



Did U Know?

Jacques Kallis has scored 6,978 runs, and needs 22 more to become the first South African player to score 7,000 runs in ODI matches.



Tatenda Taibu
(Zimbabwe's new cricket captain)
"I am ready. I am always ready for the tasks I am given and I want to make the best out of each opportunity that comes my way."
After being named captain.



ESPN
English Premier Football League
Man United vs Birmingham City
Live at 7:55 pm
Primera Liga
Celta de Vigo vs Sevilla
Live at 2:00 am (Sunday)
STAR Sports
English Premier Football League
Chelsea vs Middlesbrough
Live at 7:55 pm
TEN Sports
England vs West Indies
Fourth Test, Day One
Live at 7:30 pm

Star WHIZZ KID COMPETITION 210

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

Competition closes at 8 pm April 23, 2004 and draw shortly afterwards

- How many gold medals did Bangladesh win in the recently concluded SAF Games?
5 4 3
- Who is the coach of Chelsea?
Erikson Wenge Renieri
- What is the title of the official Euro 2004 song?
Forma Forza Forca
- Who clinched the WTA Key Biscayne title?
Venus Henin Serena
- What was the score of the India-Pakistan one-day series?
.....

Name

Class..... Roll No.....

School Address

Phone: (if any)

CJKS cricket Abahani post victory

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Title aspirants Abahani defeated Shatabdi Ghoshti by 55 runs in a CJKS-Ispahani Premier Cricket League match at the MA Aziz Stadium yesterday.

Batting first, Abahani scored 187 for eight in the stipulated 50 overs with opener Ahad Ripon top-scoring 41 off 80 balls and Imran Ahmed adding 32 off 61 deliveries. Besides, Former national skipper Minhajul Abedin made only 18 off 30 balls.

Arafat captured three Abahani wickets.

In reply, the body language of

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Top players against pool GP to sponsor CCL



SPORTS REPORTER

Although registration formalities of participating teams have been all but completed, national cricketers were yet to find reasons to feel optimistic about the first-ever Corporate Cricket League (CCL). Chairman of the CCL's organising committee Khondokar Jamiluddin informed yesterday that eleven corporate houses have ensured their participation a day ahead of the extended registration deadline which expires today. The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB)'s Development Squad completes the 12-team line-up.

"GrameenPhone has agreed to sponsor the meet for two seasons. We are therefore determined to start the league from April 20," said Jamiluddin.

But some top players expressed

their apprehension about the BCB's national pool of 24 which was declared on Thursday. Any CCL side can recruit two players at most from the 24 which many fear will leave a number of cricketers clubless. Also, the Bangladesh team's international commitments could prompt some corporate houses not to include national cricketers as they might not be in a position to play too many games in the CCL.

"I think it will come as a big blow for some players. Especially, bowlers will be effected by this pool system," said Bangladesh captain Habibur Bashar who added that he was yet to receive an offer.

Bashar said that he has had talks with other cricketers over the issue and a few of them will meet concerned officials of the BCB today to try and find a proper balance.

The Tigers' skipper also believed that it was practically impossible to compensate the huge number of cricketers in the country through one corporate league. The CCL was

arranged after clubs refused to participate in this season's Dhaka Premier Division league, traditionally the most financially lucrative domestic cricket event. Their argument was that organising the delayed 2003-2004 league at this time of the year will mean holding two Premier Division competitions in the same year as the next league is scheduled to start in November according to the BCB's calendar of events. Also, with the rainy season coming, they felt that matches could be severely affected by the weather.

Later, First Division clubs also took the same stance.

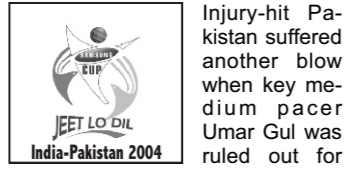
This has left hundreds of cricketers faced with the prospect of being deprived of their main source of income.

"This is an immense setback for players who fully depend on the

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Pakistan lose Gul

AFP, Lahore



Injury-hit Pakistan suffered another blow when key medium pacer Umar Gul was ruled out for the series-deciding third Test against India because of back trouble, selectors said Friday.

Gul took a career best 5-31 to help Pakistan win the second Test in Lahore and draw level with India at 1-1 in the three-match series.

The final encounter is due to start Tuesday at the Rawalpindi stadium near Islamabad.

