



Did U Know?

Jose Batista of Uruguay was sent off after just 56 seconds against Scotland in 1986! That is the fastest dismissal in World Cup history. His foul on Gordon Strachan gave French referee Joel Quiniou no choice. Uruguay kept the score at 0-0 and progressed to the next round at the expense of Scotland.



What to WATCH

ESPN
English Premier Football League
Aston Villa vs Blackburn Rovers
Repeat at 5:30 pm
Sportscentre Hindi
Sport News
Live at 8:30 pm
English Premier Football League
Southampton vs Man United
Repeat at 9:30 pm
STAR Sports
Cricket Programming
Super Selector
Repeat at 8:30 am
Primera Liga
Bilbao vs Real Sociedad
Repeat at 10:30 am
Sportsline Tonight
Sport News
Live at 8:00 pm
Harsha Online
Cricket Talk Show
Repeat at 10:00 pm

Star WHIZZ KID
OMPETITION 18
Tick the correct answers, post to
The Daily Star
Win attractive prizes
Competition closes at 8 pm
Feb 7, 2003 and draw

1. Who clinched the national junior chess title?	Parag	Ali	Zia
2. Bangladesh lost to Namibia by 20 runs 2-wkt 7-wkt			
3. Who became MVP in the SAFF Championship?	Arman	Rajani	Alfaz
4. Who will lead Kenya in the cricket World Cup?	Odumbe	Tikolo	Suji
5. Ronaldinho plays for			
Name			
Class			
School Address			
Phone: (If any)			

ICC Cricket World Cup
SOUTH AFRICA 2003

AFP, Cape Town

Herschelle Gibbs has been involved in cricket's match-fixing scandal, was fined for smoking marijuana in the West Indies and put down a crucial catch that might have cost South Africa the 1999 World Cup.

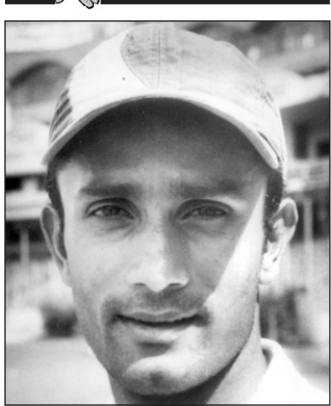
But Gibbs is one of his country's main hopes as they seek to lift the 2003 trophy in their own country.

Gibbs, 28, is a dashing stroke-player who coach Eric Simons believes is in the same league as India's Sachin Tendulkar and West Indian star Brian Lara. At the start of the season, Simons sat down with Gibbs to tell him how highly he rated him. The message seems to be getting through.

Opening batsman Gibbs has reeled off five one-day international centuries, including a world record-equalling sequence of three in a row, since August. He has also hit two Test centuries, including 228 against Pakistan, and fell just short of a third when he was out for 92 against Sri Lanka.

What's impressive about Gibbs is the way he makes his runs. He has a strike rate of more than 80 runs per 100 balls faced. He hits a high percentage of boundaries.

Gibbs was banned for six months for agreeing to an offer of 15,000 dollars by Hansie Cronje to underperform in a match in India in April 2000. He was saved from a possible



Khaled Mashud
(Bangladesh cricket captain)
"The dream of going to the World Cup is over because we are making our second appearance in the big event. We hope to win a couple of matches and repeat the last Cup performance this time."



GrameenPhone Premier Cricket League
Victoria SC vs Indira Road KC
Venue: Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium.
Mohammedan SC vs Orient SC
Venue: Fatullah Cricket Stadium.



LEADING FROM THE FRONT: Abahani's Akram Khan sets off for a run after playing the ball square of the wicket against Surjo Tarun yesterday.

Sakib ton goes in vain

Cricket
SPORTS REPORTER

Title aspirants Abahani Krira Chakra got off to a flying start in the GrameenPhone Premier Division Cricket League with a seven-wicket victory over Surjo Tarun Club at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium yesterday.

