guest.

Shabbir ban to stay

REUTERS, London

An independent bowling review group (BRG) has upheld Pakistan pace bowler Shabbir Ahmed's 12-month ban from international cricket after a hearing in Dubai.

"We have decided the player had an illegal bowling action and the suspension of the player is to be maintained. This is the unanimous view of the BRG," said the BRG in an International Cricket Council (ICC) statement on Saturday.

"While it is clear a laboratory test can never fully replicate match conditions, the regulations provide for match conditions to be simulated as best as possible.

"We take the view the laboratory test was carried out as fairly and properly as it should be."

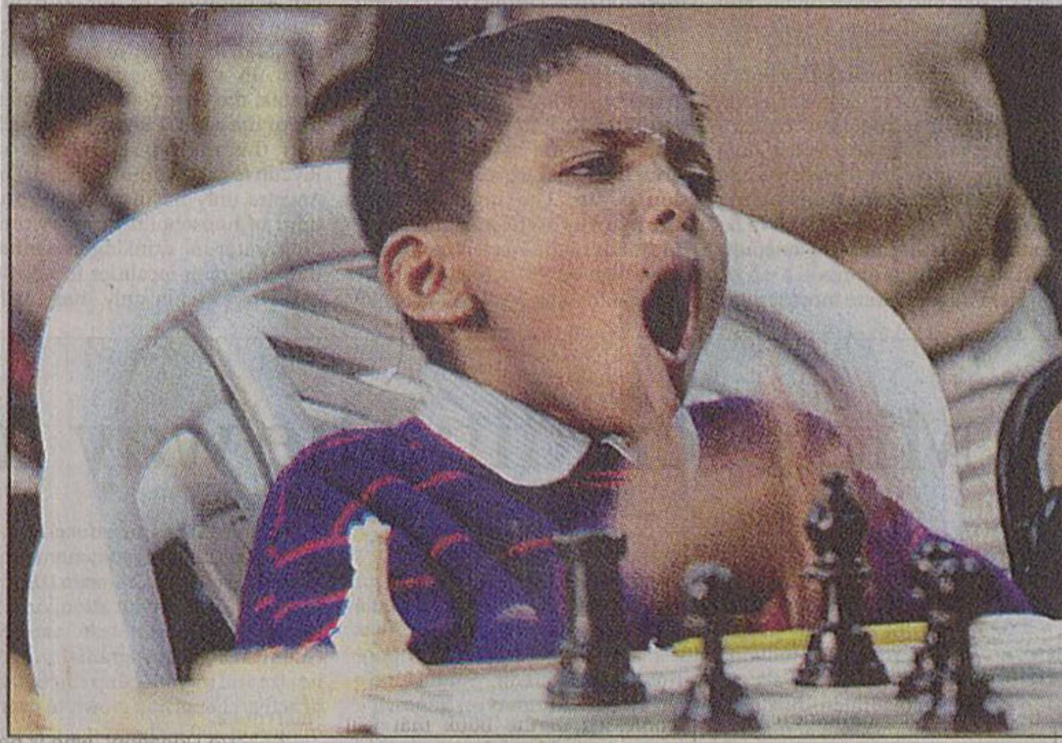
The 29-year-old Shabbir was the first player to receive a 12-month suspension under the revised ICC bowling review regulations after his action was reported twice in 2005.

The BRG, which included former India pace bowler Javagal Srinath, watched video evidence from the Multan Test against England in November after which Shabbir was reported again.

Shabbir, a six-foot five-inch seamer, played 10 Tests and 32 one-day internationals, with best figures of five for 48.

The amended regulations, introduced in March 2005, stipulate that a player who is found to have been bowling with an illegal action twice within two years will face an automatic 12-month ban from international cricket.

The decision of the BRG is final and binding.



FEELING SLEEPY? Class one student Mohammad Fahim yawns during his second round engagement of the BASIC Bank National Junior (Under-20) Chess Championship on Saturday.

Lee doesn't worry Moody

Sri Lanka meet Aussies again today

Cricket

AFP, Sydney

Sri Lanka are unfazed by the latest efforts of pace bowling sensation Brett Lee and will face Australia in Sunday's one-day triangular series match boosted by the return of opener Sanath Jayasuriya, coach Tom Moody said.

"Our guys have faced quick bowling before with (Pakistan's) Shoaib Akhtar and (New Zealand's) Shane Bond recently," Moody said Saturday.

"Obviously he (Lee) bowled well last night but our guys played him reasonably well the other night."

Lee claimed 5-22 during

Australia's 59-run win over South Africa in Melbourne on Friday which put them at the top of the tri-series table with 10 points from three matches.

Sri Lanka are second with five points from two matches while South Africa are third with four points from three matches.

The Sri Lankans lost their opening match to Australia by an embarrassing 116 runs with Lee taking 2-29 before recovering to beat South Africa by 94 runs in Brisbane last Tuesday.

"Brett is in a bit of a purple patch at the moment. We've just got to deal with it -- simple as that," Moody said.

"He's a bowler at the top of his game."

Moody, a former Australian Test and one-day international, said the return of Jayasuriya from a shoulder injury would boost Sri Lanka's batting while his left-arm spinners would also be useful.

Jayasuriya, 36, was sent home after Sri Lanka's second match in New Zealand after aggravating the injury when he slipped in the showers.

He is only the fourth batsman to make 10,000 one-day runs, joining Sachin Tendulkar, Sourav Ganguly and Inzamamul Haq.

"Regardless of thinking he (Jayasuriya) is going to be the answer to Brett Lee or not, I think just having him in the side... he's scored over 10,000 one-day runs,

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Hingis keeps rolling

Australian Open

AP, Melbourne

Martina Hingis has quickly quieted her doubters.

The former No. 1 player in the world, coming back from a three-year retirement, cruised past her third consecutive opponent Saturday to advance to the fourth round of the Australian Open on a day that the heat was some players' worst opponent.

Though there were questions about Hingis' fitness coming into the tournament, she looked fresh as she took the court for a late-morning match. She committed only 12 unforced errors in a 6-4, 6-1 victory in 65 minutes over Iveta Benesova, who suffered as temperatures rose.

"It wasn't as cruel, brutal" as later in the day, Hingis said. "Towards the end of the second set you could feel the heat, but thank God she felt it more than I did."

Hingis now has dropped only 10 games in her three matches and has looked almost as dominating as when she won three of her five Grand Slams here.

"I don't think I played my best tennis today," she said. "But as long as you win, it's always good. Always room to improve for the next match."

That will be against unseeded

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Switzerland's Martina Hingis is elated after winning her third round match of the Australian Open in Melbourne on Saturday.

CRICKET UPDATE

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"It is never easy to leave out a player of Sourav's experience but we needed all the help we could get to take 20 wickets in the match," said Dravid.

The Afridi-Inzamam partnership revived Pakistan's innings after it was briefly threatened by Rudra Pratap.

Rudra Pratap, who played eight one-day internationals last year, had Younis Khan caught superbly at point by a leaping Yuvraj Singh in his second spell after lunch.

Younis, who hit 199 in Lahore, smashed 13 boundaries during his

and the edge was well taken by Indian skipper Rahul Dravid at first slip.

Malik and Salman Butt put on 49 for the first wicket before Zaheer Khan, the third left-arm seamer in the Indian team had Butt caught by Dhoni for 37.

Talented paceman Mohammad Asif, who played his only Test against Australia last year, and all-rounder Abdul Razzaq replaced seamers Mohammad Sami and Navedul Hasan in the Pakistan team.

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