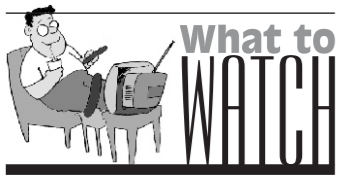




Did U Know?

In the 1925-26 English Soccer Season, Chesterfield goalkeeper A Birch scored from five penalties!



What to WATCH

ESPN
South Africa vs West Indies
Third ODI
Live at 6:27 pm
Sportscentre
Sports News
Live at 10:00 pm
STAR Sports
Futbol Mundial
Repeat at 8:30 am
Australian Open
Women's Dbls Final/ Mixed
Dbls/Men's Sgls Semifinal
Live at 10:00 am
Sportsline
Sports News
Live at 8:00 pm



TALK TURKEY



Mohammad Ali Asghar

(Bangladesh Cricket Board president)
"I think England should go. They are our big brothers and they should encourage us."
On the Zimbabwe question.

Star WHIZZ KID
COMPETITION 205

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

Competition closes at 8 pm
Jan 30, 2004 and draw

1. Who won the 25th National Women's Chess Championship title?	Shabana Parveen, Rani Hamid, Zakia Sultana
2. Who lifted the Hopman Cup tennis title?	Australia, America, Russia
3. Steve Waugh has played how many Test matches?	132, 168, 200
4. David Seaman quit football at	
Name	
Class	Roll No.
School Address	
Phone: (If any)	

Office Hockey title Library's

UNB, Dhaka
Friends Library clinch the Office Hockey League title when they came from behind to beat Bangladesh Army 2-1 in the final at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium yesterday.
Sharif put Bangladesh Army ahead in the 9th minute with a field goal, but Shahidullah Tito of Friends restored parity after seven minutes from a penalty stroke before ace national forward Rafiqul Islam Kamal struck the winner in the 49th minute.
Eight teams took part in the tournament that began on January 18.
President of Bangladesh Hockey Federation and Chief of Air Staff Air Vice-Marshal M Fakrul Azam witnessed the final and distributed prizes.

Biggies' goal glut

SPORTS REPORTER

WESTERN UNION Ugandan strikers were the toast of their clubs when the return leg of the Western Union Premier Division Football League got underway at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

Okelo was on fire as leaders Brothers Union Club abased a hapless Dhanmondi 7-1
In the day's first match, another hot title contender Muktiyoddha Sangsad Krira Chakra blazed past Badda Jagarani 4-0 at the same venue thanks to a double strike by their Ugandan marksman Lulenty.

BROTHERS 7; DHANMONDI - 1

Brothers had just a one-goal lead going into the breather courtesy of hatrickman Okelo but were at their devastating best in the second half.

Okelo gave the star-studded team from Gopibagh the lead in the 26th minute with a brilliant volley off an Arman lob (1-0).

Two minutes into the second session, the lanky Ugandan fed his Russian attacking partner Victor who scored with a left foot shot (2-0).

Okelo made the night his own as he completed his treble in a space of 60 seconds. In the 55th minute, he tapped in a miss-directed shot from Victor (3-0) and barely a minute later, took full advantage of a defensive lapse to find the net (4-0).

Bangladesh internationals Parvez, Monwar and Firoze Mahmud Tito completed the rout with late strikes.

Bottom club Dhanmondi got a consolation goal when young midfielder Maruf found the net with a thunderous grounder capitalising on a minus from Nigerian Donald Agu in the 74th minute.

Brothers had a scare when their national custodian Biplob suffered a cut on his head after colliding with a fellow defender

midway through the first half while going for the ball. Mohammed Ali replaced the country's number two goalkeeper who was immediately taken to a hospital.

Brothers' seventh win took their tally to 24 points from 10 matches. Dhanmondi are destined to face relegation, as their collection remained a sorry two.

TEAMS

Brothers Union: Biplob (Ali), Nazrul, Sujon, Tito, Parvez Babu, Arman (Francis), Iqbal (Monwar), Liton, Alfaz, Victor and Okelo.

Dhanmondi Club: Ratan Ali (Raju), Soheli (Abul), Prodeep, Kamal, Azizi, Maruf, Mizan, Wasim, Kennedy, Donald and

Bipul.

Referee: Ibrahim Nessar.

MUKTIYODDHA 4; BADDHA - 0

The Reds stayed just behind Brothers by outplaying Badda. Lulenty started and finished off the romp by scoring in the 42nd and 83rd minutes. Muktiyoddha captain Matiu Munna and Liberian striker Arcadia Toe joined in the party with strikes in the 57th and 71st minutes respectively.

The Muktis now have 21 points from 10 matches while Badda are second from last position with just four points also from 10 games.



Muktiyoddha Sangsad forward Moni (R) taking control of the ball during the match against Badda Jagarani at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.



