

Column One

SPORTS TALK



Nelson Mandela
(Former President of South Africa)

"Sport has the power to unite, inspire and it is the language the youth of today understand."

Boost sports WHIZZ KID

Competition-131

✓ Tick the Correct Answers
Post to The Daily Star
Win attractive prizes
Competition closes at 8 pm
June 30/2000 and draw
shortly afterwards

- Who is the number one women tennis player at the moment?
Hingis Pierce Williams
- Who won the European Champions' League?
M United Real Madrid Lazio
- Who won the UEFA Cup?
Valencia Galatasaray Fiorentina
- Who lifted the national schools cricket title?
St Joseph Mithun Zila Ory Khastagi
- Who is the coach of Bangladesh football team?
Harrison Van Gaal Shakir

Name

Class Roll No.

School Address

Phone: (If any)



WSG buys 2003 & 2007 cricket WCs rights

LONDON, June 28: London and Hong Kong-based international sports marketing firm The World Sports Group (WSG) announced on Tuesday that it had signed a seven-year deal with the International Cricket Council (ICC) for the commercial rights for the 2003 and 2007 cricket World Cups, reports AFP.

The ICC confirmed at meetings in London that WSG along with the Rupert Murdoch owned-News Corporation had agreed to pay a minimum guaranteed sum of 550 million dollars for television, internet and sponsorship rights.

"This is a tremendous boost for international cricket," said WSG chairman Seamus O'Brien. "There were a number of very attractive bids, but I'd like to think that ours stood alone because of our proven track record in promoting sports bodies across the world and building their properties," he added.

The 2003 World Cup is being hosted by South Africa with the 2007 event taking place in the West Indies with both countries hosting the extravaganza for the first time.

The deal also includes WSG and News Corporation covering four ICC Knock-Out Tournaments, two Under-19 Youth World Cups and two ICC Trophies.

B'baria cricket

From Our Correspondent
BRAHMANBARIA, June 28: Durbar Cricket Club defeated Titus Cricket Club by 20 runs in the Shaheed Freedom Fighter Rangui Ma Cricket Cup at Shahjadpur Junior High School playground here today.

Winning the toss, Durbar batted first and scored 160 runs for eight wickets in the stipulated 35 overs. Reaz made the highest 60.

In reply, Titus elected to bat first and scored 140 runs losing all wickets.

An apology to cricket

Sports Reporter

Come a sporting success, come the politics.

The historic Paltan Maidan was oozing with a single expectation of celebrating a singular pleasure -- Bangladesh's Test status. Sadly though, once the programme yesterday got underway cricket buffs discovered themselves at a wrong place and for what seemed to be an altogether different cause, as they did in 1997 (ICC Trophy) and 1999 (World Cup triumph over Pakistan).

The audience was understandably quite keen to hear some good words from our past and present cricket heroes and see those who worked selflessly to help Bangladesh reach the Ivy League of Test cricket get the recognition. But the whole programme eventually turned into an occasion for the ruling Awami League government to tell a tale of their success story.

There were six out of seven Bangladesh captains present at the podium. Two of them -- first Bangladesh captain Shamin Kabir and Akram Khan (sixth in the list) -- were allowed to speak for two minutes each. They were certainly not blessed with the gift of the gab. But then why deprive the other four of expressing their views, especially on an occasion when they should be the toast of the nation.

Saber Hossain Chowdhury, the president of Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB), did not correct the fact that it was not the success of a particular political party or a section of the society. But the buttoned-up BCB boss then went on to make a mockery of his earlier statement, claiming it was the success of

the present Board members. "It was a four-year strategic plan of my committee which is responsible for the success".

Saber, who is also the Deputy Minister for LGED, even went to the extent of blasting his predecessors for their imagination, or the lack of it.

"For the last twenty years nobody applied for Test status".

Saber said much to the embarrassment of a few former BCB officials present on the occasion. But he did not disclose the fact that there was no logical point for Bangladesh to apply for the Test status until they achieved success in the ICC Trophy in Malaysia in 1997.

It is true that Saber's dynasty is the only one that

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National flag waving cricket enthusiasts chanting slogans hailing Bangladesh's cricket during the celebration programme at the Paltan Maidan yesterday. —Star photo

Tribute from neighbours

From Our Correspondent

CALCUTTA, June 28: While Bangladesh has been in a festive mood since its elevation to Test status, former cricket stars and organisers here came forward to hail the newest member of the elite club.

