

WEEKEND'S ACTION IN EUROPE

Primera Liga

Saturday (kick off GMT): Rayo Vallecano v Atletico Madrid (2030)

Sunday: Celta Vigo v Athletic Bilbao (1600), Real Mallorca v Valladolid (1600), Recreativo Huelva v Osasuna (1600), Sevilla v Alaves (1600), Valencia v Espanyol (1600), Villarreal v Real Sociedad (1600), Malaga v Real Betis (1700), Barcelona v Racing Santander (1900), Real Madrid v Deportivo La Coruna (1930)

SerieA

Saturday (1400 GMT kick-off unless stated): AC Milan v Juventus (1930 GMT),

Modena v Reggina (1700 GMT), **Sunday:** Atalanta v Chievo, Como v Bologna, Empoli v Brescia, Parma v Lazio, AS Roma v Piacenza, Torino v Perugia, Udinese v Inter Milan (1930 GMT)

Premiership

Saturday (1500 GMT unless stated): Birmingham City v West Brom (1200 GMT), Chelsea v Manchester City, Manchester United v Fulham (1230 GMT), Middlesbrough v Charlton, Newcastle v Blackburn, Southampton v Aston Villa, West Ham v Sunderland

Sunday: Arsenal v Everton (1605 GMT), Liverpool v Leeds (1400 GMT)

Monday: Bolton v Tottenham (2000 GMT)

I was right

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wickets in these conditions," he explained.

"The wicket helps early on but if you don't lose wickets you can get a big total with runs at the end of the innings."



GrameenPhone Premier Cricket League

Kalabagan KC v Surjo Tarun
Venue: FCS
Young Pegasus v Brothers Union

NOTICE

Dear WHIZZ KIDS, due to some technical difficulties draw of the Competition-191 could not be held last night. It will now take place on March 28.



ESPN

English Premier Football League
Man United vs Fulham
Live at 6:25 pm &

West Ham United vs Sunderland
Live at 8:55 pm
Primera Liga

Rayo Vallecano vs Atletico Madrid
Live at 2:30 pm (Sunday)
STAR Sports

Gillette World Sports Special
Int'l Sports News
Taped Version at 7:00 pm
Taking Guard Final Preview
WC Cricket Programme
Live at 9:30 pm



Tick the correct answers, post to
The Daily Star
Win attractive prizes

Competition closes at 8 pm
March 28, 2003 and draw shortly afterwards

1. Who clinched the Shahjalal Bank International Rating Chess title?	Lovtu	Rajib	Zia
2. New Zealand beat South Africa in a World Cup Group B match by:	102 runs	9 wkts	5 wkts
3. How many runs did Bangladesh score against South Africa in the World Cup Group B match?	120	108	110
4. Bangladesh lost to Canada in the World Cup Group B match			
Name			
Class.			
School Address			
Phone: (If any)			

Abahani romp past Orient



SPORTS REPORTER

Title aspirants Abahani Krira Chakra rounded up their GrameenPhone Premier Cricket League first phase campaign with an impressive eight-wicket win over Orient Sporting Club at the BKSP ground in Savar yesterday.

Opener Mehrab Hossain scored played a brilliant innings as Abahani, chasing a useful Orient total of 223 or seven in 50 overs, reached 227 in 46.2 overs for the loss of two wickets.

Mehrab was undefeated on 96 off 117 balls that featured ten boundaries.

Together with former national opener Sajjad Ahmed, Mehrab shared 119 for the first wicket to lay the foundation for Abahani's ninth

in 12 matches.

Sajjad scored 65 off 76 balls with a six and eight fours while captain Akram Khan, who is in terrific form, chipped in with an undefeated 45 off 63 balls.

Earlier, put into bat, the Orient total was dominated by opener Masumuddowla who made 86.

Abahani finished their first round campaign with 50 points from 12 matches, six points behind leaders Victoria Sporting Club.

On the other hand, Orient tasted their seventh defeat against five wins.

In the other match of the day, Bangladesh Biman defeated Indira Road by 21 runs at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium.

Batting first, Biman scored 187 for nine in 50 overs with one-down Jahangir Khan scoring highest 46.

In reply, Indira Road were on 136 for four when rain stopped play

after 34.2 overs.

Later, Biman was declared winners by 21 runs through parabola method.

