



## Did U Know?

Steve McPeak built and rode a unicycle that was ten stories tall. The greatest skill was not in riding the machine, but in building it so that the chains would not fall off the sprockets.



## Ian Botham

(England cricket legend)  
*"When me and Lamby (Allan Lamb) were playing we weren't to be seen done up like a couple of pock-dots' clerks prancing about. No way!"*  
**Lashing out at cricketers taking part in dance competitions, after Darren Gough and Mark Ramprakash were crowned successive champions in Strictly Come Dancing.**



### ESPN

**Australia v England**  
 Fourth Ashes Test, Day 1  
**Live at 5:30 am (Tuesday)**  
**English Premiership**  
 Chelsea v Reading  
**Live at 7:00 pm**  
 Man United v Wigan Athletic  
**Live at 9:00 pm**

### STAR Sports

**New Zealand v Sri Lanka**  
 Second Twenty20 International  
**Live at 7:00 am**  
**India v South Africa**  
 Second Test, Day 1  
**Live at 2:00 pm**  
**English Premiership**  
 Blackburn Rovers v Liverpool  
**Live at 9:30 pm**  
**Watford v Arsenal**  
**Live at 11:30 pm**

## Irfan's mission World Cup

REUTERS, Durban

Indian Fast bowler Irfan Pathan will leave South Africa early to ensure he rediscovers his form in time for next year's World Cup, captain Rahul Dravid said on Monday.

Pathan performed indifferently in the three one-day internationals he played against South Africa, and he was not selected for the first Test in Johannesburg.

Pathan took just one wicket and conceded 136 runs in the 21 overs he bowled in the one-dayers.

In a two-day practice match against a modest KwaZulu-Natal Invitation XI in Durban last week, Pathan went wicketless and conceded 74 runs from 11 overs.

Dravid said Pathan would

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## V-Day hockey

UNB, Dhaka

BKSP beat Bangladesh Navy by 2-1 in the opening match of the Victory Day Hockey Competition at the Maulana Bhashani National Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Tapash Barman and Abdus Sajjad scored for the winners while Mizan netted the lone goal for the losers.

After a barren first-half, Tapash broke the deadlock for BKSP in the 42nd minute by converting a penalty corner (1-0) while Sajjad doubled the margin in the 51st minute with a field goal (2-0).

Four minutes later, Mizan pulled one back for Navy with a field goal in the 55th minute (2-1).

Earlier, Bangladesh Hockey Federation vice president AB Siddique Chowdhury inaugurated the competition as chief guest.

## Marvellous Mashrafee

Old DOHS v Abahani; Mohammedan v Victoria in semis

SPORTS REPORTER



While Zunaed Siddique and Mohammad Ashraful delighted the Dhanmondi crowd, Mashrafee bin Mortuza took charge at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium to take Abahani to the semifinals, beating Indira Road Krira Chakra by 90 runs in the Kai-Altech Premier Division Twenty20 League yesterday.

The pace spearhead returned outstanding figures of 5 for 5 in 4 overs after hammering a 23-ball 65 that featured four boundaries and seven over boundaries to see his side sail to an easy win after their disappointing nine-run defeat against Mohammedan in the previous match.

Abahani put up a challenging total of 173 for 6 in their stipulated 20 overs after deciding to bat and then restricted the opponents to 83-6. Golam Mowla Tushar fought a lone battle with an unbeaten 42 for the losers.

The semifinals line-up was thus completed and sees defending champions Old DOHS take on Abahani while Mohammedan

Sporting Club face off against Victoria Sporting Club.

Both the semis will take place at the Mirpur Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium tomorrow while the final will be played at the same venue on Friday.

At the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium, DOHS rode on Abdur Razzak's all-round performance to record a three-wicket victory against Victoria to emerge as Group A champions with an all-win record.

Razzak (22 off 17 balls) joined former national skipper Khaled Mahmud, who played brilliantly during his 29-ball 45, to accumulate 51 runs in the sixth wicket stand as DOHS reached their target of 139 for the loss of 7 wickets in 18.5 overs.

Earlier national left-arm spinner Razzak picked up four wickets for 12 runs in 4 overs to restrict Victoria for 137 despite a sparkling unbeaten 50-ball 64 by Mahmudullah Riyad. Razzak was adjudged man-of-the-match.

At BKSP, City Club defended 160-5 to secure a nine-run victory over Kalabagan, who were all out for 151 in 19.5 overs.

On the other hand Biman (178-

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DHANMONDI ON FIRE: A combo of pictures show twin centurions, Mohammedan Sporting Club's Zunaed Siddique (L) raises his bat upon reaching his swashbuckling hundred while Sonargaon Cricketers' Mohammad Ashraful flays one on the off-side during his sparkling knock in their Kai-Altech Premier Division Twenty20 League clash at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium yesterday.

