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Star SPORT

DHAKA SATURDAY MAY 5, 2001, E-MAIL: dssports@gononet.com

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Did U Know?

Arguably the most renowned of all pre-World War II soccer players, Billy Meredith played internationally for a record span of 26 years (1895-1920). He played for both Manchester clubs, City and United, and can take some credit for Manchester's love of soccer. Meredith also appeared in movies and on the stage, making him the first true soccer star. He was twice an FA Cup winner, twice League Championship winner, and was one of the founders of the Player's Union. Meredith continued to play well into his late forties, and many who saw him rank him among the best of all time. He died in 1958 at the age of 83.



What to WATCH

- ESPN**
English Premiership
Leeds vs Arsenal
Live at 8:00 pm
English Premiership
Derby County vs Man United
10:00 pm
Serie A
Brescia vs Lecce
Live at 12:30 am (Sunday)
- Star Sports**
Boys & Sunny Masterclass: Best XI
Crick Talk Show
2:30 pm
South Africa vs West Indies
Second ODI Highlights
6:30 pm
South Africa vs West Indies
Third ODI
Live at 7:30 pm
Primera Liga
Highlights
6:00 pm



Roger Harper
(West Indies cricket coach)
We are delighted with the win. This is the sort of game that if we found ourselves in a similar position in a few months back we would have lost.

After winning the first one-day international against South Africa.

Sports WHIZZ KID

Competition 149
Tick the Correct Answers
Post to *The Daily Star*
Win attractive prizes
Competition closes at 8 pm
May 18, 2001 and draw shortly afterwards

- Who clinched the Monte Carlo Tennis Masters Series title?
Agassi Arzi Kuerten
- Who lifted the Ary Gold Cup Sharjah tri-series cricket trophy?
New Zealand/Pakistan/Sri Lanka
- What was the result of the South Africa and West Indies Test series?
4-1 3-2 2-1
- Who was the man-of-the-match in the Bangladesh and Zimbabwe first Test?
Heath Streak K Masood Javed Omar
- How many Test wickets did Courtney Walsh capture when he retired?
336 520 519

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



Abahani players (L) stretching as part of their training at their club ground yesterday while (R) Mohammedan's (L-R) Parvez, Odumbe, Sanwar and Tikolo pose for a photograph during their practice session at the Bangabandhu National Stadium on Thursday.

Titans' title-battle today

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Holders Abahani and leaders Mohammedan Sporting Club lock horns in a high-voltage battle of the Premier Division Cricket League at the Bangabandhu National Stadium today.

Weather permitting, the title-deciding last match of the Super League starts at 9 am.

Mohammedan, looking for their first Premier League title after four abortive seasons, are leading the six-team Super League table with highest 26 points, two clear of their arch-rivals Abahani. But that will have a little bearing as the winners of today's match would walk away with the coveted title.

A win for Abahani would leave the two heavyweights with equal points, but the former would have the last laugh as they are maintaining a better net run rate (+1.27) compared to the latter's +1.21.

During the last two days, the two Dhaka giants were busy taking preparation for the crucial clash. Abahani have already flown in

Pakistani teenager Shoaib Malik to strengthen their attack. The off-spinner, whose action has been reported to the ICC following the tri-nation tournament in Sharjah last month, will replace his compatriot Tareq Javed. He will pair up with his compatriot Mohammad Hussain, who has been a match-winner for the popular Dhanmondi club for last two months.

The beefy all-rounder has scored 719 runs from 14 matches including a century and seven fifties. He also took 24 wickets with his slow left-arm spinner. Hussain is currently maintaining the number one status in his team with highest runs and wickets under his belt.

On the other hand, Mohammedan will look to their run-machine Steve Tikolo once more. Their star Kenyan signing is now at his marauding best. The number three batsman has already upset Gazi Ashraf Hossain Lipu's record of 1017 runs in the Dhaka league record. The terrific Tikolo scored 1072 runs from 14 innings at an amazing average of 107.2.

His compatriot Maurice Odumbe is the other foreigner recruit of Mohammedan. Both teams appeared pretty

confident on eve of the virtual final, which was originally scheduled for Friday, but was deferred by a day due to rain.

