# SPÖRT

## Surma qualifiers

Jubok Phone 23rd National Football Championship gets under way at the

Eight teams, Chandpur, Comilla, Brahmanbaria, Narshingdi, Sunamganj, Moulvibazar and Habiganj will take part in the knockout competition with only the zonal champions mak-

Comilla will face Brahmanbaria in the opening match at 3.45pm. The

The Moulvibazar DSA, who will take on Chandpur on July 26, have ignored footballers from Rainagar. Kulaura and Juri upazilas in their

Manik, Shamsu, Nasir, Liton, Shabu, Akib. Munna, Minar, Masum, Belal

# Nel nails

out a Sri Lankan second string side game here on Sunday.

Nel took 4-39 as the visiting side gained a huge 303-run first innings lead and were 43-1 in their second innings at close of the second day's

Africa declared at 465-4. The home side only managed the wicket of Hashim Amla (150), who was trapped leg-before by seamer Akalanka Ganegama.

Amla batted for over five hours hitting 16 fours and a six off 272

Captain Ashwell Prince and A.B. de Villiers too got useful batting practice hitting contrasting unbeaten half-centuries.

balls for his 50 while de Villiers reached 50 off only 46 balls with 10

After an excellent show by the batsmen, South Africa's seamers struck at regular intervals as Sri Lanka A were bowled out in 46.3 overs. But South Africa decided not to enforce the follow-on.

### **BRIEF SCORES**

SOUTH AFRICANS: 351 for 3 and 43 for 1 (Dippennaar 22\*) SRI LANKAA: 162 (Chandana 51,

### Gilondo win opener

OUR CORRESPONDENT,

Gilondo United Club blanked Jovat Sangha 3-0 in the opening match of the Shaheed Chan Mia Memorial football tournament at the Garpara Upazila Parisad ground here vesterday.

Deputy Commissioner SM Shamsher Zakaria inaugurated the eight-team meet as chief guest. Garpara Association president and Manikganj Muktijoddha Unit commander Golam Mohier Shiper was also present.

### Rani shares

while Shamima Akhter Liza won her board against Farzana Hossain, Tanima Parveen beat Shamiha Sharmin, Zakia Sultana beat Salma and Sharmin Sultana won her board against Arifa Khatun to cash full points from two rounds.

### **Bring on Gatlin**

BBC ONLINE, undated

Asafa Powell says he is ready to take on Justin Gatlin whenever and

The pair were due to go head-tohead in the 100m at the London Grand Prix in Crystal Palace on 28

However, the American pulled out with a leg injury and the planned showdown between the joint world record holders has now been put on hold -- yet again.



The 2006 World Cup final was decided for only the second time on a penalty shoot-out following USA'94 where also Italy were involved along with Brazil.

# from today

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Moulvibazar

The Surma zone qualifiers of the Habiganj Stadium today.

ing it to the 12-team finals in Sylhet.

final is slated for July 30.

Moulvibazar squad: Jhantu, Dulal, Raju, Jamal, Badrul, Pablo, Noman, Sumon, Shaown, Moni, Ripon Sr, Ripon Jr, Shaheen, Emad,, Rasel, and Shahiahan: Ikram Rana (coach).

# SL A down

AFP, Colombo

South African paceman Andre Nel bagged four wickets to help bowl for 162 in a three-day practice

play against Sri Lanka A.

Resuming on 351-3, South

to a problem that had its origins in bone fragments left in Flintoff's left ankle from an operation at the beginning of last year.

Prince, 15 overnight, took 117 But the man the selectors want to captain the team in Australia now faces a spell on the sidelines which could leave him desperately short of match practice before November's

first Ashes Test in Brisbane. For Atherton the situation has

Tennis

Andy Roddick used his strong

serve to overpower Robby Ginepri

7-5, 6-3 Saturday and move into the

for the title, pitting the top two play-

ers in the United States. Blake, the

tournament's No. 1 seed, is ranked

sixth in the world; Roddick, the

Xavier Malisse 6-3, 2-6, 6-1 to

advance. Roddick, who won the

tournament in 2003 and 2004,

eliminated the defending champion

by winning 32 of 40 first-serve

points (80 per cent) and 12 of 16

second-serve points. He hasn't lost

Blake defeated ninth-seeded

second seed, is ranked 11th.

Roddick will play James Blake

final at the RCA Championships.

AP. Indianapolis

Cricket

Former England captain Michael

Atherton fears history is in danger

of repeating itself after Andrew

Flintoff was ruled out for 12 weeks

Saturday with a recurring ankle

England had hoped rest and

rehabilitation would be the answer

AFP, London

problem

worrying echoes of England's last tour of Australia in 2002/03.

a three-day practice match against Sri Lanka A in Colombo on Sunday.

