

Column One

SPORTS TALK



Steffi Graf
(Legendary German tennis player)
"Right now I am a little disappointed about it. But I still feel like a winner coming out of this tournament."
After her loss in this year's Wimbledon final.

Boost sports WHIZZ KID

COMPETITION FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN
Competition-118

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- Who is the new England cricket coach?
Fletcher Hussain Marsh
- Brazilian footballer Rivaldo plays for
Lazio Barcelona Arsenal
- Who is the captain of Argentina soccer team?
Simone Batistuta Ayala
- How many Grand Slam titles has Steffi Graf won till now?
22 23 24
- Who is ATP's top ranked player right now?
Sampras Moya Agassi

Name

Class Roll No.

School Address

Phone: (If any)



DID U' KNOW?

(The Professor does)

THAT cricket was so much treasured as a gentleman's game that everyone associated with it was considered as possessing fair and honourable behaviour. Gerry Nadel is so quoted, ... it wasn't cricket for her to break her contract.

Popov eying a fifth

ISTANBUL, July 21: Alexander Popov can cap a decade of swimming excellence next week by completing an unprecedented winning streak at the European Championships, reports Reuters.

Popov, double gold medalist at the 1992 and 1996 Olympics, is favourite to win the European 100 metres freestyle for the fifth time since his debut in 1991 and also collect his fourth successive victory in the 50 freestyle.

Nobody has won a single event more than four times in the 73-year history of the championships, which begin on Thursday amid enormous security because of the conflict between Turkish security forces and Kurdish guerrillas.

Thousands of police have been drafted in to step up security for around 1,000 swimmers and officials from 43 nations. Leading swimmers had expressed doubts about their safety and the German Swimming Federation at one point considered staying away from the 11-day championships.

In the pool, Popov suffered his only major long-course championship defeat of the 1990s when he was beaten into second place in the 50 by American Bill Pilczuk at the 1998 world championships in Perth.

Dhaka derby today



Arch rivals Mohammedan SC and Abahani meet today in a crucial match of the Keya Metropolitan Premier Division football league at the Bangabandhu National Stadium at 5:30 pm, reports UNB.

The match is particularly important for Abahani as they are two points behind Mohammedan who collected 16 points from six matches.

Abahani began their league campaign with a 1-1 draw against Arambagh KS and also shared points with Youngmen's Fakirerpool Club in a goalless affair, while Mohammedan lost one point against Arambagh.

Two traditional rivals last met in the Federation Cup in May this year which Abahani won 1-0.

The two teams earlier played 45 league matches with Dhanmohdi-based Abahani winning 14 and Motijheel-based Mohammedan 13. The rest 17 ended in draws.

Abahani, not a balanced side

this season with shortcomings in the forward position faltered in the early stages. But having Indian national striker Sabir Pasa to reinforce the attack, they performed better in the last two matches.

Conversely, although Mohammedan won their two previous matches but they failed to perform to their best in the forward position as two premier

strikers, Alfaz and Don were absent.

National striker and Mohammedan captain Alfaz missed the previous two matches due to fever. But he is likely to play in the match today.

Ticket sale will begin at 2:30 pm. The rate of ticket: West Gallery Tk 20 and East Gallery Tk 10.

STANDINGS

Standings of the Keya Premier Division football league:

Team	M	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Muktijoddha Sangsad	7	6	1	0	17	5	19
Mohammedan SC	6	5	1	0	8	0	16
Abahani	6	4	2	0	11	3	14
Farashganj SC	6	3	0	3	7	7	9
Badda Jagoroni	6	2	2	2	9	8	8
Sangsad	7	2	1	4	9	7	7
Brothers Union	6	1	3	2	9	11	6
Arambagh KS	6	1	2	3	6	9	5
Rahmatganj MFS	6	0	2	4	2	12	2
Fakirerpool YMC	6	0	0	6	5	21	0
Mirpur Chalanika SC	6	0	0	6	5	21	0

GOALSCORERS

5: Effieni (Muktijoddha), Zakir (Abahani), Mizan (Brothers), 4: Alfaz (Mohammedan), Asif (Arambagh), 3: Ollo (Muktijoddha), Raquib (Mohammedan), Sabir Pasha (Abahani), Milan (Rahmatganj), Ritu (Arambagh), Monwar (Badda) and Khokan (Badda).



