



Did U Know?

The first version of the Commonwealth Games, then known as the British Empire Games, was held in Ontario, Canada consisting six sports, with around 400 athletes from 11 nations taking part.



Uli Hoeness
(Bayern Munich general manager)
"There is one club in the world that we can not measure ourselves against and that is Chelsea. We just can not compete financially."



BTV, STAR Sports, Channel i
Bangladesh vs Kenya
1st ODI at Bogra
Live at 9:30 am

ESPN
South Africa vs Australia
1st Test, Day Two
Live at 2:30 pm
Sportscentre
Live at 9:30 pm

New Zealand vs West Indies
2nd Test, Day Two
Live at 3:30 am (Thursday)



7th National Cricket League Four-Day Matches (Day One)
Dhaka vs Khulna
Venue: Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium
Chittagong vs Rajshahi
Venue: BKS-2
Sylhet vs Barisal
Venue: Barisal Divisional Stadium

Harmison misses Mumbai Test

AFP, Mumbai

Fast bowler Steve Harmison has been ruled out of England's third and final Test against India here because of a shin injury.

The decision was taken after Harmison underwent an X-ray on his injured shin Thursday.

"There was enough in the scan to rule him out," former England captain Nasser Hussain told Sky Sports.

"It must have shown something fairly drastic to pull out of the Test. They're sending the scans back to England and they're taking medical advice."

More will be announced Friday at the press conference.

"It's a massive blow to England," added Hussain. "That's five of the Ashes squad now gone. To lose Steve Harmison really exposes the England line-up when they don't need to be exposed."

It could mean a reprieve for Harmison's Durham team-mate Liam Plunkett, who was expected to lose his place to veteran spin bowler Shaun Udal.

The only other alternative would be James Anderson who has not played a single game on tour, although he recently played for England A in the West Indies.

Harmison, who bowled only four overs in the second innings of the second Test at Mohali, had taken 159 wickets in 41 matches.

India lead 1-0 in the ongoing series following their nine-wicket win at Mohali, while the opening Test ended in a draw at Nagpur.

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Bangladesh cricketers Mohammad Ashraf (L), Habibul Bashar (C) and Mashrafe Bin Mortaza pose during a practice session at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra on Thursday.

Payback time for Tigers

Kenya-Bangladesh first ODI today



HASIBUR RAHMAN from Bogra

Bangladesh coach Dav Whatmore put pressure on the Tigers ahead of the first game of the four-match one-day series against Kenya wishing to whitewash the visitors.

The match will begin today at 9.30pm at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium with StarSports, Bangladesh Television and Channel i beaming the live telecast.

After the morning training session, Whatmore told at a press briefing that he was backing his boys for a 4-0 win against Kenya.

"They are a good team but I am not considering the strength of the opposition. If we are to make a habit of winning, this is the time to go for it," said the Australian coach, whose side have won at least one match in the three previous one-day series at home.

Bangladesh, now tenth in the ICC one-day ranking, will overtake ninth-placed Zimbabwe if they win the series at least 3-1.

Bangladesh captain Habibul Bashar was also optimistic despite their poor record against Kenya,

who have won six out of seven previous one-day clashes against the hosts. Kenya also have better overall record, winning 15 ODIs in 75 appearances compared to Bangladesh's 11 wins in 105 games.

"Yes, statistically they are ahead. But in the last three-four years, we have changed a lot. They will see a different Bangladesh team this time," said Bashar.

Kenya will depend a lot on the batting prowess of Steve Tikolo but Bashar said they were not concentrating on the master batsman alone.

"We are thinking Kenya as a whole team, not just Tikolo," said Bashar.

It has been three years since the two met and Kenya were the victors in the 2003 World Cup match in South Africa. The East Africans, who were the surprise semifinalist of the World Cup, hardly played any international match between the World Cup and a series in Zimbabwe.

