



Did U Know?

West Indies great Garfield Sobers made just one appearance in one-day internationals. Arguably the best all-rounder of all time, Sobers contributed a golden duck in that match.



What to WATCH

ESPN
UEFA Champions League Dynamo Kiev vs Liverpool 12:30 pm
English Premier Football League Aston Villa vs Southampton 4:00 pm
Pakistan Tour of New Zealand Fifth ODI Highlights at 6:00 pm
Western Union World Football 7:30 pm
Sportscentre Hindi Sport News Live at 8:30 pm
World Cup Soccer Mix 9:00 pm
UEFA Champions League Arsenal vs Panathinaikos 9:30 pm

STAR Sports
Sportsline Today Sport News 7:30am
English Premier Football League Highlights at 8:30 am
& Newcastle vs West Ham 1:00 pm
Sportsline Tonight Sport News Live at 8:00 pm
Futbol Mundial 9:30 pm
India Tour of South Africa Second Test Highlights at 11:00 pm



TALK TURKEY



Mahela Jayawardene
(Sri Lanka star cricketer)
"There is so much uncertainty in cricket. One day you can get a hundred, the next day you can be dismissed for a zero. It makes you become practical about things. Teaches you to accept both success and failure."



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

**Competition closes at 8 pm
Sept 28, 2001 and draw
shortly afterwards**

1. Who became National Bank Premier League football champions? Abahani Mohammedan Arambagh
2. Who won the US Open men's singles title? Hewitt Safin
3. What was Ashraf's score in his century innings against Sri Lanka in the Asian Test Championship? 114 126
4. What was the result of the Test series between India and Sri Lanka? 2-1 2-0
5. Former West Indies fast bowler Andy Roberts comes Name
Class. Roll No.
School Address
Phone: (If any)

Zim tour very much on



SPORTS REPORTER

A leading BCB (Bangladesh Cricket Board) official yesterday ruled out any possibility of Zimbabwe cancelling their tour of Bangladesh in November.

"As far as we are concerned, the Zimbabwe tour is very much on. The last message I received from the Zimbabwe Cricket Union on Tuesday had contained no such news," said Board director Syed Ashraf Huq.

An AFP report from New Delhi on Tuesday said that the expected US military strikes against Afghanistan have wrecked havoc with sports schedules in the Indian sub-continent, posing threat to the entire season. It reported that Sri Lanka and Bangladesh also face the prospect of a postponement to the tours of West Indies and Zimbabwe in this region.

Zimbabwe are scheduled to arrive in Dhaka in the first week of

November to play two Tests and three one-day internationals.

But Ashrafu insisted that the possible US attack on Afghanistan has got nothing to do with Zimbabwe's tour of Bangladesh.



SYED ASHRAFUL HUQ

"Bangladesh is located some 20,000-odd miles away from Afghanistan. Besides, they (Zimbabwe) will be playing a tri-nation tournament in Sharjah before coming over to Dhaka. And, I think

Sharjah is not far away from Afghanistan," said Ashrafu, who is also the chairman of the Cricket Committee.

Zimbabwe will play a triangular tournament in the desert kingdom in October-November that will also feature Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

"Why should they (Zimbabwe) fear to come to Bangladesh when they would be playing in Sharjah," asked the internationally reputed cricket organiser.

He also said that the preparation to host Zimbabwe is going on in full swing. The first Test will be played at the Bangabandhu National Stadium from November 8.

The second Test will commence in Chittagong. The match at the port city will mark the first official five-day game outside Dhaka.

"The preparation in Chittagong is satisfactory. We have formed a three-member committee and they are happy with the progress," said the former national cricketer.

The Board will meet today to discuss the preparation about the Zimbabwe tour.



PHOTO: STAR

National team's Al Shahriar, who made 45, follows through on a pull shot during his enterprising innings against the Bangladesh A side at the BUET ground yesterday.

Nat'l team's squeaky win



SPORTS REPORTER

A third-wicket stand of 80 runs between Al-Shahriar and Habibul Bashar, steered the national team to a narrow two-wicket victory over the Bangladesh A team in a rain-interrupted limited-over practice match at the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) ground on Wednesday.

Given a target of 160 in 35 overs, Al-Shahriar scored a patient 45 while Bashar made 38 as Naimur Rahman's men recovered from a shaky start to scrape home for eight wickets in 34.2 overs.

Earlier, Khaled Mahmud's A team scored 191 before being all out in 48.4 overs. The national team were 22 for one after six overs when weather intervened. After a brief spell of shower, which consumed an hour's play, the national team was given a revised target of 160.

Al-Shahriar, batting at number three, struck two fours and a six in his 63-ball knock. Skipper Naimur completed a fine all-round show by chipping in with an unbeaten 26 off 24 balls that included three boundaries, to see his team through.

