



Did U Know?

World football's governing body, FIFA, introduced different mascot for each World Cup from 1966, with Willie becoming the first of its kind.



Didier Drogba
(Chelsea's Ivory Coast star footballer)
"I want to say thank you to (manager) Jose (Mourinho) for believing in me since the beginning and now we will be together for a long time. The best period of my career I think."
After signing a new four-year contract with the English club.

What to WATCH

ESPN
Sportscenter India
Live at 8:30 pm

Unlucky 13

SPORTS REPORTER

Thirteen bowlers cannot appear in the forthcoming National Cricket League and the Dhaka Premier League as their actions were deemed illegal in a report submitted by the bowling advisory committee of Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB).

According to the report submitted on Thursday, Jamaluddin Babu, Wasquruni Palash, Mustaqim Raju, Monirul Islam, Kamrul Islam, Saifullah Khan, Shahriar Alam, Faisal Hossain, Rasel Khan, Ashrafur Haque Khan, Imran Parvez, Yasin Arafat and Rashid Khan exceed the limit of 20 degrees and must be held under Level 2 of the illegal bowling action rule.

The committee headed by Kazi Yusa Misha however cleared left-arm spinners Ahsanullah Hasan and Elias Sunny of suspect actions while another left-armed Nadif Chowdhury informed the committee that he would refrain himself from bowling spin.

Div I chess from today

SPORTS REPORTER

The Dutch-Bangla Bank First Division Chess League begins today at the federation hall-room.

The number draw of the participating teams was held yesterday at the conference room of the National Sports Council.

The participating teams are Bangladesh Biman, Dhaka University Chess Club, Titus Islam, Rajshahi Daba Unnayan Sangstha, Destiny-2000 Limited, Faith Chess Club, Narayanganj City Chess Club, Chittagong Mohammedan Sporting Club, Mohakhali Prodig Sangha, Friends Chess Power, Farashganj Sporting Club, Leonie Chess Club, Sonali Bank Sports and Recreation Club, BJMC, Mukti-joddha Sangsad and Anushillan Daba Krira Chakra.

The two bottom finishers of the round robin league will be relegated to the Second Division.

In connection with the league a press conference was held yesterday with federation general secretary Jamilur Rahman and AFM Nazmul Quadir, additional managing director of Dutch-Bangla Bank, speaking on the occasion.

Sangakkara charms on Dhaka debut

Beximco set up final clash with Acme

SPORTS REPORTER



Kumar Sangakkara made his presence felt on his Dhaka debut as he took Beximco into the final of the GrameenPhone Corporate Cricket League with a convincing 61-run victory over Partex in the second semifinal at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium yesterday.

The otherwise lacklustre curtain-raising tournament of the season had a flamboyant mood on Sunday as a large number of fans turned up to watch the match at the open-ended ground and it was just because of the 29-year-old Sri Lankan vice-captain.

The elegant left-hander did not let his team or the crowd down as the star Lankan wicketkeeper showed his true character with a well-composed 69 to help the defending champions piling up a challenging total of 252 in 49.1 overs.

Partex batting line-up was totally out of idea to chase down the target on the placid batting wicket as they were bundled out for 191 in 46.4 overs which ensured an all-star Beximco-Acme final tomorrow at the same venue.

Former national skipper Akram Khan chose to bat first after winning the toss but his top-order batsmen Al Shahriar (6), Alok Kapali (28) and Mohammad Ashrafur (17) failed to take advantage of the batsman-friendly surface as Beximco were reduced to 61 for 3.

The big man then joined Sangakkara to repair the innings and added 85 runs in a fourth-wicket stand before being caught at long-on by Tariq Ahmed off Kamrul Hasan for a 68-ball 36 that featured three boundaries.

But it was man-of-the-match Sangakkara who played purposefully to give his side a decent total as he built the innings taking singles and only went for the big one when he settled down in the mid-

dle. In his 89-ball innings the stroke-maker produced four boundaries and flicked Pakistani left-arm spinner Jaffar Qureshi, who was Partex's most successful bowler with four for 47, for a big six before he was caught at point by Suhrawardi Shuvo off national paceman Shahadat Hossain.

"It was fantastic to play cricket with such a vibrant crowd behind. I am really excited with my maiden appearance in Dhaka cricket. It is a team game and we won the match as a team and what I tried to stay in the middle till 40-42 overs to put up a decent total on the board," said Sangakkara after the match.

Young batsman Nadif Chowdhury had some fireworks during his 35-ball 31 that saw one four and two sixes but the lower order, especially former national skipper Khaled Mahmud's batting was very poor, failed to accelerate which saw Beximco a few runs short in the end.

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Beximco's Sri Lankan batsman Kumar Sangakkara (R) pushes the ball on the on-side as Partex and Bangladesh wicketkeeper Khaled Mashud looks on during the second semifinal of the GrameenPhone Corporate Cricket League at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium on Sunday.

