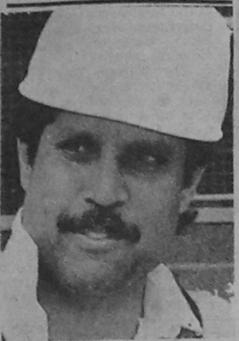


Column One SPORTS TALK



Kapil Dev

(Indian cricket coach) "Mohammad Azharuddin was unpopular with the team-mates. I do not think it is more important than Indian cricket."

Commenting on the inclusion of the former skipper.

Boost sports WHIZZ KID

COMPETITION FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN
Competition-126

Tick the Correct Answers
Post to The Daily Star
Win attractive prizes

Competition closes at 8 pm
Feb 4, 2000 and draw
shortly afterwards

- How many centuries did Tendulkar score in the Tests series against Australia recently?
- Who won the last ever European Cup Winners' Cup soccer?
- Who was named player of the cricket World Cup?
- Where did Maurice Greene break the 100m world record?
- Who lifted the National Cricket League title?

Name: _____
Class: _____ Roll No.: _____
School Address: _____
Phone: (if any) _____



BCB names teams for 3-dayer

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) yesterday (Thursday) announced two teams for a three-day practice match to be held on February 7 at the Bangabandhu National Stadium, reports UNB.

National captain Aminul Islam will lead the Green XI while former national skipper Akram Khan the Red XI.

GREEN XI: Mehrob Hossain, Sajid Hasan, Sanwar Hossain, Aminul Islam (captain), Mushfiqur Rahman, Zahurul Islam, Mohammad Rafique, Raja (wicketkeeper), Sohel Islami, Anwar Hossain Munir, Monjurul Islam and Rajin Saleh Alam.

RED XI: Parvez Ahmed, Azam Iqbal, Sajjad Ahmed Shipon, Akram Khan (captain), Asadullah Khan Biplob, Mohammed Hasanuzzaman, Mosaddeq Hossain, Mizanur Rahman Babu (wicketkeeper), Sabbir Khan, Bikas Ranjan Das, Anisur Rahman and Nalidul Haq Shaown.

Women's chess resumes today

Sports Reporter

After a two-day hiatus, the 21st national women chess championship resumes at the NSC chess room this afternoon.

In today's round - seventh - leader Tanima Parveen will meet last year's runner-up Syeda Shabana Parveen Nipa, defending champion Rani Hamid will take on Afroza Haque Chowdhury, Syed Afana Parveen Nira will face Masuda Begum, Jahanara Haque Runu will encounter Zakia Sultanah while Nazrana Khan will play against Afroza Haque Chowdhury.

STANDINGS: 5 points Tanima, 4.5 points Nipa and Zakia, 4 points Nazrana, 3.5 points Rani and Runu, 3 points Nira, 1.5 points Masuda, 0 points Afroza.

Natore cricket

From Our Correspondent

NATORE, Feb 3: The final match of the District Cricket League '98 between Natore Cricket Club and Barcelona Club will be held at the Shankar Gowinda Chowdhury Stadium tomorrow.

Unholy deal for gentlemen

Sports Reporter



The so called 'gentlemen's agreement' of the Dhaka clubs has taken the gloss off the gentleman's game this season as the leading cricketers of the country can no more choose teams they want to play with.

The once exciting inter-club cricketers' transfer of the Premier Division League, beginning tomorrow, abruptly turned into a mundane affair this year as the leading clubs reached an off-hand agreement for not to rope in the top cricketers of each team. By doing so they are successfully shutting out the bracketed players from the transfer market and saving virtually a fortune.

Their unholy alliance has left a leading cricketer with no choice but to go all the way with his employers. Over the years club cricket has been the only source of income for the players of this country where nothing is run professionally in sports arena. The bulk of the club earnings come from the laundered money, gambling and donations. While players do not pay taxes as they play under the banner of amateur cricketers.