SCORES IN BRIEF

Abahani v Orient SC

VENUE: BKSP

Orient SC: 223 for 7 in 50 overs (Masum 86, Sajid 46, Jewel 22, Mehrab 2-30, Arman 2-40)

Abahani: 227 for 2 in 46.2 overs (Mehrab 96 n.o., Sajjad 65, Akram 45 n.o., Jewel 2-49)

Result: Abahani won by eight wickets.

Biman v Indira Road KC

VENUE: FCS

Biman: 187 for 9 in 50 overs (Khan 46, Jahangir 30, Aminul jr 31 n.o., Arafat 3-43)

Indira Road KC: 136 for 4 in 34.2 overs (Humayun 66, Sadat 42, Mosaddek 3-16)

Result: Biman won by 21 runs.

Passionate Smith



INTERNET, Johannesburg

New South African captain Graeme Smith has pledged to put passion and fire back into the national team after their dismal World Cup failure. He pledged to reinvigorate his team's passion for the game in a bid to return them to winning ways.

Under former skipper Shaun Pollock, South Africa were one of the favourites to win the 2003 World Cup.

But the tournament co-hosts failed to qualify for the Super Six stage, prompting the sacking of Pollock and the appointment of 22-year-old Smith as captain.

And Smith told the BBC Sport website: "I have to get everyone in the team working in one sole direction."

"Maybe we need a bit of discipline in our cricket and maybe we need a bit of fun. But I am determined to bring back the passion and spark."

Smith has long been targeted as a future South African captain and has promised to take a strong approach in restructuring team morale.

Pollock was criticised during his tenure for failing to be decisive and spending too much time seeking the advice of senior teammates.

But Smith said he planned to take a more proactive approach, with his first aim being to get the more established players, who had

failed to shine in the World Cup, to hit top form again.

"One of my hardest jobs will be to get the guys to step up a gear. As a captain I have to have the ability to tap into any player," said Smith.

"With Jacques Kallis you have to make him bowl at 140kph because you know he can if he wants to."

Smith's first assignment as captain will be the three-nation Sharjah Cup from April 1-10 against Pakistan and Sri Lanka, provided South Africa make the trip due to the war in Iraq.

South Africa are also scheduled to play a tri-series in Bangladesh from April 13, which also features India, before two Test matches against the hosts.

Smith's men will also tour England later in the summer.

Tikolo picks Australia



AFP, Johannesburg

Kenya captain Steve Tikolo backed reigning champions Australia to beat India in Sunday's World Cup final at the Wanderers.

Tikolo's team the first non-Test nation to reach the tournament's semifinals bowed out with a 91-run defeat against India in the semifinal at Kingsmead in Durban on Thursday.

But despite that loss, Tikolo, whose unheralded East Africans were beaten by five wickets by Australia in a Super Six match here on Saturday, said he expected Ricky Ponting's men to win in Johannesburg.

"They are the top two teams in one-day cricket. On any day one could win but I'll go with Australia," Tikolo said.

"They've had some close calls

and come through. The character they've shown on the field gives them an edge."

Kenya's progress has been beyond all expectations and Tikolo, when asked how he felt now his tournament was over, replied: "A bit relieved. There's been a lot of pressure at this tournament and the boys have handled the pressure pretty well."

The East Africans are due to lose inspirational coach Sandeep Patil a World Cup winner as a player with India back in 1983 who is returning home now that his four-year contract has ended.

Veteran left-arm spinner Asif Karim, 39, who took three wickets for seven runs against Australia, is also set to step out of the limelight having come out of retirement for this World Cup.

But Tikolo said he did not know if the team would be losing any of its other old-stagers.

"I really don't know about retirements. It depends on the

individual. But we have got some youngsters who I'd like to see come through," he said.

Tikolo admitted the crushing scale of Kenya's semifinal defeat had been disappointing, saying the climax of the Indian innings where opposing skipper Saurav Ganguly made an unbeaten 111 had been crucial.

"The way the Indians batted to get nearly 90 runs in the last 10 overs made a big difference."

"When we batted we didn't get the start we wanted and lost wickets regularly."

Tikolo said the highlight of his World Cup had been Kenya's shock 53-run group win over 1996 champions Sri Lanka in Nairobi on February 24.

"That really stands out."

And Tikolo admitted coming down to earth after such success would be difficult. "It will be hard to adjust. There's been a lot of hype. We'll take a month off and regroup."

Can India do it bees saal baad



AFP, Johannesburg

India captain Saurav Ganguly finds himself under greater pressure as he attempts to emulate Kapil Dev's feat of winning the World Cup in 1983.

