



Did U Know?

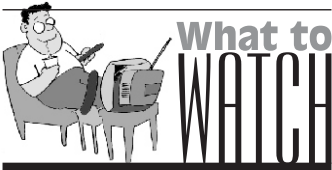
Chaminda Vaas has a career aggregate of 292 ODI wickets and needs seven more to become the second player from Sri Lanka to take 300 ODI wickets.



Matthew Hoggard

(England fast bowler)
"We've had Steve Harmison getting a seven-for, Simon Jones getting a five-for and Freddie Flintoff getting a five-for, so it was about time I pulled my finger out and did something special."

After his hatrick in the third Test against West Indies.



ESPN

Football Focus
Live at 6:30 pm
Sportscentre Hindi
Sport News
Live at 8:30 pm
UEFA Champions League
Arsenal vs Chelsea
Live at 12:30 am (Wednesday)

STAR Sports

Sportline
Sport News
Live at 8:00 pm
UEFA Champions League
Real Madrid vs Monaco
Live at 12:30 am (Wednesday)

TEN Sports

India vs Pakistan
Second Test, Day Two
Live at 11:00 am

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

- Who will captain the Bangladesh football team at the SAF Games?
Monwar Alfaz Rana
- How many ODI hundreds has Sachin Tendulkar scored?
37 36 32
- Who clinched the Indian Wells ATP Masters Series title?
Federer Roddick Agassi
- Who lifted the Spanish Cup?
Zaragoza Real Madrid Villarreal
- Who became man-of-the-match in the fifth and final one-day international between India and Pakistan?

Name
Class. Roll No.
School Address
Phone: (If any)



Bangladesh A vs Zimbabwe A
Fifth Limited-overs Match
Venue: Khulna Divisional Stadium

Gul couldn't have been here

AFP/REUTERS, Lahore



He had enough inspiration around him as a toddler to take to squash.

The lanky seamer hails from the same north-western Pakistani village of Nawa-e-Kali that threw up legendary squash champions, Jahangir Khan, Jansher Khan and Qamar Zaman.

It was Zaman, a former British Open champion, who introduced Gul to cricket by buying him a cricket ball when the young lad had no money to play with his friends in the village.

Gul, who turns 20 on April 14, was picked for the talent search programme of Pakistan International Airlines (PIA), where he was

groomed by fast bowling great Wasim Akram and former international Rashid Khan.

"I saw Gul bowl at the PIA nets and I was immediately struck by the lad's height and his natural bowling action," Akram recalled.

"I thought we had someone here who could make it big and ensured Gul got all the help and facilities from PIA."

Gul, who made his Test debut against Bangladesh last August, made an impression in the third Test of that series where he bagged four wickets in each innings.

He was, however, ignored for the first part of India's long-awaited tour of Pakistan, missing both the one-day series and the first Test at Multan last week which the tourists won by an innings and 52 runs.

But a shin injury to Shabbir Ahmed hastened Gul's return for the second Test here as Pakistan prepared a seaming wicket to hit back at the Indians.

And Akram's advice to Pakistani bowlers -- bowl straight, not fast --

which was published in Monday's newspapers rang in Gul's ears as he marked his run-up at the Gaddafi Stadium.

In a remarkable comeback, Gul took a career-best five wickets as India were reduced to 127-6 after electing to take first strike on the greenish wicket.

Only a defiant 112 from Yuvraj Singh helped the tourists recover to 287 all out.

Gul dismissed first Test heroes Virender Sehwag and Sachin Tendulkar in the space of six deliveries, and had stand-in captain Rahul Dravid and Venkatesai Laxman caught in the slips.

"To have such renowned batsmen against my name is amazing," Gul said.

His only regret was that Akram, who was away in Singapore, was not around to see him bowl.

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PHOTO: AFP

THE RESCUER: India's Yuvraj Singh salutes his teammates on reaching his maiden century on the first day of the Lahore Test yesterday.

PCB's cause for concern

REUTERS, Lahore



The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has cut ticket prices for the second Test between India and Pakistan in a bid to boost the number of spectators over the next few days.

India won the first Test in Multan with only a few thousand people watching in the stadium despite the huge interest cricket between the two countries normally generates.

On the first day of the second Test in Lahore on Monday, there were just a few hundred people in the stands.

"We'll have to take some radical steps," Rameez Raja, chief executive of the PCB, told Reuters on Monday.

"We've sent special ticket packages

to schools and colleges to fill up the stands. We've slashed the ticket rates by 50 percent and other such measures are in the pipeline," he said.

India are playing their first full series in Pakistan in over 14 years after political tensions between the two south Asian neighbours eased recently.

Cricket matches between the two neighbours have always been intense affairs, followed closely by millions of passionate fans on both sides of the border.

Raja said the main reason for the lack of crowds was that the one-day series was held before the Tests.

"When India insisted on playing the one-day internationals before the Test series, we were always apprehensive it would reduce the crowd interest for the Tests," Raja said.

"Once India won the series 3-2, the interest in the Tests was bound to reduce further. No one likes to see

their team losing."

The low turnout for the Tests has been in stark contrast to the packed stadiums for the five one-day matches.

The PCB is hoping fans from India will add to the crowds over the next four days of the Test.

"About 2,500 tickets for this match were sold over the internet to Indians," he said. "We're expecting them to come," Raja said.

The third and final Test starts in Rawalpindi on April 13.

Meanwhile, Pakistan will ask the International Cricket Council (ICC) for a code of conduct to prevent former cricketers from making match-fixing allegations without substantial evidence.