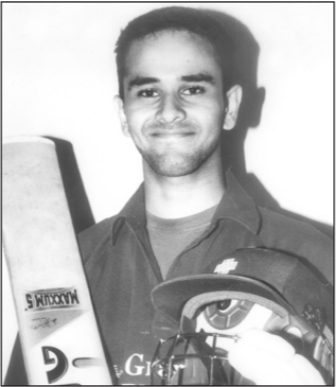
Chasing Surjo Tarun's 238, Akram Khan and Asadullah Khan produced an unbeaten century partnership (118) for the fourth wicket as the popular Dhanmondi outfit reached home in the second ball of the final over.

Former national skipper Akram smashed 73 off 67 balls that included one six and four boundaries. Asadullah, fresh from his unbeaten 73 that won Khulna the first-class championship on January 29, was not out on 54 off 48 deliveries.

Among others, opener Mehrab

Hossain and Sajjadul Hassan weighed in with 56 and 41.

Electing to bat first, Surjo Tarun posted a challenging total, thanks to a sizzling 106 from captain and one-down Sakib Razzak.



SAKIB ... 106
The 23-year-old right hander took only 70 balls to plunder the first

hundred of the 13-team elite league. In his 75-ball knock, Sakib smote amazing seven sixes and eleven boundaries.

BROTHERS UNION V KALABAGAN KC
Away at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium, Brothers Union handed down a 101-run defeat to Kalabagan Krira Chakra.

Put into bat, the Gopibag outfit scored a fighting 251 for nine in 50 overs, middle-order Mahbubur Rahman topscoring with 54. The 1999 World Cupper hit one six and eight fours in his 77-ball stay at the crease.

Captain Halim Shah (41), Masroor (32) and number ten Iqbal (33) were the other notable run-getters for Brothers.

In reply, Kalabagan were bundled out for 150 in 42 overs.

Masroor, Mustakim and Sanjay evenly shared six wickets among them.

SEE PAGE 14 COL 2

From sinner to saint?

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SOUTH AFRICA 2003

AFP, Cape Town

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HERSCHELLE GIBBS

life ban because he didn't go through with the deal.

He was fined 10,000 rand (about 1,000 dollars), together with five other members of the squad, for smoking marijuana while celebrating a Test series win over the West Indies in Antigua in 2001.

He dropped a simple catch off Australian captain Steve Waugh in a crucial World Cup match at Headingley, Leeds in 1999. Waugh, who was on 52, went on to make 120 not out and Australia won with two balls to spare.

For Gibbs, though, all will be forgiven if he makes some big scores in the 2003 World Cup.

Pumped up Sachin

ICC Cricket World Cup
SOUTH AFRICA 2003

REUTERS, Durban, SA

India are fit, settled and balanced and have been improving for the last 20 months in anticipation of the World Cup, top batsman Sachin Tendulkar said yesterday.

"We've been improving for the last 20 months, and we've won games in each country we've visited," Tendulkar told the news agency. "Now we've got to show more consistency."

Tendulkar said better selection policies had helped settle the team and had driven India's progress.

"We have a better balanced side, and the players have been able to put things together when it mattered," Tendulkar said. "Our fitness levels have also improved a lot."

Tendulkar played down the significance of India's match against Pakistan in Centurion on March 1, the first time the rivals will clash since the Asia Cup in 2000.

"It's obviously going to be a big game, but from our team's point of view it's just another big game," Tendulkar said.

Coach John Wright said poor pitches had contributed to India's downfall on their tour of New Zealand this season, where they lost the limited overs series 5-2.

SEE PAGE 14 COL 1



I'VE LEARNT A NEW DANCE STEP! Indian batting superstar Sachin Tendulkar is in a happy frame of mind as he jokes with teammate Javagal Srinath during fielding practice at Durban's Kingsmead cricket ground.

BFF meeting postponed

SPORTS REPORTER

The executive committee meeting of the BFF (Bangladesh Football Federation) could not be held yesterday because of the non-availability of its president SA Sultan.