Three former India cricketers -- Pankaj Roy, Arun Lal and Gopal Bose -- feel that granting Test status to Bangladesh by the International Cricket Council has been the right decision. They are of the opinion that this will only help in giving the game a boost in Bangladesh. In fact all the three, who opened for India at one time or the other said, that

they felt that Bangladesh has a potential.

"Why not," asked Gopal Bose after being requested to comment on the timing of the decision. "It took New Zealand to win their first Test 26 years after they were granted official status. Sri Lanka won the World Cup 15 years after being granted Test status. So, Bangladesh will definitely achieve some distinction if you give them similar time span."

However, both Bose and Lal said that it would be wrong to expect miracles from them. "They will not be able to defeat any Test-playing country immediately now. However, at times, they can provide stiff

competition," said Lal and Bose. Lal went on to add, "Even though, I have been out of touch with Bangladesh cricket for sometime now, I feel that there are quite a few talented cricketers in Bangladesh. Cricketers who can blossom into talented players if they have the right kind of exposure."

Pankaj Roy also said that he supported the decision by the ICC. "When cricket is being globalised, the decision is a right one," said Roy. "This will spur them onto greater heights. Unless you play against better opposition, you will never improve. The Test status will help Bangladesh to play against tougher opponents frequently"

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SEMIFINAL PREVIEW

Holland v Italy: It doesn't get any bigger than this

AMSTERDAM, June 28: Two schools of thought in world soccer will collide in the Euro 2000 semi-finals here on Thursday, when Holland's goal-happy 'total football' comes up against the gritty realism of Italian defending, reports AFP.

Dutch football has been influenced for decades by the attacking wizardry of Johan Cruyff and the swashbuckling style of play he later transferred at club level to Barcelona in a prestigious coaching career. That line continued with Marco Van Basten and Ruud Gullit, who guided Holland to the European title in 1988, and the old school tie has been in evidence again at Euro 2000 on the likes of Dennis Bergkamp and Patrick Kluivert.

The demolition of Yugoslavia in the quarter-finals showed just how much damage Frank Rijkaard's side can wreak against a side who are sloppy at the back and overrun in the middle of the park.

Kluivert, ditched by AC Mi-

lan in 1998 after a miserable debut season, scored a hat-trick. Bergkamp was omnipresent in his playmaking role and Marc Overmars again used his speed and ball skills down the flank.

The Dutch may have put Yugoslavia's defence through the shredding-machine, but they will not find it so easy to do the same with the likes of Paolo

a miserly two goals in four matches.

Italy have an enviable generation of flair players in Francesco Totti, Alessandro Del Piero and midfielder Stefano Fiore, but solid defending and counter-attack has been the basis of Italy's success at Euro 2000.

Rijkaard, who as a player won two European Cups and two Italian league titles in a five-year stint with AC Milan, has an insider's understanding of Italian football and knows the problem he has to crack.

Two of the men he will try to foil on Thursday - Maldini and Dennerio Albertini - are former teammates. But although he knows that Italy will be waiting for Holland to leap for the jugular - and therefore expose themselves to a potentially fatal Italian strike on the break - there is little he can do.

Holland cannot change their approach to football just for one match.

We want to play our own offensive game, but the Italians

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TIMING OF THE 2ND SEMIFINAL

Italy v Holland
10 pm BST (Thursday)
* Live coverage on Ekushey TV and DD Sports

Maldini, Alessandro Nesta and Fabio Cannavaro.

Holland may have been attacking at full tilt since the 1970s but Italian defences have been weathering storms for a lot longer than that.

And the nation who gave football the word 'catenaccio', for a gridlocked defensive system, has not betrayed its ancestry at Euro 2000 - conceding just

U-15 cricketers go to Malaysia today

Bangladesh national junior cricket team leaves here today for Malaysia to take part in the Asian Under-15 Cricket Championship which began yesterday, reports UNB.

Kamrul Hasan will lead the team while Kazi Hasibul Haq act as his deputy in the seven team league basis championship.

Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Hong Kong and Thailand are competing in the league. Later, two top teams will play in the final on July 9.