## NZ take it as a test

Second Twenty20 international today



BBC ONLINE, undated

New Zealand will aim to use Tuesday's second Twenty20 game in Auckland as a final warm-up for a packed one-day schedule over the next two months.

The Black Caps, who lost a rain-hit opener by 18 runs on Friday, have five 50-over matches against Sri Lanka.

They have at least eight matches in the tri-series in Australia and then three more against Australia at home.

"Introducing new players and pressing for places is important at this stage," said Kiwi captain Stephen Fleming.

"If we lose a couple of key players approaching the World Cup the message from the selectors is we want to be as well planned and prepared as possible."

He said of the 20-over format: "They're not the hit and giggles they used to be -- they've got a real purpose."

In just their second Twenty20 match, Sri Lanka secured victory on Friday thanks to a blistering 51 from 23 balls by Sanath Jayasuriya.

Fleming will have a rest after this match, sitting out the first two games of the one-day series to rest an elbow problem while Daniel Vettori takes the captaincy.

Spinner Vettori, who has a long-term back problem, has been allowed to miss the Twenty20

matches as part of a rotation policy.

The home side will again wear replica shirts from their 1992 World Cup campaign, when they got to the semifinals.

But their eyes are firmly on the next tournament, beginning in the West Indies in March.

## Murali can take 1,000 wickets

BBC ONLINE, undated

Spin bowler Muttiah Muralidaran believes he can take 1,000 Test wickets for Sri Lanka before retiring.

He currently has 674 Test wickets, putting him second behind Shane Warne who has 699 but will quit after the two remaining Ashes Tests.

Muralidaran said: "It's a tough one. I am 34 now and if I go on for another five years without an injury that's possible I guess."

"But it depends on my form, how I feel and a lot of other things. We'll see."

Murali revealed he will cut down on his one-day commitments after the World Cup in 2007.

"The workload is huge and there's no point in playing each and every ODI competition or tournament," he said.

"I'll just cut down on the ODI

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## A spectators' delight

Zunaed bangs 138 before Ashraful slams 104

SPORTS REPORTER



If the Twenty20 cricket is a show of batsman then its provided maximum entertainment at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium yesterday where Mohammedan Sporting Club won a high-scoring thriller against Sonargaon Cricketers by nine runs and claimed a rightful place in the semi-final of the ball-bashing competition.

A mind-boggling 443 runs in 40 overs, two superb centuries, 20 mighty sixes and more importantly an intriguing battle between star batsman Mohammad Ashraful and a little known Zunaed Siddique scripted a game that a couple of thousand holiday crowd will remember for a long time.

Mohammedan, fresh from an identical nine-run victory against their archrivals Abahani in the previous match at the BKSP, knew that their Sunday's triumph in the battle royal would count for little if they fail to cross the Sonargaon hurdle.

But the popular Motijheel outfit and its followers had never thought of Zunaed to take the centre stage with an imperious 64-ball 134 in a massive total of 226-4 in 20 allotted overs.

The 19-year-old with his array of

stroke-play not only set the Dhanmondi ground afire but also recalled the pyrotechnic of famed Sri Lankan batsman Atula Samarasekara, who smashed 10 sixes in a Premier League match for Abahani against Mohammedan at the Bangabandhu National Stadium in 1992.

The young left-hander from Rajshahi however did one better hitting 11 sixes and four boundaries. Not only that, his lusty blows resulted in the ball being lost thrice.

If Zunaed's innings was the first part of a drama packed with full of action then Mohammad Ashraful's delightful 104 off only 47 balls in Sonargaon's near-impossible chase provided a fitting finish.

Ashraful, who possesses the uncanny ability of doing impossible things, strode onto the field when many felt Sonargaon were fighting a lost battle after they had lost their first three wickets with only 23 runs on the board.

But the little right-hander was at his destructive best. He sketched almost all the shots at the park that featured fifteen boundaries and three overs boundaries. Ashraful on song means a nightmare for bowlers and it was no exception for former national pacer Hasibul Hossain and spinner Rezaul Islam, who went for 28 runs each from single overs.

But the Sonargaon skipper eventually failed to keep his cool

when a thrilling victory and a place in the last four looked a reality as he unnecessarily involved in a heated exchange with the umpires over the substitution of Zunaed. The debate proved colossal and Ashraful was out, caught by Rezaul at point off Tapash Baisya, the very next over leaving his side to score 32 runs from 16 balls with three wickets in hand.

Ashraful was later fined Tk 5,000 for his offence. Mohammed Sharif batted sensibly to give Ashraful a perfect support but his 25-ball 46 was not good enough to topple the Mohammedan total. Tapash was the most successful Mohammedan bowler with 5-29.

"I don't think I lost my concentration for contesting the umpires decision to allow Imroz (Zunaed Siddique) to leave the field. Rather it was a good catch," said Ashraful after the match.

