



## Did U Know?

The first official men's Olympic soccer tournament dates back to the 1908 London Games, where Great Britain defeated Denmark to claim the first soccer gold medal.



### Duncan Fletcher

(England cricket coach)  
"As a finger spinner there is probably no-one to match him in world cricket at the moment - his control is very, very good."  
On Monty Panesar.

**What to WATCH**

**Channel i**  
Bangladesh v Kenya  
First ODI  
Live at 1:30 pm

## Bangladesh meet Vietnam today in U-17 tourney

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh under-17 national football team will take on hosts Vietnam in the opening match of the AFC Youth Football Championship in Hanoi today.

The match will kick off at 2.30pm Bangladesh time, according to a message received in Dhaka. The four-nation meet of youth teams, also involving Laos and Myanmar, is the part of preparation for all the participants for the AFC Youth Football Championship to be held in Singapore next September.

Bangladesh play Laos on August 14 and Myanmar on August 16 in the robin-league tournament.

## England can retain Ashes: Vaughan

AFP, London

Injured captain Michael Vaughan warned Friday he is confident England can retain the Ashes with or without him this winter.

The 31-year-old, who led England to their first Ashes win for 18 years last summer, insisted however he has not yet given up hope of taking part in the series against Australia starting in November.

"I'm very confident in whoever leads the team to produce a fantastic winter ahead and make sure we retain the Ashes," Vaughan told Sky Sports News.

"There is always a slight worry it will take time to adjust to international cricket but the guys who have come in have done really well.

"You need that bit of luck but if you work hard you get that. The team will do everything in their power to try to emulate last summer.

"It is going to be a fantastic series. If we can emulate anything like the series last year it should be a great spectacle."

Vaughan has not played for England since the series in Pakistan before Christmas due to his injury problems.

By the time he returns he could have missed at least a year of international cricket but the Yorkshire batsman is pushing to get back to fitness as soon as possible.

"I am determined to get back on a cricket pitch sooner rather than later. If that is December or January, or if not I've got to be patient," he said.

"But I'm determined to make sure that does happen. I'm training for a number of hours each week to make sure that does happen."

# Mission consolation



SPORTS REPORTER

If anybody takes the recent record in consideration, there is hardly any doubt that Bangladesh go into the three-match one-day international series against Kenya today as favourites.

But the way the Tigers had shattered the dream of recording the first-ever away series victory against Zimbabwe by suffering a 3-2 defeat, no one would dare deem the challenge as easy-going this time.

Kenya still have an edge over Bangladesh in overall record although the stand-in skipper Khaled Mashud men's whitewashed their East African opponents in the last meeting at home last March.

Despite the 4-0 series win by the Tigers, Kenya are still enjoying a

narrow advantage as they have won six matches out of eleven encounters against Bangladesh and most importantly, they had simply outclassed their opponents in both their previous meetings in Nairobi.

So, the challenge lies in different ways for Dav Whatmore's charges as they already have had the bitter experience that it is not at all an easy task to win matches on foreign soil. The other fact is that Kenya go into the battle with some good match practice against Canada.

Bangladesh coach and captain met the press at an official briefing yesterday with Mashud expressing his optimism to win the series comfortably, a team official told The Daily Star Sport.

"The Zimbabwe result is now past for us and we are looking forward to win the series here. We are confident about our success in the series," said wicketkeeper Mashud, who is captaining the team

in absence of injured Habibul Bashar.

"Yes, the overall record still favours Kenya but the last result reflects the fact how much our cricket has improved in the international stage. There are numbers of quality cricketers in the side who can make the difference single headedly," he added.

Bangladesh team had their nets at Ruaraka ground and then were allowed by the authority to enjoy a fielding practice for just half an hour at the match venue.

It has already been reported that the Bangladesh team have been suffering a lot of difficulties in Kenya since their arrival last Monday because of the non-cooperation from the authority but one thing is sure that nobody will accept excuses if they suffer yet another shocking defeat.