There were no expectations from Kapil's Devils, who started out as a bunch of no-hopers, having won just one match against lowly East Africa in the previous two World Cups in 1975 and 1979.

But Ganguly's team will be rated strong contenders after winning nine of their 10 matches in this tournament before Sunday's final against reigning champions Australia at the Wanderers here.

All-rounders were the key to India's success in England two decades ago when they stunned two-time champions West Indies in the final at Lord's.

Kapil, one of the best all-rounders of his era, had at his disposal Mohinder Amarnath, Madan Lal and Roger Binny who were capable of chipping in with both bat and ball at crucial stages.

Ganguly, on the other hand, has just two all-rounders in Sanjay Bangar and Ajit Agarkar, both of whom have been confined to the benches since the tournament began.

India, however, have the most potent weapon of them all in Sachin Tendulkar, a batting genius who can single-handedly alter the course of a match.

Australian captain Ricky Ponting conceded his team had to be wary of "that little fella who opens the batting" because "he is the best batsman I've seen or

played against".

Tendulkar has made up for the absence of all-rounders by amassing a record 669 runs in 10 matches, the highest ever in World Cup history.

Kapil's team also possessed a master batsman in Sunil Gavaskar, but the champion opener was neither in good form nor had a Tendulkar-like reputation in the shorter version of the game.

Few gave India a chance to win the World Cup when Kapil's team was shot out for 183 in the final by Clive Lloyd's West Indians that boasted batsmen of the calibre of Viv Richards, Gordon Greenidge and Desmond Haynes.

But the medium-pacers changed the script as Madan, Mohinder, Binny and Balwinder Sandhu shared nine wickets to bowl their rivals out for 140.

Binny finished as the tournament's highest wicket-taker with 18 victims. Madan (17) and Kapil (12) also figured among the top-10 bowlers.

"We have always underestimated our medium-pacers because of the stress on spin, but they have served us well," Kapil said later.

Kapil led from the front, his batting, bowling and captaincy coming in for praise from all quarters.

He played the knock of his lifetime against Zimbabwe at Tunbridge Wells when he smashed a brilliant 175 after his team had been reduced to 17-5 and then 140-8.

Kapil also took a splendid running catch in the final to dismiss Richards, which turned the match in India's favour.

Like Kapil, Ganguly has also impressed with his leadership,

besides notching up three centuries to follow Tendulkar in the batsmen's honours list with 441 runs.

His weapons have, like Kapil's, also come from the unexpected pace department instead of India's known strength in spin.

Zaheer Khan has 18 wickets in the tournament, followed by veteran paceman Javagal Srinath with 16 and Ashish Nehra on 15, allaying pre-tournament fears that India did not have bowlers to win matches.

But India's fortunes rest on one man, the "little fella" who has already made this World Cup his own.

Uneasy Indian

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three for 13 and Glenn McGrath chipping in with one for 23.

Gillespie has returned home with a heel injury but Andy Bichel has stepped into his shoes so easily, taking 15 wickets at under 10 runs apiece, that Australia have barely missed a beat.

Lee now has 20 wickets, terrorising opposition batting line-ups in the process, and Ponting felt he could have a crucial effect on Sunday's match, expected to be played on a pace-friendly surface.

"If Brett gets it right he could cause them some trouble," he said.

"There is bound to be some short stuff but as much as the pace it is also the length that you bowl that is important."

"We saw that when Brett got Ganguly and Sehwag with full length balls at Centurion and Shane Bond did the same to them when New Zealand played India."

Real-MU pick of the qtrs



AFP, Geneva

Holders Real Madrid were drawn against Manchester United Friday in the tie of the round in the Champions League quarterfinals.

Inter Milan face Valencia, Ajax Amsterdam play AC Milan and Juventus play Barcelona in the other quarterfinals.

The winners of the Real-United match take on Juventus or Barcelona in the semi-finals.

Inter Milan or Valencia face Ajax or Milan in the other semi.

Ajax-Milan is a replay of the 1995 final when Patrick Kluivert became the youngest-ever scorer as the Dutch side won their fourth title.