The meeting was supposed to finalise two vital issues -- on when to start the camp for 9th SAF Games and who to coach the team.

Sultan was in Chittagong yesterday to pursue the port city clubs so that they spare their registered players for the SAF Games camp.

But the postponement notice was not circulated among most of the BFF members as they came to know about the latest development only when they arrived at Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday for the meeting.

The meeting will now be held on February 5, according to the BFF assistant general secretary Badal Roy.

Nasir, Aminul share lead

SPORTS REPORTER

FM Sheikh Nasir Ahmed and Khandkar Aminul Islam jointly led the table with 7.5 points each after the ninth round preliminary phase games of the Professor Abdur Razzak 29th National Chess Championship at the Bangladesh Chess Federation auditorium yesterday.

Sawkat Hossain, Monjur Alam were sharing the second position with seven points each. Following are the ninth round games results: Nasir beat Ejaz Monjur beat Rani Hamid, Javed beat Polash and Debaraj beat Alamgir. Amin drew with Pallab and Lavlu drew with Parag.

School hockey

BSS, Dhaka

Government High of Habiganj defeated Jinjira PM Pilot High of Dhaka 6-1 in the Metro Group National School Hockey Championship at the Maulana Bhashani National Stadium yesterday.

Yusuf Multiple Technical High of Comilla blanked Khanjanpur High of Joypurhat 2-0, Khalilur Rahman High of Dhaka trounced Police Line High of Mymensingh 6-0, while Police Lines High of Faridpur routed Chowgachha Shahadat Pilot High of Jessore 7-0 in the other matches of the day.

SL will play in Kenya

REUTERS, Johannesburg

Sri Lanka will honour their World Cup fixture in Kenya despite security concerns from rivals New Zealand, said captain Sanath Jayasuriya on Saturday.

New Zealand on Friday refused to play their match against Kenya in Nairobi because of fears over their players' safety.

"We have no problem, we're going to play there," Jayasuriya told reporters shortly after the Sri Lankan squad arrived in South Africa for the World Cup which begins February 9.

Kenya host Sri Lanka on February 24, while New Zealand were due to play there three days earlier.

Security concerns in the country have intensified after a suicide bombing killed 16 people in an attack on an Israeli-owned hotel in Mombassa in November, for which the Al Qaeda network claimed responsibility.

Jayasuriya played down his team's poor form in limited overs series this season. They lost 4-1 in South Africa, and won just two of their eight matches in Australia in a series that also featured England.

"I think we have a very good side," Jayasuriya said. "If we can do well in the first round I think we can go all the way."

"We accept that we didn't do well in South Africa, but we started playing better in Australia and we want to continue that type of improvement."

"That should happen, because the conditions in Australia are not that different from here."

School b'ball

UNB, Dhaka

Green Herald beat Sunny Dale 14-12 in a girls' group match of the Metropolis School Basketball tournament at the Dhanmondi Basketball gymnasium yesterday. The winners led the first session by 10-5.

Samina and Faria caged 6 each for the winners while Humara made 7 for the losers.

Earlier, on Saturday, Maple Leaf defeated Green Herald 48-7, also in a girls' group match, after dominating the first session by 33-2 at the same venue.



WHEN GOD WAS AN ENGLISHMAN: In the 1992 World Cup held in Australia and New Zealand a newly-introduced clause, the run-rate calculation during rain-interrupted matches became a joke when South Africa took on England in the semifinals. When rain interrupted the match, South Africa needed 22 from 13 balls. The very innovative playing conditions now enacted a farce at the Sydney Cricket Ground. When the players returned to the field the target was revised to 22 from one ball. All because the playing conditions did not allow playing time to be extended.

NZC appeals for switch

ICC Cricket World Cup
SOUTH AFRICA 2003

AFP, Christchurch

New Zealand Cricket (NZC) on Sunday said it was likely to appeal to an International Cricket Council (ICC) technical committee to resolve the dispute over its refusal to play a World Cup match in Kenya.