Raja said on Monday a letter would be sent to the ICC this week asking for the issue to be put on the agenda of the next executive board meeting of the sport's governing body.

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PHOTO: STAR

YOU DID A GOOD JOB: A Sri Lankan player is being shown green card for his 'fair play' during the opening match of the Asian Football Confederation Under-14 Festival against Bangladesh at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.



PHOTO: AFP

FIVE-STAR GUL: Pakistan pace bowler Umar Gul is ecstatic after claiming the wicket of Rahul Dravid of India on the opening day of the second Test in Lahore yesterday. Gul claimed a career-best 5-31.

Rafique let off

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammad Rafique was let off lightly after a lot of hype that surrounded the top bowler of the country since his reported dressing-room outburst a day before the fifth one-day international against Zimbabwe in Harare last month.

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) yesterday announced that the 32-year-old Rafique would be reprimanded for his action following the recommendation of the four-member disciplinary committee.

The committee headed by Mahmudur Rahman found Rafique guilty of committing a Level-2 offence, which carries maximum punishment of a two-match ODI ban, but suggested a softer penalty since the cricketer was punished



MOHAMMAD RAFIQUE

before appearing for a trial.

"The tour management has already taken disciplinary action by dropping him (Rafique) from a one-day match and sending him back from Zimbabwe. Considering the fact that in taking this disciplinary (action), the principle of natural justice in accordance with clause 4.1.6 of the code of conduct was denied by not giving him the opportunity of defending himself, additional punishment in regard to further suspension is not recommended," read a BCB statement on Monday.

Rafique, who is the country's leading wicket-taker in both

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Another cheerless day

SPORTS REPORTER



It was another disappointing day for Bangladesh at the 9th SAF Games with

only bronze medals to show for efforts at the regional meet in the Pakistani capital Islamabad yesterday.

And to make matters worse Nepal overtook Bangladesh in fourth place with a total of sixth gold medals.

The first of four was won by Nazmun Nahar in the 400m women's final at the Jinnah Stadium when she clocked 55.48 seconds. Indians Geetha and Chitrak claimed the first two positions with 52.25 and 52.43 seconds respectively.

Elsewhere Bangladesh's shoot-

ing team of Noor Uddin Salim, Altamash Kabir and Iqbal Salim won bronze in the skeet team event with a total score 303 at the Pakistan Sports Complex Shooting Range.

Pakistan won the gold medal scoring 342 and India totalled 2313 for silver.

Noor Uddin later managed third place in the skeet individual competition.

But the main focus was on whom would win the coveted titles of fastest man and woman of South Asia, and that went to India's Piyush Kumar and Jani Chathu-rangan of Sri Lanka.

Piyush sprinted to gold with a time of 10.44 seconds. His compatriot Vilash Nalgunde was second in 10.62 seconds while Muhammad Shahbaz of Pakistan took 10.67 seconds to get the bronze.

Bangladeshi sprinters Abu

Abdullah and Shahidul Islam finished fifth and sixth. Abdullah took 11.06 seconds while Shahid was timed at 11.14.

In the women's final, Chathu-rangan stole the limelight in the absence of her favourite and fellow Lankan Susanthika Jayasinghe.

Susanthika, regarded as the sprint queen, was ruled out due to an injury she picked up during a practice session.

Chathurangan finished in 11.81 seconds to clinch the gold ahead of KM Greeshma of India, who ran 11.96. The another Indian Poonam Tomer picked up bronze in 11.98.

Bangladesh's Shansun Nahar finished fourth with 12.40 seconds

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Zim A come back again



SPORTS REPORTER

Zimbabwe A pulled off a 16-run victory over their Bangladeshi counterparts in the fourth one day match in Khulna yesterday to set up a fascinating series decider today.

The tourists' 275 for nine was always going to be a tall-order to eclipse and despite a whirlwind unbeaten knock from exciting newcomer Faisal Hossain, the home side were bundled out for 259 with two balls to go of the allotted 50 overs at the Khulna Divisional Stadium. The victory enabled Zimbabwe A to level the series at 2-2. The fifth and final game will be held at the same venue today but it will be a 40-over-a-side encounter.

The authorities cut the overs apparently to let the touring side leave Khulna early for Dhaka. The Zimbabweans are scheduled to head back home tomorrow on completion of their one month tour.

Zimbabwe A captain Alester Maragwede won the toss and had no hesitation to bat first. His openers Piet Rinke and Brendan Taylor were in business straightaway and put on 67 inside 10 overs before Rinke was stumped by Dhiman Ghosh off left-arm spinner Abdur Razzak Raj for 39.

Taylor, opening in place of the experienced Trevor Gripper who was rested, however carried on to 72 off 105 balls until he was run out by Manjarul Islam Rana. The right-hander, who was a member of the Zimbabwe squad in the recent under-19 World Cup, hit eight fours and a six.

Elton Chigambura and Richard Simms then shared a crucial fourth wicket stand. Chigambura made 53 from 72 deliveries while Sims fell just one short of a half-century.

Razzak, fresh from his fantastic seven-for in the third match, was once again Bangladesh A's best bowler and took four wickets giving away 54 from his ten overs.

Manjarul fell early when the hosts' chase began but veteran Al-Shahriar showed definite signs of getting his touch back with his second fifty in consecutive games. The elegant Test discard clubbed two sixes and six fours as he raced to 52 off 58 balls before paceman Jordan Nicolle had him caught behind.

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PHOTO: STAR

Grand Master Ziaur Rahman (L) makes his move against Saifuddin Lavlu during their ninth round game of the Singer 30th National Chess Championship at the NSC conference room yesterday.