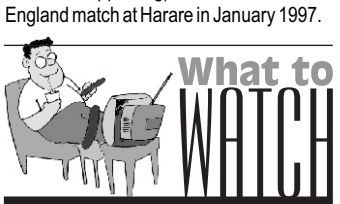


Did U Know?

A Flower, C Evans and A Campbell were all reprimanded by the match referee (for excessive appealing), in the Zimbabwe vs England match at Harare in January 1997.



What to WATCH

ESPN

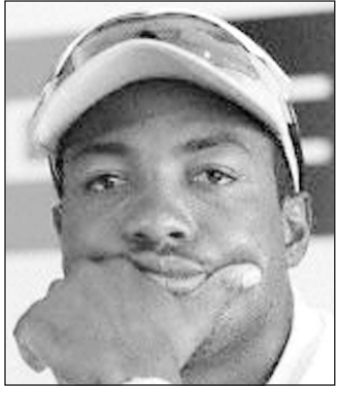
Australia vs Zimbabwe
Tri-Series, Fourth ODI
Live at 5:00 am
Football Focus
Repeat at 3:00 pm
Sportscentre Hindi
Sport News
Live at 8:30 pm

STAR Sports

Futbol Mundial
Repeat at 9:30 am
Harsha Online
Cricket Talk Show
Repeat at 10:00 am
South Africa vs West Indies
Fourth Test, Day One
Live at 2:25 pm
Sportline Tonight
Sport News
Live at 9:30 pm



TALK TURKEY



Brian Lara
(West Indies cricket captain)
"We wouldn't go into this Test if we didn't think we could win it."
Before the third Test against



Star WHIZZ KID

COMPETITION 204

Tick the correct answers, post to
The Daily Star
Win attractive prizes
Competition closes at 8 pm
Jan 16, 2004 and draw

1. Who clinched the Leonine Grand Masters chess title?	Zia	Reefat	Rakib
2. Who won the Pepsi Nat'l volleyball women's crown?	BJMC	Army	Navy
3. Who won the European footballer-of-the-year award?	Nedved	Owen	Zidane
4. Who became World Youth football champions?	Brazil	Holland	France
Name			
Class.	Roll No.		
School Address			
Phone: (If any)			

Ashiqur named U-19 captain

SPORTS REPORTER

Ashiqur Rahman replaced Nafees Iqbal as captain when the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) announced a 14-man squad for the ICC Under-19 World Cup to be held in Bangladesh from February 10.

Nafees, the opening batsman from Chittagong, however won a rightful place in Australian coach Richard McInnes' final list.

It was learnt from reliable sources that the decision to remove Nafees was more to do with discontent among his teammates rather than anything else.

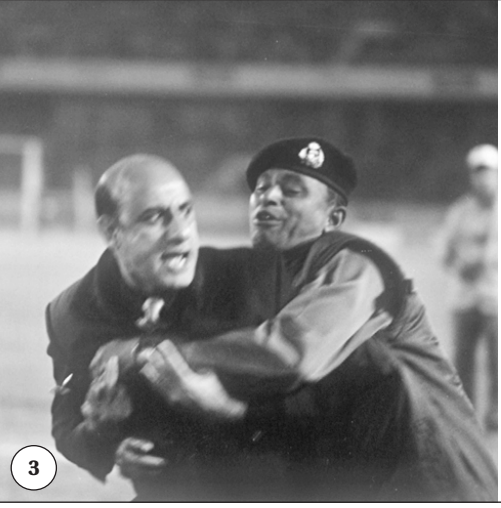
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(1) Mohammedan's Cameroon striker Etigo being denied by Muktiyoddha custodian Aminul.



(2) Incensed Mohammedan captain Jewel Rana lets his feelings known to linesman Shahadat Badal after Muktiyoddha's equaliser.



(3) A policeman struggling to contain Mohammedan official Mahbub who has completely lost it.



(4) Referee Ram Krishna Ghosh is being escorted by police off the ground.

PHOTOS: ANISUR RAHMAN

Fiasco at Mirpur

Muktis smile as MSC lose cool

SPORTS REPORTER

WESTERN UNION Football took a back seat when Mohammedan Sporting Club refused to play the remaining six minutes of their crucial Western Union Premier Division Football League clash against Muktiyoddha last afternoon.

The farcical finish at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium happened in the 84th minute after a right side throw from Muktiyoddha defender Belal went into the net taking a deflection off substitute Mohammedan defender Shuvro's chest.

The goal cancelled out Mohammedan's 54 minute lead given by prolific Cameroon marksman Etigo. But no sooner had referee Ram Krishna Ghosh blew the whistle it prompted Mohammedan players to protest

the goal. Led by captain Jewel Rana, the players demanded that the goal be nullified as they believed that the throw by Belal went straight into the net without any connection being made.

