



Did U Know?

Steffi Graf won a minimum of seven tournaments a year for eleven straight years 1986-96.



ESPN
Sportscentre
Sport News
Live at 8:30 pm

STAR Sports
Sportsline
Sport News
Live at 8:00 pm

TEN Sports
India vs Pakistan
First Test, Day Five
Live at 11:00 am

West Indies vs England
Third Test, Day One
Live at 8:00 pm



Arjuna Ranatunga
(Former Sri Lankan cricket captain)
"This is to totally discredit the achievements of a great player. Murali is chasing the world record with Shane Warne (of Australia) and the Australians and the English do not want one of our players getting there."

Star WHIZZ KID COMPETITION 209

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

Competition closes at 8 pm April 9, 2004 and draw shortly afterwards

1. Who will captain the Bangladesh football team at the SAF Games?	Monwar	Alfaz	Rana
2. How many ODI hundreds has Sachin Tendulkar scored?	37	36	32
3. Who clinched the Indian Wells ATP Masters Series title?	Federer	Roddick	Agassi
4. Who lifted the Spanish Cup?	Zaragoza	Real Madrid	Villareal
5. Who became man-of-the-match in the fifth and final one-day international between India and Pakistan?			
Name			
Class.....			
School Address			
Phone: (If any)			

Kyrgyzstan in Dhaka for AFC U-14 meet

SPORTS REPORTER

Kyrgyzstan was the first team to arrive in Dhaka yesterday to take part in the Asian Football Confederations (AFC) Under-14 Festival of Football.

The juvenile football competition that also features Iran, Sri Lanka and hosts Bangladesh will commence at the Kamalapur Stadium on April 5.

The home side will play the opening game against Sri Lanka 5pm.

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Sensational Sharmin

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh made the 10m air-rifle event their own in the 9th SAF Games when Sharmin Akhter followed in the footsteps of compatriot Asif Hossain Khan to win the women's gold at the Shooting Range of Jinnah Sports Complex in Islamabad yesterday.

The 16-year-old prodigy from country's lone sports institute BKSP celebrated her first success in any international meet when she won a close battle with Indian Purnima a day after her Pabna mate Asif won the men's 10m air-rifle gold. Incidentally, Asif is also a BKSP student.

Sharmin scored 493.9 points against Purnima's 492.9 to present Bangladesh their second gold in the regional sporting extravaganza.

The little known Sharmin shot to fame from virtually nowhere when her best-ever score yesterday. In her only previous international appearance, the teenager collected a disappointing 386 points in the same event at the Asian shooting

championship in Malaysia in February this year.

Although Asif's triumph was expected, Sharmin success took everybody by surprise.

Sharmin also played a vital role in ensuring the silver in the team event as she and her partners Sabrina and Surya came up with a score of 1159.

While the shooters continued to smile, the swimmers on the other hand failed to make any impression in the pool. Karar Samedul Islam, who appeared a good bet for gold in the build up to the Games, bagged his second bronze when he clocked 31.55 seconds in the men's 50m breaststroke. India continued to dominate the pool with Puneet clinching the gold clocking 31 seconds in the event.

Kazi Monirul won the second bronze for Bangladesh in swimming with a timing of 25.05 seconds in the men's 50m free-style.

Sharmin's gold however placed Bangladesh third in the overall standings after the third day with hosts Pakistan enjoying a slight edge over India, winning highest 17 medals.

But India, who are the undis-

puted the monarchs of the SAF Games, lead the gold medal tally with 12 under their belt, compared to Pakistan's five

Bangladesh have so far won 12 medals, Sri Lanka eight, Nepal four and Afghanistan, who are making their first appearance in the meet, have won three. Bhutan and the Maldives were yet to get their names on the list.

In the day's other events, Bangladesh volleyball team registered a 25-21, 25-21, 25-20 points victory against Afghanistan. It was Bangladesh's second win after their success against Maldives on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, the Bangladesh football team face Pakistan in a crucial match at the Jinnah Stadium today. The holders need a draw to advance into the last four while Pakistan have no other option but to win.

The Bangladesh kabaddi team will lock horns with India today hoping for an upset.

Around 1,800 participants are competing in the 10-day games.

