



Did U Know?

In the history of Test cricket only four batsmen scored centuries in their 100th match - Colin Cowdrey, Javed Miandad, Gordon Greenidge and Alec Stewart.



Ronaldo
(Real Madrid's Brazilian super star)
"He is the one that motivates me most. He's very good at that and I'm happy to be working for him."
On Fabio Capello.

Bowlers join the party



BISHWAJIT ROY from Bogra

The early departure of in-form Shahriar Nafees saw Bangladesh batting in tatters in the third match of the five-match series after strong displays in the first two games, but still Habibul Bashar's men clinched the series with a 26-run victory in the third match at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra yesterday with two games to go.

The left-handed opener's splendid run-fest in the first two games not only enabled the home team to win the battle convincingly -- nine-wicket success in the first game before achieving a six-wicket victory -- but that shelved the other batsmen.

But the bowlers, especially left-arm spinner Abdur Razzak (5-33) and Mashrafe Bin Mortaza (3-35), made up for the batting failure as the Tigers confirmed their series victory to complete half their job and now will desperately try to win the remaining two games to make their critics believe that they are not only on paper a far better team than their Southern African opponents.

The cynics raised their eye-

brows about Bangladesh's supremacy after their 3-2 series defeat in Zimbabwe last August and that's why only whitewash can be a fitting answer.

And that might be the reason why the Tigers weren't in the same celebratory mood they had been in after their maiden one-day series victory against these opponents last year at home, although there was no short of excitement in the stands where the northern town crowd celebrated the fall of every Zimbabwean wicket chanting slogan of 'Bangladesh, Bangladesh...'

Bangladesh captain Bashar understandably heaped praise on his bowlers for confirming the series early.

"I must thank my bowlers to confirm the series victory here. We were few runs short, but the bowlers did a tremendous job to make up for the batting failure," said a delighted Bashar.

"I'm really happy with the outcome and looking forward to finish the job as expected," he added. "It wasn't easy to hold the ball properly today (on Tuesday) because of the heavy dew, but they were brilliant," admitted Bashar.

Back to the first session, there was a different point to prove for the Tigers in the day-night affair when they were sent into bat for the first time in the series after Zimbabwean skipper Prosper

Utseya won the toss, but the batsmen failed to respond properly to put the visitors under pile of runs.

No doubt some credit must go to the Zimbabwean fielders who plucked some spectacular catches to dismiss Bangladesh for 220 in 49.2 overs.

Like two previous occasions, southpaw openers Nafees (35) and Mehrab Hossain (38) gave the home side a perfect start to put up a mammoth total on the board and Nafees particularly looked in good touch to make another big knock after his unbeaten 105 and 67, but Gary Brent took a brilliant catch at the short fine-leg off Elton Chigumbura to send back the dangerman.

With the end of the opening partnership at 64 in 9.4 overs, Bangladesh batting lost their way losing wickets at regular intervals and the dismissal of Bashar (3), who offered a catch at mid-on for Brent off Christopher Mpofu, put the home team in big trouble with the scoreboard reading 123 for 4.

Aftab Ahmed (16) and Saquibul Hasan got off to good starts but failed to carry on their innings while Mohammad Ashraf, coming at number six, got the first chance to prove that his domestic form was not a fluke and the ace batsman was not at all unsuccessful.

Ashraf, who saw the wickets

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DAZZLING RAJ: Bangladesh left-arm spinner Abdur Razzak (C) celebrates his first of five wickets with his teammates as his victim Stuart Matsikenyeri leaves despondently during the third one-day international against Zimbabwe at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra on Tuesday.

PHOTO: AFP

Aussies rise from ashes

Go 2-0 up with dramatic last-day win



AFP, Adelaide

Australia dealt England a potentially fatal Ashes blow with an astonishing come-from-behind last day

victory in the second cricket Test at the Adelaide Oval Tuesday.

In a dramatic turnaround, England, expecting a draw, crumpled to 129 all out, leaving the Australians with the task of scoring 168 runs for victory off 36 overs.

Australia achieved that with

ease by six wickets to seize a 2-0 lead in the five-Test series.

They now head to Perth, where victory in the December 14-18 third Test would win back the Ashes after they relinquished them for the first time in 16 years in 2005.

Despairing England must win two of their remaining three Tests to draw the series and, as holders, retain the Ashes.

It was an ignominious day for England as their first innings 551 for six was the largest-ever declared first innings total for a team who then went on to lose the match.

Only two other teams in Test cricket -- Australia (586) against England in 1894 and Australia (556) against India in 2003 -- have posted higher completed first innings totals and lost, although these innings were completed.