# Worry for Dravid and co



AFP, Colombo

India captain Rahul Dravid on Friday predicted a tough triangular series against South Africa and hosts Sri Lanka, saying both rivals were a force to reckon with in world cricket.

"Sri Lanka are playing very good cricket at the moment and are always difficult opponents at home," Dravid told a media conference ahead of the August 14-29 series in the Sri Lankan capital.

"And let's not forget South Africa. They are not the number two team in the world for nothing. Any side that chases down a 400-plus score has to be very explosive."

South Africa's last one-dayer in April saw them surpass world champions Australia's 434-4 off the penultimate ball in a sensational one-wicket win at the Wanderers in Johannesburg.

Herschelle Gibbs, who smashed 175 off 111 balls in that match, will spearhead the South African batting in the absence of the injured duo of captain Graeme Smith and star all-rounder Jacques Kallis.

The depleted Proteas were swept aside 0-2 in the recent Test series against Sri Lanka, giving the hosts a

boost ahead of the high-profile triangular.

Dravid admitted Sri Lanka will be different rivals from the side that India thrashed 6-1 at home last year.

"We had a great series against them last year, but that does not give us any advantage," he said. "It's a new series, a new game and we will have to beat our best to win."

"Sri Lanka have been pretty strong at home in the last few years and are also playing good cricket abroad. Their confidence will be very high going into the series."

"I think the England tour turned their team around," said Dravid, referring to Sri Lanka's tour earlier in the summer when they fought back to draw the Test series 1-1 and blanked England 5-0 in the one-dayers.

"They have some class batsmen - and then they have Murali. He is a great bowler whether he is playing Test cricket or one-day cricket."

"We have to look at ways to score against him. We have had the better of

him a few times and he has done well on other occasions, so it should be a good contest between bat and ball."

Prolific off-spinner Muttiah Muralitharan grabbed 22 wickets in the two Tests against South Africa to take his tally to 657 wickets, second behind Australian world record holder Shane Warne's 685.

India, who arrived here on Thursday night, will play two practice matches against local teams on Saturday and Sunday.

India's first match is against Sri Lanka next Wednesday after Monday's opener between South Africa and the hosts.

Heavy rains, meanwhile, washed out the practice matches Sri Lanka and South Africa were scheduled to play on Friday.

Bad weather has also been forecast for next week.

# Border with Jones



CRICINFO, undated

Allan Border believes Dean Jones has already been punished enough for his on-air description of South Africa's Hashim Amla as a "terrorist".

Border, who captained Jones throughout his career, said his former teammate was responsible for breaking down barriers in the 1980s when there was "angst between the Australians, Pakistanis and Indians".

"He got to know those players very well," Border said in The Courier-Mail.

"He has always enjoyed playing and being in the subcontinent and the differences between their nations and ours. We have a brashness about the way we play our cricket and there was always suspicions from those nations. Deano helped change that. Let's get it right about his character."

Border, an Australian selector, believed the South African players "jokingly" referred to Amla the same

way as Jones had when he thought viewers of the Ten Sports telecast were on an advertisement break. Jones was sacked the same day and returned to Australia on an early morning flight, offering apologies before he left and after he landed.

"It was an in-house joke you would never say publicly," Border said. "And Deano wasn't meaning for it to be public. It was said in a jovial manner and it backfired terribly. Deservedly he has got a wrap over the knuckles and a good kick up the backside." Border said Jones was known for "leading with his chin" but felt this was a "joke gone wrong".

"The guy does a lot of work for charity," he said. "He did a charity walk which raised over a million dollars."

"He did not go to South Africa when the money was on offer (in the 1980s). He stayed loyal to Australia and was not enamoured with the politics over there (in South Africa). He has paid enough penalty and let's get on with it."

The paper also reported Jones would not be punished by the ICC.