Brothers Union's Ugandan striker Okelo (C) about to score one of his three goals against Dhanmondi at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

Zia draws 9th game

SPORTS REPORTER

Grand Master Ziaur Rahman drew his 9th round game of the First International Chess Tournament in Chennai, India yesterday.

But despite the disappointing draw with Uzbek IM Vakhidov Tahir, the second Bangladeshi GM held the second position with six others, all having seven points each.

International Women's Master Rani Hamid earned 5 points, Afroza Khanam Bably and Zakia Sultana raised their tally to 4 points each in the ladies section.

Rakib clinches Active crown

SPORTS REPORTER

IM Abdullah Al Rakib won the Active chess tournament collecting highest six points at the Bangladesh Chess Federation Auditorium yesterday.

Khandakar Aminul Islam finished runner-up with 5.5 points while IM Enamul Hossain Rajib, Arman Monir and Delwar Hossain captured five points each.



Western Union Premier Division Football League
Sheikh Russell vs Victoria (2:30 pm)
Abahani vs Dhaka Wanderers (4:30 pm)
Venue: Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium, Mirpur

Wasim hits back at Javed

Cricket

AFP, New Delhi

Pakistan's former fast bowling great Wasim Akram took a swipe at teammate Javed Miandad on Thursday for suggesting he had passed on "secrets" to Indian pacemen.

"I have not modified their (Indian bowlers') actions or anything like that. Nor have I handed them any secret weapons," Akram wrote in his column in the Times of India.

Media reports quoted Miandad, the current Pakistan coach, as saying he hoped Akram had not been giving India tips on how to play reverse-swing ahead of an upcoming historic Test series between the two nations.

India are scheduled to play three Test matches and five one-

dayers in March-April on their first full-fledged tour of Pakistan in nearly 15 years.

"Come to think of it, I haven't even discussed reverse-swing with them (Indian players), let alone taught them how to bat against reverse-swing," said Akram, who is in Australia as a TV commentator.

India's Irfan Pathan, Ashish Nehra and Zaheer Khan all left-arm pacemen like their idol sought Akram's help on their ongoing tour of Australia to improve their performance.

"In the past few days, some heat and dust has been raised by Javed Miandad about my spending time with the young Indian bowlers," said the "Sultan of Swing" who bagged 414 wickets in Tests and a record 502 in one-dayers.

"I don't see anything wrong in talking with Irfan who is just 18 years old and approached me with a request to spend time with him at

the nets. Nobody said a word when (Australian paceman) Nathan Bracken sought me out similarly.

"I've only shared my training methods and talked about the psychology of bowling with the Indian youngsters.

"Back in 1996 when India was preparing for the Lord's Test (in England), a certain Miandad spent much time with the Indian captain, his deputy and other batsmen.

"Of course Viv Richards was there as well as they sought to help the Indians tackle the seam and swing movement. I guess it was okay then for 'secrets' to be shared."

Miandad meanwhile clarified that he was never against his former teammate giving tips to Indian pacemen.

"Even I as a former player have helped youngsters from other coun
SEE PAGE 14 COL 5

All-Belgian final

Australian Open

REUTERS, Melbourne

Justine Henin-Hardenne and Kim Clijsters slotted into their allotted places in the Australian Open final on Thursday, the top two seeds ensuring a third all-Belgian final in the last four grand slams.

Second-ranked Clijsters overcame unfancied Swiss Patty Schnyder 6-2, 7-6 while world number one Justine Henin-Hardenne hammered Colombia's Fabiola Zuluaga 6-2, 6-2.

"It's incredible for a country as small as Belgium," Clijsters said after joining her compatriot in the final.

Henin-Hardenne beat Clijsters in the French and U.S. Open finals last season but knows that come Saturday, past results or world rankings will count for nothing.

"When we go on the court it's going to be number one against number two. It doesn't make a big difference," the 21-year-old said after thrashing Zuluaga.

"I'm not going to be the favourite because I'm number one. I mean, we played unbelievable matches in our career. And Kim is a great player.

"We'll see what's going to happen. It's very hard to tell you what's going to happen. It's a grand slam final. That's going to be another great moment in my career."

Clijsters leads the pair's head-to-head battles 9-8 but she will have to pick up her game after looking decidedly shaky against

demolished her nervous opponent in just 76 minutes.

"I'm very happy with my first Australian Open final and I hope to be in good shape on Saturday," she said.

Zuluaga, the first Colombian to reach a grand slam semi-final, was unable to mount a serious challenge against the top seed.

Henin-Hardenne always had control, hitting a series of winners off both sides and running her opponent ragged.

"It was a good fight and there were lots of good rallies. I played well on the big points and I served

well," Henin-Hardenne said.

"I've won all my matches in straight sets so physically I'm feeling fine."

The match was played indoors after morning showers forced Melbourne Park officials to close the retractable roof.