"We have prepared well although our exposure to international cricket is minimum. We drew a series with Zimbabwe 2-2 recently and we are here to prove us. They boys look enthusiastic," said Tikolo, whose side practised one hour more than their opposition.

"I am not concerned about previous records because its history. Also, Bangladesh are a Test nation now and play in a different league. It is a new series for us and we have come here to win," the Kenyan captain added.

The home side, meanwhile, retained the same side that played against Sri Lanka in the last one-day international in February, keeping paceman Shahadat Hossain and all-rounder Manjarul Islam out. Rajin Saleh is expected to start as the supersub.

Nadir Shah will make his one-day international debut as umpire when he stands with Pakistan's Nadim Ghouri.

SQUAD
BANGLADESH: Habibul Bashar (captain), Javed Omar, Shahriar Nafees, Aftab Ahmed, Mohammad Ashraf, Alok Kapali, Khaled Mashud, Mohammad Rafique, Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, Abdur Razzak, Syed Rasel and Rajin Saleh.
KENYA (from): Steve Tikolo (Captain), Thomas Odoyo, Martin Suji, Kennedy Otieno, Otieno Suji, Peter Jimmy, Hitesh Modi, David Obuya, Collins Obuya, Alfred Luseno, Morris Ouma, Kalpesh Patel, James Kabatha and Tanmay Mishra.

C'WEALTH GAMES

Sabira finishes seventh

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Bangladesh weightlifter Mollah Sabira finished seventh among eleven competitors in the women's 48-kg category at the 18th Commonwealth Games in Melbourne on Thursday.

Indian Kunjarani Devi Nameirakpam clinched gold lifting 166 kg -- 72kg in snatch and 94kg in clean and jerk.

Sabira, who failed twice to lift 73kg in clean and jerk, lifted total of 131kg -- 64kg in snatch and 67kg in clean and jerk.

She was expected to at least win a bronze in the event. However, Sabira surpassed his previous record of 124kg -- 57kg in snatch and 67kg in clean and jerk -- at the 17th Women's Centennial Weightlifting World Championship in Doha, Qatar in 2005.

Lifter Ekramul Haq finished 11th out of 16 in men's 56kg category.

Rubel Rana, who took part in the third heat of men's 50m backstroke, finished seventh with Gibraltar's Jamie Zammit behind him. Rubel became 24th among 26 swimmers clocking 29.47 seconds.

National champion in 50m backstroke, Rubel improved his previous best of 29.59s in the same event at the 17th Commonwealth Games in Manchester.

Commonwealth gold medalist Asif Hossain Khan and his fellow shooters Anjan Kumar Singh and Sharmin Akhter will compete in the 10m air rifle today.

Jewel Ahmed will be action at the pool when he lines up for the 50m butterfly and freestyle heats while Sabura Khatun goes to the pool for the 50m breaststroke and 100m butterfly heats.

Besides, weightlifter Hamdul Islam will take part in the men's 62-kg category.

SL up against the odds

AFP, Colombo

Injury-hit Sri Lanka have the tough task of trying to blank Pakistan in a three-match one-day home series starting here on Friday.

Former world champions Sri Lanka need to win all three matches to ensure a direct entry in the Champions Trophy tournament in India later this year.

But with former captain Sanath Jayasuriya, veteran seamer Chaminda Vaas and emerging fast bowler Ruchira Perera on the injury list, their chances of avoiding the qualifiers looks difficult.

Sri Lanka and Pakistan have also mutually agreed to scrap the super-sub rule for the series. They will name super-subs but won't use them as the ICC has decided to do away with the rule after March 21.

"The one-day game requires quick decisions and when the super-sub comes into play it's yet another headache for the captain. On a personal note I prefer if we don't have the rule," Atapattu said.

Pakistan coach Bob Woolmer said he wasn't in favour of the rule.

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Al Shahriar denied justice?



