

## Khagrachhari edge past Ramgour

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachhari

Pulok Dey saved the blushes for hosts Khagrachhari in the opening match of the first DC Gold Cup football tournament against Ramgour at the Khagrachhari Stadium yesterday.

Khagrachhari won 2-1 after a festive opening ceremony at the historical upazila stadium. Pulok put one into the Ramgour net in the second-half after Sajjad struck back for Ramgour just after the breather. Earlier, Chabai put the hosts ahead in the first-half.

Deputy Commissioner of Khagrachhari Mohammad Humayun Kabir declared the tournament open in the presence of at least three thousand roaring spectators.

## Pakistan assure England about one-day series

BBC ONLINE, undated

England have accepted an "unequivocal assurance" from Pakistan that they will play the one-day series which starts with a Twenty20 game on Monday.

The hosts have ended contingency plans for England to play an International XI at Bristol and then face West Indies in the five 50-over games which follow.

Pakistan will complete their tour as scheduled despite Inzamamul Haq's disciplinary hearing being delayed.

They re-affirmed their commitment to the one-day series following Friday's revelation that umpire Darrell Hair offered to resign in return for 500,000 dollars in the wake of last weekend's furore at The Oval.

"We are very keen that the actions of some officials do not affect the goodwill which exists between the Pakistan team and their supporters and the England team and their supporters," said Pakistan Cricket Board chairman Shaharyar Khan.

England and Wales Cricket Board chief executive David Collier, meanwhile, has thanked the cricket community for their willingness to help if Pakistan had abandoned the tour.

"ECB also wishes to thank the 12 players who had agreed to play in the International XI and the management team who had been invited to support the International XI," he said.

Meanwhile, International Cricket Council chief executive Malcolm Speed wants attention switched back to events on the field. "England and Pakistan have produced some superb cricket this summer and the best result for everyone now would be for them to produce more of the same in the forthcoming NatWest Series.

"I now call on both sides to go out and put a smile back on the faces of the world's cricket lovers with some superb action and remind everyone why this is such a great game," Speed said.

## UPCOMING ASHES Aussies' no to neutral umpires

CRICINFO, undated

The Australian board has suggested that umpires from England and Australia be allowed to stand during this year's Ashes series. The ICC rules stipulate that all Test matches should have third-country umpires, but the Australians believe that the quality of decision-making will be better if the umpires from the two countries are part of the panel.

According to The Age, though a formal request hasn't yet been placed, Cricket Australia directors have been exploring the option with the ICC. Peter Young, a spokesman for Cricket Australia, said that a contest between the two best teams in the world should have the best officials as well. "It's one of those issues that is frequently discussed socially. Australia and England are the two top-ranked sides in the world, and by chance the top-ranked umpires in the world ... won't be able to umpire in that series.

In a perfect world, it would be great for a series that will not only determine who wins the Ashes but could decide the world No. 1 ranking to be officiated by the world's top-ranked umpires." Australia's Simon Taufel is regarded as the best umpire in the world at the moment, while England's Mark Benson -- their only representative in the Elite Panel -- is highly rated as well. Daryl Harper and the controversial Darrell Hair are the two other Australian umpires currently in the Elite Panel.



PHOTO: AFP

Lindsay Davenport of the US returns a shot to Australian Samantha Stosur during their semifinal encounter of the Pilot Pen tennis tournament at the Connecticut Tennis Center in New Haven on Friday.

# Lindsay, Justine to battle it out

## Tennis

INTERNET, undated

Lindsay Davenport outlasted the rain and Samantha Stosur to move within one victory of defending her Pilot Pen Tennis title.

The seventh seed, Davenport defeated Stosur, 7-6 (7-3), 7-6 (9-7), on a wet Friday at the 1.275 million dollar co-ed event.

The 30-year-old Californian, who has missed much of the season with back problems and a concussion, was slated to begin her match with Stosur, a lucky loser from Australia but rain pushed back the start for more than 3 1/2 hours.