Back then England arrived with several players -- including Flintoff, Darren Gough, Simon Jones and Marcus Trescothick -- who were not

Athers doubts Eng setup

"It was a shambolic start to England's last Ashes tour and, on the back of that, the selectors were very clear when they said, 'We will not do this again, we will not take players who are not fully match fit'," Atherton told Sky Sports.

"But they are going to be faced with this situation with Andrew Flintoff, that here's a guy who's played minimal cricket for the best part of eight or nine months, but a guy they want to captain out there (Australia).

"It's going to be an interesting question because he's going to be getting on that plane without any

Roddick is trying to become the

"It's more what's happening off the

The fourth-seeded Ginepri said,

Both players held serve until the

12th game of the first set, when

Roddick broke Ginepri by winning

the final three points. Roddick kept

Ginepri on the run in the second set,

winning four of the last five points of

the sixth game to break Ginepri en

two service games in the first set

before Malisse rallied in the second

Blake broke Malisse on his first

"That's the best I've ever seen him

serve. He played a great match."

tournament's second three-time

winner. Pete Sampras won in 1991,

serves," Roddick said. "Robby can

handle (serve) paces as well as any-

body. I tried to mix it up a little bit.

knowledge really that he's fully match fit," the former opener added.

South African bowler Andre Nel (C) celebrates after his dismissal of Sri Lankan batsman Prasanna Jayawardene (not in the picture) during the second day of

"Going back to what happened four years ago that is exactly the situation the selectors were keen to avoid again, going out on a long, three-month tour of Australia.

"They said it wouldn't happen again but they are going to be faced with a tricky situation to justify somebody's inclusion.' Ánd with Michael Vaughan, who led England to Ashes glory last year, also out

of the return series, and fellow Asheswinners Ashley Giles and Simon Jones both still sidelined, Atherton was adamant Flintoff's was not an isolated case. "It does seem to me that over the

last four or five years this has been a regular problem for England players. "The management of injuries

seems to be -- incompetent might be too strong a word for it -- recurring time and time again.

set. Blake rebounded to control the

and winning the first three games

Blake said he had to start quickly

"If he gets the lead, he can play

lights out and not give you much of a

wasn't coming in very well at the start,

which I tried to take advantage of. One

of my strengths is taking advantage of

Blake said dealing with

Roddick's first serve could be

trouble. Roddick has landed 70

percent of his first serves (149-of-

"I'm pretty concerned with that,"

Blake said. "You've got to stay real

focused on your serve, and make

sure you hold, because he's going

to hold almost every time.'

and the last three games.

against Malisse.

second serves."

213) this week.

11th over. Wickets continued to tumble regularly and when Bazid Khan fell for 20, Pakistan A required a further 16 from 13 balls, with only two wickets in Roddick, Blake face-off

### Rehman proved equal to the task, flicking Shane Watson and then driving him past mid-on for two fours in the 19th over. Irshad levelled the scores by slogging James Hopes down the ground for four in the next third set, breaking Malisse twice over, and the winning run came via a

Rehman

CRICINFO, undated

Pak blushes

Australia A fought back spiritedly in the

field after posting just 122, but

Pakistan Aheld their nerve to eke out a

two-wicket win in a Twenty20 game in

In a game which didn't see the

usual frenetic hitting associated with

this format, Pakistan Aalmost lost their

plot, sinking to 8 for 107, before Abdur

Rehman and Mohammad Irshad

added 16 for the ninth wicket guide

Pakistanis got off to a good start as

Mohammad Hafeez and Shahid

Yousuf added 27 in less than three

overs. However, three wickets then

went down in eight balls as they

slumped to 3 for 30. Hafeez played a

fine hand, scoring 39 from 29 balls with

four fours, but he was next out in the

Requiring just 123 for victory, the

saves

them home.

scampered single on the off side. The Australian innings never got any sort of momentum, as Phil Jaques and Shane Watson were dismissed with only ten runs on the board. Mark Cosgrove kept the innings together with a fine 44, off just 32 balls, but apart from Shaun Marsh, who clubbed two sixes en route to 23, none of the other batsmen came to the party. The total seemed too low to challenge Pakistan, but a fine effort in the field almost brought the Australians an unlikely

**BRIEF SCORES** PAKISTAN A: 8 for 123 (Hafeez 39,

AUSTRÁLIAA: 122 (Cosgrove 44)

### Shoaib still unsure

CRICINFO, undated

Pakistan coach Bob Woolmer said that Shoaib Akhtar's participation in the third Test at Headingley is unlikely and added that he was also doubtful for the fourth Test at The Oval on August 17.

"It is going to take time," Woolmer told The News. "It is not likely that he would be able to play in the third Test and I would consider Shoaib lucky if he plays in the last Test. People should understand that Shoaib has had serious injury problems and has been out of international cricket for quite a long while. He would need more time to get fit enough to play for Pakistan. We have plans for Shoaib to play in the local league but such games are still at least 14 days

Shoaib could not give a definite date when he would return to action. "I still can't set a comeback time for Pakistan, though I know the third or fourth Tests have been mentioned. They (the medical staff) don't want me to be breaking down again.

