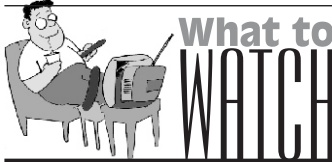




Did U Know?

George Foreman was so disgusted with his loss against Muhammad Ali in the "Rumble in the Jungle" in Zaire in 1974 that a few months later he took on five opponents in one day and knocked them all out!



What to WATCH

ESPN

English Premier Football League
Newcastle United vs Arsenal

Live at 9:00 pm

Primera Liga

Real Madrid vs Osasuna

Live at 1:30 am (Monday)

STAR Sports

Gillette World Sports Special

Int'l Sports News

Repeat at 8:00 pm

TEN Sports

England vs West Indies

Fourth Test, Day Two

Live at 8:00 pm



Shoaib Akhtar

(Pakistan speedster)

"I am not an angel, I have my bad days and good days. I am still learning day by day."

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**

| | | | |
|---|----------|--------|---------|
| 1. How many gold medals did Bangladesh win in the recently concluded SAF Games? | 5 | 4 | 3 |
| 2. Who is the coach of Chelsea? | Eriksson | Wenger | Ranieri |
| 3. What is the title of the official Euro 2004 song? | Forma | Forza | Forca |
| 4. Who clinched the WTA Key Biscayne title? | Venus | Henin | Serena |
| 5. What was the score of the India-Pakistan one-day series? | 4-1 | 5-0 | 3-2 |

Name

Class Roll No.

School Address

Phone: (If any)

Malik speaks again

REUTERS, Rawalpindi

Former Pakistan captain Salim Malik, banned from cricket for life in 2000 for alleged involvement in match-fixing, wants a chance to clear his name.

Malik, who turns 40 this month, was banned by a judicial inquiry commission looking into match-fixing, headed by Lahore High Court judge Malik Mohammad Qayyum.

"Since then I've filed several appeals against the ban. My appeal is now pending in the Supreme Court but they are yet to set a date for a hearing," Malik told Reuters on Saturday.

The Qayyum commission recommended life bans for Malik

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Golden heroes return

SPORTS REPORTER



It was a grand homecoming for three gold winners of the Ninth SAF Games when shooters Asif Hossain Khan, Sharmin Akhter and swimmer Rubel Rana arrived at the Zia International Airport yesterday after their heroics in Islamabad.

When Asif, who won the men's 10m air-rifle event, felt the warmth and admiration for the second time in his young life after repeating his exploits of the Manchester Commonwealth Games in 2002, it was on the other hand a moment to savour for Sharmin and Rubel.

State Minister for Youth and Sports Fazlur Rahman received the heroes along with president of Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) and Chief of Army Staff Lt Gen Hasan Mashhud Chowdhury with bouquets, but the scene was touching as it became more like a family reunion.

Little Sharmin was awe-struck seeing the broad smile of her father Amzad Hossain, who is a paan (betel-leaf) vendor in Pabna.

"I'm speechless at how proud my youngest daughter has made me. I can only say that I am the

happiest man on earth because she ensured Bangladesh's national anthem to be played in Pakistan," said a grey bearded Amzad, who came to the airport with his four other daughters and son.

The sweet 16-year-old Sharmin emerged from nowhere to stardom by shooting gold in the women's 10m air-rifle event a day after Asif's feat in the regional sporting carnival.

The BKSP student said that she was still living in her dreams of how it all happened. Starting as a swimmer in the lone sports institute in 1997, she realised that there was no hope for her in the pool so she switched to shooting in 2000 after consulting her uncle Shajahan Ali, who is a distinguished swimmer himself.

"It all started when I tried my luck in shooting when the event was introduced for female athletes in that same year. I was always confident with a rifle in my hand and the success in the SAF Games will inspire me to do greater things in the Olympics or Asiad," a bubbling Sharmin told reporters at the airport.

But Sharmin thinks to do well on the bigger stage the shooters need to be sent abroad for training.

Asif also found his mother waiting to embrace her son, whom she raised with great difficulty and only after placing him in the care of BKSP did she

heave a sigh of relief.

"I always knew that I would win in my favourite event. It's a great feeling to strike gold in Islamabad after Manchester," said Asif. But the ace marksman also from Pabna was bitter at a lot of broken promises made in the past.

"After winning the Commonwealth Games gold I was promised a secured job by a well-known company. But it never happened. Also if we were not deprived of better training otherwise the results could have been better," said Asif.

Bangladesh's other hero Rubel, who won only the country's third gold in the men's 100m backstroke, missed a family gathering but he was far from being unhappy.