He however said that Zunaed has a habit of leaving the field citing fake injuries.

"He batted very well today. But he should have stayed on the field to disprove his critics who have pointed fingers at him for shying away from fielding," said a dejected Ashraful.

"Although we lost, it was a great match but at the end of the day what matters was that we failed to reach the semifinals," he added.

While Ashraful was distressed

despite his brilliant hundred, the young Zunaed was understandably thrilled as his effort ultimately led to his team's success.

"I'm especially happy as we won the match in the end. My ultimate target is to play in the national side and I'm aware of the fact that I have to play good cricket in the domestic competitions to draw the attention of the selectors," said an excited Zunaed, the man from Rajshahi, who used his feet brilliantly in the match to often clear the park.

As regards Samarasekara's record, Zunaed said, "I only learned about it (the record) after I returned to the dressing room. But I don't want to focus on this kind of record but instead concentrate on putting together consistent performances."

### SCORES IN BRIEF

**MOHAMMEDAN:** 226-4 in 20 overs (Mtiiaz 12, Zunaed 134, Aftab 18, Bashar 5, Faisal 39 not out, Tapash 3 not out, extras 15; Sharif 2-49).

**SONARGAON:** 217-7 in 20 overs (Al Shahriar 2, Ijaz 3, Kapali 14, Ashraful 104, Marshal 20, Rafique 16, Sharif 46, Salim 3 not out, Robin 1 not out, extras 8; Tapash 5-29, Aftab 2-50).

**Result:** Mohammedan won by nine runs.

## Sakib injured

SPORTS REPORTER

National all-rounder Sakib Al Hasan will be out of action for the next three weeks after he broke a bone in his right hand during the ongoing Premier Division Twenty20 League.

The promising left-handed middle-order batsman and useful left-arm spinner got the injury while fielding for Mohammedan against Brothers Union in the second round game at BKSP.

Despite the injury he played the third round match for his side against Abahani at the same venue.

"It will be three weeks before I can play a match again. The physio instructed me to take rest," informed Sakib yesterday after he missed the tantalising match against Sonargaon.

## Naimur, Joy to run in polls

SPORTS REPORTER

Two celebrated sports personalities are going to contest in the upcoming national elections to be held on January 22.

Bangladesh's first Test captain Naimur Rahman and ex-national football skipper Arif Khan Joy got the clearance from Awami League to take part in the parliamentary polls.

Naimur will contest from the Manikganj-3 (Ghor and Daulatpur) constituency while Joy will fight it out from the Netrokona-2 (Sadar) constituency.

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SPIRIT HIGH IN SPRINT: Female athletes take part in the 100m sprint competition of the Annual National Handicap Sports 2006 organised by the National Handicap Sporting Society and National Handicap Forum at the Women's Sports Complex in Dhanmondi yesterday.

## India to get back Patel

Second Test against South Africa from today



REUTERS, Durban

Pace bowler Munaf Patel is set to win back his place in the India team for the second Test against South Africa in Durban on Tuesday after recovering from an ankle injury.

Patel missed the last three one-day internationals and the first Test in Johannesburg after injuring his ankle in the second one-day in Durban on November 23.

He bowled in a match for the first time since hurting his ankle in a drawn two-day practice game against a KwaZulu-Natal Invitation XI in Durban on Saturday, taking two for 25 from eight overs.

India coach Greg Chappell said he had been heartened by Patel's performance.

"He's one of our top bowlers, so if he's fit he'll play," Chappell told Reuters on Sunday. "He seems to have pulled up all right today (Sunday), so it looks promising."

India will also consider selecting Gautam Gambhir to strengthen their top order.

Gambhir was not in the team who won the first Test by 123 runs in Johannesburg last Monday, India's first Test win in South Africa.

But after top-scoring with 79 in the practice match, Gambhir seems an appropriate replacement for the

struggling Wasim Jaffer. South Africa beat India by 157 runs in the one-day international in Durban on their way to a convincing 4-0 series triumph.

But India turned the tables dramatically with their win in Johannesburg and another victory in Durban would hand South Africa a third home series defeat in as many seasons following losses to England and Australia.

South African captain Graeme Smith acknowledged his team were feeling the heat.

"Our performance at home is something we really pride ourselves on, so not performing in a home Test match is always going to create pressure," Smith told a news conference.

"The public are quite demanding, which shows that they care. They want results."

Smith said he wanted an improved performance from spearhead Makhaya Ntini, who looked lacklustre in the first Test despite taking six wickets.

"He (Ntini) would probably say that he wasn't at his best at the Wanderers," Smith said. "He's also a guy who needs to bowl a lot, and in one-day cricket he doesn't really get overs under his belt."

"But towards the end of our bowling in Johannesburg he was starting to hit his straps."

"He's a professional and he's come back from an ordinary Test

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