



Did U Know?

New Zealand won the second ICC Champions Trophy title in Kenya, 2000.



Fabien Barthez
(France international goalkeeper)
"I'm finished with football and the French team. Now I'm going to continue enjoying myself, as I've done since the age of 15, but without football. I'm starting a new life."
After announcing his retirement.



BTV & SET Max
ICC Champions Trophy
West Indies v Zimbabwe
Live at 2:45 pm

Dudhia has fond memories

SPORTS REPORTER from Mohali

Former Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) chief executive officer (CEO) Macky Dudhia is still affectionately following Bangladesh cricket.
"When I open the websites like Cricinfo and TigerCricket.com I first go through Bangladesh and then Zimbabwe. I love Bangladesh cricket and I always tried to be up-to-date with it," said Dudhia while talking with the Bangladeshi reporters at the press box here.
The Zimbabwean, who was the first CEO of BCB, is now working as a consultant of International Cricket Council (ICC) in the ongoing ICC Champions Trophy in India.
"It is really nice that the young players are coming up and I am really excited with the state of Bangladesh cricket," said Dudhia, who left Dhaka October last year after BCB didn't want to extend his tenure.
He however denied to comment on any internal issue of his former office.
"Please don't ask me anything about BCB because it would not be decent for me rather I love to help you people if needed," he said smilingly.

Bhaji in hair row

PTI, Chandigarh

Indian off-spinner Harbhajan Singh on Saturday apologised to the Sikh community for "hurting" their emotions by keeping his hair open in an advertisement.
Harbhajan, who was pulled up by the Shiromani Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, the apex religious body of Sikhs, said he respected emotions of the people of his community and did not do it intentionally.
"If my action has hurt the Sikh community, then I feel sorry for it. I will take note of it (in future)," Harbhajan told PTI.
The SGPC yesterday demanded an apology from the spinner, saying that the religion prohibited a Sikh from keeping his hair open.
"Harbhajan Singh should apologise for appearing in the advertisement if he considers himself to be a Sikh. Our religion prohibits keeping one's hair open. We also strongly object to his appearing in the advertisement in this fashion," SGPC President Avtar Singh had said.
However, Harbhajan slammed the SGPC for taking up the issue in media.
"It's bad that the SGPC took up the issue in media. If they had any problem, they should have called me like a son and told me. But, their action was wrong," he said.

Ad Fielding decision backfires



BISHWAJIT ROY from Mohali

Bangladesh coach Dav Whatmore had harboured high hopes over the ability of his two new ball bowlers to threaten the Sri Lankan top order at the lively Mohali pitch, but his charges failed to justify his idea.
The optimism encouraged the team think-tank to decide to field first in the day-night match after winning the toss but ultimately the decision back-fired as inform Sri Lanka piled up a huge total of 302 for eight wickets in their share of 50 overs, courtesy of a brilliant hundred by Uppal Tharanga.
It was learnt that two factors played in skipper Habibul Bashar's mindone was that they won their lone match against the islanders by chasing down the target at Bogra last February and another was that if Mashrafe Bin Mortaza and Syed Rassel could ensure early success then they could have a chance to restrict their opponents in reasonable total.
But the ploy ultimately did not work as Bangladesh had to look to the two left-arm spinner Mohammad Rafique and Abdur Razzak to sal-

vage them from embarrassment.
Tharanga and his senior partner Sanath Jayasuriya, who initially survived a very close call from Mashrafe which West Indies umpire Steve Bucknor turned down, gave no chance to ride on them though they struggled a little bit against the movement of Tigers number one pacesman Mashrafe.
The expectation however was high on left-arm paceman Syed Rassel who made the team think-tank believe after the lone practice game that he could play a vital role in the match as he has the ability to swung the ball both ways, but the dashing Jayasuriya smashed two boundaries through cover in his fourth over to exterminate his nerve.
Rasel scalped two wickets in his ten over spell including the one of Jayasuriya, who fell victim of a leg before decision for a 46-ball 31, but was the most expensive giving away 65 runs. The two other seamers costly figures reflected how the Bangladesh pace department failed to justify their captain's decision to field first.
Mashrafe conceded 60 runs with one success in his ten overs quota while the inexperienced Forhad Reza, who had struggled to find his line and length, conceded 63 runs in eight overs without success.
But it was Mohammad Rafique who helped his side to check the run rates in the middle and captured the prize wicket of Kumara Sangakara (22 off 23 balls) to finish with figures of one for 37 in 10 overs while Razzak took two wickets for 49 in 10 overs.
On the other hand, the Sri Lanka innings was built around a scintillating century by left-handed batsman Tharanga, who became the only batsman in one-day history to score five hundreds in his first 30 one-day matches.
The 21-year old left-hander played shots all over the park to make 105 off 129 balls that featured eleven boundaries and one six and it was his second one-day ton against Bangladesh.
He got valuable support from his skipper Mahela Jayawardene (35 off 24 balls) and fit-again Marvan Atapattu, who played his first match after recovering from injury, who added 40 off 42 balls.
There sole encouraging factor in the session was that Bangladesh fielding looked sharp as they affected two brilliant run outs in the Sri Lanka innings.