The pact, which borders on human rights violation, will enable the leading clubs to shackle four of their desired cricketers whom the other eleven clubs will not try to woo.

The 'Cricketer-gate' scandal was set in motion when representatives of Dhaka-based clubs gathered in a closed-door meeting at the Dhanmondi residence of a top club official last week.

The club officials claimed

they have made such an agreement in order to bring down the soaring salary demand of the cricketers. But insiders tell clubs are struck by severe cash-crisis this year. And the idea of reducing their expenditure significantly dawned on them while players found themselves on the receiving end of an early course agitation against the CCDM (Cricketer Committee of Dhaka Metropolitan) recently. The shrewd club officials followed in the footsteps of the organisers of Premier Division football league where the clubs were practising the shameful act for the last couple of seasons.

On average, clubs spent Taka five lakhs on a national team cricketer previously. But they will not have to pay more than Taka 3.5 lakhs to any top cricketers this season, said a leading club official. This means, a top player will receive thirty per cent less this season.

The saddest aspect of this treaty is that the players will have to live on the will of the clubs. "Clubs are now dictating our fates whether we like it or not. I have lost my right to choose my own club and also the right to settle the terms of my payment," said national vice-captain Khaled Mahmud, who was bracketed by the Brothers Union Club.

"Playing in the Premier League is the only source of our income. They are now out to make us starve," said a leading all-rounder, seeking anonymity.

He also feared that this agreement would encourage the clubs to manipulate the results of the League in future. They might also fix which clubs

should be relegated from the League.

Club officials, in their defence, have come up with excuses of their own.

"The players' demand for money was going higher and higher in last few seasons. And we thought of taking some initiatives to bring it under control. That's why we have decided to go for the agreement," said Jalal Yunus, the cricket secretary of the Abahani Krirara Chakra.

"We have bracketed top cricketers of each team in the greater interest of the clubs," Jalal added.

Lutfur Rahman Badal, a cricket official of the Mohammedan Sporting Club, echoed Jalal's sentiment. He however denied that his club was going through cash crisis.

"The financial state of the whole country is not good. Clubs are not out of that bad spell. We need money too to form a team," said Badal.

The following 24 cricketers have lost their rights to bar, in the transfer market: Abahani: Naimur Rahman, Mehrab Hossain, Hasibul Hossain and Azam Iqbal; Mohammedan SC: Nasirul Alam, Rashedul Haque, Monjurul Islam and Mohammad Rafique; Brothers Union: Sanwar Hossain, Shafiqul Islam, Shahrir Hossain and Jahangir Alam; Biman: Aminul Islam, Habibul Bashar, Hasanuzzaman and Javed Omar; Kalabangor KC: Fahim Munlasir, Mushfiqur Rahman, Saiful Islam and Hanurur Rashid; Surjo Tarun Club: Minhazul Abedin, Al-Shahriar, Khaled Masood and Enamul Hoque.

Second final today



SYDNEY, Feb 3: Pakistan will get a last chance to prevent the Australian cricket summer from being consigned to history's dustbin when they clash with the hosts in the second tri-series final here on Friday, reports AFP.



WASIM AKRAM

Australia's runaway superiority over Asian rivals Pakistan and India in both the Test and one-day series has taken the fun out of watching cricket down under this season.

Fans showed their displeasure at the lopsided summer when just 39,041 turned up at the 100,000-capacity Melbourne Cricket Ground on Wednesday to watch the opening match of the best-of-three finals.

MCG regulars could not recall a lower attendance at a one-day final in the last 20 years.

Those who stayed away missed nothing as Australia demolished Pakistan by six wickets in a replay of their eight-wicket romp in the World Cup final last June.

Wednesday's match was over as a contest as early as the third over after Pakistan lost three top batsmen - Shahid Afridi, Ijaz Ahmed and Inzamam-ul-Haq for ducks to the brilliant Glenn McGrath.

"The atmosphere at the match was about as inspiring as a Christmas carol in July," the Herald Sun wrote.