Naimur had taken three for 37, off his 10 overs when the A team batted.

Earlier, the A team total was built around two strikingly different knocks from wicketkeeper Sajjad Kadir and young paceman Kowshik.

While Sajjad made a sedate 63 ball 36, Kowshik needed only 19 deliveries for the 36. The tall right-hander clubbed three massive sixes in his explosive knock.

Another practice one day game between the sides is scheduled at the same venue today.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the practice one-day match between Bangladesh senior and A team at the BUET ground on Wednesday:

BANGLADESHA	
Ashrafu b Naimur	15
Mehrab c Anwar b Monjurul	5
Tushar lbw b Sharif	5
Sanwar c Aminul b Naimur	13
Hasanuzzaman st Anwar	
b Bashar	33
Mushfig run out	9
K Mahmud c Bashar b Sabbir	4
Sajjad c Aminul b Hasibul	36
Rafique c Rajin b Sabbir	5
Kowshik c Hannan b Naimur	36
Fahim not out	2
Extras: (b-1, lb-8, nb-5, w-14)	28
Total: (All out in 48.4 overs)	191

Fall of wickets: 1/8, 2/26, 3/42, 4/47, 5/68, 6/73, 7/113, 8/138, 9/188.

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Monjurul	10	4	20	1
Sharif	7	0	20	1
Hasibul	9.4	1	48	1
Naimur	10	1	37	3
Sabbir	8	0	42	2
Bashar	4	0	15	1

BANGLADESH

Hannan c Ashrafu b Bikash	9
Rafiqui c Sajjad b Kowshik	10
Al-Shahriar c Mehrob b Rafique	45
Bashar c Mehrob b Rafique	38
Aminul c Ashrafu b K Mahmud	13
Naimur not out	26
Hasibul c Sajjad b K Mahmud	2
Sharif c K Mahmud b Bikash	4
Rajin run out	0
Anwar not out	0
Extras: (b-1, lb-1, nb-3, w-8)	13
Total: (For 8 wkts in 34.2 overs)	160

Fall of wickets: 1/22, 2/28, 3/108, 4/117, 5/131, 6/143, 7/154, 8/156.

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Bikash	7	1	18	2
Kowshik	7	1	28	1
K Mahmud	7	0	39	2
Monir	3.2	0	25	0
Fahim	3	0	21	0
Rafique	7	0	27	2

Result: Bangladesh won by two wickets.

Sk Nizam awaits his fate



SPORTS REPORTER

The Board meeting today is all set to review the appointment of a controversial Sheikh Nizamuddin as manager of Bangladesh A team for India tour next month.

Sheikh Nizam of Sathkira was named manager of the second string national side by newly appointed Board president Akmal Hossain in his first meeting on September 17.

But Akmal, the Energy Secretary who replaced Saber Hossain as part of a shake up in seven sports federation by the caretaker government, recently said that he would replace Nizam with someone else.

Akmal changed his mind after having gone through the probe committee report that found Nizam as the principle suspect in widely manipulating the February 25 elections of the Board. The report also advised the Board 'not to give him any important post.'

"I had asked the Sports Secretary to show me the probe committee report, I found out that, as per report, he (Nizam) along with another person (Professor Mamunur Rashid) should not be allowed to play any important role in

cricket," Akmal said to the Star Sport Tuesday.

Akmal also claimed that none of his directors informed him of the probe report when he gave Sheikh Nizam the responsibility.

Leading Board director Syed Ashrafu Huq meanwhile claimed that he was not aware of the probe committee recommendation.

"This is a strictly confidential matter, and only the president knows about it. But if there is any disciplinary recommendation suggested against (him), it should be spelt out in the Board meeting," he said.

"He (Nizam) is sitting in every Board meeting that means he is playing a part in making important decisions. If he can be a part of policy making then what is wrong for him to do the managerial job," argued Ashrafu.

"Had the report suggested a precise disciplinary action against him, for a particular period of time, this problem would not have been occurred," he opined.

Ashrafu also thinks that the Board should abandon its 'rotation policy' while appointing team manager from its directors.

"Personally, I think we should pick people who played the game at the highest level to manage any team, which is a common practice among the other Test nations."

Div III cricket qualifiers

UNB, Dhaka

An all-round show by Alamgir enabled Facilities Department earn a massive 157-run victory over Future Cricketers (Green) in a qualifying round match of the Metropolis Third Division Cricket League at the Gulshan Youth Club ground yesterday.

Facilities Department: 223 for 9 in 35 overs. (Alamgir 70, Imon 32, Rana 20, Faruk 19, Ziku 18; extras 34, Tanmoy 3/42, Tanveer 2/18.)

Future Cricketers: 66 all out in 24.2 overs. Farhad 18, extras 25, Manju 4/6, Alamgir 4/7.

