



Did U Know?

The most number of Wimbledon tennis titles (13) won by the UK's Laurie Doherty. His tally comprised five singles titles (190206) and eight doubles titles between 1897 and 1906.



Muttiah Muralidaran
(Sri Lanka's master spinner)
"Cricket is like this, wickets can come all at once and at other times you can bowl well and maybe not receive your rewards."



ESPN
English Premier Football League
Reading v Man City
Live at 12:55 am (Tuesday)
TEN Sports
Hockey World Cup
India v Korea
Live at 7:45 pm
Argentina v Pakistan
Live at 9:55 pm

BCB picks 26 for U-19

SPORTS REPORTER
Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has called up 26 players for a preliminary residential camp of the Bangladesh Under-19 team at the Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Protisthan (BKSP).

The players are requested to report to coach Shahidul Alam Ratan at 11am on September 12.

SQUAD
Mithun Ali, Mahmudul Hasan Limon, Nasir Hossain, Ariful Haque, Iftekhar Nayeem Adib, Nadimudin Mintu, Mehdi Amin Topu, Ariful Haque Neon, Shahed Adnan, Amit Majumder, Raihan Anas, Tanvir Haider, Sohag Gazi, Bayezid Imran, Mokter Ali, Rumman Islam, Shuvashish Roy, Shafayet Hossain, Mohammad Azim, Mohammad Manik, Tapash Ghosh, Noor Hossain Munna, Sanjamul Islam, Islamul Ahsan Abir, Zabid Hossain and Ashiqul Islam.

Indians favourite in ATF U-14 tennis

UNB, Dhaka
Indian players Sinha Vishvesh and Rana Shweta will start as favourites in the Sagufta ATF Under-14 Tennis Series which begins at the Ramna National Tennis Complex today.

Vishvesh is the seventh in the ATF U-14 boys' ranking 7 while Rana stands third in the ATF U-14 girls' ranking.

A total of 53 participants including 21 girls from India, Malaysia, South Korea, Japan and hosts Bangladesh will take part in the four events -- boys' singles and doubles and girls' singles and doubles -- of the five-day competition.

Deputy Minister for Land M Ruhul Kuddus Talukder Dulu will formally inaugurate the meet as chief guest in the morning.

Sponsors Sagufta Group will provide Tk 2,50,000, the entire expense of the tournament.

Eight boys and eight girls will be chosen after the tournament for a month-long coaching camp in Australia later this year, informed Bangladesh Tennis Federation general secretary Mohammad Sanaul Huq at a press conference

Clubs deny to join transfer in Oct

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

The leading football clubs continued to play negative role as the future of the first ever Professional League fell uncertain.

The league committee's meeting with club representatives ended yesterday at the BFF Bhaban without reaching a conclusion as the clubs disagreed to go for the transfer in October.

With the footballers threatening to go for an all out boycott, the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) plans to start the transfer -- which has already been delayed twice -- on October 1. The BFF also has set a tentative date in the third week of November to launch the ProLeague.

However, the clubs are not interested to listen to BFF's plea

and the 'verbal assurance' of the National Sports Council (NSC) that the ground at the Bangabandhu National Stadium would be handed over in playable condition by October.

"We have not been shown any official letter from the NSC in today's meeting. We want to see the ground by ourselves and realise actually when it would be ready. We are not going for the transfer without being certain," the club representatives said.

Tournament committee chairman Abdur Rahim presided over the meeting where representatives of seven Dhaka-based clubs and the Khulna Abahani were present.

"We have got NSC's confirmation that it will prepare the ground by October even if the athletics tracks are not completed. If the clubs want to wait that late, the league would be further delayed.

That's why we want to follow the BFF guideline and start the transfer on October 1," said BFF general secretary Anwarul Hoque Helal, also a member of the tournament committee.

"The tournament committee has offered the clubs compensations in case the start of the league is delayed due to the ground. But they were adamant in their demand," Helal said.

The agitated footballers boycotted the national camp before their trip to Qatar for the 2007 Asian Cup qualifiers but returned to practice on condition that a fresh transfer date would be announced shortly. If the latest date fails due to the tug-of-war between clubs and the federation, they are expected to boycott all activities.