Usha going great guns



SPORTS REPORTER

Mostafizur Rahman Dinar scored in the dying seconds to give Usha Krira Chakra solo lead in the Green Delta Insurance Premier Hockey League as the defending champions edged Mohammedan Sporting Club 1-0 in a crucial match yesterday.

The exciting seventh-round clash at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium looked set to end in a goalless draw but Usha maintained their all-win run when Dinar dragged the ball low into the right hand corner of Mohammedan keeper Shakil from a penalty corner with only three seconds remaining on the clock.

Usha led the table with maximum 21 points, followed by Abahani who

are three points adrift also after seven rounds. Mohammedan's title hope, after an inspiration 3-0 win over Abahani in the previous round, was heavily dented with their second loss as they stuck to 13 points.

Usha and Abahani face off on November 8 in the final round of the first leg.

Desperate to stay alive in the race, Mohammedan looked the better side and rushed early blood when Salim Khalid snatched the ball from Hassan. However, the Pakistani's effort was denied by the pads of advancing Usha goalie Zahid who pulled off another similar save in the 23rd minute to keep Habul at bay.

Usha's best first half chance fell to forward Delwar Hossain but the Pakistani's powerful hit was deflected for a corner by inspired defending from Yamin.

The black and whites came close again six minutes from the breather when Chayan beat Zahid from a penalty corner but Pakistani playmaker Saqlain made a goalline save.

Usha began the second half brightly when Shafiqat Rasool flicked the ball just wide but their attack was weakened as they had to play the last half an hour without prolific goal scorer Delwar, who left the field with a bleeding nose following the stick-work of his compatriot Khalid. The umpire, however, only cautioned Khalid with a green card.

Both sides created ample scoring chances but Mohammedan were unlucky as Chayan rattled the sidebar from a penalty corner while Asim Khan and Prince both hit off target.

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Mohammedan's Pakistani recruit Salim Khalid (R) tries to get the better of a challenge from an Usha defender during their Green Delta Premier Hockey League encounter at the Maulana Bhasani National Stadium on Sunday.

Australia clinch maiden Champs Trophy in style

AFP, Mumbai

World number one Australia wrested the Champions Trophy from the West Indies with an eight-wicket victory in a disappointing rain-hit final here on Sunday.

Ricky Ponting's men won the biennial event for the first time bowling out the defending champions for 138 and then cantering home in the 29th over at the Brabourne stadium.

The target was revised to 116 from 35 overs after rain prevented play for two hours and 15 minutes after the dinner break which Australia took at 45-2 in 10 overs.

A buoyant Australia return home to prepare for the Ashes series against England starting in Brisbane on November 23 after adding the only major trophy missing from their overflowing cupboard.

Left-arm seamer Nathan Bracken took three wickets for 22 runs as the West Indies lost their last eight wickets for 58 runs after sailing merrily at 80-2 in the 10th over on a slow wicket.

A sell-out crowd of 35,000, noisily backing the underdogs from the West Indies, erupted when Australia slipped to 13-2 in the fourth over.

Adam Gilchrist was caught in the slips by Chris Gayle off Ian Bradshaw for two and Ponting was leg-before to Jerome Taylor for no score.

Damien Martyn and Shane Watson boosted the world champions with an unbroken third-wicket stand of 103 on either side of the rain interruption.

Watson returned unconquered on 57 and was declared the man of the final. Martyn was unbeaten on 47.

The West Indies, fielding seven players who won the last Champions Trophy in England two years ago, made a rollicking start as openers Gayle and Shivnarine Chanderpaul plundered 49 off the first five overs.

Chanderpaul, who took 10 runs in Brett Lee's first over, hit 27 off 18 balls when he was bowled by Bracken with the first ball of the sixth over.

Left-hander Gayle, the top-scorer in the tournament with 437 runs from seven previous matches, hit Glenn McGrath for two sixes as he raced to 37 off 27 balls.

Bracken, who had claimed Ramnaresh Sarwan as his second wicket, ended Gayle's hurricane innings when he knocked back the off-stump with a superb delivery that moved in off the seam.

Gayle ended with 474 runs including three centuries and was named the man of the tournament. Team-mate Taylor was the leading bowler with 13 wickets.

Captain Brian Lara, given a rousing welcome to the crease by the crowd, plodded for 26 minutes for two runs before falling to a brilliant diving catch by wicket-keeper Gilchrist off McGrath.

Another Gilchrist catch off McGrath removed Runako Morton as the West Indies suddenly found themselves cornered at 94-5 in the 19th.

McGrath, who had conceded 22 runs in his first two overs, gave

Acme come up with Sanath surprise

SPORTS REPORTER

This year's final of the GrameenPhone Corporate Cricket League now has another added attraction as veteran Sri Lanka opener Sanath Jayasuriya arrives here today to play for Acme Laboratories.

The 37-year-old dashing left-handed batsman and left-arm spinner confirmed his participation for the first-time finalists, who beat Epyllion by seven wickets in the first semifinal on Saturday. Acme team official Fahim Sinha confirmed.