MOHAMMAD ISAM

Bangladesh go into the ODI series against Kenya, carrying decent form from the just concluded series against Sri Lanka. Mohammad Ashraf, Habibul Bashar and Aftab Ahmed have all done well especially when it mattered. Alok Kapali, coming back after a long layoff has also done enough to be picked against Kenya.

But the tried and tested openers have done little to prove themselves once again. Good starts at the top of the order give a solid foundation and provide a base for a good total. But time and again, the Bangladesh openers have been unsuccessful.

Consistency in persevering with an opening pair is also something to consider. The series against Sri Lanka saw the opening pair being changed from a Nafees-Saleh pairing to a more regular Nafees-

Javed Omar pairing in the final two matches after the former had failed. Rajin Saleh, the reserve opening option has been irregular in the team for quite some time now. Even after getting into some form in the successful series against Zimbabwe back in 2004-05, injury led to his downfall. He has only scored 13 runs in his ODI appearances in the series against Sri Lanka. Besides, captain Habibul Bashar has not tried his occasional off-breaks, which is an additional strength of the diminutive cricketer from Sylhet.

Shahriar Nafees's form can also be described as patchy at best. Only one half-century over the period of the last five ODIs, his Test form has also dipped recently, culminating in two rash shots in the last Test against Sri Lanka. Javed Omar is the only one who looks solid, but he too has not been able to combine well with Nafees since making a comeback in the ODI fold.

At the domestic front, discarded Al Shahriar is a standout performer

in all competitions this season. Starting from the Corporate League to the Premier League and now the National League, Al Shahriar has been the man who has caught the eye. He has scored heavily in both versions of the game. He was the highest run-scorer among the local players in the Premier League, and also scored heavily in the four-day version. So far he has notched up 492 runs, which includes one century for Dhaka.

A natural stroke-maker, the gangling right-hander has the ability to take the opponent attack to the sword when there are more fielding restrictions in place.

But his penchant to play a lot of shots has not helped his cause earlier but this season he has looked in total control and the consistency has been a new element to his batting, even at the domestic level.

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WORLD CUP 2007 FIXTURE

Fixture for the 2007 Cricket World Cup to be held in West Indies from 14th March to 28th April 2007:

DAY	MATCH	DAY	MATCH
14 March	Australia v Scotland	16 March	England v New Zealand
16 March	South Africa v Netherlands	18 March	England v Canada
18 March	Australia v Netherlands	20 March	New Zealand v Kenya
20 March	South Africa v Scotland	22 March	New Zealand v Canada
22 March	Scotland v Netherlands	24 March	England v Kenya
24 March	Australia v South Africa	GROUP D (All games in Jamaica)	
GROUP A (All games in St Kitts)		Pakistan, West Indies, Zimbabwe, Ireland	
Australia, South Africa, Scotland, Netherlands		DAY MATCH	
GROUP B (All games in Trinidad)		13 March	West Indies v Pakistan
India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Bermuda		15 March	Zimbabwe v Ireland
DAY MATCH		17 March	Pakistan v Ireland
15 March	Sri Lanka v Bermuda	19 March	West Indies v Zimbabwe
17 March	India v Bangladesh	21 March	Zimbabwe v Pakistan
19 March	India v Bermuda	23 March	West Indies v Ireland
21 March	Sri Lanka v Bangladesh	SUPER EIGHT (Quarterfinals)	
23 March	India v Sri Lanka	27 March	D2 v A1, Antigua Barbuda
25 March	All games in Bangladesh	28 March	A2 v B1, Guyana
GROUP C (All games in St Lucia)		29 March	D2 v C1, Antigua Barbuda
England, New Zealand, Kenya, Canada		30 March	D1 v C2, Guyana
DAY MATCH		31 March	A1 v B2, Antigua Barbuda
14 March	Kenya v Canada	1 April	D2 v B1, Guyana
		2 April	B2 v C1, Antigua Barbuda
		3 April	D1 v A2, Guyana
4 April	C2 v B1, Antigua Barbuda	7 April	B2 v A2, Guyana
8 April	A1 v C2, Antigua Barbuda	8 April	A1 v C1, Guyana
9 April	D1 v C1, Guyana	10 April	D2 v A2, Grenada
11 April	C2 v B2, Barbados	11 April	A1 v B2, Barbados
12 April	B1 v C1, Grenada	12 April	A1 v B1, Barbados
13 April	A1 v D1, Barbados	14 April	A2 v C1, Grenada
14 April	A2 v C1, Grenada	15 April	B2 v D1, Barbados
16 April	A1 v B1, Grenada	16 April	A1 v B1, Barbados
17 April	A2 v C2, Barbados	17 April	A2 v C2, Barbados
18 April	D1 v B1, Barbados	18 April	D1 v B1, Barbados
19 April	D2 v B2, Barbados	19 April	D2 v B2, Barbados
20 April	A1 v C1, Grenada	20 April	A1 v C1, Grenada
21 April	D2 v C2, Barbados	21 April	D2 v C2, Barbados
SEMIFINALS			
24 April	Super Eight 2nd v 3rd, Jamaica	24 April	Super Eight 1st v 4th, St Lucia
FINAL			
28 April	Winner SF1 v Winner SF2, Barbados		