After dispatching Stosur in 2 hours, 7 minutes, Davenport was able to scout No. 2 Justine Henin-Hardenne of Belgium, who posted a 6-3, 6-3 triumph over fifth-seeded Russian Svetlana Kuznetsova in the second semifinal of the 600,000-

dollar Tier II women's event.

The two-time reigning French Open champion who is playing her first event since Wimbledon because of a knee injury, Henin-Hardenne outclassed Italian lucky loser Mara Santangelo in the quarterfinals, 6-2, 6-3.

Kuznetsova reached the semifinals by defeating third-seeded countrywoman Elena Dementieva, 6-3, 3-6, 6-2. Kuznetsova also beat Dementieva to win the 2004 US Open title.

In the semifinals of the 675,000-dollar men's event, No. 10 Agustín Calleri of Argentina scored a victory over No. 13 Xavier Malisse after the Belgian retired with a right elbow injury. Malisse dropped the first set, 6-2, before pulling out of the match.

"I get it a lot when it gets cold like that all of a sudden," Malisse said. "Some people adjust to it. My body really doesn't adjust to it."

"I had the same problem in Hamburg this year. Sometimes it

goes, sometimes it doesn't. It just got worse in the course of the set. It started on top, then at the end I could feel it going down. If I keep playing, I might tear something and make it worse. Then the U.S. Open, plus the rest of the year, is in jeopardy. I don't want to do that for one match."

Seeking his second title of the season and third career, Calleri will face No. 2 Nikolay Davydenko of Russia, who dispatched 15th-seeded Swede Robin Soderling, 7-6 (8-6), 6-2, to set up Saturday's final.

"He's playing well," Davydenko said of Calleri. "Sometimes he has a good first serve. He hits balls from the baseline fast but doesn't serve as fast as Soderling did today (Friday)."

Davydenko, who advanced to his fifth final of the year by winning for the 13th time in 17 matches, is 3-0 lifetime against Calleri, including a pair of victories this season.

## Inzy hearing pushed back

AFP, London

Pakistan captain Inzamamul Haq's hearing on charges of ball-tampering and bringing cricket into disrepute must wait until the end of next month.

International Cricket Council (ICC) chief executive Malcolm Speed said Saturday that earlier reports had falsely suggested a hearing was set for September 15. Inzamam's case was initially to be heard Friday.

But after consultation with the legal team assembled by Pakistan for the inquiry into Inzamam's behaviour in the abandoned fourth Test at The Oval last weekend, both parties have agreed to a further delay.

It was put back when it transpired chief referee Ranjan Madugalle was unavailable to chair the hearing because of a family problem, and Speed explained why Inzamam must now wait even longer than had been anticipated.

"When we met with the lawyers for the (Pakistan Cricket Board) PCB yesterday -- which was a very amicable meeting -- we suggested that the hearing happen on the 14th and 15th, bearing in mind that the one-day series finishes the previous Sunday," Speed said.

"That date did not suit them for one reason or another and they asked for it to be put back. We are looking now for a date that suits the key participants so at this stage we are looking at the last week in September."

## Freddie's pain won't go away

BBC ONLINE, undated

England all-rounder Andrew Flintoff expects to have problems with his left ankle for the rest of his career.

But the Lancashire star insists it is something he is ready to deal with.

"There is a possibility that I'll have to continue with my rehab programme until I retire from the game," he told the Manchester Evening News.

"If that's the case then I'll just have to grin and bear it. That would be a small price to pay for continuing to play cricket for a living."

Flintoff underwent a second operation in 12 months on the left ankle in July.

But he has confidence in his 12-week recovery plan and aims to play in the first Ashes Test against Australia in Brisbane, starting on 23 November.

"I've got absolute faith in my physio Dave Roberts and the specialist who performed the latest operation on my ankle," he added.

"It was they who devised my rehabilitation programme and I have complete confidence that if I follow their guidelines to the letter I will be fully fit for the Ashes series.