But Ghosh refused to bow to the players and officials of the Motijheel club. The situation was rapidly getting out of control when a ntv camera crew somehow entered the ground and showed footage of the incident. And that was evidence enough for the Mohammedan team to become more agitated and they were desperate to show the match officials the same replay. This was something never experienced anywhere in a football ground and Ghosh waited for the regulation 40 minutes before blowing the final whistle.

According to the League byelaws if a team disputes a goal and refuse to play that team will lose four points including three

from that game. If things stand as they are then Muktiyoddha will be declared winners by 2-0 margin.

The ugly episode was open for all to see including the members of the AFP and FIFA delegation, who are now in the city to conduct a series of seminars as part of the Vision Asia project.

"I tried my best to bring Mohammedan back into the field, but they refused. So, I had to blow the whistle after 40 minutes," said Ghosh after the ill-fated match was over.

Thursday night's mayhem hot on the heels of Muktiyoddha's last match against Abahani once again showed how a free-flowing encounter can end up in nothing.

The game came alive after the barren first 45 minute with both the giants trying to end the cycle of draws for big teams.

Mohammedan took a deserving

lead when they found enough space down the left flank from a swift counter attack. With Hasan-al Mamun not in his position, Farhad galloped down the other end before passing it to a sprinting Etigo, who stormed into the box and curled in a low right-footer past a hapless Muktiyoddha custodian Aminul.

Etigo, the leading marksman with eight goals, missed a golden opportunity to double the lead when shot the ball wide off the right post with Aminul at his mercy. At the other end Muktiyoddha's substitute Sahajuddin Tipu failed to gather the ball properly after receiving it in the open, leaving Mohammedan custodian Nadeem to make a clearance.

From the very next attack Muktiyoddha equalised when Belal's swerving throw-in silenced the boisterous Mohammedan crowd.

Schools cricket without scouts!

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has employed high-profile experts to look into the affairs of the national team and different age-group selections. But, it seems the Board is unaware of the necessity of recruiting scouts ahead of the schools cricket tournament.

The qualifying rounds of the 22nd edition of the biggest cricket meet in terms of representation is already underway in different districts. The Dhaka Zonal qualifying round featuring 113 schools will start at seven different venues in the capital from January 20.

But the Board failed to read the message that the hunt for talent begins here.

"As far as I'm concerned, we haven't employed any scout anywhere in the country," told co-ordination Ail Hossain to The Daily Star Sport last night.

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Underdog pairs bask in glory

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

The unheralded pairs stole the show in the International Junior Tennis Championship at the Rajshahi Tennis Complex yesterday.

In the girls' doubles the Chinese Taipei pairing of Lin Yu Ting and Lee Ya Wen upset Dilyara of Russia and Slovakian Tjasa 7-5, 6-2. The Russians had won the title in 2002.

The European duo advanced to the final thrashing Taipei's Parchart and Ratchaya with a 6-2, 6-1 win.

The Taipei finalists defeated India's Sandar and Reddy 6-3, 6-1. In the boy's section, Indians Sanam K Singh and N Jeevan brushed aside compatriots Rupesh Roy and Ansuman Dutta with a 6-2, 6-4 win.

Singh and Jeevan advanced to

SEE PAGE 14 COL 6



DAY'S EVENT

Western Union Premier Football League
Dhanmondi vs Victoria SC (2:30 pm)
Abahani vs Sheikh Russell (4:30 pm)
Venue: Sher-e-Bangla National

Black Thursday

SPORTS REPORTER

WESTERN UNION It couldn't have happened at the worst possible time.

With strong Asian Football Confederation (AFC) and FIFA delegates, who are in Dhaka as part of the 'Vision Asia' project, watching from the media enclosure at Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday, Mohammedan Sporting Club officials and players decided to disgrace the image of Bangladesh's football through behaviour which was totally unlawful and indecent.

When Muktiyoddha Sangsad's long-throw specialist Belal's deep hurl was deflected into the Mohammedan net for an equalising goal with six minutes of normal time remaining, a furious black and whites captain Jewel Rana led a wild protest for cancella-

tion of the strike claiming that the ball had gone in straight from the throw-in. What happened next was a sequence of shameful acts.

Jewel, a former Bangladesh international, charged towards referee Ram Krishna Ghosh, pushed and shoved him and then let out his rage on linesman Shahadat Badal. At one stage, Jewel was seen virtually dragging Badal off balance near the centre touch-line and even threatening to slap him.

The AFC officials, who have arrived in the country to find out the problems facing the game and to help Bangladesh become a respectable name in the continent under the Vision Asia, were visibly irked and disappointed at what they were seeing.

