



Did U Know?

The first Rose Bowl game was held in 1902 in Pasadena, California. The University of Michigan beat Stanford 49-0.



Rahul Dravid
(India cricket captain)

"I have watched from close quarters some of his memorable knocks and he seems to get better and better as he is getting older. You are always picking up finer points but it is difficult to match him. He is somebody you can admire but can't copy. At my age it is difficult for me to bat the way Lara does."

His admiration for West Indies captain Brian Lara.



ESPN
Australia v England
First Ashes Test, Day Three
Live at 6:00 am (Saturday)
Sportscenter India
Sports News
Live at 8:30 pm

Shakil, Delwar share lead

SPORTS REPORTER

FIDE Master Abu Sufian Shakil shared the lead in the 9th Prime Bank Rating Chess Tournament with Delwar Hossain at the end of the fourth round yesterday.

Both the players were level on four points after Shakil beat Chanchal and Delwar defeated Javed at the federation hall-room yesterday.

In other fourth round games, Parag beat Tarik, Reza beat Siddique and Shahab beat Debaraj.

Zimbabwe in city

SPORTS REPORTER

A 22-member Zimbabwe cricket team arrived in Dhaka last night to play a Twenty20 international and five one-day internationals against Bangladesh.

The southern Africans, led by Prosper Utsya, were given a warm reception on their arrival at the Zia International Airport by Bangladesh Cricket Board general secretary Mahbul Anam and CEO Mahmudur Rahman.

The visitors will start the one-day series against Bangladesh as underdogs despite winning at home in less than four months earlier, told Zimbabwe coach Kevin Curran on the team's arrival.

"We would be the underdogs in the series although we have won the previous series. It's because of the local conditions," told Curran.

"I believe that spinners will play a major role in the games and Bangladesh are more experienced in this department," he added.

Zimbabwe have also brought a number of spinners and they will get their first taste of local conditions when they play their only warm-up match at BKSP in Savar on Sunday.

They will leave for Khulna on the next day to play the Twenty20 match and the first ODI scheduled for November 28 and 30 respectively.

The second and third ODIs – both day-nighters – will be held in Bogra on December 3 and 5 before the party returns to the capital for the final matches on December 17 and 18.

The Bangladesh side, sans captain Habibur Bashar, Mehrab Hossain and Forhad Reza who have been picked for Zimbabwe's tour opener at BKSP, reached Khulna yesterday.

Ash slams record 263

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Just to show that scoring back-to-back centuries were not enough, Mohammad Ashraful went on to hit the country's highest first-class individual score to put Dhaka in the driver's seat on the third day of the four-day match against Chittagong in the Ispahani Mirzapore 8th National Cricket League yesterday.

In an absolutely mammoth effort at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium, Ashraful struck 263, breaking the record of national captain Habibur Bashar's 224 against Khulna in 2000-01. He also shared 420 runs for the fifth-wicket with Marshall Ayub, who scored 145.

The Dhaka pair was only 44 runs short of the world first-class record of 464 runs for the fifth wicket set between Australia's famous Waugh brothers Steve and Mark for New South Wales in 1991, when Ashraful edged to wicketkeeper Dhiman Ghosh off left-arm spinner Elias Sunny.

The man who holds the record of being the youngest Test centurion, struck the seventh double century for the country in first-class cricket. His sublime 158 against India back in 2004 was his previous highest score in the longer version

game. The 22-year-old was understandably delighted with his record-breaking stand.

"I really enjoyed the partnership with Marshall (Ayub), and he's such a good batsman but I was completely unaware of the world record," said Ashraful.

"My determination was to score runs as I said before so it was quite satisfying to hit 263.

"I did think about the triple-hundred but maybe that wasn't in my fate," said Ashraful, who was dropped from the national team for the Zimbabwe one-day series. "I think I deserve a recall to the national team."

Appreciating his knock, chief selector Faruque Ahmed said: "It is fantastic that he scored two brilliant knocks in succession. We never had a doubt about his talent but his exclusion was based on performance. He must have regained a lot of confidence by scoring so heavily."

Queried about a change of heart in terms of reversing their earlier decision, Faruque said, "It is too early to reconsider our previous stand."

It was however that Faruque might sit again with his fellow selectors to re-assess their previous stand before the first one-day international against Zimbabwe on November 30.

