

Column One

SPORTS TALK



Greg Rusedski
(British tennis star)
What I have learnt is that I need to be more professional in the way I take care of my body. After coming back from a long injury lay-off.

Boost sports
WHIZZ KID
COMPETITION FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN
Competition-127

✓ Tick the Correct Answers
Post to The Daily Star
Win attractive prizes
Competition closes at 8 pm
March 10, 2000 and draw
shortly afterwards

1. Who won the tri-series down under?	India	Pakistan	Australia
2. How many Test matches has Shepherd officiated in till the Bombay Test?	49	50	51
3. What is the name of Sir Stanley Matthews, father?	Jack	Stephen	Bill
4. Who is FIFA's world player-of-the-year?	Ronaldo	Raul	Vieri
5. Who is the captain of Biman cricket team?	Aminul	Faruque	Athar

Name

Class Roll No.

School Address

Phone: (If any)

POWERED WITH
EN-VITS
ENERGY RELEASES VITAMINS

Dalmiya plans to honour Saurav

From Our Correspondent CALCUTTA, Feb 29: Jagmohan Dalmiya, the president of the ICC and the Cricket Association of Bengal is planning to felicitate the new Indian captain Saurav Ganguly.

Dalmiya, who returned to Calcutta on Sunday, said that discussions were on at the CAB to honour Ganguly. Sitting in his chamber at the Eden Gardens, Dalmiya said, "I am happy for Saurav. He has virtually grown up in front of us. He deserved the Indian captaincy. I am sure that he will do quite well in his new role."

Ganguly in fact made his mark in Bengal cricket playing for Rajasthan club, which incidentally is still run by Dalmiya. He has truly played a very important role in the development of Saurav Ganguly.

Graf's denial

BERLIN, Feb 29: Steffi Graf, swamped by congratulations, posted a message Tuesday on her Web site saying she doesn't plan to marry fellow tennis star Andre Agassi on her June 14 birthday, reports AP.

"Please be nice and stop bombarding us with mails and faxes," the message read. "It is an invention of the press to increase their circulation."

German and British media had quoted anonymous friends close to the couple as saying the marriage would take place on that date.

"Steffi got so many questions and congratulations that our Internet site was overloaded. That's why she wanted to clear up the matter," Graf's manager, Hans Engert, told the German newspaper Bild.

"Please be so kind as to stop bombarding us with e-mails and faxes on the subject of 'Marriage on 14.6.2000,' a message on the website said."

It's a press "Discovery" and is used to increase their circulation," Graf said in the German text of the message.

The two tennis stars first began seeing each other after last year's French Open in early June, where both won titles. Graf has since retired and is often seen cheering Agassi from the stands when he plays.

It's not cricket

Al-Amin

Is our cricket going the football way? Few might disagree. But many observers feel that the cricket has already come down with the fix-match virus like the way our football did in recent past.

It was however remained unnoticed until an umpire's report exposed the free-style exercise of the arranged affair in the Second Division Cricket League.

Although there were lots of funny stories being cooked up and circulated around the sports arena all the time, Dhaka cricket created an unwanted record when umpires, for the first time in the world, branded a match as the arranged one on Sunday.

It was a classic example of how a match can be rigged when Nabin Sangha overhauled Teja's palty 82 in just 4.5 overs. The 29-ball drama was also marked by an amazing 21 wide deliveries by one bowler, who did not have to even complete his second over as the opponents reached the victory mark. To make things funnier, Teja's wicketkeeper stood behind the stumps like a statue and when a ball slowed down to the boundary the generous fielders used their feet to help the ball roll over the rope.

"I felt like crying sensing that a shameful act was being played out. I had nothing to do but stand behind the stump till the end. Is this the way Bangladesh are going to play in wake of attaining Test status?" remarked one of the two umpires to the Daily Star after the match on Sunday.

The revelation came as a shocking surprise to the loyal cricket fans of the country. With the Test status well in sight, Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) appears to be shell-shocked albeit some of its officials are also representing the clubs in question.

Although the general secretary of the BCB, Syed Ashraf Haq was surprised to know that fixed-matches are being played in Dhaka cricket frequently, but those who love cricket passionately are not at all amused to learn the very existence of this ominous practice.

"It's an open secret. The players, (club) officials and umpires are all involved in this wicked game", said a cricket official to the Daily Star yesterday, preferring anonymity.

The cricket world is already aware of ball tampering, chucking and even unconfirmed match-fixing by the players. Bookies are accused of being the playmaker in rigging a match. But here in Dhaka leagues, a section of so-called cricket promoters of clubs are involved in an off-the-field manipulation that ranges from forfeiting a match to deciding a championship.