"We have to name a 17-man squad after injuries to some key players with Gul also ruled out due to a back problem," said chief selector Wasim Bari.

Fast bowler Shabbir Ahmed is nursing a shin injury, while experienced wicketkeeper Moin Khan and allrounder Abdul Razaq were

earlier ruled out of the final Test after failing to regain fitness.

Moin and Razaq played in the first Test at Multan but pulled out of the second Test with the former suffering a groin injury and the latter hit by backache.

Bari admitted he was concerned about the injuries to frontline players ahead of the crucial Test.

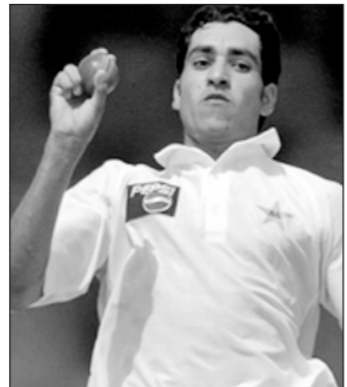
"The injuries are worrying but I am confident the boys will put this behind them and display the same standard of cricket that earned them victory," Bari said.

India won the first Test at Multan by an innings and 52 runs while Pakistan levelled the series with a nine-wicket win in the second in Lahore.

Pacers Rao Itikhar Anjum, Fazle Akbar, Abdul Rauf, and all-rounder Rana Naveedul Hasan have been recalled as back ups.

Only Akbar has played for Pakistan before with his last of two Tests against New Zealand in 2001.

PAKISTAN: Inzamamul Haq (captain), Taufeeq Umar, Imran Nazir, Imran Farhat, Yasir Hameed, Yousuf Youhana, Asim Kamal, Misbahul Haq, Kamran Akmal (wicketkeeper), Shoaib Akhtar, Mohammad Sami, Danish Kaneria, Shoaib Malik, Rao Itikhar Anjum, Fazle Akbar, Abdul Rauf, Rana Naveedul Hasan.



UMAR GUL

AFC U-14 soccer Hosts thrashed yet fair

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh suffered a 7-0 thrashing against Iran in the last match of the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) U-14 Football Festival at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

However, the hosts are poised to receive the fair play trophy with a comfortable lead of 137.14 points against second placed Sri Lanka's 66.28 points in the four-nation competition.

But the final standings could not be known when this report was being filed at 9pm.

Bangladesh trailed 3-0 at half-time. The home team's defenders were found wanting against the physically superior Iranian forwards.

Earlier, Kyrgyzstan beat Sri Lanka 2-0.



Action from yesterday's AFC U-14 Football Festival encounter between Sri Lanka and Kyrgyzstan at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

A ton of umpiring



SPORTS REPORTER

Experienced West Indian umpire Steve Bucknor is eyeing a century of Test matches before he retires in 2007.

"I have set a target of 2007 for myself and with the speed of Test matches I am doing I hope to complete the century before retiring," he said.

The 57-year-old from Jamaica took his tally to 89 Tests after he officiated the Lahore Test between Pakistan and India which finished here on Thursday.

"I have to work hard to keep myself fit and to meet the demands of umpiring in the high profile game of cricket and it would be a great honour to complete century of Tests as umpire," said Bucknor.

Bucknor's first Test as umpire was the Jamaica Test between India and the West Indies in the 1988-1989 season and he has also officiated in 118 one-day internationals

including the 1992, 1996 1999 and 2003 World Cup finals.

He also refereed a World Cup football match between El Salvador and Holland.

Bucknor, who came under severe criticism over some controversial decisions during India's tour of Australia earlier this season, admitted everyone makes mistakes.

"With extensive television coverage umpiring has become very difficult from the time when I started my career.

"But I am pretty happy with my performance and everyone makes mistakes, including myself," said Bucknor, famous for waiting several seconds before shaking his head or raising his finger.

"I give myself enough time to think about my decision, to replay just about everything about that delivery, and by so doing I should in the end be able to make that decision."

Bucknor lamented the problems in West Indies cricket as the Test side seeks to avoid a first-ever series whitewash at home against England.

"I think cricket in the Caribbean would be further pushed back after the recent defeats and this is all because of lack of interest by the youths."

"Players now play more for money rather than for their country and this is a serious problem in West Indian cricket."