"Nobody expected gold from me but I had a personal dream to give my country something. Now I want something in return, which I think is not too much to ask for that is send us aboard for better training," said Rubel, who hails from Kushtia.

Bangladesh sent a strong 138-member contingent to Islamabad but success apart from the trio was few and far between.

The next SAF Games under a new name (South Asian Games) will be staged in Colombo in 2005.



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

THE SWEET TASTE OF GOLD: Top (L-R) Swimmer Rubel Rana, shooters Sharmin Akhter and Asif Hossain Khan pose with their medals on arrival at the Zia International Airport yesterday. Bottom (L) Asif's mother kisses her son and (R) former SAF gold medallist Sabrina Sultan embraces Sharmin.

CCL pool now 10

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) yesterday reduced the 24-member national pool to 10 for the Corporate Cricket League (CCL).

The new-look competition involving 11 corporate houses and an Under-19 selection of the Board is scheduled to start from April 20.

The Board cut the list following dissatisfaction among the cricketers, who argued that the number would see sitting idle.

"We now have brought ten players in the pool who presently are on the BCB payroll. Teams will eligible to recruit maximum two players from the new list," said chairman of the CCL's organizing committee Khondokar Jamiluddin.

The committee reduced the number after a meeting with Bangladesh captain Habibul Bashar and his predecessor Khaled Mahmud.

"I think there is nothing wrong with the new list and nobody will have wait on the sideline," said Bashar after the meeting.

The national pool players are: Habibul Bashar, Khaled Mahmud, Khaled Mashud, Alok Kapali, Mohammed Rafique, Hannan Sarkar, Javed Omar Belim, Rajin Saleh, Tapas Baishya and Mushfiqur Rahman.

Zia remains invincible

SPORTS REPORTER

Grand Master Ziaur Rahman became unbeaten champion in the Singer 30th National Chess Championship when he drew his last game with International Master Enamul Hossain Rajib at the National Sports Council conference room yesterday.

Zia, who regained the title day before winning the penultimate game, ended with 11.5 points while International Master Abdullah Al-Rakib finished runner-up securing 9.5 points.

Rakib shared points with Mehedi Hasan Parag in the last game.

Grand Master Niaz Murshed and Rajib ended with nine points each and will meet in a play-off match today to determine their position (3rd and 4th).

Last year champion International Master Reefat-bin-Sattar and FM Sheikh Nasir Ahmed earned 8.5 points each and they will also battle in a play-off match for 5th and 6th positions.

Meanwhile, the 25th National Junior Chess Championship will begin from Thursday at Bangla-desh Chess Federation Auditorium.

The interested boys and girls have been asked to enroll their names by Tuesday.

BKSP, Kalindi post wins

SPORTS REPORTER



Rain affected play on the opening day of the final round of the 22nd Standard Chartered National School Cricket Tournament yesterday.

Three curtailed over matches took places at three grounds while not a single ball was bowled at the City Club ground where the coin went in favour of Comilla's Razzak High School who moved into the next round eliminating Rahmatullah Model High School of Dhaka.

Three curtailed over matches took places at three grounds while not a single ball was bowled at the City Club ground where the coin went in favour of Comilla's Razzak High School who moved into the next round eliminating Rahmatullah Model High School of Dhaka.

Holders BKSP eased to a 67-run victory against Adarsha High School at the Dhamondi Cricket Stadium in a 25-over-a-side match.

The sports institute team piled up 177-9 in 25 after deciding to bat. Adarsha High School were all out for 110 despite a brave 62 by Masud Rana.

Last year's runners-up Parjia Kalindi High School also scored a comfortable six-wicket victory against Gani Adarsha High School of Chandpur at Dhaka University's Jagannath Hall ground.

Babu hit 51 as Gani Adarsha

SEE PAGE 14 COL 5



PHOTO: AFP

IT'S GOOD TO BE BACK: India captain Sourav Ganguly bowls during a practice session at the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore yesterday. Ganguly flew home following the one-day series after suffering a back injury. He will lead the side in the third and final Test starting in Rawalpindi on April 13.

Mushtaq eyes recall

AFP, London

Pakistan leg-spinner Mushtaq Ahmed said he for one was not ready to call time on his Test career and insisted he would going flat-out to earn an international recall.

Mushtaq, 33, played the last of his 52 Tests against South Africa in Faisalabad in October.

But he was left out of the side for the current series at home to arch-rivals India which is tied at 1-1 ahead of the final Test next week in Rawalpindi.

However, he said watching the series had made him even more determined to get his place back.

"I'm just 33 so I think I've still got two or three good years ahead of me," Mushtaq told AFP at Lord's here Friday, where he was playing for county champions Sussex in the English season opener against MCC.