It's however nothing on record until the two honest umpires let the cat out of the bag. Since then the accused clubs and players are busy in passing blame on the organisers.

"If we are held responsible for match-fixing then what about the other match on the previous day where Azad Sporting Club scored 193 runs in just

17.1 overs. Besides, they also made 85 runs in just five overs which is quite amazing", said Arif, captain of the Nabin Sangha.

"If that was a fair play then why the umpires are now setting a standard? There are a lot of suspicious things being happened not only in the Second Division but also in the First Division cricket", said a frustrated Nabin Sangha captain.

"The umpires knowingly or unknowingly are making mistakes. The game's rule is itself erroneous. We have repeatedly appealed to the organisers to omit the run-rate provision in deciding the championship. But it fell on deaf ears so far", lamented Arif.

When Arif was critical about the way things are going on in cricket a club official went deep down to the root of all evil acts.

"There are a few umpires who are involved in fixing matches. It is unfortunate for Wanderers not to make a place in the First Division Super League. Had there been a fair judgement or the game was played in the true spirit there was no way for Eskaton to make it to the Super Six", said the official on condition of anonymity.

"It is easy to catch a small fry like Nabin Sangha. But there is hardly anyone to brand Eskaton or even Khelaghar as cheats since they are rigging the result of a match under the umbrella of a BCB high-up", said the officials.

"It is a strange world where the protector of the law turn predator", quipped the official.

Lanka clinch a cliff-hanger

Resolute Ranatunga reigns



RAWALPINDI, Pakistan, Mar 1: A valiant ninth wicket stand between Arjuna Ranatunga and Romesh Kaluwitharana helped Sri Lanka down Pakistan by two wickets in the first cricket Test Wednesday, reports AFP.

The seasoned pair put on a fighting 43 to help outlast the home team in a nerve-racking finish with close shaves and tantalising efforts for each run. Kaluwitharana, who finished with 36 not out, hit two boundaries off Waqar Younis to bring Sri Lanka's eighth win in the last 18 Tests.

Ranatunga, batting with a broken left thumb, finished with a batting 29 not out as Sri Lanka achieved their victory target of 220 with 9.1 overs to go in the match.

The home team put up a remarkable fight and though reduced to just three bowlers made a match of it but in the end were left to rue a low score in the first innings and missed chances.

With 77 needed at tea and six wickets intact Sri Lanka held the advantage but pacer Abdur Razzak snared two wickets off two balls to set a nerve wracking finish.

Twenty-year-old Razzak had Nuwan Zoysa caught in the second slip by Wahajuddin Wasti and yorked Pramodya Wickremasinghe next ball to send the 12,000-strong crowd to their feet sensing a home win.

Sri Lanka lost four wickets for 34 runs after tea, leaving all the guesses open.

Zoysa helped Kaluwitharana add a valuable 25 runs for the seventh wicket.

But Pakistan missed a golden opportunity when Kaluwitharana was let off by Waqar at mid-on off Razzak at 172-6 and then failed to run out Arjuna Ranatunga with 40 to get.

At 146-5 Ranatunga had to retire after he was hit on the left thumb by Waqar. The diminutive Ranatunga returned back at

177-8, his team still 43 away from victory.

"It was a tense finish but I think our boys did well to pull off this win," Sri Lankan captain Sanath Jayasuriya, who came from series wins over Australia and Zimbabwe last year, said.

Pakistan continued their remarkable fightback in the match, claiming three wickets in the first session of the day to hold the slight advantage for the first time in the match.

Resuming at 11-0, Sri Lanka added 66 runs in the first ses-

ball off Waqar and a run out. He hit four well-timed boundaries before snicking to wicketkeeper Moin Khan off Razzak.

Sri Lanka went into lunch struggling at 77-3, still needing 143 to win.

"It could have gone either way but we missed a number of chances and scored just 182 in the first innings which led to our failure," Pakistan captain Saeed Anwar said.

Jayasuriya remained subdued throughout the session and completed his 15th half century in Test cricket, his first fifty as captain in seven Tests hitting six boundaries.

Razzak got the prized scalp of Jayasuriya when his outgoing delivery got the edge which Amir Sohail took low to his left.

Jayasuriya made 56 in his innings lasting 191 minutes.

Experienced Ranatunga and vice-captain Mahela Jayawardene took the Sri Lankan score to 143-4 at tea, frustrating the Pakistan attack with resolute batting, needing another 77 runs.

Saqlain struck with the third ball after tea when he had Jayawardene caught bat-pad at silly mid-on by Yousuf Youhana.