"I joined Mohammedan this year with a mission and that is to win back the title after four seasons. We are just one match away from that and none can stop us," said Mohammedan captain Minhazul Abedin. "We have already beat Abahani in the first round and we are going to repeat it."

Abahani skipper Azam Iqbal showed no signs of backing away either. "We have no other option but to win this match. What had happened in the first round is in the past. If we could win the match it would be a double delight for us -- the title and the revenge," said Azam at the nets on Thursday.

Azam hoped that Shoaib Malik would play a key role in upsetting Mohammedan today.

SUPER LEAGUE TABLE

Teams	M	W	L	Points
Mohammedan	15	13	2	26 (+1.21)
Abahani	15	12	3	24 (+1.27)
Biman	16	10	6	20
Dhanmondi	16	8	8	16
Surjo Tarun	15	7	8	14
Kalabagan	15	6	9	12

That's not fair!

SPORTS REPORTER

As the country's cricketers returned from their first overseas Test tour, the cricket-mad public received them in a dignified way despite the fact that the 'Tigers' lost all their international commitments in Zimbabwe.

Sadly however, some of our sports journalists don't seem to have the same level of maturity. In a press conference held to review the tour at the BCB office on Friday, a number of over-enthusiastic local reporters asked the team management whether Bangladesh captain Naimur Rahman deserved a place in the side on performance?

A visibly irked Naimur kept quiet to his credit while manager Mahabubul Anam brushed aside the thoughtless query by saying, "Of course. He's the captain. He has to be in the team."

The brief but significant episode only epitomises how impatient and indecent some of us are.

It is absolutely ridiculous to criticise an individual who has been at the helm for just three Tests.

At the same time, we keep forgetting that the same player had sent the much hyped Indian batting line-up on a spin by taking six wickets in the first innings of Bangladesh's inaugural Test only last November.

While constructive criticism is a fair practice all over the world, this premature attack on the national skipper only exposes the lack of cricketing wisdom and common sense on the part of a section of the media.

Pak don't need Boycott!

Cricket

AFP, Nottingham

Pakistan will do without the coaching skills of Geoff Boycott during their tour of England.

The former England opener, a popular figure with cricket followers, was recently drafted in by the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) for specialist batting coaching clinics with both up and coming and established players, prompting speculation that he might land the job of coaching the Test team in the wake of Pakistani hero Javed Miandad's acrimonious departure.

It was not to be and instead of going for a man who played in 108 Tests they have reverted to Richard Pybus, a 36-year-old former medium-pace bowler with English minor county Suffolk, who nevertheless has a solid coaching record behind him.

Recalled just last week Pybus, who guided Pakistan to the final of the World Cup, confirmed ahead of the tourists' opening match against British Universities here at Trent Bridge Friday that there would be no place in the set-up for outspoken Yorkshire great Boycott.

"You don't want too many cooks in the same soup," was Pybus' explanation for Boycott's absence.

Pybus will be receiving a helping hand on the two-Test trip from former Kent coach Daryl Foster. The Australian has already worked on helping fast bowler Shoaib Akhtar modify his suspect action and will be employed on a consultancy basis.

Pybus, who has coached Border in South African provincial cricket, admitted he was glad to be back and said it had not taken him long to readjust.

"My issues were never with the players, we have a different cricket Board now and the players are happy with them."

"There were circumstances in Pakistan last time, a military coup and a change of board but I am upbeat now, I've always had a good relationship with the players and the mood in the camp is excellent."

"What made me interested in working with Pakistan again was that I'd heard some very good things about the present Board and they have a long-term perspective, they are a looking for a consistency of personnel which is usually a basis for success."

Pybus' perception

Cricket

AGENCIES, Nottingham

On arriving for Pakistan's two-Test tour of England, newly-appointed team coach Richard Pybus was singing the praises of his team.

English-born Pybus said on Thursday the team would face a tough battle to win the two-Test series starting later this month.

But he made it clear who he expected to win.

"It's arguably the most talented side in the world," he said of his new charges. "And it's my job to channel it."

The 37-year-old coach, in his second tenure in the role, added: "We can't come over here and expect to push England around. We're going to have to work bloody hard."