"Watching Australia play India and Pakistan this summer is a bit like watching Mike Tyson toss Julius Francis around like a rag doll.

"It's interesting for a while, but there are times when you yearn for a decent contest," the paper wrote.

This season, Australia have won all six Tests and eight of the nine one-dayers. Another win on Friday would give the hosts their 13th tri-series title in 21 years.

Tickets for the second final at the Sydney Cricket Ground were sold out long ago; but it remains to be seen how many actually turn up on a hot afternoon.

Australian captain Steve Waugh was, however, not concerned about crowd figures.

He is desperate to settle the series on Friday and give his team two extra days off before commencing a tour of New Zealand later this month.

"I would back us to win, but you never can tell about the Pakistanis," Waugh said.

"They will come out firing because it's their last chance. We will not be caught napping."

History does not favour Pakistan as South Africa are the only team since 1989-90 to take the tri-series finals into a third match.

But Pakistan, who won the title here three years ago, know the task ahead is clear-cut - survive McGrath and Brett Lee.

Coach Intikhab Alam dismissed the idea of opening with Inam-ul-wicketkeeper Moir Khan to protect the brittle top order.

"Moin is better lower order," Intikhab said. "I will instead

demolished Pakistan by six wickets in a replay of their eight-wicket romp in the World Cup final last June.

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STEVE WAUGH

tell the main batsmen to forget going for runs at the start and protect their wickets.

Once they can get through the opening overs of McGrath and Lee, the middle and lower order can push the run-rates up.

"We must make 250 to give the bowlers a chance," Inti' hab said.

A major worry for the tourists is the hamstring injury to allrounder Abdur Razaq, who limped off the field midway through his second over on Wednesday.

Razaq returned later to bowl two more overs, but Pakistan will call up Waqar Younis if a change is required.

Eves world champs call off strike



NEW YORK, Feb 3: The American women's soccer team, the reigning World Cup champions, have ended a month-long strike by agreeing to a five-year labor contract, which was described as historic on Tuesday by US Soccer president Dr. S. Robert Contiguglia at a midtown Manhattan sports cafe, reports AFP.

The team, which beat China in a shootout in last year's World Cup final, will now meet in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, with new head coach April Heinrichs to resume training and play 1995 World Cup champion Norway in an exhibition game on Sunday.

Dr. Contiguglia said: "This is a historic agreement that continues to establish US soccer as a leader in the fight for gender equality in the world of athletics."

"Across the last 15 years, US soccer has set revolutionary standards in providing our women's teams with full-time pay, residency camps, paid maternity leave and child care," he added.

"With this agreement we have raised the level again by continuing to assure fair compensation between our women's and men's programme, especially after everything this team has accomplished."

He said the agreement was based not only on equity, but on

performance and on-field success so the team can continue to win forever.

"The women's national team is the highest paid female soccer team in the world and the new agreement means continued payroll parity with the men's national team, including 2,000 dollars a game," he stated.

Full details of the new contract were not released, according to sources, players will earn around 130,000 dollars a year in salaries and bonuses. Players also wanted a national competition which is likely to begin in 2001.

"I think we have a happy



MIA HAMM

group of players. We have rewarded the core group and the next generation of top notch women's players will be justly rewarded. Mission accomplished," said Alan Rothenburg, a former US Soccer Federation president who was part of the negotiations.

World Cup team member Carla Overbeck, who attended the press conference with her two-year-old son, Jackson, said the new agreement was loaded with bonuses.

The team refused to play in the Australia Cup in January because it was not being paid enough. The Americans sent younger players and still won the tournament.

Overbeck also revealed that former tennis champion Billie Jean King helped as an adviser.

"She is passionate about women's sport," she said.

Overbeck said the team was bothered that it did not play in Australia and felt it should have been there as part of its preparations for the Olympics in Sydney later this year.

US World Cup midfielder Mia Hamm, who also was at the press conference, described the negotiations as a time being frustrating.

