



Did U Know?

India's Abbas Ali Baig was the first batsman to hit a Test century on debut against England at Old Trafford in 1959.



Frank Rijkaard

(Barcelona coach)
"Ronaldinho's second goal was the sort of marvel that provokes strong emotions from Barcelona and all football fans alike. This sort of performance will help strengthen the side in matches to come."
While praising the Brazilian star's magnificent goal against Villarreal in the Primera Liga.

What to WATCH

TEN Sports

Pakistan v West Indies
Third Test, Day Two
Live at 10:30 am
ESPN
Sportscenter India
Live at 8:30 pm

Greg burns in Kolkata

PTI, Kolkata
Kolkata on Monday erupted in protest over Greg Chappell's comments against Indian MPs, with demonstrators burning the coach's effigy and demanding that he be sacked immediately.

At Kalkighat in the southern part of the city, around 30-35 members of 'Cricket Lovers Association' raised slogans against the Australian coach saying he has insulted not only the Indian MPs but also the entire nation.

"The MPs are people's representatives. Insulting them is akin to insulting the Indian people," they said, carrying aloft posters condemning Chappell.

"Moreover, Chappell is an outsider, a foreigner. What right does he have to speak about the functioning of our parliamentary democracy," they asked.

Expressing dismay over the dismal showing of the Indian cricket team in South Africa, they also burnt a picture of skipper Rahul Dravid and demanded that Sourav Ganguly be re-inducted into the squad.

Activists of the Samajwadi Party also held a demonstration before the Eden Gardens and burnt Chappell's effigy.

The lawmakers in the West Bengal assembly also sharply criticised Chappell and demanded that he be sacked.

Watson out of 2nd Test

AFP, Brisbane

Australian all-rounder Shane Watson was Monday ruled out of playing in Friday's second Ashes Test against England in Adelaide.

Australian selectors said they will announce the second Test squad on Tuesday.

Watson has been troubled by a hamstring injury and has been bowling in the nets during the first Ashes Test, which Australia won by 277 runs.

The selectors met Monday to discuss the make-up of the second Test squad, but agreed to defer that decision until Tuesday after being told by team physiotherapist Alex Kountouris that Watson would not recover in time.

Watson's unavailability gives leg-spinner Stuart MacGill a strong chance of bowling in tandem with Shane Warne in Adelaide.

Old foes, new game

BD-Zim first Twenty20 today



SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh and Zimbabwe join the newest cricket bandwagon as they face off in their inaugural Twenty20 International match at the Khulna Divisional Stadium today.

Although the ball-bashing 20-over-side match, which has recently been endorsed by the ICC as an additional competition, is something new for both teams, the first-of-its-kind game has already created enormous enthusiasm among the cricket fans in the southern head-quarters of the country. With two third of the 15,000 tickets already sold out, local reports claim that the match will guarantee a full house when it begins at 1.30pm this afternoon.

The hosts who are led by young Shahriar Nafees, the vice-captain of

the national side, has a young theme to it. Only veteran all-rounder Mohammad Rafique, tried as an opener in Sunday's warm-up match against a local Khulna selection, will add some experience to the very young side.

"I am proud to become the first captain of Twenty20 matches for Bangladesh as I am a part of history," said skipper Nafees.

"As this format requires aggressive players, we will make sure that those players are playing tomorrow (Tuesday)," said the young opener.

Twenty20 cricket however is not totally new to Bangladesh as the Corporate League was held in this format two years ago.

Coach Dav Whatmore said, "The format is new for both teams and it is important for us to adapt quickly and get used to the pace of this game."

About Ashraf's inclusion in the one-day side, the coach informed that it was the selector's decision to reinstate him in the team. Ashraf was dropped for the first three one-dayers including the opening match at Khulna on November 30 due to

his poor run of form with the bat.

But the talented right-hander forced the selectors to change their hearts with back-to-back centuries including a record 263 for Dhaka against Chittagong in a first-class match last week.

Whatmore, who was apparently against Ashraf's inclusion in the one-day squad, also said that he could not confirm whether he (Ashraf) would be inserted into the side for the first ODI as it is a norm to decide on the line-up the day before the match itself.

Opener Nazmus Sadat and middle-order batsman Nadif Chowdhury, who arrived yesterday after playing the warm-up game against Zimbabwe, are two young aggressive characters who are expected to do some early damage on the Zimbabwe bowlers. Veteran Rafique is also expected to entertain the crowd with his usual spectacular batting.