"I can start running again early next month and that will be a big step on the road back."

## Javed slams

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do this, otherwise every second umpire after (this) controversy would do the same," he said.

Javed Miandad scored 8,832 runs in 124 Test matches with an average of 52.57. He had also played 233 ODIs and scored 7381 runs.

## Liverpool nail

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tre-half Agger was allowed a huge amount of space as he gathered a loose ball just inside the West Ham half, the Dane advancing to around 30 yards from goal before delivering an unstoppable left-foot strike that swerved deceptively in the air as it beat goalkeeper Roy Carroll.

Suitably relieved by the equaliser, Liverpool fans had to wait only four minutes for another goal, this one beautifully carved out by short, sharp passes from Gerrard and Garcia.

The latter's pass played Crouch past the last line of defenders with the giant forward showing neat footwork to gather the ball, round Carroll and plant his shot emphatically past the covering West Ham players on the line.

After the interval, Gerrard opened with a note of promise, a shot from distance that whistled just past Carroll's right-hand post but it was the arrival of Liverpool debutant Dirk Kuyt, as a 52nd-minute replacement for Crouch that proved the most exciting aspect of the second half.

Within 60 seconds, the Netherlands striker had sent a 35-yard shot curling just wide, headed off-target and almost beaten the West Ham offside trap from a through ball.

The Kop had a new cult hero to cheer and Crouch had some very serious competition for the role of Liverpool's target man.

Kuyt might have completed the victory in the 77th minute, forcing Carroll into a good full-length save with another long-range effort, but, similarly, West Ham could count themselves unlucky with Lee Bowyer scraping the far post with a poorly aimed shot from Paintsil's cross.

# Papers take Hair to task

## Cricket

AFP, London

Revelations that umpire Darrell Hair asked cricket's governing body the ICC for a 500,000-dollar pay-off to defuse the ball-tampering row with Pakistan dominated Britain's newspapers Saturday.

The latest twist in a saga that began at The Oval last Sunday made the front pages of early editions of not only The Daily Telegraph and The Times but also The Sun tabloid and the even business daily the Financial Times.

Copies of the very e-mails in which the Australian official, 53, made the request to the ICC's umpires and referees manager, Doug Cowie, were reprinted while ex-pros and pundits gave their views.

The Sun -- whose sports coverage is normally dominated by football -- was the most vocal critic, describing the affair as: "Ransom: Biggest Scandal to Hit Cricket."

The newspaper mocked up a photograph of Hair with a wad of

greenbacks in his right hand under the headline "Ransom Demand", the "s" of "ransom" fashioned out of a dollar sign.

Like most, it viewed Hair as having irreparably damaged his reputation and made it virtually inevitable that Pakistan, and their captain Inzamamul Haq, would be exonerated of ball tampering and disrepute charges.

Commentator Steven Howard wrote: "They coined a new phrase last night: as mad as Darrell Hair."

"Only someone who had taken temporary leave of his senses could have imagined he could have got away with holding his employers -- the ICC -- to ransom."

He went on: "(The) facts are that Hair has single-handedly caused more damage to cricket than anyone else in the history of the game."

The Daily Mirror viewed Hair's correspondence as "one of professional sport's longest suicide notes".

"He is due to stand in a Second XI fixture at Chesterfield next week, but after yesterday's incredible disclosures, he will be lucky to get a white coat as a dentist's reception-

ist," wrote correspondent Mike Walters.

Instead of "the way forward" -- what Hair titled his e-mails -- "in professional terms, it proved only a fast-track over the cliff-edge", he added. In the broadsheets, The Times' Christopher Martin-Jenkins was in a conciliatory mood, assessing that Hair's decision was "almost certainly made with honest intentions", but acknowledging its detrimental impact.

The Guardian agreed that Hair's actions appeared to have prejudiced the case against Pakistan but considered it had united cricket "as rarely before".

