



Did U Know?

Wasim Akram hit a record 12 sixes in a Test innings in his 257 not out for Pakistan against Zimbabwe at Sheikhpura, Pakistan from October 18 to 20, 1996.



ESPN

Primera Liga
Real Sociedad vs Atletico Madrid
Repeat at 12:30 pm

Western Union World Football

Repeat at 6:00 pm

Football Focus

Taped Version at 6:30 pm

Sportscenter Hindi

Sport News

Live at 8:30 pm

Cricket Twenty20 Cup

Yorkshire vs Nottinghamshire

Live at 10:30 pm

STAR Sports

Wimbledon C'ships

Day One

Highlights at 8:30 am

Primera Liga

Barcelona vs Celta De Vigo

Taped Version at 3:00 pm

Wimbledon C'ships

Day Two, First Round

Live at 5:00 pm

Sportsline Tonight

Sport News



PHOTO: STAR

LET'S HOPE, WE MEET IN THE FINAL: A combo picture shows players of rival camps Abahani (L) and Mohammedan do the stretching during their respective training sessions at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Biggies battle it out today



SPORTS REPORTER

four teams in the season's curtain-raiser event.

They started the season with a bang, scoring a 14-0 win against Victoria Sporting Club in their Group C opener and then outplayed Dhaka Wanderers Club 11-0. However, Abahani faced some resistance in their last match against Ajax before winning 2-0.

Ashraful Islam emerged as the run-machine for the sky blues hammering eight out of Abahani's 27 goals in the preliminary round.

Mohammedan also enjoyed an impressive first round where the black and whites scored an amazing 30 goals without any reply in three games. Mohammedan got off to a flying start with a 13-0 win over Bachelor Sporting Club. They blanked Barnak Samaj 9-0 in the second game before running away with an 8-0 victory over Wari Club in their last match.

Mariner on the other hand, will take on Mariner Young's Club in the other semi at 4:15 pm.

The popular Dhamondi outfit though they failed to make it to last year's final, they made up for the disappointment by lifting the Premier League title.

Abahani also looked the most impressive performer among the

Captain Musa Miah led Mohammedan from the front scor-

ing highest nine goals so far in the tournament.

Given the strength of Mohammedan and Abahani the June 26 final is set to be yet another exciting battle between the two crowd-pulling teams.

But Usha Krira Chakra and Mariner Young's Club will be out to prove they are no pushovers. Both teams on their day are capable of causing upsets.

With national forward Moududur Rahman celebrating his return to his former club with half a dozen goals in the last match against Mukta Bihanga, Usha look menacing in attack.

Mariner on the other hand look like a tough side to crack with four Pakistani players in their ranks.

Mariner have also won their three first round Group B matches against Farashganj SC (3-0), Sadharan Biman 4-0 and Dhaka Railway (4-0).

Nat'l football scores

SPORTS REPORTER

Padma Krira Chakra of Natore entered the Jamalpur zonal semifinals of the Nitol-Tata third National Football League with a 4-3 tiebreak win over Mohsin Club of Narayanganj at the Jamalpur Stadium yesterday.

The match was locked 0-0 in the regulation 90 minutes.

Padma KC will now face either Sabuj Sena of Faridpur or Shikharthi Sports Institute of Pabna in the semis on June 27.

Away in Sylhet, GRC Sporting Club of Narshingdi outplayed Football Players Association of Sherpur 8-1 to set up a semifinal clash with Mymensingh Abahani KC tomorrow.

There were two matches in Noakhali. Mohammedan SC of Chittagong registered a 2-0 over Sonali Oikya of Feni while home side Rising Star Club trounced Comilla Mohammadan 7-0 to book their berths in the semifinals.

In Jhenidah, Khulna Abahani also reached the zonal finals with a 3-1 win over Udaykathi Jubo Samity of Pirozpur.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Army moved into the Sheba zone final with a 7-1 thrashing of Bangladesh Air Force at the Army Stadium in Dhaka. They will take on Bangladesh Navy in June 26 final.

Setback for Zia

UNB, Dhaka

Grand Master Ziaur Rahman slipped to second position as he drew with FIDE Master Abu Sufian Shakil in the fourth round of the Open FIDE Rating Chess tournament at the Chess Federation auditorium yesterday.

Zia was the only top player to suffer a setback in this round.

But Grand Master Niaz Mursheed, International Master Reefat bin Sattar, International Master Abdullah Al Rakib and Arman Munir registered their fourth straight wins to lead the table.

Niaz won his board against Sohel, Reefat defeated Chanchal, Rakib beat Maleq and Arman won his game against Ranodev.

Zia now shares the second position with International Master Enamul Hossain Rajib, FIDE Master Taibor Rahman Sumon, FIDE Master Shakil, Syed Mahfuzur Rahman Emon and Mehedi Hasan Parag.

The fifth round matches will be held on Wednesday from 4 pm at the same venue.

against the world's top team and everyone expects a drubbing.