"Why doesn't the referee just show him (Jewel) the red card and let the game continue," said one member of the delegation as the

match was stopped.

In the meantime, Mohammedan manager Amirul Islam Babu, who wastes no opportunity to get involved with the action in the middle, rushed on to the pitch and confronted the match officials. No one but the players and medical staff are allowed on the ground during a match but Babu roamed freely and was continuously talking on his cell phone apparently seeking instructions from club high-ups.

Babu is no stranger to controversy. In 2001, the Mohammedan manager attacked the referee in a Premier Division game and was banned from entering the ground for a year.

Next it was Mohammedan's sports secretary Salam Mursheedi's turn. The striker of yesteryears also

SEE PAGE 14 COL 2



FACES OF TOMORROW: Under-13 cricketers gather at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday to undergo a medical checkup.

PHOTO: STAR

WI need to improve more

Cricket

AFP, Centurion

The West Indies will seek further improvement when they play South Africa in the fourth and final Test at Centurion Park, starting Friday, captain Brian Lara said Wednesday.

South Africa have already clinched the series, which they lead 2-0, but Lara said there was still plenty at stake for the West Indies, who earned a draw in the third Test in Cape Town before beating Easterns, the current South African four-day competition champions, in a match leading up to the final Test.

"The win against Easterns was important because it gave us a little bit of momentum going into the Test but the most important thing for me is that this side should keep improving," said Lara. "I would like to see a whole-hearted effort so we can all come off the field proud of our performance."

The biggest improvement in the West Indies side is in batting, with five of the top six batsmen having made centuries during the series.

"It's great to see a lot of guys performing," said Lara, who said it was time for the bowling and fielding to match the standard of the batting.

Although still prone to collapse, as they showed when they lost their first five wickets for 43 in the second innings of the first Test in Johannesburg, the West Indian batting has been far more solid than it was in 11 previous encounters between the two sides, when wicketkeeper Ridley Jacobs was the only man to notch a century against the South Africans.

The spectacular century hit off

93 balls by debutant Dwayne Smith was a highlight for the tourists in the third Test, with Lara praising the attitude of the youngster from Barbados.

But he said Smith, an all-rounder, was still struggling after dislocating his little right finger while fielding in Cape Town. He was in pain while he made his century and was rested from the Easterns game. It is not certain he will play.

"Hopefully he will be able to grip the bat properly and be able to field, even if he can't bowl," said Lara.

Following the draw in Cape Town, the pressure will be on South Africa to finish the series well, with South African captain Graeme Smith admitting that his team have sometimes failed to maintain peak form until the end of a series.

Coach Eric Simons added to the pressure by admitting in Cape Town that South Africa had set out to win the series 4-0.

"That was the plan right from the beginning," he said.

"Obviously we would have liked to win all four but the way the guys have played has been really exciting."

On a pitch which has generally favoured fast bowlers, both teams will be tempted to go in without a specialist spinner. South Africa's Paul Adams and West Indian Dave Mohammed, both left-arm wrist spinners, were disappointing in Cape Town.

But former South African captain Shaun Pollock said hot weather in the Centurion area would probably mean a dry pitch.

"The spinners haven't really performed in this series but that is because the faster bowlers have done the job. I think there will be

some assistance for the spinners later on."

Pollock said fast bowler Andre Nel had been a star for South Africa.

"He has really put his hand up and made sure of his place in the team."

Saturday's play at Centurion clashed with Nel's wedding to Deanne Weitz in nearby Benoni but the ceremony has been postponed from 4:30 pm to 6:30 pm (1430 to 1630 GMT). Play is due to finish at 5:30 pm but could run later if over rates are slow, which has been the pattern during the series.

Nel has been promised a police escort to enable him to get to the wedding as soon as possible after play finishes.

The West Indies, who have been hit hard by injuries, lost batsman Wavell Hinds, who has returned home after struggling both with his form and a groin strain. In his place, though, will come Shivnarine Chanderpaul, who hit a century in the second Test but missed the third because of a thigh strain.

TEAMS

SOUTH AFRICA (from): Graeme Smith (captain), Mark Boucher (vice-captain), Herschelle Gibbs, Jacques Rudolph, Jacques Kallis, Gary Kirsten, Neil McKenzie, Martin van Jaarsveld, Shaun Pollock, Andrew Hall, Paul Adams, Makhaya Ntini, Andre Nel.

WEST INDIES (from): Brian Lara (captain), Ramnaresh Sarwan (vice-captain), Chris Gayle, Daren Ganga, Shivnarine Chanderpaul, Dwayne Smith, Ridley Jacobs, Carlton Baugh, Vashbert Drakes, Mervyn Dillon, Fidel Edwards, Ravindarnath Rampaul, Adam Sanford, Dave Mohammed, Corey Collymore.