After apologising to Pakistan and opening an investigation into Hair's conduct, the ICC should look at how much power umpires have on a match, the left-leaning newspaper added.

"Major sports no longer consider a referee's decision to be final. Modern technology and the higher stakes involved means that the days when the umpire alone had the last word have long gone," they said.

There was disappointment at the Daily Telegraph, who lauded Hair's decision at the Oval not to be cowed by commercial pressures to continue the Test when, under the laws, Pakistan had forfeited the game by not taking the field in time.

"Now we see his feet of clay," an editorial said, adding of the e-mails: "It still feels like a slap in the face to the very cricket-lovers whose respect he had won. It has diminished him and diminished the game."

Despite the headline -- "Hair's 30 pieces of silver small change next to 10 million pounds for putting truth on hold" -- The Independent's James Lawton proved Hair's strongest backer.

He assessed the umpire may at the very least be accused of opportunism but he was "hardly the only one with money on his mind".

"Indeed, we can be sure celebrations within the ICC, the England and Wales Cricket Board and its Pakistan counterparts at the rescuing of the one-day series starting next week have rather more to do with the resulting income of 10 million pounds than some magical restoration of sporting values -- and relations -- out on the old green square," he wrote.

# Hair-raising quips

## Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Reactions to the revelations that Darrell Hair offered to resign as an elite umpire have brought a swathe of reaction. Here is a selection: "He does what he thinks is right regardless of the consequences. My immediate reaction was 'typical Darrell'."

ICC general manager cricket Dave Richardson

"I am dumbfounded. I cannot believe what has transpired but I guess he realises the consequences now."

A Pakistan camp insider

"It's hard to see how Darrell Hair can umpire at any future international match. They have made his position untenable now. To imagine he can umpire down the line in international matches is hard to see. It seems extraordinary when you consider that Inzamamul Haq has been charged on two counts -- one of ball-

tampering, for which nobody can find any evidence, and secondly for bringing the game into disrepute on the back of the first charge. So poor old Inzy finds himself under two charges, but Darrell Hair, after these extraordinary letters, finds himself under no charge whatsoever"

Former England captain and Sky Sports commentator Mike Atherton

"Darrell Hair was probably advised to do what he has done. He was under a huge amount of pressure. It didn't help when he had the Pakistan team saying they wouldn't have Darrell Hair as an umpire again and Bangladesh following suit. It's not the sort of thing you need."

Former England captain Mike Gatting

"It will be very hard for Darrell Hair to umpire at not just international level but also first-class level."

Former England batsman Allan Lamb

# Doctrove the approver!

## Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

From being a fringe player in the whole controversy, Billy Doctrove, Darrell Hair's umpiring partner in the final Test at The Oval, has emerged as the key figure in the disciplinary hearing that Inzamamul Haq will face.

With Hair under the cloud after his golden-handshake offer was made public, Doctrove's evidence will be critical.

Though the basic charges against Pakistan -- of ball tampering, and bringing the game into disrepute by refusing to come out to play -- remain unchanged, Pakistan's legal team could well question Hair's motives in the light of his 500,000-dollar offer in exchange for a quiet retirement following the incident.

In the absence of video or photographic evidence, the ball, now in the possession of the ICC, will provide the strongest material evidence, but even with forensic

tests it might not be easy to establish that the ball had been intentionally tampered with. In all likelihood, it will be a case of Inzamam's word against that of the umpires. And with Hair's reputation as a fearless enforcer of cricket laws having been somewhat eroded, the case might hinge on the word of Doctrove.

If Doctrove, who has stood in just nine Tests and is very much the junior man in the partnership with Hair, were to suggest that he was not entirely convinced about the alleged tampering, but nevertheless went along -- based on Hair's judgment -- Pakistan will be home free.

In April, Hair had suggested in an interview that he might give up umpiring at the end of the World Cup. "I'm not so sure that after another 12 months I'll have the passion to keep enjoying it." His demand for 500,000 dollars, based on the rationale that he had four of his best years ahead of him, is contrary to this.