Bangladesh spinner Abdur Razzak (2nd from L) swaps the high-five with captain Habibul Bashar as others celebrate the dismissal of Sri Lanka captain Mahela Jayawardene in the opening game of the Champions Trophy at Mohali yesterday.

Low-key start to Champions Trophy

SPORTS REPORTER from Mohali

The ICC Champions Trophy got underway at the Punjab Cricket Association Stadium at Mohali yesterday under brilliant sunshine and perfect conditions. But the only dismal scene was that the stands of the 25 to 30 thousands capacity stadium, the best one in India, were almost empty in a country where people are known as being cricket mad.
It was however not surprising for the local media men as they knew that cricket lovers in the country only came in numbers to the ground when the team is India or Pakistan.
"Yes, its look little bit depressing that a mega event started with almost empty stands and there was no excitement among the local people about the match. But it is a reality here that people are only mad for India and Pakistan players," said a veteran journalist of an international news agency.
Another journalist however quipped that the ICC and Punjab Cricket Association can rest their tug of war over the seat money for at least one match. There will be however be four more matches here in the tournament proper.
For last few days in Chandigarh there was hardly any evidence that the city was going to stage the first match of the second biggest tournament after the World Cup as none ever showed their interest to talk about the preliminary round matches.
It might have justified that people are less bothered with the Bangladeshi players when they were in outings but interestingly they even paid no attention to

Zim await Lara session



AFP, Ahmedabad

robin qualifier will join world champions Australia, South Africa, India, Pakistan, England and New Zealand in the main tournament that begins on October 15.
"We are here to learn and there are few better persons to learn from than watching Lara in action," said Curran of the record-breaking West Indian captain.
"We have been hit badly by the exodus of top players. The average age of this team is 20. But they work hard and are talented. We are picking up again."
Lara, meanwhile, was focussed on making a flying start. His team has to go through the qualifying rounds despite winning the previous Champions Trophy in England in 2004.
"We had to qualify because we were not among the top six on April 1 but that is a blessing in disguise," he said.
"I see it as a good way of going into the tournament. We will have three games under our belt when the main tournament starts and will be better prepared.
"Frankly, if we do not get past the first hurdle, we do not deserve to be playing in the big league."
Lara, Test cricket's leading scorer with 11,505 runs, is only 179 runs away from becoming the fifth batsman to make 10,000 one-day runs after Indians Sachin Tendulkar and Sourav Ganguly, Pakistan's Inzamamul Haq and Sanath Jayasuriya of Sri Lanka.
At 37, the left-hander prefers to concentrate on Test cricket but is enthused enough to lead the West Indian revival in limited-overs cricket, ahead of the World Cup in his own backyard in the Caribbean in March.
Since Lara took over as captain for a third term in April, the West

BANGLADESH-SL SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the Sri Lankan innings in the Champions Trophy qualifying match against Bangladesh at the Punjab Cricket Association Stadium on Saturday:

SRI LANKA
Tharanga b Mortuza 105
Jayasuriya lbw b Rassel 31
Jayawardene c Aftab b Razzak 35
Sangakkara c Mortuza b Rafique 22
Atapattu c Reza b Rassel 40
Dilshan not out 26
Maharoor run out 0
Vaas c Reza b Razzak 4
Muralidaran run out 11
Malinga not out 7
Extras: (b-1, lb-4, w-16) 21
Total: (For eight wkts in 50 overs) 302
Fall of wickets: 1-67, 2-130, 3-193, 4-244, 5-260, 6-262, 7-273, 8-295.