Bangladesh will play their opening match against India on July 1, Sri Lanka on July 2, Pakistan on July 4, Hong Kong on July 5, Thailand on July 6 and hosts Malaysia on July 8.

SQUAD

Kamrul Hasan, Kazi Hasibul Haq, Nafiz Ahmed, Mahbubul Islam, Mahmudullah Riad, Arifat Sunny, Almir Rana, Golam Rahman Chowdhury, Anwar Hossain, Rubayet Haq, Arif Hossain, Safa-al-Zabir, Taiyubur Rahman and Ibrahim Sagar.

Schools h'ball final today

Rajbargh Police Lines High will take on Motijheel High in the final of the 11th Bata schools handball tournament today at 4 pm at the handball ground of outer stadium, reports UNB.

State Minister for Youth and Sports Obaidul Quader will be the chief guest.

In yesterday's semifinals, Rajbargh defeated Shaheed Nabi High 21-13 (first half 10-8) while Motijheel beat BAF Shaheen 30-12 (first half 14-6).

Imran, Rashid laugh at ICC

KARACHI, June 28: Former Pakistani cricket hero Imran Khan and ex-captain Rashid Latif Tuesday derided the International Cricket Council (ICC) for bailing out South Africa and Australia and singling out Pakistan in a match-fixing probe, reports AFP.

"Why the ICC has not touched the confession and match-fixing reports against Australian players Shane Warne and Mark Waugh," Latif said.

"I believe the new ICC chief, Malcolm Gray, being an Australian has saved the Aussies," Latif told this news agency. ICC at its meeting in London on Monday appointed Sir Paul Condon as the chief of an anti-corruption unit to investigate two matches of the 1999 World Cup which Pakistan lost to Bangladesh and India.

Condon will also look into the claims that Pakistani umpire Javed Akhtar was bribed in 1998 England-South Africa Test match.

"ICC did nothing against South African Cricket chief Ali Bacher who has made false allegations based on hearsay," former all-rounder Imran said. "I am disappointed," over the outcome of the ICC meeting, he added.

"Pakistan should have been given credit for investigating allegations against their players," Latif said.

"Pakistan imposed bans on two players, fined six others including former skipper Wasim Akram but the ICC still wants to probe further," he added.

Greetings

Sports Reporter

Abahani Krira Chakra Thursday expressed their delight on Bangladesh becoming the tenth Test-playing nation.

In a press release, they felicitated the Board, cricketers, organisers and others who helped cricket grow up to today's stature.

Meanwhile, the Spread Eagle Cricketers also congratulated all on achieving the long-cherished Test status.

Meanwhile, Our Magura Correspondent adds: Cricket fans here celebrated country's Test status by holding rally and distributing sweets yesterday. The rally was also attended by the Deputy Commissioner of Magura.

Potential earns Test tag

Sports Reporter



Bangladesh earned the Test status not for their playing standard but for the potential, said BCB (Bangladesh Cricket Board) president

Saber Hossain Chowdhury on his return from London yesterday.

On arrival with the news that this tiny South Asian

Cup," he said.

"Our second mission was to establish Dhaka as an international venue because that was the only way to show the world how rich our cricket culture was. That was a part of our strategy and we became hundred per cent successful by arranging the Wills International Cup and the exhibition match between Asia and Rest of the World."



Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president Saber Hossain Chowdhury (C) and his general secretary Syed Ashraf Huq (L) were received by State Minister for Youth and Sports Obaidul Quader on their arrival at the Zia International Airport from London yesterday morning. —Star photo

country was now the newest member of the cricket's exclusive club, Saber and his deputy Syed Ashraf Huque were given a heroes' welcome in the morning.

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has given Bangladesh the Test status only after assessing the immense potential and sheer passion for the game in the country, Saber said to a crowded press conference at the VIP Lounge of Zia International Airport. State Minister for Youth and Sports Obaidul Quader was also present at the press briefing.

He said his Board's main aim in the last four years was to attain the Test status. "If we look back to 1996, what we did first was to make changes in the qualification rules of the ICC Trophy. That we did after our Nairobi experience where a country took the advantage of previous rules and fielded as many foreign players as possible to qualify for the World

"No one from Bangladesh took part in any of these events. But the crowd was fantastic. There we proved how much passion we do have for cricket."