The last transfer for the league was held in December 2005 and the booters have virtually lost one season.

Series ends all square

England win the fifth ODI

Cricket

AFP, Birmingham

Sajid Mahmood starred with both bat and ball as England fell over the line to beat Pakistan by three wickets in the fifth and final one-day international at Edgbaston here Sunday and so end the series all square at 2-2.

Set a meagre 155 to win, England finished on 155 for seven with 19 overs to spare. Michael Yardy was 12 not out and Mahmood, who came in at 118 for seven, was 22 not out after taking two for 24 in his maximum 10 overs.

England's attack had put them in a position to gain a morale-boosting victory ahead of next month's ICC Champions Trophy one-day tournament in India by restricting Pakistan to 154 for nine in 50 overs. Fast bowler Mahmood, the son of Pakistani immigrants, responded to the jeers of the massed ranks of Pakistan supporters with two wickets.

Medium-pacer Collingwood provided good support with two for 23 in eight overs, including the prize wicket of Pakistan captain

Inzamamul Haq. Younis Khan's top-score of 47 was the only individual total above 18 in Pakistan's innings with extras second-top on 24.

England were well on course at 102 for three but then lost three wickets for four runs in eight balls to slump to 106 for six.

Kevin Pietersen, going for an ugly heave across the line against leg-spinner Shahid Afridi, was bowled for 34 off 33 balls with six fours.

Then, three balls later, Jamie Dalrymple was plumb lbw to Afridi.

Paul Collingwood, in his 100th one-day international, made 22 before he was lbw, aiming across the line, to medium-pacer Abdul Razzaq. And when Chris Read's top-edged hook off Razzaq was caught by Rana Naved at fine leg, England were 118 for seven.

What made Pakistan's performance all the more impressive was that they were without lead fast bowler Shoaib Akhtar because of a knee injury.

But a beauty from Mohammad Asif then clipped the top of Ed Joyce's off-stump as England captain Andrew Strauss's Middlesex teammate shouldered

arms. Strauss then struck some impressive boundaries before England lost two wickets in two balls to be 49 for three.

Ian Bell, who made 86 not out in England's eight-wicket win in the fourth one-day international at Trent Bridge on Friday, managed just two on his Warwickshire home ground before edging Asif to third slip Imran Farhat, in for the dropped Shoaib Malik, off the last ball of the 10th over.

Next ball left-hander Strauss went for an expansive drive against Anjum and wicket-keeper Kamran Akmal, diving in front of first slip Inzamam, held a superb two-handed catch. It was a careless but understandable shot given that Strauss had been in fine form, his 41-ball 35 featuring eight fours.

Collingwood, on two, was then given a reprieve when Anjum failed to hold a caught and bowled chance with England 59 for three in the 14th over.

Mahmood later settled England's nerves with the bat with three successive fours off Rana Naved.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1

Federer's 'double fight'

AFP, New York

US OPEN 2006
Top-seed and defending champion Roger Federer will face a do-or-die Andy Roddick and a hostile crowd in the US Open final on Sunday.

Roddick though faces crushing odds based on the fact that in 11 previous meetings with the Swiss star he has lost 10 of them, including the 2004 and 2005 Wimbledon finals.

Federer at 25, will be aiming for his ninth Grand Slam title. The American, a year younger, will be looking for just his second.

After defeating Russia's Mikhail Youzhny in four sets in Saturday's semifinals, Roddick pledged to make the final "a battle."

"I'm just going to go out and throw it all at him," he said.

"If the guy plays too well, then he

plays too well. But I'm not going to lay down, I'm going to go out there and try to win the US Open."

Federer as always has history at his doorstep as he compiles one of the greatest careers in world sport.

He would be only the third man after John McEnroe and Ivan Lendl to record a hat-trick of US Open wins in the professional era, the first to win three straight back-to-back Wimbledon and US Open titles and it would be the second time in three years he would have won three Grand Slam titles in the same year.

It would also take him to nine Grand Slam titles for his career, just five shy of Pete Sampras's all-time record of 14.

Federer has had the measure of Roddick since they first met in a tournament in his home town of Basel in 2001.

And he admits that he is unsure exactly what difference the arrival

of Connors has made to his opponent's game.