A Maldives miracle

AFP, Male



The Maldives pulled off one of the most remarkable upsets in Asian football history here Wednesday by holding mighty South Korea to a goalless draw in qualifiers for the 2006 World Cup.

South Korea, who themselves turned the football world upside down when they reached the last four of the 2002 finals as co-hosts, were left stunned after failing to break through the Maldives defence in the Group 7 match.

The Koreans are Asia's strongest football nation, having played in every World Cup since 1986 and placed at 22nd in the latest FIFA world rankings - 120 spots above the lowly Maldives.

The shock draw is all the more remarkable in that it was only in 1997

that the Maldives suffered a then record 17-0 defeat to Iran during a qualifier for the 1998 World Cup.

South Korea confounded expectations at the 2002 World Cup after wins over European giants Portugal, Italy and Spain helped them into the semi-finals, where they were beaten by Germany.

But South Korea's form has dipped since their 2002 heroics, and they suffered shock defeats to Oman and Vietnam during qualifiers for the Asian Cup last year before scraping into this summer's finals in China.

They opened their World Cup qualifying campaign with a 2-0 victory over Lebanon last month and looked to have eased the pressure on Portuguese coach Humberto Coelho.

Coelho has faced repeated calls to resign from sections of South Korea's media and will come under renewed pressure to quit following this latest setback. He is contracted to coach South Korea until July.

His side could do nothing to pene-

trate some desperate Maldives defence on Wednesday, raining shots down on the opposition goal to no avail.

Korea also picked up three yellow cards as their frustration told in front of around 9,600 fans at the National Stadium.

The draw completed a scarcely believable turnaround for the Maldives, who finished 1998 World Cup qualifiers with the unenviable record of played six, won none, drawn none, lost six, goals for none, goals against 59, points none.

South Korea remain in pole position to reach the second round of Asian qualifying for the World Cup from Group 7, topping the table on four points from Lebanon and Vietnam, who have three points each after two games.

Lebanon defeated Vietnam 2-0 away in Wednesday's other match of the group.



PHOTO: AFP

Bangladesh's Moshir Rahman (No. 12) leaps to smash during their Group A match against Afghanistan in the SAF Games volleyball competition in Islamabad yesterday.

Test by 'Lord of the Rings'



AFP, Sydney

Australian experts checking the validity of Mutiah Muralitharan's controversial "doosra" delivery will use state-of-the-art, Academy Award-winning technology to resolve cricket's most vexing question.

Murali, on the verge of becoming Test cricket's leading wicket-taker, will arrive in Perth this week to have his new delivery assessed by an advanced camera system responsible for the animation in 'The Lord of the Rings' trilogy.

Match referee Chris Broad reported the doosra, the off-spinner's 'wrong-un' delivery, as suspect after Murali took 28 wickets in Sri Lanka's 3-0 series loss to Australia at home this month.

The report to the International Cricket Council led to the Sri Lankan cricket board referring him to biomechanics experts to have the delivery tested and reignited a

political battle over the merits of the inquest.

The doubts raised by Englishman Broad incensed Sri Lankan officials, with former captain Arjuna Ranatunga hinting at a "white



MUTIAH MURALITHARAN

conspiracy" to stop Murali (513) passing West Indian Courtney Walsh's world record of 519 Test wickets, expected in Sri Lanka's tour

of Zimbabwe in April-May.

But Perth-based professor Bruce Elliott, an ICC-approved human-movement specialist who tested Murali in 1996, told Australian Associated Press the advanced technology to be used would deliver a correct and clear-cut analysis of his doosra.

Elliott will use a 12-camera Vicon system which is an updated version of the system used eight years ago, shooting 250 frames per second compared to the six-camera system which captured 50 frames per second.

It allows smaller reflective markers to be attached to the bowler around the elbow, which impede the action less.

"It's the ultimate analysis tool, it's the same sort of tool that they use for all the animations in Lord of the Rings," Elliott said.

Elliott said the process, which measures whether the bent arm extends more than 10 per cent, was accurate.

"This is all automatic so the

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PHOTO: AFP

ANNIHILATOR ANIL! India leg-spinner Anil Kumble successfully appeals for a caught-behind decision against Imran Farhat in Pakistan's second innings on the fourth day of the first Test in Multan yesterday. Kumble took six wickets as India came within one wicket for their historic first Test win on Pakistan soil.