# A blessing in disguise!



BBC, undated

John Buchanan says Andrew Flintoff's absence has boosted England's teamwork.

The Australia coach is impressed with how the team have won the Test series against Pakistan without their star.

"What we've seen is a gradual build-up in the way they're playing, teamwork, and responsibility being shared," he told The Sydney Morning Herald.

All-rounder Flintoff was outstanding in last year's Ashes but is not expected to play again until the return series this winter after ankle surgery.

Buchanan added: "It hasn't been a case of turning to Flintoff all the time to take a wicket or turning to Steve Harmison or Kevin Pietersen to deliver something."

"They've actually had the ability to share it around - the likes of Alastair Cook, Ian Bell, Monty Panesar and now Chris Read's come in.

"I think they would be very, very pleased with the outcomes of their summer, knowing that they've still got a couple of players, particularly Flintoff, who are convalescing and getting themselves ready for the

Ashes." Young batsmen Bell and Cook have scored five centuries between them against Pakistan, while left-arm spinner Panesar has taken 16 wickets.

And wicketkeeper Read, recalled after a two-year absence, struck a crucial 50 in the second



JOHN BUCHANAN

innings as England won the third Test at Headingley by 167 runs to take a 2-0 lead with one match to play.

The first of five Tests against Australia begins in Brisbane on 23 November and Buchanan is holding a "commando-style" training camp for his squad in Queensland this month.

# Kenya recall opener Ouma

AFP, Nairobi

Kenya have recalled opening batsman Morris Ouma for the one-day international series against Bangladesh starting here today.

Ouma, who is also a reserve wicketkeeper, replaces Timothy Mwange, one of two youngsters expected to make their international debut in Canada but neither featured in the Intercontinental Cup nor the two one-day matches Kenya played in Toronto.

The change is part of head coach Roger Harper's desire to improve the run rate from his top order, which has disappointedly failed to deliver in the last four international competitions.

Struggling veteran opener and wicketkeeper Kennedy Otieno has retained his place despite heavy criticism for his poor batting during the disastrous tour of Bangladesh, where Kenya suffered a 4-0 series defeat earlier this year.

Harper said Kenya would be looking to avenge the defeat. "This is a new series and both teams start from scratch," said Harper.

"In Bangladesh they had the advantage of home conditions.

"We expect to be able to perform a lot better in home conditions and we're looking forward to being very competitive and really trying to turn the tables on the Bangladeshis this time," he added.

# WI-Aussies opener in Singapore

AFP, Mumbai

World Cup winners Australia will clash with the West Indies in the opening match of next month's triangular one-day series in Southeast Asia, the Indian cricket board announced on Friday.

The day-night tournament, also featuring India, begins in Singapore on September 12 and ends in Malaysia on September 24.

Indian board secretary Niranjan Shah said the first three matches would be played in Singapore and the remaining four, including the final, in Malaysia.

"All matches will start at 3 pm local time, except the third (between India and Australia on September 16) which begins at 2 pm to enable the teams to finish early and leave for Malaysia," he said.

The Indian team for the tournament would be named in the first week of September, he added. Each team will play the other twice in the league before the top two advance to the final.

Singapore has previously hosted three tri-series, the first one in 1996 between India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka at Padang and two in 1999 and 2000 at the new Kallang ground.

Kuala Lumpur hosted one-day internationals when cricket was played at the Commonwealth Games in 2002.

India are currently in Sri Lanka for a tri-series, also involving South Africa.

## SCHEDULE

- Sept 12: Australia v West Indies
- Sept 14: India v West Indies
- Sept 16: India v Australia
- Sept 18: Australia v West Indies
- Sept 20: India v West Indies
- Sept 22: India v Australia
- Sept 24: Final

# HARBHAJAN IS BETTER: PANESAR

PTI, London

England spin star Monty Panesar is not going over the moon by his coach's flattering remark that he is the best finger spinner in the world, saying Harbhajan Singh and Daniel Vettori are better bowlers.