"I haven't seen him enough to be honest," he said after his straight sets win over Nikolay Davydenko of Russia in the semifinals.

"I guess he's serving much better again because that's what was letting him down in the last year or so.

"People were returning him too easy. If you return Andy Roddick well, you're always in with a chance. So that's what he's been able to do better again."

Then there is the crowd factor with Federer knowing that he will have few supporters in a noisy 23,000-capacity Arthur Ashe Stadium court.

But he says he knows how to deal with that having defeated Andre Agassi in four sets in last year's final and James Blake in four sets in this year's quarterfinals.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 8



GAME, SET, MARIA : Russian superstar Maria Sharapova holds the trophy after beating Belgium's Justine Henin-Hardenne in the woman's final of the US Open at Flushing Meadows on Saturday.

PHOTO: AFP

Maria conquers US

AFP, New York



Maria Sharapova won the US Open on Saturday defeating Justine Henin-Hardenne 6-4, 6-4 with a riveting display of power-hitting.

It was the 19-year-old Russian's second Grand Slam title to go with her 2004 Wimbledon win.

In a tense and tightly-fought contest before a capacity 23,000 crowd at the Arthur Ashe Stadium, Sharapova's greater weight of shot and power-serving proved too much for the speed and counter-attacking skills of the Belgian.

After Henin-Hardenne netted on match point, Sharapova sunk to her knees and held her head in her hands before running off court to embrace father and coach Yuri.

"I figured I lost the last four times against Justine so I thought I would just flip everything 360 degrees and do the total opposite," she said.

"I am so happy it's here in New York -- my favourite city."

Henin-Hardenne, who made it to all four Grand Slam finals in 2006, said Sharapova had fully deserved her win.

"She served much better than in our last meetings and I gave her too much time -- played too short and at this level that's not good enough," she said.

"I just tried to keep fighting on every point, but she played a lot down the lines and it was tough for me."

Henin-Hardenne staved off two break points in the opening game against the big-hitting Russian who defeated top seed Amelie Mauresmo of France in three sets in the semifinals.

Clad in her all-black Audrey Hepburn-inspired "night" outfit, Sharapova then served up two double faults on her own serve and Henin-Hardenne made her pay breaking with a cracking forehand from mid-court for a 2-0 lead.

The third seed hit back immediately, a deft half-volley drop-shot at the net setting up break point which

she grabbed with a big forehand drive.

She levelled for 2-2, and games went with serve after that until 4-4 when Henin-Hardenne opened the door to Sharapova with two sloppy backhands into the net.

The Russian then provoked a forehand error that brought up two break points, the second of which she converted with a thumping cross-court forehand of her own that Henin-Hardenne could not return.

Sharapova's forehand again did the damage in the next game setting up set point with a drive down

SEE PAGE 18 COL 3

Mini-handball from today

SPORTS REPORTER

The Sunnydale-Bexifabrics fourth boys' mini-handball tournament will kick off today at the Dhanmondi Women's Sports Complex.

A total of 14 matches will be played on the opening day of the 4-day meet. The 19 participating teams will be split into four groups with the group champions advancing to the semifinals.

Sponsors Bexi Fabrics and Sunnydale will provide Tk one lakh and Tk 50,000 respectively out of the total Tk 2.25,000-budget, informed Bangladesh Handball Federation general secretary Asaduzzaman Kohinor at a press conference at the NSC conference room yesterday.

Tournament committee chairman Badaruddin Ahmed, secretary Mizanur Rahman and BM Sohel and Mizanul Islam were also present on behalf of the sponsors.

Paes ends drought

PTI, New York

Leander Paes won his first Men's doubles title at a Grand Slam in five years by wrestling the US Open crown with Martin Damm of the Czech republic here on Saturday.

Paes and Damm scored a shock 6-7, 6-4, 6-3 victory over second seeds Jonas Bjorkman of Sweden and Max Mirnyi of Belarus in the final at the Flushing Meadows.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5



Top seed Roger Federer (L) of Switzerland celebrates his win over Nikolay Davydenko of Russia while American star Andy Roddick (R) makes a double-handed return to Russian Mikhail Youzhny in their respective semifinals of the US Open at Flushing Meadows on Saturday.

PHOTOS: AFP

6x3