"But it has brought us closer as a team," she said.

"I haven't played since last summer and there is going to be a lot of excitement (at the weekend)," she added.

Div I cricket Easy victory for Khelaghar

Sports Reporter

Khelaghar Samaj Kalyan Sangha topped co-leads Young Cricketers with a seven-wicket victory to take sole lead in the First Division Cricket League yesterday.

The Dama Smriti Champions made mockery of a contest when they chasing a modest for nine from stipulated 50 overs, reached 181 for the loss

BRIEFS SCORE

Khelaghar SKS vs Young Cricketers
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium
YOUNG CRICKETERS: 180 for 9 wickets in 50 overs (Adil 26, Azim 24, Sabbir 23; Alamgir 3/27, Rana 3/27)
KHELAGHAR SKS: 181 for 3 in 40.4 overs (Bijon 54, Shamsul 52, Tony 21 not out)
Result: Khelaghar won by 7 wickets.

Uttara SC vs Bangladesh Boys
Venue: Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium
UTTARA: 210 for 7 wickets in 50 overs (Towhid 59, Rana 33, Humayun 25)
BANGLADESH BOYS: 196 all out in 48.2 overs (Nadim 50, Majid 28, Panna 23; Arif 3/17, Humayun 2/30)
Result: Uttara won by 14 runs.

of three wickets and with more than nine overs to spare at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

Bijon and skipper Shamsul put on 112 runs for the second wicket to lay the foundation of an easy victory for Khelaghar after Alamgir and Rana had destroyed the Young batting lineup taking six wickets among themselves.

Bijon scored a patient 103-ball 54 while Shamsul hammered 52 which was studded with five fours. It was Khelaghar's sixth win in seven matches. A sensational revelation in the Dhaka cricket this year, Khelaghar conceded their only defeat against Orient Sporting Club in their second match of the League. On the other hand, it was Young Cricketers' second defeat against five wins.

Meanwhile, in other match of the day at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium, Uttara Sporting Club defeated Bangladesh Boys by 14 runs.

Batting first, Uttara scored 210 for seven in their share of 50 overs with one-down Rose notching 59 off 92 balls and Masud hammering a quick-fire 30-ball 33.

Bangladesh Boys in their chase could manage 196 before being all out with 10 balls to go. Nadim scored a fine 50 for the losers.

Arif, who made the early inroads with the new ball, wrapped up the Boys' innings to finish with three for 17 in his 8.2 overs.

Munna's charity match now on Feb. 16

Sports Reporter

The charity football match between Mohammedan Sporting Club and Abahani Krira Chakra to help ailing former national footballer, Monem Peggy Luyindula, left Lyon in fourth place, 13 points adrift of runaway leaders Monaco who have 52 with 10 matches remaining in the season.

Main rivals for France's second and third Champions League berths are A J Auxerre, in second place 10 points behind Monaco after a 1-0 home win over Girondins Bordeaux on Tuesday, and Paris St Germain on 41.

Lyon are at home to Monaco on Sunday but their confidence is in pieces after a dismal first month of the year in which they have taken only two out of a possible 12 points.

National chess from Feb 7

Sports Reporter

The qualifying round of the 26th National Chess Championship will start at the NSC chess room on February 7.

All rated players, 16 selected players from Dhaka city, representatives from all districts, universities, forces and other organisations will participate in the eleven-round Swiss league preliminary round.

The participants have been asked to register their names with a fee of Tk 50 by February 5. Players from districts and other organisations must submit their entries through respective organisations.

Biman inter club shooting

Sports Reporter

The seventh Bangladesh Biman inter-club shooting competition begins today at the Gulshan Shooting Complex.

Biman's managing director Air Commodore M Rafiqul Islam will inaugurate the competition at 4.30 pm.

Zimbabwe pull off a stunner



DURBAN, Feb 3 (Reuters/ AP): Tail-ender Heath Streak stole a single off the last ball of the match to give Zimbabwe a dramatic two-wicket win over South Africa in the one-day triangular tournament on Wednesday.

