



Arsene Wenger

(Arsenal manager)
"It's very disappointing ... physically it cost us a lot today and of course mentally it's very disappointing to lose a game."

After his side went down 3-2 to Coventry City in the Premiership.

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COMPETITION FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN
Competition-125

✓ Tick the Correct Answers
Post to The Daily Star
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Competition closes at 8 pm
Dec 31, '99 and draw
shortly afterwards

1 Who was the man-of-the-series in the Australia-Pakistan Tests?
Langer Ponting Inzamam

2 Who was the highest wicket-taker in the Australia-Pakistan Test series?
Akram Fleming McGrath

3 How many Test hundreds has Mark Waugh scored to date?
15 16 17

4 Who became champion in the Kya Premier soccer?
Muktiuddha Mohammmed Arambagh

5 Who lifted the Expatriates' Open chess title?
Reefat Zia Tanveer

Name _____

Class Roll No.

School Address
.....

Phone: (If any)
.....

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Sub-junior Chess

Sports Reporter

Mehdi Hasan Parag of Kamalapur Samaj Kalyan Sangha earned a solo lead in the 20th national sub-junior chess championship after defeating Naseem Arefin Ratul in the penultimate round at the NSC room yesterday.

Parag, with this win, raised his tally to 7.5 points from 8 matches and needs only a draw in the final round today to lift the title.

Defending champion Golam Mustafa, who were jointly leading the table until yesterday, lost his 8th round clash to Naseem Haque Udash. Both Mustafa and Udash are now sharing the second spot with 6.5 points.

The final round will start at the same venue at 10 am today.

Cute H'ball

Sports Reporter

Arambagh Krira Sangha and Mariner Young's Club won their respective Cute First Division handball league matches, played at a court adjacent to the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Arambagh beat Satirtha Club 20-13. The winners led the first half 12-6.

Uzzal and Zahid scored five goals each for the winners.

In the other match, Mariner cruised past Mansoor Sporting Club 21-7. Mariner's Sultan scored 14 goals alone.

Morocco for United Africa

ABUJA, Dec 28 (Reuters): Morocco's 2006 World Cup campaign boss said during a lobbying visit to Nigeria that Africa should make only a single bid to host the tournament.

Morocco and South Africa are among five nations bidding to host the 2006 finals along with Brazil, England and Germany.

"If Africa may find it easier to reject Africa's bid if both Morocco and South Africa insist on presenting their bids, citing lack of unity," Driss Benhima, head of the Morocco 2006 bid committee, told reporters.

Round Nine starts today

Barisal to cop Ctg flak

Sports Reporter

Runaway leaders Chittagong will take on hosts Barisal in their penultimate match at the Abdur Rab Serniabat

Stadium as the ninth round of the inaugural National Cricket League begins at different venues across the country this morning.

In the other two matches, second-placed Sylhet meet Khulna at the Shamsul Huda Stadium in Jessore while third-placed Dhaka face Rajshahi at the Rangpur Stadium.

Taking note of the current course of events, it seems that only miracle can refrain Chittagong, who are leading the race by eight points, from lifting the title. The enterprising port city, under the charismatic leadership of Minhzul Abedin, have collected 26 points from eight matches while Sylhet and Dhaka have collections of 18 and 14 points respectively on completion of their eighth round matches.

Chittagong, thriving on a

six-match winning streak, is the only team yet to be beaten in the six-team league. They will certainly start the 'insignificant' affair as clear favourites against the home side.

On the other hand, despite some good yet inconsistent

performances, no-hoppers Barisal have not won any match in eight outings. They lost three matches and managed to collect four batting points from five drawn encounters. They are currently sharing the last place along with Rajshahi.

Tournament's surprise-setters Sylhet, who shared the lead with Chittagong till the fifth round, lost their way after losing two successive matches against Chittagong and Dhaka in the sixth and seventh round.

They however got back on track with an eight-wicket win over Barisal in their previous match in Barisal on Monday.

With their strike bowler Hasibul Hossain and left-arm spinner Mohammad Rafique back in form, Sylhet, who won three matches so far in eight engagements, will look forward for an outright win against Khulna to keep their remote title hopes alive. Sylhet skipper Nasirul Haque will certainly look to this two bowlers to do it again Jessore. Hasibul and Rafique took nineteen wickets

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MINHAZUL ABEDIN

FIFA acknowledgement for Bangladesh

Sports Reporter

Bangladesh have found itself inducted into an elite group of 27 countries in football's governing body FIFA's 'Best Mover in 1999' (by confederation) list according to a FIFA Communication Division press release.

FIFA selected the teams which had earned the most number of ranking points in 1999 from its six confederations—UEFA, CONMEBOL, CONCACAF, AFC, CAF and the OFC---and placed them according to their index value—franking points at the end of 1999 multiplied by ranking points earned in 1999 = index value.

Bangladesh are fifth among Asian Football Confederation's (AFC) five teams. Uzbekistan leads the pack with 466683 index points followed by Iraq (37044), Indonesia (34850), Jordan (26311), while Bangladesh have 24700 points. However, Bangladesh have earned most ranking points in Asia in the year with 100.

This recognition from FIFA comes in a year regarded as the best in the country's football history.

Bangladesh, under the astute guidance of Iraqi World Cup veteran Samir Shakir, made steady progress throughout 1999.