Umpire Athar Zaidi, doubting it a bump catch, referred to leg umpire South African Dave Orchard and he finally declared the batsman out after consulting the TV umpire.

Jayawardene made 35 with five fours and in the course completed his 1,000 runs in his 16th Test.

Chaminda Vaas was run out without scoring when he failed to beat a Saqlain throw from fine leg. Sri Lanka lost their sixth wicket at 152.

Pakistan made 390 in the second innings with debutant Younis Khan hitting a polished 107 to set a target of 220 to the visitors.

The second of the three Tests will commence at Peshawar

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A DE SILVA ... m-o-m

sion losing opener Marvan Atapattu (10) Russel Arnold (6) and Aravinda de Silva (21).

Waqar forced Atapattu to edge an outgoing delivery in the second over of the day to first slip where Saqlain Mushtaq held an easy catch.

Saqlain, who recovered in time to take the field after having dehydration problems on Day Four, held his second catch off Waqar when Arnold failed to draw his bat away.

Sri Lanka lost their second wicket at 34.

De Silva survived a confident leg before shout on the first

Office hockey

BAF, Railway split points

The lone match of the Shah Sports Metropolis Office Hockey League between Bangladesh Air Force and Bangladesh Railway ended in one-all draw at the Maulana Bhasani National Stadium yesterday, reports UNB.

After a barren first half, Masud put the Air Force ahead in the 43rd minute by a field goal while Moimuddin of Railway restored the parity just after two minutes, also by a field goal.

Sadharan Bima KS will meet Bangladesh Army in a vital league match today (Thursday) at the same venue.

Martyn back in Test fold

NAPIER, New Zealand, Mar 1: Damien Martyn's exile from Test cricket could be over after he beat West Australian teammate Simon Katich in the race for a berth in Australia's Test squad to face New Zealand, reports AFP.

Martyn was Wednesday night added to the 14-man squad for the three-Test series after Ricky Ponting was declared unfit to play with an ankle he injured colliding with a boundary fence at the Sydney Cricket Ground last month.

Ponting was Wednesday ruled out, leaving the door open for Martyn to restart a Test career which has been dormant for more than six years.

Martyn has been overlooked by selectors since he failed during Australia's disastrous loss to South Africa at the SCG in January 1994.

But the 28-year-old is back in contention for the opening Test in Auckland starting on March 11.

New West Australian captain Simon Katich was among the front-runners for the vacancy after shaking off a summer of sickness but his expected progression to the Test arena will have to wait after selectors took the safety-first option of Martyn.

The talented right-hander has been in New Zealand for almost three weeks with the Australian one-day squad and he received the good news from captain Steve Waugh during the dinner break in Wednesday's fifth international here.

"There has been a lot of candidates and if I get a spot in the first Test that will be great but if not I'll wait my turn," Martyn said.

"I really haven't worried about it because we've been pretty focused on the job here. But I've been back in the one-day side for two years now and hopefully I'm starting to put it together."

Martyn was tipped for a big future when he played his first Test as a 21-year-old against the fearsome West Indies pace attack.

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Soccer for Munna BFF receives fat cheque

Sports Reporter

The Chittagong Football Khelwar Samiti (CFKS) handed over a cheque worth Taka three lakhs thirty thousand (Tk 3,30,000) to the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) yesterday to help the ailing former national football captain Monem Munna.

The fund was raised through a charity football match between the Chittagong Mohammedan Sporting Club and the Dhaka Abahani Krira Chakra at the MA Aziz Stadium in Chittagong on February 26.

Former national footballer Ashish Bhadra and CFKS president Nandi Panna Lal handed over the cheque to BFF treasurer Shamimuzzaman Basunia during a press conference of the BFF at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Sorry, Kalabagan!

Sports Reporter

The International Cricket Council (ICC) last night cleared Sri Lankan off-spinner Kumara Dharmasena from the accusation of illegal bowling action.

He will play his first match for the Mohammedan Sporting Club against the Kalabagan Krira Chakra in the Premier Division League at the Bangabandhu National Stadium today.

The complication arose when Kalabagan, in a letter to the CCDM, asked the organisers to run a check on the bowling action of Dharmasena, suggesting that the World Cup winning Sri Lankan was banned from international cricket by the ICC for his suspicious bowling action.

Bangladesh Cricket Board, following a request from the CCDM, sent a fax to Clive Hitchcock, the Cricket Operation Manager of the ICC, to know whether the world governing body had any embargo on Dharmasena.

The reply came fast and it spelled out that the ICC had never imposed a ban on Sri Lankan.