Abahani booters train at their club ground yesterday ahead of the traditional battle royale against Mohammedan today. — Star photo



The Mohammedans squad practising at the BDR ground yesterday. — Star photo

ROK top AFC rankings

Sports Reporter

The Asian Football Confederation rankings for July released yesterday, saw powerhouse South Korea maintain an edge over rivals Saudi Arabia and Japan.

The Koreans joint hosts of the World Championships in three years time, are currently ranked 37th by FIFA and have collected 563 points. The Saudis are seven points behind.

Third place Japan are on 542 points.

Among the South Asian countries India are 18th with 319 points, Sri Lanka (27th) with 188 points followed by Bangladesh who are nine points behind.

The Maldives are placed at 32 in the 43-team table on 139 points. Pakistan languish in 39th place.

Gum are the last-placed team.

Continental Ranking	Team	Points	Ranking World
1	Korea Republic	563	37
2	Saudi Arabia	556	40
3	Japan	543	44
4	Iran	527	50
5	Kuwait	512	55
6	China PR	502	58
7	United Arab Emirates	490	65
8	Thailand	439	78
9	Qatar	436	80
10	Oman	412	86
11	Uzbekistan	412	86
12	Syria	359	101
13	Singapore	349	103
14	Iraq	339	105
15	Lebanon	331	110
16	Indonesia	331	111
17	Vietnam	323	112
18	India	319	113
19	Kazakhstan	301	116
20	Malaysia	285	118
21	Bahrain	275	120
22	Turkmenistan	271	124
23	Myanmar	263	127
24	Tajikistan	254	128
25	Jordan	239	131
26	Hong Kong	210	137
27	Sri Lanka	188	142
28	Bangladesh	179	149
29	Yemen	174	150
30	Kyrgyzstan	147	157
31	Laos	146	158
32	Maldives Republic	139	161
33	Korea DPR	138	162
34	Nepal	134	163
35	Chinese Taipei	101	169
36	Macao	95	175
37	Cambodia	89	177
38	Pakistan	77	179
39	Philippines	74	180
40	Brunei	42	188
41	Palestine	27	191
42	Mongolia	6	198
43	Guam	4	200

Note: Teams inactive since 1991 and teams which have not played yet do not appear in the table.

Atherton in hunt for more runs

LONDON, July 21 (Internet report): Hampshire, whose charge towards the top was checked by Surrey last week, face relegation-threatened Lancashire, for whom Mike Atherton will hope to add to his career-best 268 not out against Glamorgan last week in his bid to regain his England place.

Somerset, unbeaten at home this season, include Stefan Jones in their team for the game against Middlesex at Taunton.

Jones replaces Andy Caddick, who is on Test duty with England, while the other change from the side that beat Derbyshire a fortnight ago sees Jason Kerr replace Adrian Pierson.

Middlesex are forced to make changes of their own, with Phil Tufnell and Mark Ramprakash also on duty at Lord's.

Nottinghamshire coach Clive Rice has made changes for the visit of Kent, as the fourth-bottom side hope to galvanise their season.

Guy Welton, who scored a century for the second XI last week, comes into the side in place of Matthew Downman, and seamer Mark Bowen replaces spinner Richard Stemp.

Meanwhile, Kent - denied the services of Dean Headley - could give 19-year-old Matthew Banes his championship debut following a maiden first-class 50 against New Zealand.

Div II hockey

Combined Sporting Club defeated Dhaka Young Star Club 2-1 in the Green Delta Insurance Second Division hockey league at the Maulana Bhasani National Stadium yesterday, reports UNB.