"I want to be playing for another five years yet so they are looking after my interests and Pakistan's interests," he told Bigstarcricket.com.

"I don't feel that is up to me because if it was I would be playing tomorrow and running in hard again.

"I feel really fit and just want to bowl but, after what happened last time, I know I need to listen to my trainers. One thing is for certain and that is when I do play against England I expect to bowl faster and better than when I bowled against them in Pakistan last year."

Shoaib is currently working with Warwickshire as he continues his rehabilitation and is expected to play a couple of games for them before his international return.

# Australia edge past **Pakistan**

Hockey

AFP, Terrassa

Australia began their Champions Trophy defence with a 3-2 win over Pakistan while Spain and Germany drew 1-1 and Netherlands beat Argentina 4-2 in the men's field hockey tournament here on Saturday

With the mercury nudging 38 degrees (100-degree Fahrenheit), Pakistan turned the heat on the Kookaburras in the opening match but Australia opened the scoring in the first three minutes through Michael McCann.

Pakistan were level minutes before the break as Sohail Abbas scored from a penalty

In the second half, Troy Elder made the difference for Australia, converting two penalty corners while Abbas responded with his

Australian assistant coach Colin Batch paid tribute to "a quality team" that forced his side onto the back foot in the latter stages of the

"They made a lot of good saves from the good chances we created for ourselves and we had to defend at the end to secure the victory." In the second match of the day,

Germany got off to a flying start against the tournament hosts thanks to an individual goal by Tibor Weissenborn in the first five min-He took the ball all the way from

his own half into the Spanish circle to slide it past goalkeeper Bernadino Herrera from the left Despite their control and short

passing, Spain were unable to break through the Germans' defence until five minutes before the final whistle when Santiago Freixa scored from a penalty cor-

German coach Bernhard Peters bemoaned his team's missed

"In the second half we had three or four good chances to score the second goal but our young strikers were not calm enough in Spain's circle to capitalise on the chances,

Meanwhile, Spain's Maurits Hendriks claimed his players had struggled to find their groove.

"In the first half we did not find our rhythm and this was reflected in the difficulty we had in finding the passes and the movement off the ball in the midfield," he said.

In the day's last day, three penalty corner conversions to Netherlands' Taeke Taekema helped seal a 4-2 score against Argentina.

Teun de Nooijer scored a brilliant individual goal to round off the Europeans' scoring while Pedro Ibarra and Lucas Cammareri found the net for the South Americans.

# Vera shock for Serena



Vera Zvonareva ended Serena Williams' run in her first tournament in six months, beating the seven-time Grand Slam champion 6-2, 6-3 on Saturday to advance to the final of the Western & Southern Financial Group Women's Open.

Zvonareva, unseeded and ranked 52nd, will be making her second appearance in three years in the championship match of the Tier III event Sunday when she faces fourth-seeded Katarina Srebotnik, who upset defending champion Patty Schnyder 4-6, 6-3.7-6(6).

"Two years ago, she was playing so well that I didn't get a chance to enjoy myself, Zvonareva said.

Williams committed 19 of her 34 unforced errors in the first set, while Zvonareva committed just six unforced errors in the match, none in the first set. "I think the results are custom-

ary for somebody who makes that many unforced errors," said Williams, who expects to spend next week in training. "I was fighting, but my balls kept flying. Maybe I should've added more spin. I think I was just off today -better now than three weeks from now. Every forehand, I think I was aiming at the ball kids or the umpire instead of the court."

Zvonera said: "I know Serena's a good player, and I knew I had to opportunity to take over from the beginning of the match. I think she wasn't 100 percent ready to play her best today." Williams, whose ranking

dropped to 140th as she missed six months because of a chronic left knee injury, lost just 12 games in winning her first three matches of the tournament in straight sets. Zvonareva, who was ranked No. 9 in August 2004, fell in the

rankings last year while she battled injuries to her left ankle and right shoulder. She dropped just seven games while sweeping her first three matches. "I expected to at least play on

Sunday, but I guess Vera had her expectations, too," Williams said.

Zvonareva won the first five games of the match to take control of the first set and broke Williams to take a 2-0 lead in the second. Williams responded by breaking Zvonareva, but Zvonareva broke right back to take a 3-1 lead. They traded breaks again in the seventh and eighth games, with Zvonareva taking a 5-3 lead when Williams put a drop shot into the net on break point.

"It feels great," said Zvonareva, who has reached three finals this year. "To be in the finals is always a great feeling.

Zvonareva lost in the final of the Tier IV tournament at Auckland, New Zealand, in the vear's first tournament and won the championship of the Tier III tournament at Birmingham, England, in June.