CHITTAGONG v DHAKA

Resuming on overnight 332-4, Ashraful and Ayub continued on their merry way, taking the hapless Chittagong bowling to the cleaners. Ayub, who earned a place in the Board President's Eleven in a warm-up game against Zimbabwe through his sterling performances in the season so far, batted with aplomb but was more subdued than his celebrated partner.

Ashraful reached his maiden double hundred in the first hour of the day and in a bid to put the game

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HIGHEST FIRST-CLASS SCORES

263	Mohammad Ashraful	Dhaka	v Chittagong	2006-07
224	Habibur Bashar	Biman	v Khulna	2000-01
218	Shahriar Hossain	BDA	v Dhaka	2003-04
210	Minhajul Abedin	Chittagong	v Dhaka	2001-02
204	Nazimuddin	Chittagong	v Sylhet	2004-05
201*	Khaled Mashud	Rajshahi	v Khulna	2001-02
200	Hasanuzzaman	Khulna	v Chittagong	2002-03

Booters leave tomorrow

SPORTS REPORTER

The first batch of Bangladesh's Asian Games contingent will leave Dhaka tomorrow when the football team take their flight to Qatar early in the morning.

Although the 15th Asiad officially starts on December 1, the football competition will begin early and when Hassanuzzaman Babloo's side kick off their campaign against mighty South Korea on November 28, there would be little hopes of avoiding a disaster.

"Our target would be to play good and competitive football. We are facing the top teams in Asia, so if we can win a point in the group stage, that would be enough," told coach Babloo yesterday.

Rank outsiders Bangladesh are also pitted against Bahrain and Vietnam in their group.

"Even Vietnam's ranking is much higher. So I think, just participating in a prestigious event would be an accomplishment. All I can tell is that my boys will not lose the match before it starts," hoped the former national winger.

Most members of the under-23

squad – accompanied by three senior footballers Rajani, Nazrul and Matir Munna for the trip to Doha – have been at the national camp for a long time as part of the side that played in the South Asian Games last August.

Babloo, happy at preparation, added that the decision to give exposure to the young players during Bangladesh's last two qualifiers for the 2007 Asian Cup instead picking up an all-seniors squad has given the players confidence.

"With a young side, we fought against Qatar and Hong Kong national teams. We hope to do better in this tournament because I feel that the fitness level of the players is better than any time in the past. They also look mentally strong."

"The first match is important and I think I would follow the formation of our last two internationals where we have played 3-5-2. We are taking almost the entire defence of the national team and against a team like Korea, it would be better to think about defending first."

Both the goalkeepers – Shakil and Himel – are less experienced but Babloo thought that the exposure would be fruitful in the long run in finding successors of Aminul and Biplab.

Lack of quality strikers has been the main problem of even the national team and the coach will have to rely on Emily's form.

"Robin is likely to be the first choice to partner Emily but I am also hopeful that young Mithun will impress," Babloo told of the under-20 player who was also in the SA Games camp. "He is the youngest member of the squad but he is a good prospect. He is one of the most talented strikers among the youngsters."

SQUAD

Goalkeepers: MN Shakil, Mazharul Islam Himel; defenders: Rajani Kanta Barman, Nazrul, Feroz Mahmud Titu, Ariful Islam, Arafat Ali Rony, Waly Faisal, Jahirul Islam, Ibnul Siraji; midfielders: Abul Hossain, Matir Munna, Arman Aziz, Enamul Haque Sharif, Faisal Mahmud; forwards: Zahid Hossain, Zahid Hassan Emily, Mohammed Robin and Mithun Chowdhury. Officials: Sirajul Islam Bachchu (team leader and manager), Hassanuzzaman Babloo (coach), Bayezid Alam Nipu (assistant coach), Mohammed Ali Imran (physician).



WHAT MORE DID YOU EXPECT? Mohammad Ashraful (R) and Marshall Ayub walk off the pitch after their country record first-class partnership of 420 in their National League encounter against Chittagong at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium yesterday.

Zia crashes to Indian WGM

SPORTS REPORTER

Niaz Murshed returned to winning ways in the Commonwealth Chess Championship but his fellow Bangladeshi Grandmaster Ziaur Rahman stumbled in the third round on Wednesday.

Niaz, who drew his second round match of the 10-round Swiss League competition in Mumbai, defeated MKA Russell in the third round to extend his collection to 2.5 points.

Zia, after two successive wins, crashed to India's Woman Grandmaster Meenakshi and stuck to two points.