"To tell you very frankly, if we look at the standard of our game, that's not good enough to get Test status and that we knew. If we look back to our record, we won only three matches out of 40 ODIs we played from 1997. We have won only one match out of six against Kenya, who is also an ODI member. So, we had to turn to different tactics where we gave emphasis on projecting our enormous potential in cricket."

"You all know that we had only five votes in our favour last year. Our State Minister for Youth and Sports and myself then visited South Africa, Australia and New Zealand and ensured their support this time. That really made our job done. Pointing to the tough track

SL openers find their feet



KANDY, Sri Lanka, June 28 (AFP/Internet): Captain Sanath Jayasuriya celebrated

his 50th Test match with an aggressive unbeaten 82 as Sri Lanka have Pakistan a taste of their own medicine, reaching 140 for no loss at stumps on the rain-affected first day of the final Test at Kandy on Wednesday.

Jayasuriya and his partner Marvan Atapattu managed to see of a fiery Wasim Akram and a less dangerous Waqar Younis to post Sri Lanka's highest opening partnership in 28 Tests.

Heavy overnight rain meant that play was delayed for almost three hours, but after numerous visits to the middle by match umpires Steve Bucknor and Peter Manuel, play was scheduled to start at 12.30 pm local time. The regular 90 overs in a day were reduced to 62.

Both sides made two changes to their teams. For Pakistan, exciting young opener Imran Nazir gained a recall in place of Mohammad Wasim, while leg-spinner Mushtaq Ahmed got the nod ahead of all-rounder Azhar Mahmood.

For Sri Lanka, the out-of-form wicketkeeper Romesh Kaluwitharana made way for Prasanna Jayawardene, while



JAYASURIYA ... 82 n.o.

spinner Kumara Dharmasena returned to Test cricket in place of Rangana Herath.

Winning the toss for the third straight time Jayasuriya elected to bat on what looked to be a good track for runs. His decision proved a wise one, as Sri

Lanka saw off the opening spell of Akram and Waqar with relative comfort. There were edges over and short of the slips, some close calls, but the all-out rout of the First and Second Tests was averted.

As is his wont, Atapattu settled into the role of anchor man, defending resolutely and hitting the odd loose ball, while Jayasuriya attacked. The bowlers partly facilitated this arrangement, with a miserly Akram bowling at Atapattu's body, while Waqar pitched it up to the left-handed Jayasuriya, searching for the swing that has made him so effective in this series.

After the tea interval the two batsmen accelerated as the fast bowlers were put out to pasture at fine leg and deep mid-wicket. Off-spinner Arshad Khan was milked for singles, and never looked threatening.

Jayasuriya reached his 50 first, with his partner on 40. The captain's half-century came off 126 balls and included 6 fours. By now he was in full flow, and any thoughts of Atapattu catching him were banished as he smashed the newly introduced Mushtaq for 11 off one over, two superb hits over long on.

Atapattu's 50s came off 131 balls with 4 fours, but all eyes were on the sparkling Jayasuriya. But when Waqar was brought back 9 overs from the close of play, it was time to shut up shop.

At the close, Jayasuriya was within striking distance of his sixth Test hundred on 82 off 182 balls, including 9 fours and six. Atapattu was on 50, off 138 balls with four fours.

SCOREBOARD
Scoreboard at close of play on the first day of the third and final Test between Pakistan and Sri Lanka played at Asgiriya International Stadium on Wednesday:

SRI LANKA: First Innings
Atapattu not out 50
Jayasuriya not out 82
Extras: (b-4; lb-2; w-1; nb-1) 8
Total: (For no loss in 53.2 overs) 140

To bat: Russel Arnold, Aravinda de Silva, Mahela Jayawardene, Arjuna Ranatunga, Prasanna Jayawardene.

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ALONG CAME THE TEST STATUS: (L) New International Cricket Council president Malcolm Gray and BCB chief Saber Hossain Chowdhury shake hands during the ICC media conference at the Nursery Pavilion at Lord's on June 26. (M) Saber is surrounded by a group of expatriate Bangladeshis in front of Lord's. (R) The BCB supremo and national captain Aminul Islam hug each other just after Bangladesh was made the 10th Test playing nation.

—Courtesy photos