The visitors also have players

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Dravid to miss last two games

REUTERS, Durban

India captain Rahul Dravid will miss the last two matches of the one-day series against South Africa with a finger injury.

Virender Sehwag will take over the captaincy for the matches in Port Elizabeth on Wednesday and in Centurion on Sunday, Indian media manager Rajan Nair told reporters on Monday.

Test batsman VVS Laxman has been asked to join the team. "Laxman is going to reinforce the team in Rahul's absence," Indian board secretary Niranjan Shah told Reuters in Mumbai.

"I don't see him reaching in time for the fourth ODI, but we expect him for the fifth," he added.

Dravid sustained the injury while fielding in the slips in the third one-day international in Cape Town on Sunday.

Nair said team management was awaiting confirmation of whether Dravid's finger was fractured or whether he had damaged ligaments. But he is expected to be fit for the Test series. "(Physio John) Gloster is confident that Dravid will regain full fitness," Shah said.

The first of India's three tests in South Africa will be played in Johannesburg from Dec. 15 to 19. South Africa hold an unbeatable 2-0 lead in the one-day series.

Laxman, 32, was overlooked from the original one-day squad despite the side's poor batting displays this season.

Niaz, Zia held

SPORTS REPORTER

Grand Masters (GM) Niaz Murshed and Ziaur Rahman both drew their games in the seventh round of the Commonwealth Chess Championship in Mumbai yesterday.

Zia drew with India's International Master Chandrashekar Gokhalchand while Niaz also tied his match against India's GM Dronavalli Harika in their seventh round matches as they are both tied at 4.5 points.

Englishman GM Nigel Short and local lad IM Venkatesh maintain their joint lead with 6.5 points.

Australia go one up

Crush England by 277 runs



AFP, Brisbane

Australia wrapped up a crushing 277-run victory over England 90 minutes into the fifth and final day of the opening Ashes Test at the Gabba here Monday.

Glenn McGrath caught Steve Harmison at fine leg off Stuart Clark to end England's resistance and give the Australians a morale-boosting 1-0 lead over the holders in the five-Test series.

Clark finished with 4-72 off 24.1 overs and leg-spinner Shane Warne, who did not take a wicket on the final day, closed with 4-124 off 34 overs.

England's remote hopes of

batting out the final day nosedived in the day's opening over when Kevin Pietersen was out on the fourth ball to Brett Lee.

Pietersen, who buoyed England with his counter-attacking innings, went the same way as his batting partner Paul Collingwood (96) by getting out in the nineties.

Lee took the second new ball for his second delivery and had Pietersen out to a poor shot to Damien Martyn at short mid-wicket, with no addition to his overnight score of 92.

Pietersen, who had an absorbing duel with his Hampshire county teammate Shane Warne on Sunday's fourth day, was upset to be dismissed so softly as he fell to a half-volley from Lee.

He batted for 228 minutes with

14 boundaries and with him went the last remaining recognised batsman in England's against-the-odds bid to avoid a heavy defeat in the first of the five-Test series.

Wicketkeeper Geraint Jones, selected ahead of Chris Read primarily for his batting, went 30 minutes later when he chopped a Glen McGrath ball on to his stumps for 33 after hitting five fours in his 68-minute stay.

Ashley Giles, also chosen ahead of Monty Panesar for his batting ability, was out at first-hour drinks when he edged Clark to Warne at first slip for 23, leaving the tourists at 346 for eight.

Matthew Hoggard followed when he edged Clark to Warne at slip for eight and Harmison was the

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England tailender Matthew Hoggard (L) is dejected as he walks off following his dismissal by Australian bowler Stuart Clark (2nd L) during the final day of the first Ashes Test at the Gabba in Brisbane on Monday.

Ctg ride on Dhiman



SPORTS REPORTER

Hosts Chittagong took the momentum away from Barisal as they passed the 300-run mark at the end of the opening day in the four-day Ispahani Mirzapore 8th National Cricket League at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium yesterday.

The hosts, reeling in the points table with only eight points, were 303 for nine at stumps.

Chittagong's wicketkeeper-batsman Dhiman Ghosh batted superbly to score 85 but had little support from the rest of the batsmen.

It was slow going at the Rajshahi Divisional Stadium as Dhaka crawled to 194 for six in 90 overs of play with only form batsman Marshall Ayub showing some stability with 49 not out.