Henin-Hardenne was an overwhelming favourite to win the match after starting the new year in great form. She won the Sydney International in the lead-up to the Open and had dropped just 27 games on her way to the semis.
SEE PAGE 14 COL 5



JUSTINE HENIN-HARDENNE KIM CLIJSTERS

Cash starved DMFLC

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

The once affluent Dhaka Mahanagari Football League Committee (DMFLC) is presently facing acute shortage of funds.

The organisers of Dhaka football, who over the years had been enjoying healthy coffers by hosting crowd-favourite Premier League, has recently borrowed money from the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) to pay staff salary.

"We have taken one lakh taka as loan from the BFF to meet the necessary expenses. But we are hopeful of overcoming the dry spell once we get the money from the sponsors," said DMFLC secretary Muzammel Haq Mukta to The Daily Star Sport last night.

The DMFLC this year sold out the title sponsorship rights for the two-tier Leagues to Western Union for an amount of Tk. 25 lakh. But the American-based money traders are yet to disburse the first installment though the Premier Division Football League already

reached the halfway mark.

"Since we are dealing directly with the Hong Kong office of the multinational company, it took some time to complete all the formalities. Hopefully, we will get half of the total sum from them after the Eid," said Mukta.

But sponsorship money had never been a cause for concern for DMFLC. The worrying aspect was the poor gate receipts. They have only earned seven lakh taka as gate money from the first-leg of the country's most prestigious League.

This is a sorry figure compared to what they had earned only a decade ago. In 1995 the Dhaka football organisers earned a record amount of Taka two crore through gate receipts.

The turn out of football fans experienced a sharp decline after the game lost its popular appeal to an ever-improving cricket in the recent years.

Besides, the shifting of the most lucrative domestic football competition to Mirpur's Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium from the all-purpose Bangabandhu National Stadium also ended in a drastic drop in spectators' interest.

Rain wins at Melbourne

Cricket

AFP, Melbourne

Zimbabwe's hopes of breaking through for their first win in the triangular VB Series one-day cricket tournament were dashed at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on Thursday when heavy rain forced play to be abandoned.

The Africans had yet to face a ball when rain started falling heavily after Australia had made 263 for nine off 50 overs.

Both teams were awarded three points, taking Australia to 31 points and Zimbabwe to six.

They now head to Perth where Australia will play India on Sunday. Zimbabwe play their final game against India on Tuesday.

One-day specialist Michael Bevan had played a classic knock to lift Australia to 263, a tally which the Africans believed was achievable.

Bevan's 56 was his 46th half-century in one-day matches.

His style to craft, rather than blast, an innings was evident as he hit just three boundaries yet faced just 53 deliveries.

His input came at a useful time for Australia, which was 139 for four in the 27th over when he came to

the crease.

Bevan was eventually run out in the 49th over from a brilliant throw from the deep from Andy Blynnaug as the left-hander attempted two.

Zimbabwe bowled tightly and showed enthusiasm in the field, including three run-outs, as they set about the task of trying to earn

their first win in the series and their first over Australia in more than 20 years.

Damien Martyn, who had been hopelessly out of form, opened the batting and smacked 42 runs off 40 deliveries before being given out to a

SEE PAGE 14 COL 2



Michael Bevan raises his bat on reaching the half-century against Zimbabwe at Melbourne yesterday.

Eng to debate tour plan

Cricket

BBC ONLINE, undated

The key decision-makers in English cricket could take the first step towards abandoning their tour of Zimbabwe when they meet on Thursday.

The 16-man management of the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) will vote on a planning structure that provides a framework for cancelling any tours.

But they will not make a final decision on the Zimbabwe trip until next month.

The Government has stopped short of demanding England pull out of the tour for political and moral reasons.

direct government ban are sufficient to pull out of a tour.

The management board includes ECB chairman David Morgan, chief executive Tim Lamb and several county chief executives.

A paper written by Des Wilson, the chairman of their own marketing committee, states that security should not be the only factor in deciding whether to tour.

It suggests a course of action towards cancelling and postponing touring commitments.

The management board are also likely to consider possible compensation for the Zimbabwe Cricket Union (ZCU) if they do opt out of the tour.

"We must do this decision justice," said Lamb.

"We need a little more time to make a thoroughly informed decision.

explicit view on the tour will be carefully considered and we're pleased to have it."

The ECB, and particularly the counties, felt the financial backlash when England boycotted a World Cup match in Harare last February.

On that occasion, the ICC withheld part of their share of the tournament's vast profits.

The ZCU, which has attempted to increase the pressure on their English counterparts this week, has already dismissed playing in a neutral venue.

Vince Hogg, managing director of the ZCU, claimed: "If England don't come it will be catastrophic for Zimbabwean cricket."

"This tour is vital for our game."

Australia, due to tour Zimbabwe in May and June, are in a similar dilemma to England with their government issuing strongly-worded advice.

"Obviously, the Government's