In the day's other matches, ACC beat Student Friendship CC by 80 runs at the Dhanmondi Club ground, Madaripur CC defeated Prodipta SC by 80 runs at the Uttara Police Lines ground and Boy-care Cricket Coaching School beat Dhaka Cricket Academy by 20 runs at the Mirpur Outer Stadium.

ACC: 190 for 8 in 35 overs. Bappy 27, Tanveer 25, Chanchal 21, extras 38, Tomal 3/36.

Student Friendship CC: 110 all out in 31.1 overs. Tomal 26, Raju 21, extras 16, Sohel 3/18, Towhid 3/22.

Prodipta SC: 64 all out in 23.3 overs. Haider 12, Masum 11, Masud

SEE PAGE 15

A full bloomed Flower



REUTERS, London

An unassuming Zimbabwean with an exotic surname is fast becoming a bane for harried headline writers.

Andy Flower's astonishing feats with the bat over the last year have rewritten the record books. They are also exhausting the ingenuity of newspaper, magazine and online sub-editors as they struggle for yet another horticultural pun.

The simple facts tell the story effectively enough.

Last November, Flower scored 183 not out, 70, 55 and 232 in a two-match series against India. Witnesses say they had never seen a finer player of spin bowling.

This month, Flower became the first wicketkeeper to score a century in each innings of a Test match. After 142 in the first innings, he was left stranded on 199 in the second.

His 11 Test hundreds are three better than Englishman Les Ames' previous best for a wicketkeeper and he now averages 55.51 from his 54 Test matches. Only the Indian master Sachin Tendulkar, with 57.18, averages more among current players.

"I've seen a lot of great players around the world but I don't think I've ever seen a player with the shot selection he has," said former South Africa all-rounder Mike Procter.

"He seems to play every single delivery as he should play it. If it's up, he goes forward, if it's short he goes back. If it's not hittable, he leaves it. He's incredible, he's a machine."

Of current players, Flower most resembles Australia captain Steve Waugh, the man he has replaced at the top of the world batting rankings. Waugh has ruthlessly refined his game to exclude shots with the slightest chance of error. He also averages 50 in Test cricket, the proof of a great player.

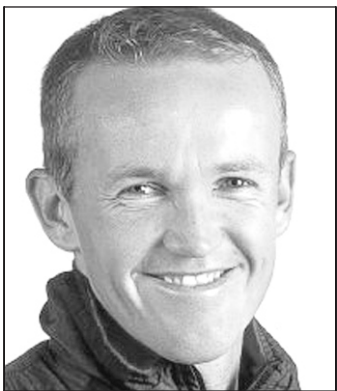
Yet Waugh plays for the undisputed world champions, a team acknowledged as one of the finest in history. Tendulkar plays most of his cricket on benign Indian pitches and does not carry the burden of leading

his team or keeping wicket.

"Surely no cricketer in the history of the game has so long borne such a burden with such success as has Andy Flower," says Zimbabwe cricket writer John Ward.

"He has spent endless hours perfecting his batting technique. He has also spent his life developing his mental strength."

The closest modern equivalent



ANDY FLOWER

to Flower is another compact left-hander, former Australia captain Allan Border.

Border was the national captain at the start of the last decade, a period of almost unbroken success for Australia.

His finest achievements, though, came in the 1980s, a bleak era for Australian cricket.

Border captained a side striving and generally failing to come to terms with the aftermath of World Series Cricket and a series of rebel tours to South Africa.

West Indies were at their menacing best at this period yet somehow Border battled everything they, and anybody else, could throw at him.

He averaged 56.57 in 70 overseas Tests, 45.94 in 86 home Tests for a career average of 50.56. Incredibly he also made 273 one-day international appearances.

"Essentially he was an ordinary soul who accomplished extraordinary deeds," wrote Australian journalist Mike Coward in a tribute which could equally apply to Flower.

An even better comparison could be with the great Jamaican George

Headley, who like Flower was largely self-taught and played for the West Indies when they, like Zimbabwe now, usually lost.

Yet Headley still averaged 60.83 in Test cricket. Figures show he was more effective on bad pitches than the peerless Don Bradman and may have been the finest batsman on all surfaces between the two world wars.

"George Headley, this West Indian, would be my candidate for a clinical study of a great batsman as a unique type of human being, mentally and physically," wrote the Trinidadian Marxist historian and cricket writer C L R James in his classic "Beyond a Boundary".

Flower inhabits a far smaller world with far greater opportunities than Headley enjoyed. But his achievement in coming from a cricketing backwater and turning himself by sheer force of will into a great batsman is uncannily similar.

"I don't think we have seen anyone perform against South Africa like he has," says Procter. "We've never had two innings as good as that scored against us."

Flower was disappointed but resigned after failing to reach another landmark with a double century in the second innings of the first Test.