In the other semifinal Saturday, point.'

the top-seeded Schnyder doublefaulted twice during the tiebreaker, including on match point, when her second serve sailed "Strange," Schnyder said. "I

second serve is usually pretty reliable. That normally doesn't happen to me. 'Tiebreakers are like roulette," Srebotnik said. "Your back's

got a little tired. I don't know. My

against the wall. You have to take chances and hope you're lucky enouah to win it. Srebotnik, the world's 26thranked player, is in a final for the first time since losing to Klara

Koukalova in Portoroz, Slovenia, last September. Both players held serve until Srebotnik sent a crosscourt back-

hand wide on set point in the first Schnyder received a warning from the chair umpire after she threw her racket twice and hit balls into the crowd twice while losing

her serve in the fifth game of the second set. Srebotnik broke again in the ninth game to win the set. Srebotnik broke Schnyder at love in the fourth game to take a 3-1 lead. Schnyder got back on

serve by breaking Srebotnik in the seventh game to tie the set at 4. "The third set, I started really well," Srebotnik said. "I felt like didn't make any mistakes and l was up 4-1. Then she started playing more aggressively. She played an awesome three games, and when it got to four-all, you had to fight for every ball and every

Russian Vera Zvonareva is delighted after defeating Serena Williams in the semifinal of the Western & Southern Financial Group Women's Open tennis tournament in Mason on Saturday.

# **Obituary**

SPORTS REPORTER

Humaira Siddika, wife of Abdus Selim and mother of Rakibul Hasan (Sports Reporter of The Daily Jai Jai Din), died off jaundice at her Jessore

residence on Saturday. She was 48. Bangladesh Sports Journalists Association condoled the death of Humaira and prayed for the salvation of the departed soul.

### Saiful bails

FROM PAGE 17

semifinal clash against hosts Magura with a 2-0 win over

On the opening day of the Meghna zone, hosts Perojepur twice came from behind to win a five-goal thriller and knock out Patuakhali 3-2.

In an exciting match before an 8,000-strong crowd, Monir put the visitors ahead in the first minute but Jewel levelled the score on the half hour. Patuakhali again took the lead four minutes into the second half through Sagar but a brace by Liton Khan in the 57 and 83 minutes snatched victory for the home side.

Peroejepur will take on winners of today's match between Barisal and Barguna in the zonal semis.

Today's matches: Dhaka v Madaripur (Shariatpur), Jessore v Kushtia (Magura), Barguna v Barisal (Perojepur), Comilla v Brahmanbaria (Habiganj), Bangladesh Army v Bangladesh Navy and Bangladesh Air Force v Bangladesh Police.

## Hard time awaits India

Cricket

PTI, New Delhi

route to a 5-2 lead.

India may have a tough task in the one-day international cricket triseries in Sri Lanka if past records are taken into account. Sri Lanka has claimed four titles

since 1999, besides they have a

better home record of winning 19 out of total 33 ODIs played by the two nations in the Emerald Isle. India have bagged only two series, with nine one-dayers against the Islanders' in their backvard while

undecided. The two teams shared the ICC Champions Trophy in 2002-03 after rain washed out the final in Though Indians had a bright

the fate of five matches remained

series against Sri Lanka and England (at home), Pakistan (in Pakistan), and a draw with South Africa (at home) but their winning streak was broken by 1-4 loss against the West Indies in the Caribbean. However, the Rahul Dravid-led

team can have some heart from the fact that India has a better track record at neutral venue and at India and Sri Lanka have played 23 ODIs at neutral venues of which

they won 15 matches and conceded seven while one ended in no result. The tri-series, also involving South Africa, is slated from August 14 to 29 with all matches to be played in Colombo at the R Premadasa Satdium and Sinhalese

Sport Club (SSC) following the internal bickering in the Sri Lanka

Both venues are happy hunting ground for the home players as the Premadasa venue holds the world record for the highest Test total of 952 for 6 declared by Sri Lanka against India in 1997-98.

### David defends

FROM PAGE 17 Asked if he was confident Flintoff would play in the first Test of the Ashes rematch with Australia, in Brisbane on 23 November, Graveney said: "Yes -- let's be upbeat. I am confident.'

Freddie will be on that plane with the rest of the team. "Once he has the operation we can make our plan from there. If the symptoms they think are causing the problem are correct the 12-

He explained: "As far as the time

line is concerned, we still believe

Jones and spinner Ashley Giles as players who could go on the Ashes tour without having played for several months. Jones has endured a string of knee and ankle problems while

Giles, who has had a second hip

operation, has not played since last

November.

week span is probably accurate."

Flintoff joins seamer Simon

"We're investigating areas we can play cricket. South Africa is one, Australia is another," Graveney "Maybe the Australians might

allow some of our players to play in heir domestic cricket.