Citigroup Golf gets underway

SPORTS REPORTER

The first ever Citigroup Cup Golf Tournament took off at the Kurmitola Golf Club yesterday. Over 190 golfers participated on the first day which was inaugurated by Chief of Army Staff Lt Gen Moeen U Ahmed and Head of Corporate Banking, Citigroup Bangladesh, Abrar A Anwar.

The tournament, organised specially for members of Kurmitola Golf Club and valuable clients of Citigroup, is set to draw over 200 golfers again today, the concluding day.

Kallis blows India away

AFP, Durban

Jacques Kallis struck a flawless century before South Africa's fast bowlers sealed a crushing 157-run win in the second one-day international against India at Kingsmead on Wednesday.

Kallis made 119 not out as South Africa reached 248 for eight after they won the toss and batted on a well-grassed pitch in the day-night clash.

India were then skittled out for just 91 in reply, with Andre Nel taking four for 13 and Kallis following up his batting effort by taking three for three.

It was a record margin of runs for South Africa against India and gave South Africa a 1-0 lead in the five-match series after the opening encounter in Johannesburg last Sunday was rained out.

"South Africa bowled in the right areas and once we lost a few wickets early there was always going to be pressure on the lower order," said Indian captain Rahul

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Yousuf saves Pakistan

Cricket

AFP, Multan

Mohammad Yousuf's record-equalling century salvaged a draw for Pakistan and ended the West Indies' chances of a series-leaving win in the second Test at Multan stadium on Thursday.

The stylish middle-order batsman narrowly missed a double century for the second time in as many matches, making 191 to help his team reach 461-7 on the fifth and final day, keeping their 1-0 lead in the three-match series.

Yousuf survived a dropped chance and some close appeals to make his record-equalling seventh century of the year and the 21st of his career. He hit 21 boundaries during his gritty innings of 424 minutes.

He matches the record jointly held by the West Indian Vivian Richards and Sri Lankan Aravinda de Silva. Richards hit seven hundreds in 1976 while De Silva recorded the feat in 1997.

He was finally dismissed by left-arm spinner Dave Mohammed, caught at mid-wicket by Shivnarine Chanderpaul. But by then the home team had built a lead of 227 runs and the West Indies had no option but to settle for a draw.

West Indian captain Brian Lara said his team needed to improve their fielding after dropping Yousuf four times in two Tests.

"It was a tough match and we worked hard throughout. The one

aspect where we need to work is the fielding. We have to do something on catching," said Lara.

The master batsman, whose epic 216 in the high-scoring Test nearly won it for the Windies, added: "Now we have to do better in the third Test to level the series."

Pakistan captain Inzamamul Haq said Yousuf's batting was "exemplary", adding: "It needed a lot of character to save the match after conceding a lead of over 200 runs."

"Getting a draw will raise the confidence of the team and we will be more determined in the next Test."

The West Indies were unlucky not to have dismissed Yousuf earlier, after two close leg-before shots were turned down by the umpires and Runako Morton fanned a straightforward slip catch off Daren Powell when Yousuf was on 108.

Yousuf added an invaluable 152 runs for the sixth wicket with all-rounder Abdul Razzaq, who made a precious 80, with eight boundaries and a six.

The West Indies took the crucial wickets of Shoaib Malik (four) and Inzamam (ten) to get closer to a

series-leaving win in the pre-lunch session.

Yousuf had put on 119 runs for the third wicket with opener Imran Farhat (76) to dim the threat and added another 41 for the fourth wicket with captain Inzamam.

The 32 year old hooked pace-man Jerome Taylor for his 13th boundary to complete his hundred off 153 balls.

Farhat was run out by a brilliant piece of fielding by Shivnarine Chanderpaul. The West Indian made a diving stop to catch Farhat out of his crease when he was sent back by Yousuf.

There could have been further disaster for the home team had burly Inzamam not reached his crease on a sharp single to point in the next over.

The West Indies took the prized wicket of Inzamam with the second new ball when fast bowler Jerome Taylor trapped him in front, before Powell bowled Malik three overs before lunch, with West Indies still in with a chance of victory.

But Yousuf and Razzaq ensured Pakistan saved the match.

Razzaq finally holed out off

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WELCOME TO BANGLADESH: Players and officials of the Zimbabwe cricket team on their arrival at the ZIA yesterday. They are here to play five ODIs and a Twenty20 match.



THE RESCUER: Pakistan batsman Mohammad Yousuf tucks one off his pads as West Indies wicketkeeper Denesh Ramdin (R) looks on during the final day's play of the second Test at the Multan Cricket Stadium on Thursday.