Scottish Caitlin McClatchey (C), Australia's Lisbeth Lenton (L) and England's Melanie Marshall are all elated after receiving their medals for the women's 200-m freestyle finals at the Commonwealth Games in Melbourne on Thursday. McClatchey broke the games record to win gold followed by Lenton for silver and Marshall for bronze.

Clark puts Aus on top



AFP, Cape Town

Debutant seam bowler Stuart Clark wrecked the South African top order as Australia took command on the first day of the first Test against South Africa at Newlands Thursday.

Clark took four for 34 as South Africa crashed to 155 for eight at tea after winning the toss and batting in overcast conditions on a pitch which gave help to the seam bowlers.

Opening bowlers Michael Kasprovic and Brett Lee took two wickets each as South Africa tumbled back to earth just four days after hammering a world record 438 for nine in a one-day international against Australia.

Clark, 30, bowled at a brisk pace with an accuracy that would have won the approval of fellow New South Wales player Glenn McGrath, who was not available for the tour because of his wife's illness.

With Australia opting for a three-man pace attack instead of picking two leg-spinners, Clark struck with his ninth ball when he had South African captain Graeme Smith caught behind for 19.

He followed up by dismissing leading batsmen Jacques Kallis and Herschelle Gibbs and South African wicketkeeper Mark Boucher.

Kasprovic made the initial breakthrough by bowling AB de Villiers for eight in the tenth over after South Africa made a cautious start.

When Kallis slashed a short delivery to Matthew Hayden at gully, Clark had taken two for three.

Gibbs, who slammed 175 in South Africa's record-breaking one-

day win in Johannesburg Sunday, struck Clark for two boundaries in an over but Clark then produced a superb delivery which left Gibbs off the pitch and hit his off stump. Gibbs made 18.

Ashwell Prince battled for 105 minutes to make 17 before Lee came back into the attack and had him caught at gully.

All-rounder Andrew Hall, who replaced the injured Shaun Pollock, became the first man to reach 20, going on to make 24 before he too was caught at gully off Lee. It was

Hayden's third catch of the innings and his 100th in Tests.

SCOREBOARD
Scoreboard at tea on the first day of the first Test between South Africa and Australia at Newlands on Thursday.

SOUTH AFRICA
Smith c Gilchrist b Clark 19
Villiers b Kasprovic 8
Gibbs b Clark 18
Kallis c Hayden b Clark 6
Prince c Hayden b Lee 17

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Australian paceman Stuart Clark (L) is delighted after bowling out South Africa's Herschelle Gibbs (R) at the Newlands Stadium in Cape Town on Thursday.

PHOTO: AFP

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