Pybus, who was drafted into the team on Tuesday, just hours ahead of the squad's flight to England, said his first priority was to take stock of both his players and his new situation.



RICHARD PYBUS

WHIZZ KID-147 winner



Maher Fatema Noni (Spectrum Int'l School, Dhaka)

WHIZZ KID-148 correct answers

- Who clinched the Biman Cup Under-14 national football title?
Ans: Naravanganj
- Who became Professor Abdur Razzak National chess champion?
Ans: Ziaur Rahman
- Who lifted the Estoril Open title?
Ans: Carlos Ferrero
- Who won the English Premiership?
Ans: Man United
- What was the result of the Bangladesh and Zimbabwe one-day series?
Ans: 3-0

DAY'S EVENT

Premier Division Cricket Super League
Abahani v Mohammedan SC
(Bangabandhu National Stadium)

BD 'win' experience

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh may have lost both the one-day and Test series against Zimbabwe in their maiden overseas tour, but the exposure and experience they gained will definitely benefit their cricket in the long-term.

This was the view expressed during a briefing organised by Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) on Friday.

Captain Naimur Rahman, manager Mahabubul Anam, Australian coach Trevor Chappell entertained questions from the local press. Syed Ashraful Huq, director-elect BCB, was also present on the occasion.

Trevor Chappell, who took over the national team two weeks before the tour, said that as far as results were concerned his team's achievements were zero.

"But the improvement you have seen match-by-match is I think what we wanted to achieve as an emerging Test-playing country," said Chappell.

"The players have learnt a lot and I believe that they are mature enough to understand where they are lacking and what they need for improvement," said the white-haired Australian.

In terms of performance, Chappell believed his batsmen struggled in the first two one-day internationals because of the bouncy wicket at the Harare

Sports Club ground. "But they played extremely well in the third and final game in Bulawayo to reply with 272 while chasing the home team's monumental 308."

Chappell also thought the team's showing was better in the second Test, especially to take the match into the fifth day. He said now it was essential the batsmen knew which balls to play at and which are to be left alone.

Chappell was full of praise for opener Javed Omar, middle-order batsman Habibul Bashar and left-arm seamer Monjurul Islam. Also

young right-arm seamer Mohammad Sharif impressed him in the one-dayers.

On the other hand Naimur, admitted he was far from satisfied with his performance. "I was not at all successful during the tour. May be the conditions in Zimbabwe were not suitable for an off-spinner, I also failed as a batsman." The Bangladesh captain said.

Manager Mahabubul Anam thanked the Zimbabwe Cricket Union (ZCU) for extending their excellent hospitality during the month-long tour.



Bangladesh cricket coach Trevor Chappell speaking to reporters during a media briefing at the BCB office Friday.

Zimbabwe coming in Nov

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Zimbabwe will tour Bangladesh later this year to play two Tests and three one-day internationals. The proposed itinerary was announced by Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) on Friday.

After the visitors arrive in Dhaka on November 1, they will play a three-day match against the Bangladesh A team starting on November 4.

Heath Streak's men will play their first Test on November 9. The second Test begins on November 16.

The three limited-overs matches are scheduled for November 25, 28 and 30 respectively. Whether these will be day-night affairs remains unclear since the

Board did not mention the venues for the Tests or the one-dayers.

BCB director-elect Syed Ashraful Huq said no matter which venue is selected by us, apart from Bangabandhu National

PROPOSED ITINERARY

Date	Event
Nov 1:	Arrival
Nov 4-6:	3-day match vs BD A team
Nov 9-13:	First Test
Nov 16-20:	Second Test
Nov 23:	Warm up one-day match
Nov 25:	First ODI
Nov 26:	Reserve day
Nov 28:	Second ODI
Nov 29:	Reserve day
Nov 30:	Third ODI
Dec 1:	Reserve day
Dec 2:	Depart for Colombo

Stadium, it has to get the approval of an ICC inspection team.

Although, Ashraful declined to name the intended venues, it was learnt that BCB was actively thinking about Rajshahi, Chittagong and BKSP in addition to the Bangabandhu National Stadium (BNS).

Referring to the BNS, Ashraful expressed grave doubts whether the internationally-recognised Test venue would be ready in time the Test matches after they getting it back from football on October 1.