Bangladesh's 19 Tests have ended in 18 losses 13 by an innings and a rain-affected draw.

"The success of the tour or otherwise ... can't be judged in terms of wins or losses but more on individual improvement in the areas that we've identified in each player," Whatmore told reporters as the Bangladesh team arrived in Brisbane on Monday.

"They (Bangladesh) are oozing with (talent)," added the former Australia Test batsman, who guided Sri Lanka to World Cup victory in 1996.

"They just need to get a little bit tougher and be able to withstand that extra pressure that comes along from time to time, and go ahead and bat for four hours."

"I want to see clear, defined

goals put in place during the tour about what we need to do," Whatmore told the press conference. "We need to see whether or not we're moving in the right direction.

"Those areas will be very pain-

fully defined during these matches."

Whatmore admitted the task of improving the Bangladesh side looked "a bit frightening", but said the "huge challenge" of making it competitive was the main motivation for taking the job.

The former Australian batsman took the two-year contract after two eventful stints as Sri Lankan coach.

He masterminded Sri Lanka's 1996 World Cup win, left the job soon after and returned in 1999 for another four-year term.

Whatmore's contract was not

SEE PAGE 14 COL 8

A learning tour

Bangladesh arrive in Australia

Cricket

AFP, Brisbane

New Bangladesh cricket coach David Whatmore can see at least one positive in next month's Test and one-day series against Australia.

By the time the two Tests and three one-dayers are over, he and his team will know exactly where they have to improve and Whatmore says the tour will be judged on the improvement of his players, not on results against the top side in world cricket.

Whatmore, only three weeks into his job, and his 15-man squad arrived here on Monday for the series.

It will be the first time the Bangladeshis have played Tests



PHOTO: AFP

TITLE NOW A REAL-ITY: Real Madrid's French ace Zinedine Zidane (R), Iker Casillas on his shoulders and

Ronaldo (L) celebrate with teammates at the Santiago Bernabeu stadium in Madrid on June 22.

Primera Liga

Rock'n roll Real

Football

AFP, Madrid

Ronaldo promised Real Madrid fans a special treat before Sunday's crucial game against Athletic Bilbao and the Brazilian striker remained true to his word as he scored twice in their 3-1 win to give Real a record 29th title.

After a week in which the imminent arrival of England captain David Beckham from Manchester United has overshadowed the team's league decider, Real got back to business to end Real Sociedad's league ambitions.

Sociedad started the day two points behind their rivals from the Spanish capital but, despite a 3-0 win over Atletico Madrid, they were frustrated in their bid to lift their first

title in 21 years.

As the final whistle sounded at Real's Santiago Bernabeu stadium, Ronaldo and his superstar teammates celebrated under a spectacular fireworks display.

The World Cup winner had taken the field with a complete skinhead apart from a tuft of hair at the front - a style he sported in the closing stages of the World Cup finals last year as he led Brazil to victory.

Ronaldo, completing his first season with Real, opened the scoring after just nine minutes finishing off a move which started with Luis Figo darting down the left wing.

The Portuguese winger's pass found Roberto Carlos, who produced a defence-splitting pass from the touchline which left Ronaldo to slot home the ball from close range.

Real had two other chances, from Raul and Ronaldo, with Athletic goalkeeper Daniel Aranzubia pulling off brave saves before former Spanish international Bitor Alkiza levelled the scores after 36 minutes with his first goal of the season.

Alkiza was given acres of space just outside the box and his swerving left foot shot from 20 metres left Real goalkeper Iker Casillas standing staring at the ball as it hit the net.

However, there were a few anxious minutes for the capacity 75,000 crowd packed into the Bernabeu.

Real took the lead again nearly two minutes into first-half injury time when Roberto Carlos fired home one of his trademark thunderbolt freekicks.

The game ended as a contest

SEE PAGE 14 COL 5

Lara in charge



AFP, St Lucia

bowlers to find rhythm with their aggressive batting.

Pressure kept mounting on Sri Lanka as ace off-spinner Muttiah Muralitharan and left-arm seamer Chaminda Vaas put in a below-par performance on an easy-paced track.

The two bowlers shared 50 wickets against the West Indies to play major roles in their team's 3-0 Test series victory at home two years ago.

They failed to reproduce their magic away from home as Muralitharan took just one wicket on the rain-curtailed day while Vaas ended the day with none.

Hinds did not curb his strokes after the let-off and completed his hundred when he swept Muralitharan for his sixth boundary.

Runs continued to flow from the other end as Lara also did not allow the Sri Lankan bowlers to settle down.

Lara punished Vaas with three firmly-struck fours and then offdrove Nissanka for another boundary. He looked set for his century when rain stopped play.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the third day of the first Test between West Indies and Sri Lanka at the Beausejour Stadium on Sunday:

SRI LANKA: First innings 354 (M

SEE PAGE 14 COL 5

Score

Team

Wicket

Run

Wicket

<p