Cricket carnival at Singapore

NEW DELHI, July 21 (AFP): Big-time cricket returns to Singapore when India, Zimbabwe and the West Indies play a limited-overs series there from September 2 to 7, officials said on Wednesday.

The top 10 sides from a round-robin preliminary league will advance to the final. All matches will be played at the Kallang ground in central Singapore.

It will be the second official one-day tournament to be staged in Singapore, a non-Test playing nation which is aiming to become a regular international venue.

India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka played a series in the city-state soon after the 1996 World Cup.

Schedule:
Sept 2: West Indies vs Zimbabwe
Sept 4: India vs Zimbabwe
Sept 5: India vs West Indies
Sept 7: Final

Indians to play non-stop cricket

NEW DELHI, July 21 (AFP): India's cricketers, barely recovered from last month's World Cup, start a six-week tour next month for three one-day tournaments in Sri Lanka, Singapore and Kenya.

A fourth stop-over is also on the cards if the Indian government approves the annual Sahara Cup matches against Pakistan in Toronto, Canada.

India take on newly crowned world champions Australia and hosts Sri Lanka in a three-nation tournament from August 22 to 31.

They then fly to Singapore to play Zimbabwe and the West Indies in another tri-series from September 2 to 7.

The Sahara Cup matches - under a cloud because of the recent fighting in Kashmir between India and Pakistan - are scheduled to be played between September 11 and 19.

If the Toronto leg of the tour is cancelled, the Indians will get a brief respite before taking on South Africa, Zimbabwe and hosts Kenya in a four-nation tournament in Nairobi from September 24 to October 1.

India, who play more one-day matches than any other team in world cricket, failed to qualify for the semi-finals of the World Cup in England.

The Lord's jinx

LONDON, July 21: To some extent, history will be on New Zealand's side on Thursday when they start the second Test against England at Lord's, a match they have to win keep alive their hopes of taking the series, reports AFP.

One-nil down with three Tests to play following the Edgbaston defeat at the start of the month, Stephen Fleming's side will take some comfort from England's poor record at cricket's headquarters.

Their hosts have won only 34 of 94 matches at Lord's and four of the last 22 Test matches there. England's last win was against West Indies in 1995 and the previous '91 against Sri Lanka. The last victory over New Zealand at Lord's was in 1983.

The only problem is that the Kiwis' own Lord's record is even more dismal. New Zealand have never won a Test at the home of cricket, losing five and drawing seven of their 12 visits.

Skipper Fleming blamed reckless strokeplay for the first Test defeat at Edgbaston, where the Kiwis led by 100 on the first innings but were skittled out for 107 in the second and lost by seven wickets with two days to spare.

"Some of the shots we played were reckless and there is no excuse for them," said Fleming. "In Test cricket it's not good enough and it cost us the match."

"We bowled pretty well and that got us into the game, but to win Tests you have to give the bowlers runs to bowl at."

"Mental toughness comes from experience, it comes from pressure. If you look for someone else to do it, you find yourself sitting on your backside."

JPC reception

Jatiya Press Club will hold a reception in honour of the Bangladesh national cricket team today at 4 pm for their outstanding performance in the World Cup in England, reports BSS.

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president and Deputy Minister for LGRD and Cooperatives Saber Hossain Chowdhury, BCB officials, former national captains, senior journalists and the club members will attend the reception.

Olympic solidarity course ends

DHAKA, July 21: The two-week long Olympic solidarity course, organised by Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) in cooperation with Bangladesh Amateur Wrestling Federation (BAWF), concluded here yesterday, reports BSS.

A total of 30 wrestling coaches from Dhaka and other districts took part in the course.

Secretary of the Ministry of Youth and Sports A S M Shahjahan attended the closing ceremony as the chief guest and gave away certificates among the participants.