STEVE BUCKNOR

Mukti lodge appeal

SPORTS REPORTER

Muktijodha Sangsad Krira Chakra are banking on an appeal to the disciplinary committee of the Asian Football Confederation (AFC) after the regional governing body awarded full points to their Yemen opponents Al Shaab Ibb Club.

The action against the Dhaka giants came after the Reds failed to fly to Sanaa for the AFC Cup away tie on April 7. This was revealed by BFF general secretary Anwarul Haq Helal said yesterday.

But Muktijodha coach Shafiqul Islam Manik said that they sent a letter to AFC requesting to arrange the match in Bangladesh.

"It was not our fault because we only received the confirmation letter from the Yemen football authorities on April 5. So that's why it was impossible to play under the circumstances. The BFF got the AFC letter on April 6 but in the mean time we requested the AFC disciplinary committee to consider our case," said Manik.

Muktijodha lost their previous matches in the competition last February against Nisa Club of Turkmenistan (away) and Al Nejme of Lebanon (home) by same 1-0 margins.

Muktijodha club will play their second home match against Al Shaab Ibb on April 20 then take on Nisa May 5 at home before flying to Lebanon on May 19 for their last away match against Al Nejme.

School cricket Final round starts today

SPORTS REPORTER

The 16-team final round of the 22nd Standard Chartered National School Cricket Tournament begins today at four different city venues.

Defending champions BKSP will take on Adarsha High School at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium, last year's runners-up Parjari Kalindi High School face Gani Adarsha High School at the Jagannath Hall ground, Razzak High School meet Rahmatullah Model High School at the City Club ground and Haji Amjad Ali High School play Bhola Government High School at the Fatullah Stadium in the inaugural day's encounters.

Sixteen schools split into two groups will play in the knockout basis final round. The group champions will play in a two-day final match starting on April 14 at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

GROUPS
GROUP A: BKSP, Adarsha High School (Narayanganj), Razzak High School (Comilla), Rahmatullah Model High School, Saint Xaviers' High School (Khulna), Narail Government High School, Dinajpur Zilla School and Willes Little Flower School.
GROUP B: Parjari Kalindi High School, Sabuj Kanan High School (Siraiganj), AK High School, National Bangla High School, Haji Amjad Ali High School (Munshiganj), Gani Adarsha High School (Chandpur), Blue Bird High School (Sylhet) and Bhola Government High School.

Mattau arrives today for nat'l camp

SPORTS REPORTER

Sri Lankan batting coach Wayne Mattau, who worked with the Tigers before the Zimbabwe series, will arrive today, ahead of the national camp for the tour of West Indies that starts in full swing tomorrow at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

The camp, which began on March 29 with 24 probabilities announced by chief selector Faruque Ahmed, has so far concentrated on physical fitness in the absence of coach Dav Whatmore. Whatmore who flew home to spend time with his family, is expected to return today and supervise the camp that will welcome the arrival of players involved in the one-day series against

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WHIZZ KID-209 winner Md Mir Kashem

(Oxford Int'l School)
Please produce your ID card and an attested passport size photograph while collecting the winner's prize from the Sports Desk of The Daily Star at 7:30 pm on April 18.

Zia reclaims nat'l crown



SPORTS REPORTER

Grand Master Ziaur Rahman regained the national title with a round to go yesterday.

The country's leading player took an unassailable eleven-point lead defeating Mehedi Hasan Parag to win the Singer 30th National Chess Championship at the NSC chess room.

Zia lost the prestigious crown last year at the hands of International Master Reefat Bin Sattar, who this year is fighting for the fifth-sixth spot.

"I'm delighted because I regained the championship just after a year. The strength of competition this year was very tough but I was confident of clinching the title," said Zia, an eight-time winner since 1988.

"My only expectation is to play the World Championship. A player needs to finish in tenth position in the Asian qualifying competition or emerge as regional champion if one wants to play in the world meet. I narrowly missed it last year," he said.

IM Abdullah Al Rakib was in second place with nine points after sharing points with Abdul Maleq of Chittagong while fellow IM Enamul Hossain Rajib was third position with 8.5 points.

Grand Master Niaz Murshed and IM Reefat Bin Sattar were sharing fourth position securing eight points.

In the 12th round, Rajib beat FM Sheikh Nasir, Niaz beat Shawkat Hossain Pollab, Reefat beat

Debaraj Chatterjee, Aminul Islam Polash beat Monjur Alam and Mohammad Javed beat Saif Uddin Lavlu.