Office hockey BAF, Railway split points

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Mark BFF's man

Sports Reporter

English coach Mark Harrison has been officially appointed as the coach of the Bangladesh national football team. This was formally announced by the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) at a press briefing yesterday.

BFF treasurer Shamimuzzaman Basunia, joint-secretary Badal Roy and members Ashrafuddin Ahmed Chumma, Ferdous Islam, Shawkat Ali Khan Jahangir and Shah Alam Chowdhury met the press along with the English coach, who arrived in the capital on February 27.

A UEFA 'A' licence holder, Mark will kick off his new assignment by attending an AFC (Asian Football Confederation) coaching seminar, starting in Malaysia from March 6. He will arrive in Dhaka on March 24 after having a trip to London.

Badal Roy, who introduced

Victoria baffle Brothers

Sports Reporter



Victoria Sporting Club pulled off the first upset in this year's Janakan-iha Premier Division Cricket League when they handed Brothers Union a two-wicket defeat at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

The bogey team of big guns had already sounded a warning when they gave Mohammedan a real scare before going down by only seven runs in their opening match.

Clearly upbeat following that near miss, the spirited Vic-

toria needed five runs from the last over. Number ten Ziaul pushed the first ball of seamer Ahmed Kamal for a single and veteran Pakistani all-rounder Zahid Ahmed hit the next delivery for four through the mid-wicket boundary.

But the underdogs should thank skipper Sabbir Khan, who was responsible for changing the complexion of the game by hitting two big sixes in one productive over of off-spinner Sanwar Hossain that yielded 17 runs. The gangling young man, who captured four wickets in the first match, demonstrated

his batting prowess with a 25-ball 31. The little cameo of Sabbir provided the much-needed thrust for Victoria to take the match way from the firm grip Brothers.

Sabbir featured in a decisive 50-run fifth wicket partnership which came off only 37 with Rashed Hanif after opener Sajjad Ahmed and one-down Nuruzzaman had given Victoria a solid start.

Sajjad, the enigmatic right hander fell two runs short of what could have been a swash-buckling fifty while Nuruzzaman scored a disciplined 80-



EHSANUL ... 98



S MEHMUD ... 4/36



NURUZZAMAN ... 50

TODAY'S MATCHES
Mohammedan SC v Kalabagan KC
(Bangabandhu National Stadium)
Agrani Bank v City Club (BKSP)

ball 50. The two apart, Pakistani Iqbal Sheikh, who hammered two massive sixes in his 66-ball knock, chipped with an invaluable 48.

For Rashed Hanif, another Pakistani recruit of Victoria, it

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Sri Lankan quartet Ruwan Kalpage (L), Kumara Dharmasena (2nd from L), Gamagee (3rd from L) and Hashan Tillekeratne (R) along with a local cricketer watching the proceedings of the Premier Division game between Victoria and Brothers Union at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

— Star photo by Anisur Rahman

Pak sun shines for Tarun

Sports Reporter



An all-round performance by Mohammad Ramzan guided Surjo Tarun Club to a massive 105-run victory over Sadharan Bima Krira Sangstha in a Premier Division League clash at the BKSP ground in Savar yesterday.

The right-handed Pakistani opener cracked 82 to help his team pile up a huge 268 for seven in the stipulated 50 overs.

After the good work with the willow, Ramzan, with his military medium pace, captured three wickets for 16 runs to bundle out Bima for 163 in 46.1 overs.

tempo once their ever-watchful opener Parvez Ahmed departed after scored 9 runs off 33 balls. He was trapped leg before wicket by Bima's new-ball bowler Mahub in the eleventh over.

One-down Imran Ahmed

Premier League

Tarun v Bima

then joined Ramzan to share 68 runs in the next 14 overs. Indian off-spinner Rajinder Singh broke the stand by dismissing Imran on 29. He clobbered four boundaries off 38 balls.

Ramzan then partnered his compatriot Akhter Sarfraz to extract 94 runs before he was adjudged leg before wicket off

the bowling of Hasan in the 38th over. Ramzan, in his near about three-hour stay at the crease, faced 113 balls and smashed nine boundaries.

After Ramzan's departure on 158, Surjo Tarun picked up another 110 runs from the remaining 13.2 overs, thanks to a fine strokeplay by Akhter and Al-Shahriar. Together the two put on 44 runs for the fourth wicket.

Sarfraz, who scored 63 runs in the previous match against Wari last week, smashed 57 off 89 balls while Al-Shahriar weighed in with a quick fire 33-ball 44, which included the only sixer of the session.

In reply, Sadharan Bima plunged into a meek defeat in the face of some controlled

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British football coach Mark Harrison (C) addressing a press conference at the BFF office yesterday.

— Star photo