Here at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium, Khulna also handled

matters quite steadily as opener Sajjadul Hasan and Manjarul Islam struck fifties as they ended the day at 237 for five.

RAJSHAHI v DHAKA

The hosts got their first breakthrough in the second hour of play when Dhaka opener Javed Omar was trapped lbw by all-rounder Mushfiqur Rahman. His partner, the young Uttam Sarkar batted with much restraint as he scored 42 in two hours but fell in the same manner to left-arm spinner Suhrwardi Shuvo.

Dhaka fell into more trouble when Farhad Hossain caught Anwar Hossain off in-form seamer Mohammad Shahjada with the score on 91.

Skipper Al Shahriar also failed to bat well as he was out for 13, leaving his side at 11 for four after lunch.

Shamsur Rahman, batting at number five was joined by the man of the hour Marshall Ayub to recover the innings. He was unbeaten at the

end of the day on 49, having batted for more than a couple of hours. Shamsur scored 36 while Mosharrif Hossain remained unbeaten along with Marshall.

For the hosts, Shuvo took 3 for 37 while Shahjada, Mushfiqur and Alamgir Kabir all picked up a wicket each.

CHITTAGONG v BARISAL
Wicketkeeper batsman Dhiman Ghosh held the Chittagong innings together as he shared two important middle-order partnerships.

With his side on 81 for three, he dominated the 60-run fourth wicket stand with skipper Ehsanul Haque, but it ended when the latter was held by Tapash Ghosh off left-armed Ahsanullah Hasan.

Faisal Hossain then struck 49, hitting eight fours but their stand was also dominated by Dhiman who struck 14 boundaries and a six in his 99-ball 85. A beautiful striker

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Subhas asks for Ganguly entry

PTI, Kolkata

West Bengal Sports Minister Subhas Chakraborty on Monday pitched for re-induction of Sourav Ganguly in the Indian cricket team in the wake of its recent poor showings.

"Sourav has contributed a lot to India and should be included in the Indian cricket team, given the team's dismal showing," Chakraborty told newsmen here.

The minister's comment comes in the backdrop of India's back-to-back losses in South Africa, where the Rahul Dravid-led side went down in the second and third one-dayers after the first game was a wash-out.

Ganguly has been out of the Indian team since turning out in the Karachi Test against Pakistan earlier this year. He played his last one-dayer in 2005 in Sri Lanka.

"It cannot be said how well Sourav will perform if re-inducted into the Indian team. This (a team's success in cricket) requires a collective performance."



Pakistan's prolific batsman Mohammad Yousuf (R) raises his bat upon reaching yet another century on the first day of the third and final Test against West Indies at the National Stadium in Karachi on Monday.

Yousuf fires record ton



AFP, Karachi

Run-making machine Mohammad Yousuf hit a world record eighth century in a calendar year to anchor Pakistan's innings in the third and final Test against the West Indies in Karachi on Monday.

The prolific 32-year-old batsman scored 102 before Corey Collymore trapped him leg-before with a straight ball that kept low on a flat grassless pitch at the National Stadium.

Kamran Akmal (18) and Shahid Nazir (0) were at the crease when bad light stopped play two overs early, with Pakistan on 257-7 after failing to take advantage of winning the toss.

Yousuf broke the record of seven centuries in a year jointly held by West Indian Vivian Richards and Aravinda de Silva of Sri Lanka.

Richards achieved the feat in 1976 when he also scored the most runs in a calendar year -- 1,710 in 11 Tests.

Yousuf fell 47 runs short of overhauling Richards' other record but has one more innings in this Test, Pakistan's only left this year,

to break it.

He brought up his 22nd Test century by driving Daren Powell to mid-wicket for three while on 99. His innings lasted 155 balls and 230 minutes and he hit 15 boundaries.

Yousuf, who hit a match-winning 192 in the first Test in Lahore and a match-saving 191 in the second at Multan, was once again lucky as wicketkeeper Denesh Ramdin failed to hold an edge off spinner Chris Gayle when he was on 63.

The tourists also dropped Yousuf on 108 in Multan to let Pakistan off the hook, and they put him down three times in Lahore.

He steadied the innings after Pakistan lost Mohammad Hafeez (18) and Younis Khan (20) in the first session and then opener Imran Farhat (47) after lunch.

Yousuf added 66 for the fourth wicket with captain Inzamamul Haq (18) and another four for the fifth wicket with Shoab Malik (18).

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