"Now I have to stay fit and keep

SEE PAGE 14 COL 1

WI 98 for 2 at lunch

REUTERS, St John's

Chris Gayle hit his 14th test half-century as West Indies showed some welcome spirit on the first day of the fourth and final Test against England on Saturday.

Trailing 3-0 in the series and looking to avoid their first whitewash on home soil, Gayle smashed 12 fours in his 69 as West Indies reached lunch on 98 for two.

Captain Brian Lara was unbeaten on 17 and though Gayle fell to the off-spin of Gareth Batty to the last ball before lunch, the home side at least showed some fight that had been sorely lacking in the first three Tests.



REUTERS, Lisbon

Portugal has performed beyond UEFA's wildest dreams by getting 10 stadiums ready in time for Euro 2004, says Martin Kallen, the man sent in to run one of the world's largest sporting events.

Time and money are a growing constraint, however, and the organisers may also need a hand from a successful Portuguese team under Brazilian coach Luiz Felipe Scolari to meet the goal of staging the best

Next it's Sami scare

REUTERS, Rawalpindi

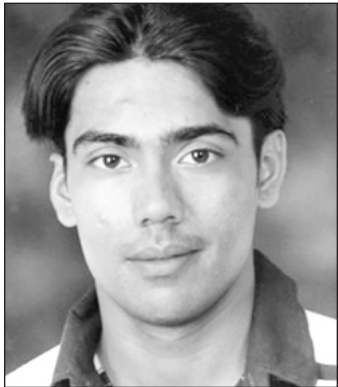


Pakistan's chances of winning the historic Test series against India have been dented with the news fast bowler Mohammad Sami is struggling with back pain.

Shoaib Akhtar is now the only fully-fit front-line pace bowler available for the hosts, who won the second Test by nine wickets in Lahore earlier this week, as they head into the series-deciding third Test in Rawalpindi starting on Tuesday.

Seamer Umar Gul was ruled out of the third Test with a back injury on Friday while pace bowler Shabbir

Ahmed (shin), allrounder Abdul Razzaq (back) and wicketkeeper Moin Khan (groin strain) all missed the second Test.



MOHAMMAD SAMI

SEE PAGE 14 COL 4

Zim in chaos: Goodwin



BBC ONLINE, London

Former Zimbabwe star Murray Goodwin believes the Test nation is on the brink of collapse as a cricket team.

Goodwin said up to 14 players could resign following the sacking of captain Heath Streak.

Goodwin, who plays for Sussex, said: "I've spoken to some of the players and they are not happy with the situation."

"There isn't enough depth in Zimbabwe cricket to cope with the loss of 14 players and still compete effectively at international level."

Streak was sacked last week when he questioned the composition of the Zimbabwe Cricket Board's

five-man selection panel.

Tatenda Taibu, a 20-year-old wicket-keeper, has been promoted to captain.



MURRAY GOODWIN

Streak believed the panel should be made up from those who have played cricket at the highest level, thus removing a black selector with no Test experience and an Asian television commentator.

He met with the board on Thursday but vowed not to return to the team until the issues he highlighted had been sorted out.

According to the Daily Telegraph, Streak has called on the International Cricket Council to "come here and investigate the grave situation at all levels of the game".

Now another member of the ZCU, Ozias Byute, who is in charge of racial quotas, has said he has sacked a group of 10 white players for taking this weekend off.

The players were set to start in

SEE PAGE 14 COL 4

Race against time

European Championship ever held.

"Nobody believed that Portugal could achieve what was put on paper in 1999," Kallen, the tournament's chief operating officer, told Reuters in an interview this week.

"Even UEFA didn't believe it. We thought if they did 80 per cent or so it would be fantastic but the Portuguese have achieved in an outstanding way. We thought in the end there might be eight stadiums but we have all 10."

The big problem for Kallen and his team at Euro 2004 SA, the company running the 23-day tournament, is that delays in completing such a massive stadium building

programme are causing problems with two months to go before kick off on June 12.

"Time is the most important thing," Kallen said.

"Everybody is finally waking up but time is short."

"The stadiums (were) finished too late and that gave us a lot of headaches. They should have been in place one year before (the start of the tournament)."

Kallen is confident that the problems, which include the positioning of media boxes and hospital-ity areas and constantly changing plans for parking, will be resolved but he is careful not to underesti-

mate potential difficulties.

"The football will be played in any case," he said.

"It's only the question of quality. We want to stage the best European Championship and for me, at the moment, we're balanced between tops and flops."

"The people in Japan and (South) Korea did a fantastic job (on the 2002 World Cup organisation) but they had a huge amount of money and resources that we just don't have here."

SEE PAGE 14 COL 2