Barlow, BCB agree terms



Former South African Test cricketer Edgar John Barlow is likely to be appointed as director of coaching of Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB), reports BSS.

He will succeed Gordon Greenidge of the West Indies. Barlow yesterday gave his consent to work under BCB to the Board president and Deputy Minister for LGRD and Cooperatives Saber Hossain Chowdhury when he called the latter at his Secretariat office.



EDDIE BARLOW

The BCB president said "We have in principle agreed terms. But the final decision in this regard will be taken at the Board's Executive Committee meeting on August 6, he said."

Barlow, who arrived on July 18, inspected private training camps for under-13 and under-14 cricketers in the city, had meetings with captain Aminul Islam and a few other national cricketers and officers before having the final sitting with the Board president.

He visited BKSP to see indoor and outdoor training facilities there before leaving for home.

The South African cricket coach discussed overall facilities, requirements and future plan of Bangladesh with the BCB president.

The 59-year-old all-rounder Barlow, who was selected and sent by the United Cricket Board of South Africa (UCBSA) after series of discussions between BCB president and UCBSA managing director Dr Ali Bacher, made his Test debut in 1981 against New Zealand.

He played 30 Tests, scoring 2561 runs including the highest of 201. He has six Test centuries and 15 fifties to his credit. Barlow also took 40 wickets on an average of 34.05 with the best figure of five for 85.

Doing without Doull

Second Test from today

LONDON, July 21 (AP/Reuters): Already one Test down in the four Test series, New Zealand go into Thursday's second Test against England at Lord's with a below-strength attack and an appalling record at the home of cricket.

Chris Cairns is expected to share the new ball with pace-keeper Geoff Allott as the Kiwis go into the game with a makeshift bowling attack excluding the injured Simon Doull.

The Black Caps appearance in the World Cup semifinals last month will fade into the distant past if Stephen Fleming's team slumps to another Test defeat.

And while England also have their injury woes, with pace spearhead Darren Gough aggravating a calf injury and not expected back until the last Test, the hosts have a distinct advantage with a relative wealth of bowlers.

In fact, if Gough had been fit enough to return the selectors would have faced the dilemma over whom to leave out.

Recalled after 15 months, Andy Caddick inspired England's bowling flightback at Edgbaston.

Alan Mullally cemented his place with his new ball performances, while Alex Tudor starred with the bat with an unbeaten 99 and Dean Headley, despite returning to his best form, couldn't crack a spot in the starting 11.

Gough's absence should give Tudor the chance to concentrate on his No. 1 priority - bowling. "I didn't bowl many overs in the first innings, and not many in the second, and I'll be trying to my best with the ball again. After all, I was picked for my bowling," he said.

"Sometimes, it goes your way, sometimes it doesn't," he said in reference to his failure to pick up a wicket and just missing out on scoring a maiden century by a single run.

"If I had a choice I'd prefer to get 10 wickets than hit a hundred."

The English selectors retained the same lineup that won an eventful opening Test at Edgbaston.

In that Test, New Zealand had the game in their grasp until Tudor went in as a night-watchman on the second day and guided England to victory.

New Zealand scored 226 on the opening day and they skittled England, who at one stage had slumped to 56 for seven, out for 126 in less than two sessions.

But more amazing was the Kiwi batting collapse as the ball swung wildly on the Edgbaston pitch. The Black Caps were bowled out for 107 in less than a session, leaving England three days to chase 208 for victory.

England were three for one when day light stopped play on

And the batting order is likely to change after the experiment to use English-born Roger Twose as an opener backfired in the first Test. He will probably return to No. 5, where he proved very effective during the World Cup.

"Both sides can play better than that," said Fleming. "The next Test is very important for us now, because we can't afford to go two down in the series."

England have given a further chance to their former captain Alex Stewart despite his evident lack of confidence in the first test.

Stewart will derive greater optimism from his test record at Lord's, where he has scored 1,031 runs, at an average of 51.55.