THE DRAW

The draw made here on Friday for the quarterfinals and semifinals of the European Champions League:

Quarterfinals

Real Madrid (SPA) v Manchester United (ENG)

Inter Milan (ITA) v Valencia (SPA)

Ajax (NED) v AC Milan (ITA)

Juventus (ITA) v Barcelona (SPA)

Semifinals

Winner of 1 v winner of 4

Winner of 3 v winner of 2

* Quarterfinals will be played on April 8-9 and April 22-23. Semifinals will be played on May 6-7 and May 13-14.

Celtic oust Liverpool



AFP, Liverpool

A stunning solo strike by John Hartson sent Celtic marching into the UEFA Cup semifinals Thursday on one of the most memorable European nights in the Scottish champions history.

The Welsh striker, who had missed a last-minute penalty in Celtic's League Cup final defeat by Rangers on Sunday, redeemed himself in the most spectacular fashion possible with a 25-yard drive ten minutes from the end to cap a 2-0 victory that put Martin O'Neill's side into the last four 3-1 on aggregate.

Hartson's goal could not have come at a better time for a Celtic team that was holding out grimly under intense pressure after Alan Thompson's free-kick right on the stroke of half-time had given them the edge in a pulsating Anfield encounter.

Celtic will take on Portuguese side Boavista in the semis. In the other semifinal, another Portuguese giant FC Porto face Italian powerhouse Lazio

RESULTS AT A GLANCE

Collated UEFA Cup quarterfinal results on Thursday:

At Liverpool, England

Liverpool (ENG) 0 Celtic (SCO) 2 (Thompson 45, Hartson 81)

(Celtic win 3-1 on aggregate)

At Athens

Panathinaikos (GRE) 0 FC Porto (POR) 2 (Derlei, 16, 22)

(FC Porto win 2-1 on aggregate)

At Istanbul

Besiktas (TUR) 1 (Sergen 83) Lazio (ITA) 2 (Fiore 5, Castroman 9)

(Lazio win 3-1 on aggregate)

At Porto

Boavista (POR) 1 (Luiz Claudio 82) Malaga (SPA) 0

(Boavista win 4-1 on penalties after aggregate score finished level 1-1)

DRAW

The draw made here on Friday for the semifinals of the UEFA Cup:

Semi-finals

Celtic (SCO) v Boavista (POR)

Lazio (ITA) v FC Porto (POR)

* Semifinals first leg on April 10 and second leg on 24.

** Final in Seville, Spain on May 21

Quips & Quotes

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Scottish cricket chief Gwynne Jones hoping to persuade India's Rahul Dravid to play for Scotland.

"Everything is on track and the World Cup final goes ahead as planned."

Rodney Hartman, the World Cup organising committee's communications director, insists that the war in Iraq won't stop the final.

Dravid to defy pain



AFP, Johannesburg

India's vice-captain Rahul Dravid will continue his role as a wicketkeeper in Sunday's World Cup final against Australia despite an injured finger.

Dravid, the dependable batsman who took over as one-day wicketkeeper to maintain the balance in the Indian side, hurt the middle finger of his left hand during Thursday's semi-final win against Kenya in Durban.

The injury, caused by keeping to the pace trio of Javagal Srinath, Zaheer Khan and Ashish Nehra, saw Dravid concede 16 byes on top of the 15 wides sent down by the bowlers.

India have a specialist wicketkeeper in the squad in 18-year-old Parthiv Patel, but team official Amrit Mathur said Dravid will don the gloves in the final.

"We were a bit worried on

Thursday night, but Dravid says he will recover and wants to do the job he has been doing in the World Cup," Mathur told AFP.

India need Dravid's new-found skills as a keeper as much as his batting at number five in a bid to stop Australia from successfully defending their title at the Wanderers on Sunday.

"I had a hard day behind the stumps during the semi-final, but my team is in the final now and that's a big satisfaction," Dravid told the BBC.

"It's part of the trade."

"This World Cup has been different for me compared to the last one where I was the highest run-getter in the tournament."

"I was just a batsman then but this time I am the vice-captain and wicketkeeper as well. I have delivered whenever my team have required it."

"The responsibilities of the three jobs are not too much for me because I think the senior players of the team have to take on extra pressure," Dravid said.

Anna extends casualty list



REUTERS, Miami

Anna Kournikova has added another first-round defeat to her growing collection after she surrendered in straight sets to Russian Dinara Safina in the Nasdaq-100 Open.

Kournikova, a Miami resident whose world ranking has slipped to 66 from a high of eight three years ago, looked well out of sorts in the

6-1 6-4 loss on Thursday despite having the support of most of the noisy Stadium Court crowd.