"I really wonder if our groundsman can restore the stadium in just 35 to 40 days. So, if it is not possible to have BNS returned earlier, then we might have to consider alternative venues."

Ashraful also revealed there would be reserve days for the one-day games.

Ws straight into business

Cricket

INTERNET, Nottingham

Saeed Anwar was in majestic form as Pakistan reached 115 for one wicket at tea on the first day of their opening tour match in reply to the British Universities' total of 74.

The left-handed opener had no trouble adjusting to an early season Trent Bridge track as he reached an unbeaten 69 from 89 balls, passing 50 with a nonchalant flick over mid-wicket for six off Chris Elstub. Salim Elahi was unbeaten on 19 at the interval.

Mark Tournier was the pick of the Universities bowlers, conceding just nine runs from an eight-over opening spell, which included four maidens.

The one wicket to fall to the students in the afternoon session was claimed by Surrey's Tim Murtagh, who had Mohammed Wasim caught behind for 27.

Earlier, Wasim Akram gave the tourists a flying start to their tour with a four-wicket burst as they dismissed the students for 74 on the opening day in Nottingham.

Akram, supposedly included in the tour squad against the wishes of skipper Waqar Younis, wasted no time in staking a claim for a place in the Test side by taking two wickets in his first over.

The inexperienced batsmen found Akram's pace and swing too much to cope as he took four for 18 in 11 overs.

Waqar picked up three wickets after struggling to find his line in a short initial spell and there was one for teenage paceman Mohammad Sami.

Universities captain Jamie Pyemont hung around for an hour and a half to make 18, but only two other batsmen reached double figures.

Akram struck with the fourth ball of the game as he beat Michael Brown's forward prod to hit the top of off stump and then trapped Matthew Banes lbw with his next delivery.

Pyemont survived the hatrick ball, they were soon in further trouble as giant Essex opener Will Jefferson, who stands 6ft 9ins tall, was bowled by Akram for five.

Waqar withdrew himself from the attack after bowling three overs for 14, giving Sami an opportunity to familiarise himself with English conditions.

Sami's first wicket of the tour arrived when he had James Dalrymple caught at slip by Mohammad Wasim for three.

England A wicketkeeper James Foster became Waqar's first victim when he was caught behind for nought and the Pakistan skipper then ended Pyemont's resistance.



Pakistan captain Waqar Younis (L) being congratulated by teammates after he claimed the wicket of James Foster of the British Universities on Friday.

The introduction of leg-spinner Mushtaq Ahmed brought no relief as bowled Tim Murtagh and Waqar rounded off the morning by removing Rob Ferley for 15, taken at gully by Wasim Akram.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at tea on the first day of the three-day tour match between British Universities and Pakistan at Trent Bridge on Friday:

BRITISH UNIVERSITIES: First innings

M Brown b W Akram	0
W Jefferson b W Akram	5
M Banes lbw b W Akram	0
J Pyemont c sub b W Younis	18
J Porter b W Akram	14
J Dalrymple c M Wasim b Sami	3
F Foster c Latif b W Younis	0
R Ferley c W Akram b W Younis	15
T Murtagh b Mushtaq	0
C Elstub not out	6
M Tournier lbw b Mushtaq	0
Extras: (b-5, lb-3, w-2, nb-3)	13
Total: (All out in 32.2 overs)	74
Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-0, 3-5, 4-30, 5-38, 6-48, 7-53, 8-56, 9-64	
Bowler	O M R W
W Akram	11 5 18 4
W Younis	9 2 30 3

SEE PAGE 14

3rd ODI today

SPORTS REPORTER

South Africa and the West Indies meet in the third one-day international at Grenada today.

This match is the first of Grenada's double-header with the fourth ODI is on Sunday.

The seven-match series is currently locked at 1-1 after the tourists won the second on May 2. West Indies won the first game in Jamaica on April 28.

WHIZZ KID-148 winner

Sabreana Reaz
(Holy Cross Girls' High School, Dhaka)
(Please produce your ID card and an attested passport size photograph while collecting the winner's prize from the Sports Desk of The Daily Star at 6:30 pm on May 10.)