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Mortuza	10	0	60	1
Rassel	10	0	65	2
Reza	8	0	63	0
Razzak	10	0	49	2
Rafique	10	0	37	1
Hasan	2	0	23	0

Toss: Bangladesh

4 MSC hockey players fined

UNB, Dhaka

The Senior Division Hockey League Committee fined four Mohammedan Sporting Club players for their violent conduct in the final of the Club Cup tournament against Abahani on Thursday.
The decision was taken at an emergency meeting of the league committee yesterday after receiving the reports of the umpires and



Sri Lanka opener Uppal Tharanga salutes the crowd on reaching his century against Bangladesh at Mohali yesterday.

Jimmy brace fires Abahani

SPORTS REPORTER

Russell Mahmud Jimmy struck twice as Abahani began their Green Delta Premier Division Hockey League campaign on the right foot with a 3-0 win over Sonali Bank at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium yesterday.
But it was Mahubul Ahsan Rana who opened the scoring for the sky blues from the penalty corner in the final minute of the first-half.
Jimmy doubled the margin in the 49th minute through a penalty stroke and then struck his second just a minute before the final whistle by a close range shot which gave the bankers' goalkeeper Rakibul Hasan no chance.
Meanwhile, holders Usha Kirra Chakra crushed Bangladesh Sporting Club 8-1 at the same venue.
Zahidul Islam and Rafiqul Islam struck twice each while Mustafizur Rahman, Remon Kumar, Hasan Ahmed and Sultan Mahmud netted one each for the winners while Ashique scored the consolation goal for the Bangladesh Sporting.
Club Cup champions Mohammedan Sporting Club take on Sadharan Bima while Dhaka Mariners Club face Azad Sporting Club in the day's last match today.

Younis captain again



AFP, Karachi

Shraf, who took over as PCB chairman after incumbent chairman Shaharyar Khan resigned Friday night, announced the decision at a press conference in the eastern city of Lahore.
"Younis has been reappointed as captain and we have decided not to take Mushtaq Ahmed as assistant coach for the Trophy," Shraf said, apparently on advice from Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf, who is also patron of the PCB.
Younis had refused to lead the team on Thursday, saying he did not want to be a "dummy captain", (PCB) chairman Nasim Ashraf announced Younis and not Mohammad Yousuf would lead Pakistan in the Champions Trophy, which kicks off with the qualifying rounds in India on Saturday.
Mushtaq's appointment as assistant coach had been criticised, as a match-fixing inquiry conducted by Justice Malik Mohammad Qayyum in 1998 barred the former leg-spinner from holding any post with the team.
Pakistan's regular captain Inzamamul Haq is facing a four-match ban over bringing the game into disrepute during the August Oval Test against England.
"Pakistan cricket is at crossroads as Shaharyar quits," screamed the front page headline of the country's premier newspaper the Dawn as it summed up the last two months.
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We are fearless: Freddie



AFP, New Delhi

nets... got the cobwebs out.
"It's not something I'm worried about. I'm not a player who feels I have to bat day in day out."
But the burly all-rounder is not expected to risk bowling in the opening matches. Flintoff said he had been working at about 60 percent in the nets back home.
Where he will bat had yet to be decided, he said, not ruling out even opening.
Flintoff was first given the captaincy on England's tour of India in February when Michael Vaughan broke down.
The 28-year-old grabbed 11 wickets in three Tests and hit four successive half centuries as England fought back to draw the series against powerful India.
But England took a pasting in the one-day series losing 5-1 and Flintoff was rested after the opening encounters.
He said he was relishing both the return to India and the "big crowds... every game is a big occasion", as well as the captaincy.
Flintoff insisted he did not feel under pressure as captain. "I think it's brought the best out of me sometimes," he said.
The re-shaped England team was "well-balanced", coach Duncan Fletcher said, noting that despite some inexperience the fight-back to draw the one-day series against Pakistan in August "showed they had the character to do it."
"There's a lot of talent in the side. A lot of good young players in the side," Flintoff added.
"We need to go in there confident, believing we can beat the sides that we play against."
Flintoff recalled that England reached the finals of the last Champion Trophy at The Oval and went down to the West Indies.
England face a daunting task against India in the opening game of the main tournament in Jaipur on October 15 before taking on world number one Australia on October 21.



Action from the Green Delta Premier Division Hockey League encounter between Abahani and Sonali Bank at the Maulana Bhasani National Stadium yesterday.