It's a strokeplayers' world

REUTERS, New Delhi



India's Virender Sehwag loves to slash short-pitched balls for six over point, which he calls his "lottery" deliveries.

So until this week, it would not have been appropriate to describe the cavalier opening batsman as cricket's version of a marathon man.

That thought is now undergoing an image makeover after he scored 309 in the first Test against Pakistan in Multan, becoming India's first triple centurion in their 72-year Test history.

The 25-year-old from Delhi achieved the feat with a stunning six over mid-wicket against off-spinner Saqlain Mushtaq, moving in one stroke from 295.

The first reaction among conventional fans was surprise.

For one, it took so long for an Indian batsman to score a triple hundred despite the country producing many technically equipped players with a continuous hunger for runs.

More surprising, however, was how the unorthodox Sehwag beat teammates like Sachin Tendulkar and Rahul Dravid and the previous generation's Sunil Gavaskar, the first man to reach 10,000 Test runs, to the mark.

Tendulkar, who has kept bettering one record or another since his debut as a 16-year-old, took almost 10 years to get his first Test 200, subsequently hitting a career-best 241 not out in the fourth Test in Sydney in January.

Gavaskar's Indian record of 236 had stood for around 18 years until Vangipurappu Laxman scored 281 to spark his team's victory out of defeat against Australia in 2001.

Fans had enough reasons to be foxed by Sehwag's triple ton. He was dismissed for 195 during last year's Australian tour attempting a six to reach 200. That did not deter him in Multan to reach the mark in the most audacious way.

Former all-rounder Chandu Borde praised Sehwag for overcoming factors that could have prevented him from reaching 300.

"It's even more praiseworthy because strokeplayers like him normally don't have much patience or concentration," he said.

Borde said the reason why Sehwag was able to achieve the milestone was because tougher conditions, with no restriction in the number of bouncers per over and leg-side fielders allowed behind the batsman, had been eliminated.

"Earlier, captains always used a deep third man to restrict scoring, but heavier bats have changed the direction in which runs are scored and the position has gone out of fashion."

Sehwag in the meantime has kept a recent sub-continent tradition alive by following Sri Lanka's explosive Sanath Jayasuriya, who smashed 340 against India in 1997, and Pakistan's Inzamamul Haq, who amassed 329 against New Zealand two years ago.

Jayasuriya built his reputation as an attacking one-day opener while sheer power, timing and minimum footwork is Inzamam's forte.

Sehwag faced just 375 balls for his 309 in Multan and former captain Ajit Wadekar put a different spin on why hitters, rather than blockers, have reached the mark.

"To reach 300, you need to score the first two hundreds that much more quickly to have the time and energy to think and go for the third."

He said that was why the top three Test scores belong to outstanding stroke-players such as Gary Sobers (365), Brian Lara (375) and Matthew Hayden, who holds

the record of 380.



PHOTO: AFP

ON TARGET STRAIGHTWAY: India paceman Irfan Pathan raises his finger to mark the dismissal of Abdul Razzaq with the first delivery on the fourth day in Multan yesterday.

Pakistan protest Taufel decisions

CRICINFO, undated

Pakistan have registered an official protest with Ranjan Madugalle, the match referee, after two key umpiring decisions went against them on the third day of the first Test at Multan.

The Pakistanis were incensed by the dismissal of Inzamamul Haq, who was well set on 77 when Simon Taufel gave him out, caught at forward short leg by Akash Chopra off the bowling of Anil Kumble.

And Taufel again raised the ire of the Pakistan camp when Yousuf Youhana was given out caught behind while attempting to flick a delivery that slid down the leg side.

Slow-motion replays suggested that Inzamam had not touched the ball, although in the case of Youhana it was difficult to ascertain whether or not he had got a touch -- even after several replays it was not possible to say with any certainty that he had in fact hit the ball. With this being the case the Pakistan team believe that the benefit of doubt should have been given to the batsman.

The Pakistanis contend that these two decisions had a significant effect on the course of play.

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PHOTO: AFP

DELAYING THE UNAVOIDABLE: Pakistan's Yousuf Youhana, fighting a single-handed battle, responds to the crowd's applause on reaching his hundred in the second innings in Multan yesterday.