New Zealand Cricket (NZC) chief executive Martin Snedden, who wants the February 21 match against Kenya moved for security reasons, said taking the case to the Court of Arbitration for Sport in Switzerland could take too long.

"Formal procedures in the Arbitration Court take longer and it could be too late for the match but we still have to find out the time frame involved," Snedden said.

The ICC has sent NZC a list of options on taking its case forward but Snedden said he had not interpreted the message as an olive branch after the Kiwis' shock announcement on Friday.

"I read it and just thought it was

really only functional. I did not read anything else into it," said Snedden, who spent the weekend preparing appeal procedures before flying to South Africa on Monday.

New Zealand have pulled out of the game in Nairobi citing security fears after 11 people were killed in a bomb attack at a Mombassa hotel. In 1998, more than 200 people were killed when the US embassies in Nairobi and Dar-es-Salaam, in Tanzania, were bombed.

NZC believes the ICC is unreasonable in expecting the Black Caps to play in Kenya, where security issues are significant and the players' safety is jeopardised.

ICC chief executive Malcolm Speed has said he recognised the serious security issues raised by New Zealand and would work to see if the match could proceed or be rescheduled.

Speed said the ICC would make available its intelligence and security advisers to provide a detailed briefing on the advice it had received about a terrorist cell operating in Nairobi.

Speed said he would talk to Snedden to confirm the ICC dispute resolution process to be used.

"NZC is entitled to seek this review in light of any concerns it may hold and it is appropriate the ICC's decision's are thoroughly scrutinised in this way," he said.

The possible options include an independent ICC committee of five members to hear the dispute, the ICC World Cup events technical committee or arbitration through the Court of Arbitration for Sport in Switzerland.

Snedden said it was likely NZC would appeal to the technical committee for a review of the case.

The World Cup's technical committee which takes control of the tournament from Sunday comprises tournament chief Ali Bacher (South Africa), Speed, Sunil Gavaskar (India), Michael Holding (West Indies), ICC commercial manager Campbell Jamieson and Brian Basson (South Africa).

Bacher has already stated the Black Caps will forfeit their points from the Kenyan match, effectively placing Kenya at the top of Group B less than a week before the start of the tournament.

McGrath's bold vision

ICC Cricket World Cup
SOUTH AFRICA 2003

INTERNET, undated

Glenn McGrath has predicted that Australia will retain the World Cup by going through the tournament unbeaten.

but they were beaten by New Zealand and Pakistan in the first round group stage.

"After having to win the hard way in 1999, our goal for the 2003 World Cup is to go through the tournament undefeated, something I believe this team can do," he told the Sunday Telegraph newspaper.

"With such tremendous talent in the squad and great faith in each

McGrath has now recovered from a back problem, which forced him to miss the final of the recent VB Series against England.

He expects to play in their opening game against Pakistan in Johannesburg on 11 February, a repeat of the 1999 final.

No team has managed to win the World Cup twice in succession since the West Indies in 1975 and 1979.

But McGrath believes Australia are up to the task despite a hectic season at home, which also featured five Ashes Tests.

Australia have won 65 of the 89 one-day internationals since the 1999 final, a success rate of over 73 per cent.

They expect hosts South Africa

SEE PAGE 14 COL 1



GLENN MCGRATH

Seam bowler McGrath took 18 wickets to help his side win the trophy in England four years ago,

Kirsten's no to neighbours

INTERNET, Potchefstroom

South African veteran Gary Kirsten has admitted he would refuse to play in Zimbabwe if his side was due to visit the strife-torn nation during the World Cup.

Kirsten's revelation comes on the back of reports of an Al-Qaeda cell planning to attack westerners in Zimbabwe and South Africa if the US goes to war with Iraq.

Kirsten, whose side is not drawn to play any matches in either Zimbabwe or another trouble spot, Kenya, told a charity function he believed there was a "security issue" around matches in Zimbabwe.

"Politics should be left to the politicians," said Kirsten.

"But I would not play in Zimbabwe... there is a security issue."