The left-arm spinner, who has taken 16 wickets in three Tests against Pakistan, was dubbed the best finger spinner by Duncan Fletcher yesterday.

But Panesar, the first Sikh to play for Britain, believes it is too early for him to be rated as the best.

"I think there are other better finger spinners like Daniel Vettori and Harbhajan Singh, who have taken more than 200 Test wickets each," he said.

"It's flattering though, because I value his comments," the Indian-origin bowler was quoted as saying by BBC Sports.

Panesar, who made his debut in India last winter, is a frontrunner for the BBC Sports Personality of the Year award and admits that he does have an acceptance speech ready in case he wins.

"You will have to see on the television, assuming I win."



LAST GOODBYE? David Beckham is seen exiting the field during England's quarterfinal with Portugal in the 2006 World Cup in Germany. It could well be his last appearance for his country.

# End of the line for Beckham?



REUTERS, London

David Beckham was left out of new England coach Steve McClaren's first England squad on Friday, raising speculation that his international career is over.

Beckham, who quit as captain after England's quarter-final exit from the World Cup in July, did not feature in McClaren's list of 25 for next Wednesday's home friendly against Greece.

But the 31-year-old Real Madrid player swiftly signalled in a statement through his agent that his desire to play for England remained "as strong as ever."

Former Arsenal defender Sol Campbell and goalkeeper David James were also omitted from the squad while McClaren announced that ex-England coach Terry Venables would be his assistant.

West Ham United striker Dean Ashton and Tottenham Hotspur defender Michael Dawson were handed the chance to win their first caps and there were recalls for forwards Jermain Defoe and Marcus Bent, both surprisingly left out of the World Cup squad by former coach Sven-Goran Eriksson.

"I spoke with David last Monday and notified him of my decision," McClaren told a news conference. "I told him I was planning for the future, looking to change things and go in a different direction, and David

wasn't included within that. "I have great respect for David, he has been a fantastic captain for England, a great player and still is a great player."

"He took it well although he was disappointed, but I got the reaction that I wanted which is that he will continue to fight for his place and I will never close the door."

Beckham limped off with an Achilles tendon injury during England's defeat by Portugal on July 1 and the following day announced that he was standing down as captain after six years.

In a statement issued to Reuters through his agent after he was dropped on Friday, Beckham said: "Having spoken to Steve McClaren this week I can fully understand that a new manager should want to make his mark on the team and build toward the next World Cup."

"I'm proud to have played for England for 10 years and my passion for representing my country remains as strong as ever."

McClaren's association with Beckham goes back to the days when he was assistant to Alex Ferguson at Manchester United, but he did not let sentiment get in the way of his thinking as he made his first big decision as England coach.

It now opens the question of whether Beckham, who has 94 caps, 58 as captain, will reach a century of appearances, a feat managed by only four other England players.

Beckham, who made his

England debut in 1996, became the first England player to score in three World Cups when he netted the winner against Ecuador in June.

Despite standing down as captain, Beckham had insisted that he still wanted to be part of McClaren's plans, although many have questioned his value to the team with the emergence of younger players in his position.

Tottenham Hotspur's Aaron Lennon, who is in the squad, is widely tipped to replace Beckham on the right side of midfield as is Chelsea's Shaun Wright-Phillips, back in favour after not being picked for the World Cup by Eriksson.

The leader of England's so-called golden generation, Beckham's hopes of emulating the late Bobby Moore by captaining his country to a first major trophy since 1966 have always ended in frustration and despair.

Beckham's highlights in an England shirt include his fantastic last-minute free kick against Greece in 2001 which rescued a 2-2 draw and a place in the 2002 World Cup finals and his penalty winner against Argentina in Japan.

There have been some lows, however, most notably his red card against Argentina at France 98 for a kick at Diego Simeone - an act led to vilification at home.

On Thursday, Chelsea defender

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