"It's a pity I didn't get there because I was so close," he said. "But I had my opportunities and I didn't take them."

The only previous Zimbabwe batsman to score a century in both innings of a Test is Flower's younger brother Grant.

The pair enjoy a close relationship and, when batting together, often confuse all opponents other than South Africa by calling in Afrikaans.

They are both obsessed with physical fitness, playing squash and going on road runs together. Grant is more introverted while Andy understands the importance of the media in the modern game.

"I think as sportsmen in the public eye we're all ambassadors for our country," said Andy. During troubled times in Zimbabwe, his country could not have a finer representative.

Bob stands by Hansie

INTERNET, undated

Former South Africa coach Bob Woolmer believes Hansie Cronje should be allowed back into the cricketing fold.

Cronje, who played under Woolmer, was banned for life by the United Cricket Board (UCB) of South Africa after admitting to taking money from bookmakers to fix matches.

He attempts to overturn the ban when his appeal hearing goes to court on Wednesday -- the day after his 32nd birthday.

And despite the UCB remaining steadfast in their belief that Cronje should be barred from involvement in any form of cricket under their auspices, Woolmer has lent his support to Cronje's case.

"Just like anyone who has done wrong in any walk of life -- like a drug addict or a thief, perhaps -- he should have the chance of rehabilitation," Woolmer said on Tuesday.

"I hope that over a period of time, people will slowly forgive him."

Cronje captained South Africa throughout Woolmer's time as the national team coach.

The former England batsman, now coach of Warwickshire, is a close friend of Cronje and says he will have to take some form of punishment.

But he maintains that Cronje's talents should not be overlooked. "What Hansie has done is not good," said Woolmer.

"He will have to serve some sort of sentence I'm sure, but he should not be seen as a bad person."

"He did a tremendous job for South African cricket over a number of years and I hope he has a chance of giving some others a bit of his terrific expertise."

"I also hope that (the hearing) will bring some finality to a saga that has been on-going for far too long."

New Eng Zimbabwe-bound



INTERNET/AP, London

England's new-look one-day cricket squad left for a tour of Zimbabwe on Wednesday, with officials maintaining there was no reason to consider pulling out because of political turmoil in the country.

England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) chief executive Tim Lamb said the tour, beginning October 3 in Harare, was safe despite the unstable political environment.

"At the end of the day we don't think it's our job to moral or political judgements," Lamb told the British Broadcasting Corporation.

He said: "It's not our position to make judgements about what's happening in other countries. We have a commitment to tour Zimbabwe."

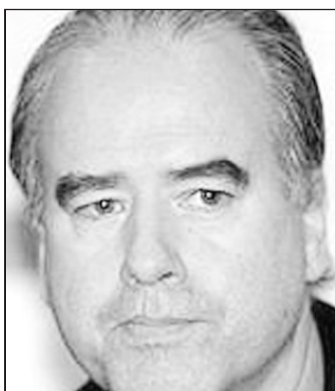
"The people who would lose most out of the cancellation of the tour are the Zimbabwe cricket

community, some of whom have suffered problems during the unrest."

"They are saying don't cancel the tour, whatever you do."

Lamb said there was never any intention of pulling out of the tour.

The ECB boss played down any possible meeting of the England squad with controversial Zimbabwe leader Robert Mugabe.



TIM LAMB

"It's possible, but unlikely we will meet him," he said.

He said: "He will be attending the Commonwealth Conference elsewhere."

Mugabe's commitments mean England should potentially avoid what would have been an embarrassing situation.

The president is a keen cricket fan and, as patron of the Zimbabwe Cricket Union, often attends international matches.

In November, England are due to tour India, and Lamb insisted that tour was also due to proceed, despite India's proximity to Pakistan and Afghanistan.

"None of us knows what is going to happen on the international stage in the next few weeks," he said.

"It's worrying times for everybody, but whenever we are going to a sensitive part of the world, we take the best possible advice from the Foreign Office and we will do so in this case."

For more than a year, ruling party

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'Cronje was dismissed'



REUTERS/AP, Pretoria

Former South Africa captain Hansie Cronje was unfairly dismissed because he was not given a hearing by the United Cricket Board (UCB) of South Africa, senior counsel Malcolm Wallace told the Pretoria High Court on Wednesday.

Cronje has appealed against a life ban by the UCB after he admitted to the King Commission in June last year that he had accepted around 130,000 dollars from illegal bookmakers.

Two other players, Herschelle Gibbs and Henry Williams, were banned from cricket for six months after admitting they agreed to under-perform -- but later reneged on the agreement -- in return for

money at Cronje's request.

Both were granted a hearing before the bans were imposed, Wallace told the court.

Wallace questioned why the decision to ban Cronje was made before any hearings had been held.

Cronje will not attend the hearing which began on Wednesday and is expected to conclude on Friday.