In March it finished runners up to India in the SAFF Football Championships at Goa. Then

came the biggest triumph of all—it's first ever gold medal in the SAFF Games football competition at Nepal in September.

The national booters also performed creditably in the Asia Cup qualifying matches in November.

BEST MOVERS IN 1999

Confederation/ Rank	Team	Points end of 1999 (X)	Points won in 1999 (Y)	Index value (XXY)
UEFA	Slovenia	544	115	62560
1	Russia	634	63	40509
2	Spain	753	50	37650
3	Czech Republic	774	48	37152
4	Bosnia-Herzegovina	447	83	37101
5	Conmebol			
1	Peru	538	58	31204
2	Uruguay	533	54	28782
3	Venezuela	335	78	26130
4	Paraguay	648	40	25920
5	Colombia	614	21	12894
CONCACAF				
1	Cuba	441	118	52038
2	Trinidad & Tobago	536	81	43416
3	Haiti	384	104	39936
4	Canada	430	40	17200
5	British Virgin Islands	141	107	15087
AFC				
1	Uzbekistan	513	91	46683
2	Iraq	441	84	37044
3	Indonesia	410	85	34850
4	Jordan	317	83	26311
5	Bangladesh	247	100	24700
CAF				
1	Libya	247	111	27417
2	Mauritius	289	89	25721
3	Swaziland	253	99	25047
4	Congo	397	55	21835
5	Burkina Faso	456	41	18696
OFC*				
1	New Zealand	381	25	9525
2	US Samoa	6	0	0

* Only two teams ranked as the 1999 index value for all other teams is negative

were in trouble.

They lost Jimmy Adams in the first over after tea when he pushed a ball from Daniel Vettori to Gary Stead at short-forward square for a fine diving catch.

Stead missed a hard chance off the new batsman, scoreless Ridley Jacobs, in the next Vettori over.

Adrian Griffith, who had been a spectator at the other and while wickets were falling fast after Lara's dismissal, went for 67 at 174, caught behind by Adam Parore off Dion Nash.

Franklyn Rose faced two balls before edging to Parore off a no-ball, while the bowler of the series so far, Chris Cairns, ended with five wickets for 44.

The West Indies earlier had fought back from 17 for three with a partnership of 112 between Adrian Griffith and Brian Lara.

But once Lara was out for 67 just before tea, the West Indies

needed to score, leaving Jacobs not out on 19.

Lara came to the wicket after Shivnarine Chanderpaul's wretched series continued when he was out for five. Earlier nightwatchman Nehemiah Perry was dismissed by Cairns' first ball of the morning.

It was a bright innings from Lara, who seemed to have rid himself of the recklessness manner which led to his downfall twice in the Hamilton Test.

He did not appear in any difficulty and struck the ball all over the ground. He saw the dangerous Cairns off by hitting two boundaries in successive overs.

Indira Road's new-ball bowler Rahul finished with four for 27 from his 8 overs.

In the other match of the day, Azad Sporting Club recorded a 26-run win over Lalbagh Union Sporting Club.

In a low-scoring match, Azad were all out for 107 in 32.1 overs after being put into bat.

In reply, Lalbagh were shot out for 81 in the face of brilliant bowling from Azad's new-ball bowler Salauddin. Salauddin took five wickets for 15 runs off 8 overs.

Cairns' fifth victim for no score, leaving Jacobs not out on 19.

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Indo-Bangla soccer series in England?

Sports Reporter

President of the All-India Football Federation (AIFF) Pravaranjan Das Munshi has invited the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) to send a team in England to play a series of exhibition matches against India.

According to a faxed message recently, the AIFF president expressed his keen interest to hold matches between the two national sides in either June or July next year.

BFF meanwhile received another invitation to take part in the under-19 Tata Cup Football Championship, scheduled to begin in Jamshedpur. The invitational tourney, involving three selections from India and as many from abroad, will commence in the second week of February next year.

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MINHAZUL ABEDIN

Khelaghbar back on right track

Sports Reporter

Khelaghbar Samaj Kalyan Sangha recorded their third win in the First Division Cricket League, defeating Uttara Sporting Club by seven wickets at the Dharmondi Cricket Stadium yesterday.

The up and coming cricketing outfit, who lifted the Damal Smriti Cricket tournament this year, made a mockery of a contest when they, chasing Uttara's modest total of 130 in the stipulated 50 overs, raced on to score 132 for the loss of three wickets and with more than 16 overs to spare.

Nadim scored an unbeaten 45 after opener Shamsul laid the foundation of an easy victory with 31.

Earlier, the Uttara total was revolved around a patient 35 from Masud. Rana captured three wickets for 28 runs while new-ball bowler Sumon returned with two for 14 in his seven overs for the promoted in the First Division this year.

In the other match of the day at the Bangabandhu National Stadium, Young Pegasus recorded a 41-run victory over Dharmondi Club.

Battling first, Pegasus scored a fighting 217 for nine in their share of 50 overs with Sohel notching highest 49. Opener Sohel, who later shone with the cherry, hammered a breezy 38 off 34 balls. Rashed with a run-a-ball 28 was the other notable run-getter for the eventual winners.

Dharmondi, in reply, could manage 176 for eight wickets before exhausting their quota of 50 overs. Skipper Anis, with 44, fought a lost battle for Dharmondi. Sohel claimed two wickets for Pegasus.

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