He joins an already star-studded Acme line-up that includes Bangladesh captain Habibur Bashar, batsman Aftab Ahmed and veteran all-rounder Mohammad Rafique.

On a previous occasion, Jayasuriya appeared in the Damal Summer semifinal for Mohammedian immediately after winning the World Cup back in 1996.

A veteran of 105 Tests and 370 one-day internationals, Jayasuriya is one of the best strikers of the cricket ball in world cricket. Along with Indian superstars Sachin Tendulkar, Sourav Ganguly and Pakistan's Inzamamul Haq, he's only the fourth player in ODI history to have scored more than 10 thousand runs.



Australia pacer Nathan Bracken bowls against West Indies batsman Chris Gayle (not in picture) during their ICC Champions Trophy final in Mumbai on Sunday.

Stage set for ZZ



SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) has completed all preparations to accord a rousing reception to Zinedine Zidane, who lands in Dhaka tonight.

One of the greatest footballers in history, Zidane has retired from the game after an eventful World Cup 2006 final that France lost to Italy in the tiebreakers.

The enigmatic Frenchman was sent off for headbutting Marco Materazzi during the final in Berlin - his last competitive game - and many believe that his absence in the rest of the game cost France a second World Cup title.

Whatever, the Juventus and Real Madrid star remains in the hearts of millions of Bangladeshi fans, who will get a chance to watch glimpses of his exquisite skills tomorrow when under-16 sides of crowd-pullers Abahani and Mohammedan play an exhibition match in honour of Zidane at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

Gallery tickets will cost Tk 40 each while VIP tickets Tk 300, 200 and 100 for different gates.

The BFF has given the ticket selling rights to an event management company, Admine, for Tk seven lakh while NTV, who will telecast the match and the cultural programme live from the Bangabandhu Stadium, have won the rights for Tk two lakh.

Zidane, who will visit the BFF Bhaban in the afternoon, is expected to arrive at the BNS at 4.45pm and play for both Abahani and Mohammedan for a few minutes.

His 27-member tour-party includes Franck Reboud, chairman of Danone Foods, which is bringing the French legend to inaugurate the plant of Grameen Danone Foods. Zidane is a brand ambassador of Danone.

An advanced party has already inspected the security measures and expressed satisfaction. Zidane will bring his own security guards but the Dhaka metropolitan Police will be in charge of his security here.

"We are expecting that Danone, a major baby food manufacturer in Europe, will involve Bangladesh in its football programme," told BFF general secretary Anwarul Hoque Helal at a press conference yesterday.

BFF vice-president Sirajul Islam Bachchu and deputy general secretary Manzoor Hossain Malu were also present.

"We are expecting that the chairman of the organisation will announce the participation of Bangladesh in the European football tournament (under-12) it hosts in France," Helal said.

It was learned that there have already been talks and a youth team representing the whole of Bangladesh would be invited to play in the tournament very soon.

"It's a great occasion. We have never been graced by the arrival of a footballer of this calibre. We thank Grameen and hope this will give our youngsters inspiration," said Bachchu.

BFF's gift list for the thrice World Footballer of the Year and Golden Ball winner at Germany 2006 World Cup includes a set of Aarong punjabi, a blazer with BFF monogram and a surprise souvenir.

Zidane, who will visit the head office of Grameen Bank in Mirpur tomorrow morning, is expected to make a courtesy call on President and Chief Advisor of the Caretaker Government Prof Iajuddin Ahmed on Wednesday afternoon. He will depart Dhaka by an Emirates flight in the same evening.

Asia taking over?



AFP, Mumbai

Asia took a vice-like grip on cricket's administration after umpire Darrell Hair was sacked and a life ban on Pakistani match-fixing accused Ataur Rehman was revoked.

The extraordinary decisions were taken by the International Cricket Council's Executive Board at its two-day meeting over the weekend here, making Asian nations buoyant and leaving the rest of the cricket world red-faced.

Hair, 54, was removed from the elite international panel of umpires after the controversial Australian official was involved in the ball-tampering row with Pakistan during

the Oval Test against England in August.

ICC president Percy Sonn, a South African lawyer, told reporters that the Executive Board had "decided it has lost confidence in the umpire."

But a highly-placed ICC source had told AFP on Friday that pressure from Asia's four Test-playing nations - India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh -- had forced the Board's hand.

"The Asian bloc comprising India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh tabled a motion at the meeting that Hair be taken off the panel," the source said.

"The motion was put to a vote and was passed by a 7-3 majority. The four Asian nations plus South Africa, Zimbabwe and the

West Indies voted against Hair. England, Australia and New Zealand wanted him to continue."

Both Sonn and ICC chief executive Malcolm Speed declined to take questions on whether the umpires' integrity had been compromised by Hair's unprecedented sacking or which countries wanted him removed.

Former Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) director Abbas Zaidi told AFP that Hair's removal had vindicated the country's tough stand against the umpire.

"Since we were involved in the standoff it vindicates whatever we believed and advocated," Zaidi said. "We thank the Asian cricket boards, especially India, for the

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