He has the full backing of his successor as captain, Nasser Hussain.

"Alex's a good player who's played well for England over the years," Hussain said. "It couldn't be better set up for him. Don't be surprised if he goes out and gets a hundred."

Hussain believes the pitch will be much better than the Edgbaston strip and wants his team to demonstrate a new consistency by building on the victory there.

"It looks a good surface, but there'll still be plenty in it for the bowlers. It always swings here," he said. "What we need to learn about this team is consistency, which is an area we've not been good at in the past."

Despite a perceived lack of interest in the series following England's failure in the World Cup, almost all tickets have been sold for the first three days.

TEAMS

ENGLAND: Nasser Hussain (captain), Mark Butcher, Alex Stewart, Graham Thorpe, Mark Ramprakash, Aftab Habib, Chris Read, Andy Caddick, Alex Tudor, Alan Mullally, Phil Tuffnell.

NEW ZEALAND (from): Matthew Hogg, Matthew Bell, Stephen Fleming (captain), Nathan Astle, Roger Twose, Craig McMillan, Adam Parore, Chris Harris, Chris Cairns, Dion Nash, Daniel Vettori, Geoff Allott.

Stage set for Cairns

LONDON, July 21 (Reuters/Internet): No bigger stage or better opportunity could await the talented yet frustrating New Zealand all-rounder Chris Cairns than a packed Lord's on Thursday.

Cairns has promised more than he has delivered for the best part of a decade and New Zealand need him to produce something special in the second Test against England.

A knee injury to the Kiwis' leading strike bowler Simon Doull may be the spur Cairns needs to seize the day and help his country square the four-match series.

Cairns took the new ball in the tourists' match against Kent last week and responded to the responsibility with figures of seven for 46 on a batsmen's pitch.

Although these days he jogs in from a short run, Cairns can still generate genuine pace and move the ball through the air and off the pitch.

"I love bowling with the new ball," Cairns remarked. "It was nice to bowl down the channel keeping my line and length right on a flat track."

"In the past year I've been guilty of bowling boundary balls. I'm not saying I've fixed it overnight but it's a good step forward. Hopefully the time is right going into the home of cricket for the next Test."

Injuries, which have hampered Cairns' development as a bowler, prevented him from touring England in 1990 and 1994 and in latter years his clean, uncomplicated batting in the lower order has been more prominent.

Cairns is as gifted a player as any in New Zealand's history but a Test batting average of 27 and a bowling average of 32 are the wrong way around for somebody aspiring to become a world class all-rounder.

His detractors, including former coach Glenn Turner, accuse him of lacking mental steel. His supporters, including New Zealand's finest batsman Martin Crowe, argue he needs sympathetic handling.

Crowe responded to the special atmosphere at Lord's five years ago by scoring a wonderful century which restored some respectability to a touring side teetering on the brink of abject failure.

Cairns has the physical gifts to perform similar heroics with either bat and ball.

While his team mates struggled on lively net pitches at Lord's on Tuesday, Cairns was rarely troubled and lofted several deliveries effortlessly out off the practice area.

"Playing at Lord's is what every cricketer aspires to," he said. "To play against England at Lord's and perform is the goal."

up on the boards in the dressing rooms among all the players who have taken five wickets or scored 100 runs. That's what we'll definitely be going out to achieve."

The New Zealand national side over the past decade has shown about as much family solidarity as the Borgias but the World Cup semifinalists appeared a united body under their impressively intelligent young captain Stephen Fleming.

Five years ago, Dion Nash responded to Crowe's century by almost snatching victory for New Zealand with a match haul of 11 wickets and a half-century in the first innings.

Troubled, like Cairns, by back problems, Nash suffered out of test cricket for several years before returning this year with immediate effect.

Solid all-round performances were instrumental in New Zealand's home series win over India late last year and he warmed up for Thursday's test with career best figure of 135 not out and seven for 39 against Hampshire.