Meanwhile, in Thursday's matches, Zia beat Maleq, Rakib beat Niaz, Polash beat Rajib, Nasir beat Parag, Reefat beat Monjur Alam, Lavlu beat Pollab and Chatterjee beat Javed.

The final round starts today at 3pm.



PHOTO: STAR
BANGLADESH KINGPIN: Grand Master Ziaur Rahman engrossed in deep thought during his 12th round game of the Singer 30th National Chess Championship against Mehdi Hasan Parag at the NSC conference room yesterday.

England look at history



AFP, St. John's

England have the opportunity to complete an unprecedented Test series clean sweep on Caribbean soil in the fourth and final cricket Test against West Indies, starting at the Antigua Recreation Ground on Saturday.

Michael Vaughan's side lead the four-Test series 3-0, after comprehensive victories at Kingston, Port-of-Spain and Bridgetown that allowed them to retain the Wisden Trophy, symbol of supremacy between the two sides, and made them the first England team to win a Test series in the Caribbean for 36 years.

"We have played some good cricket and we hope to continue that," Vaughan said.

"If we prepare well, that's what

we will be looking to do -- to win the next game.

"If we win in Antigua, obviously, it is the first time it's ever been done. We are just looking to continue with the momentum where we left off in Barbados.

"We are just trying to play well and work hard. The teams are evenly matched. West Indies are very talented and we have just managed to come through a couple of tough sessions. That's been the difference."

Far greater awaits Vaughan and his mates if Brian Lara's side once more fails to come to the party for the most significant Test match of their lives.

Last year, Australia were like England. They had won the preceding three Tests at Georgetown, Port-of-Spain and Bridgetown, but West Indies managed to wriggle free from their firm grip to post the highest fourth innings winning total in the history of Test cricket at the ARG.

"That's a hook line the guys have brought into the match -- that we have been successful here recently and if we look at our performances in Antigua it must be a happy hunting ground for the West Indies team so that's something that also gives them confidence," West Indies manager Tony Howard said.

He added: "Once you have been beaten three games in a row, there is always going to be that area of doubt. But certainly there are certain mechanisms you can use to get back the confidence.

"You need to get the team spirit back up. You need to get the guys working together and we have seen a lot of that in the last couple of days."

West Indies will require a performance equal of last year's in this

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Premiership In King Henry's court



AFP, London

Thierry Henry stopped the rot ravaging Arsenal's season with a majestic match-winning hat-trick as Arsenal twice came from behind to beat Liverpool 4-2 in a thrilling Good Friday drama at Highbury.

The win restored Arsenal's lead over Chelsea at the top of the Premiership to seven points with seven matches left and with Henry in this kind of form there seems little prospect of the Gunners allowing the title to slip from their grasp now.

But for their brilliant Frenchman it might easily have been another painful afternoon for Arsene Wenger's side in the wake of the defeats by Manchester United and

Chelsea which ended their interest in the FA Cup and Champions League.

Liverpool were worthy of the 2-1 lead they enjoyed at half-time courtesy of Sami Hyypia's early header and the Michael Owen strike which restored their lead after Henry's equaliser.

But the French striker was simply irresistible after the interval, starting the move that led to Robert Pires's second equaliser before scoring one of the goals of the season on his way to completing his hat-trick.

Liverpool's first lead had been established with the generous assistance of the Arsenal defence, who failed to pick-up Steven Gerrard lurking beyond the far post as Harry Kewell prepared to send over a corner from the right.

The Australian's delivery was

immaculate and Gerrard's powerful header back across goal was nudged over the line by Hyypia.

With Liverpool using Owen as a lone striker in front of a five-man midfield, Arsenal's prospects of getting back into the match did not look good and they were fortunate not to fall further behind.

A Kewell shot needed a deflection off Lauren to carry it fractionally wide of Lehmann's left-hand post and Owen will have been frustrated at his failure to exploit John Arne Riise's punt into the box, which caught the Arsenal defence napping for the second time in the match.

With only Lehmann to beat, the England striker lifted his shot over

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PHOTO: AFP
HAIL HENRY! Arsenal ace Thierry Henry (L) puts the ball beyond Liverpool goalkeeper Jerzy Dudek for his second goal at Highbury yesterday.