One person whose job might have been made easier by this latest email saga is Ranjan Madugalle. Initially, his role would

have been one of an investigator, trying to piece together a picture of what happened that fateful day at The Oval, and then reach a judgment. The core issue of the ball and its condition has been pushed so far back. Despite the ICC's protestations to the contrary, the issue is not about cricket anymore: it is an emotive and volatile one where perceptions will matter as much as the truth. Pakistan -- or their highly paid lawyers who must be licking their lips in glee -- will question the motives behind Hair's decisions. They might even suggest that they were willing to get on with the game, while Hair had no interest in getting it restarted.

A contentious and tricky cricket issue has now become a matter of law. When the hearing does take place -- and don't be surprised if the matter goes to court before that and thereby obviates the need for Madugalle to make the trip from Colombo to London -- it will be shrouded in legalese.

# Abbas claims 'victory'

## Cricket

AFP, London

Pakistan tour manager Zaheer Abbas insisted his side had won a huge victory after the dramatic revelations here Friday that umpire Darrell Hair had offered to resign in exchange for 500,000 dollars.

Hair, together with West Indian colleague Billy Doctrove, penalised Pakistan for ball-tampering during the fourth Test against England at The Oval on Sunday, a move that ultimately led the tourists to forfeit the match following their refusal to take the field after tea.

"This is a huge victory, and it makes a strong case for us to be cleared on ball-tampering," Zaheer told the BBC Asian Network's Gagan Grewal Show.

"We were very confident that we hadn't tampered with the ball -- we didn't like the way the whole thing was projected to the world. It has also vindicated our case."

Even though Hair later rescinded his offer, Pakistan batting great Zaheer said it helped prove Pakistan's protest at The Oval was "legitimate".

"This also proves our protest on the fourth day of the final Test was legitimate," Zaheer added.

"This is a moral victory for us, and it's good that now this issue can reach its conclusion."

And Zaheer said the result of the match, an England win which gave the hosts the series 3-0, could be revised as well.

"As for whether we need to revisit the result of the last Test match -- which was forfeited to England -- we'll have to discuss it with the parties concerned."

Earlier this week Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Shaharyar Khan called on the ICC to ban Hair from standing in any future Pakistan matches.

"We will take this issue further. I'm going to have further discussion with the chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board and we'll decide our future course of action."

Following the first forfeit in the 129-year-history of Test cricket, Pakistan captain Inzamamul Haq was charged with ball-tampering and bringing the game into disrepute.

Although Inzamam's case is not now due to be heard until the middle of next month, and despite the fact that Hair's offer was made after the alleged on-field offences took place, Zaheer said the resignation revelations had "vindicated" the Pakistan team.

Meanwhile, Zaheer said Pakistan's players were pleased the one-day series -- scheduled to start with a Twenty20 match in Bristol on Monday -- was going ahead.

"The boys are jubilant on this news. All along we maintained that

we were innocent, and it's now been proven right," he said.

"I've always stated that we're a cricket-loving country and I'm glad the one-day series will go on."

Far more cautious was the statement issued by Mark Gay of London-based lawyers DLA Piper, who've been engaged by Pakistan to help them put forward Inzamam's case.

Gay said of the publication of Hair's e-mail correspondence with the ICC, which included the resignation offer: "We met with the ICC and we agreed that it should be disclosed."

"Other than that it is a matter for ICC. We do not want to prejudice the preparation of our case."

## BCB Academy

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scorers. Trailing by 51 runs, the BCB academy side resumed the day on their overnight score of 132-1.

They earlier scored 285 runs in their first innings and were in some trouble after the hosts declared their first innings at 468 for five.

The first four-day match between the two sides was also drawn in Karachi.

The BCB Academy now will head to Sheikhpura to play the first of three one-day matches against the same opponents to be held on August 27.