After South Africa made 222 for seven in their 50 overs, Zimbabwe levelled the scores with three balls remaining but Streak failed to score off the first two.

But off the final ball bowled by Jacques Kallis, Streak managed an inside edge which gave him and fellow batsman Gary Brent the chance to scamper the winning run.

Zimbabwe's win was set up by a record seventh-wicket partnership of 91 between captain Andy Flower (59) and Guy Whittall (39).

Both were dismissed in the chase for runs, but Streak hit an unbeaten 20 to guide Zimbabwe to victory and to the top of the standings with England second and hosts South Africa last, divided only on run rate with all three teams having won two of their four matches so far.

Lance Klusener had earlier hit an unbeaten 65 to lift South Africa to a respectable total after they had been reduced to 112 for six. Dropped on naught and 17, Klusener faced 84 balls and hit five fours and two sixes.

Most of his runs were scored in a rehabilitating seventh-wicket stand of 82 with Kallis who made 52.

South Africa, who won the toss and elected to bat, were reduced to 70 for four in the 15th over by a combination of loose strokeplay and superb catching.

Kallis and Jonty Rhodes then put on 23 runs for the fifth wicket before Rhodes pulled a ball from Johnson to Brent at leg leg in the 21st over.

Four overs later South Africa slumped to 112 for six when Mark Boucher scooped a delivery from seamer Brent to Johnson at mid-on to be out for eight.

That was the cue for Kallis and Klusener to come to South Africa's rescue, only for Andy Flower and Whittall put in a similar performance after Zimbabwe had crashed to 107 for six in the 29th over.

The pair took Zimbabwe to within 25 runs of victory, and going into the last two overs the visitors needed 12 runs.

Whittall was run out by Herschelle Gibbs' throw from mid-

on with the second ball of the 49th over, and Zimbabwe needed four off the final over with two wickets standing.

It was nailbiting stuff, but Heath's nerve just held as South African wicketkeeper Mark Boucher failed with his shy at the stumps and the Zimbabwe batsman scampered the winning run.

SCOREBOARD
Scoreboard tri-series one-

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Olonga	8	0	32	2
Johnson	10	0	53	2
Streak	10	0	53	1
Brent	10	0	32	2
G Flower	10	0	37	0
G Whittall	2	0	11	0

ZIMBABWE
Johnson c McKenzie b Kallis 35
G Flower lbw b Hayward 0
Wishart c Kallis b Williams 18
Campbell c Boucher b Williams 11
Goodwin lbw b Klusener 16
A Flower c Rhodes b Williams 56
Carlisle lbw b Hayward 6
G Whittall run out (Gibbs) 36
Streak not out 15
Brent not out 1
Extras: (b-1, lb-2, nb-11, w-5) 15
Total: (For 8 wickets in 50 overs) 223

Fall of wickets: 1-13; 2-57; 3-65; 4-85; 5-90; 6-107; 7-198; 8-213

Did not bat: Henry Olonga

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Pollock	10	0	55	0
Hayward	10	0	41	2
Williams	10	0	38	3
Kallis	10	0	40	1
Klusener	10	0	45	1

Umpires: David Orchard and Wilf Diedericks, South Africa.
TV umpire: Barry Lambson, South Africa.

Result: Zimbabwe won by two wickets.

Man-of-the-match: Andrew Flower

Next match: England v South Africa (East London, Friday)



ANDY FLOWER ... m-o-m

day international between South Africa and Zimbabwe on Wednesday.