"(England's) six for 550 late in the second day and us being behind for long periods in the game -- to turn a Test match around like that, it just doesn't happen," man-of-the-match skipper Ricky Ponting said.

"We've all seen enough games of Test match cricket, and I've played enough to know that you have to do something exceptional to be able to turn the course of a Test match around that way."

Australia showed their intent to go after the tantalising win from the start with 10 runs off Matthew Hoggard's opening over, before Justin Langer fell in his next over, cutting to Ian Bell at backward point for seven.

Matthew Hayden scored at a run a ball, but on 18 he skied an

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PHOTO: AFP

WARNIE, WARNIE: Australian superstar Shane Warne thanks the crowd with a souvenir stump in hand after Australia won by six wickets in the second Ashes Test against England at the Adelaide Oval on Tuesday.

Mirpur gets ICC nod as intl venue

SPORTS REPORTER

The Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur will make its international debut on Friday with the fourth one-day international between Bangladesh and Zimbabwe after the so-called home of cricket in the country got the approval of the International Cricket Council (ICC) as an international cricket venue.

It took nearly two years to convert the football and athletics stadium into an international standard cricket venue although it needs a few minor touches to A the renovation.

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Akhtar, Asif win appeal

AFP, Karachi



Shoaib Akhtar Mohammad Asif

Pakistan fast bowlers Shoaib Akhtar and Mohammad Asif Tuesday won their appeals against doping bans, paving the way for their return to international cricket.

A three-member appeals committee in Karachi accepted the

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Shahjada hits Barisal

Dhaka need 203 more to win

SPORTS REPORTER



Fast bowler Mohammad Shahjada again pummeled the Barisal top-

order to give Rajshahi a huge one innings and 207-run win at home with one day to spare in their fifth round clash of the Ispahani Mirzapore Tea 8th National Cricket League yesterday.

At the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium, Sylhet took four late wickets to keep Dhaka on the check in the hosts' pursuit of 280 runs while Khulna's late declaration at 478 for nine against visiting

Chittagong meant a dull draw on the card. Chittagong were 48 for one at stumps.

RAJSHAHI v BARISAL

Hasanuzzaman Rosel and Mohammad Shahjada added 43 runs to Rajshahi's overnight 370-7. Skipper Rosel was unbeaten on 30 when he declared their first innings, giving Barisal a mountain to climb at the Rajshahi Divisional Stadium.

Trailing by 320 runs, Barisal were knocked out of the battle early when paceman Shahjada, fresh from a 5-wicket haul in the first innings, snapped up the top three quite cheaply.

His new-ball partner Shafaq Al

Jabir and left-arm spinner Soharwardi Shuvo took two wickets and with two run-outs, it was all over for Barisal who were bowled out in 42.5 overs, scoring only 113 in their second innings.

DHAKA v SYLHET

Dhaka added only nine runs to their overnight first innings score to be all out for 198. Sylhet then were off to a fine start but their wheels fell off when both openers, Imtiaz Hossain and Golam Mabud, were dismissed for 44 and 30 respectively.

The pace-spin duo worked for Dhaka as seamer Mohammad Sharif and left-arm spinner

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Kabaddi hopes alive

SPORTS REPORTER



Asiad silver medalist Bangladesh kabaddi team kept their hopes alive for a bronze medal in the 15th Asian

Games in Doha when they came back from behind to beat Japan 34-27 yesterday.

Bangladesh were trailing 10-11 at the break and Japan seemed to run away with a victory when opened up a 5-point lead at one stage at the Aspire Hall. But Bangladesh, after three defeats including a shocking loss to Iran, managed to finish fourth in the 5-

team table with two points from their last league match. Japan finished bottom-of-the-table with one point from a draw against Iran, who play Bangladesh for the bronze medal match today.

Bangladeshi swimmers expectedly continued their unimpressive run as all three performers yesterday finished among the backbenchers at the Hamad Aquatic Centre.

Jewel Ahmed had the best show among the trio, finishing 30th among 39 competitors in the 100m butterfly heats clocking 27.01s, 2.42s behind the best performer, China's Jiawei Zhou.

Jewel was sixth in his heat where Indian Ankur Poseria

touched the block ahead of the pack but his 25.92s was not enough to see him through to the final.

Rubel Rana was 26th out of 29 in the 100m backstroke, taking 1:04.43s to finish third among five swimmers in the first heat of the day.

Dolly Akhter had an overall 16th place out of 17 in women's 100m breaststroke after finishing last in her heat in 1:21.69s.

The hockey team, which conceded a 6-0 defeat to India in their Pool B opener, suffered another big 6-1 loss to gold medal contenders South Korea at Al-Rayyan hockey ground.

The Bangladesh put on a stiff

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