SOUTH AFRICA
Gibbs c A Flower b Olonga 20
Koen c Goodwin b Olonga 19
Kallis c Wishart b Brent 52
McKenzie c Carlisle b Streak 7
Cronje c A Flower b Johnson 10
Rhodes c Brent b Johnson 13
Boucher c Johnson b Brent 8
Klusener not out 65
Pollock not out 14
Extras: (b-1, lb-1, nb-1, w-11) 14
Total: (For 7 wickets in 50 overs) 222

STANDINGS

	P	W	L	Pts	RR
Zimbabwe	4	2	2	4	0.11
England	4	2	2	4	0.03
South Africa	4	2	2	4	0.18

LANCE JOINS ONE-DAYS DOUBLE CLUB

DURBAN, Feb 3: Lance Klusener on Wednesday became the second fastest player to achieve the double of 1,000 runs and 100 wickets in one-day internationals when he trapped Zimbabwe's Murray Goodwin lbw, reports Reuters.

Klusener, playing his 70th one-day international, took one for 45 to claim his 100th wicket. His unbeaten 65 earlier in the match took his run tally to 1,678.

Klusener's teammate Shaun Pollock reached the milestone in two fewer matches. England all-rounder Ian Botham, who did it in 75 matches, is in third place.

Top 10 to complete 100 wickets and 1,000 runs in one-day internationals:

- Shaun Pollock (South Africa) 68 matches; 2. Lance Klusener (South Africa) 70; 3. Ian Botham (England) 75; 4. Kapil Dev (India) 77; 5. Richard Hadlee (New Zealand) 79; 6. Simon O'Donnell (Australia) 80; 7. Manoj Prabhakar (India) 94; 8. Imran Khan (Pakistan) 95; 9. Chris Harris (New Zealand) 98; 10. Ravi Shastri (India) 100.

French First Division

Lyon going out of track



PARIS, Feb 3: Olympique Lyon, their French league titles hopes all but dead, had even their Champions League hopes damaged when they crashed to a 4-2 defeat at relegation-threatened Racing Strasbourg on Wednesday, reports Reuters.

The defeat, chiefly down to a hat-trick by 20-year-old striker Peggy Luyindula, left Lyon in fourth place, 13 points adrift of runaway leaders Monaco who have 52 with 10 matches remaining in the season.

Main rivals for France's second and third Champions League berths are A J Auxerre, in second place 10 points behind Monaco after a 1-0 home win over Girondins Bordeaux on Tuesday, and Paris St Germain on 41.

Lyon are at home to Monaco on Sunday but their confidence is in pieces after a dismal first month of the year in which they have taken only two out of a possible 12 points.

They began in promising fashion at Strasbourg with Philippe Violeau forcing goalkeeper Thierry Debès into a line save after 30 seconds and Brazilian Sonny Anderson shooting he rebound just wide of the far post.

But two dreadful mistakes by the normally reliable Florent Laville in the center of the Lyon defence undermined their whole performance.

Laville failed to control a back pass, Luyindula robbed him of the ball and raced away to beat goalkeeper Gregory Coupet for the first time just after the half hour.

Two minutes into the second half Laville headed an own goal past the stunned Coupet when he tried to put Habib Beye's cross from the right behind the line for a corner.

Luyindula completed his hat-trick before top scorer Anderson and substitute Frederic Kanouté pulled back two goals in two minutes.

Strasbourg's moved them two points clear of the relegation zone. It was their second successive victory following their upset 3-2 win after extra time over Monaco in the League Cup on Saturday.

Olympique Marseille, still in this season's Champions League but struggling in mid-table as they try to recover from a nightmare December, let what looked certain victory over Stade Rennes slip from their grasp at the Velodrome.

Marseille dominated the first half and went in front through Cyrille Pouget.

But they paid the price for trying to defend their slender lead rather than looking to increase it.

Rennes substitute Shabani Nonda equalised six minutes from time with his first chance.

Marseille coach Bernard Cassoni said: "We did the hardest bit in the first half. Unfortunately, we no doubt wanted too much to hang on to the result in the second half.

"To defend retreating, we can't do that and we are still a bit fragile."



Strasbourg's Brahim Hemdani (L) keeps a close eye on Lyon's Sonny Anderson (R) during their French League game on February 2. - Internet photo