



Did U Know?

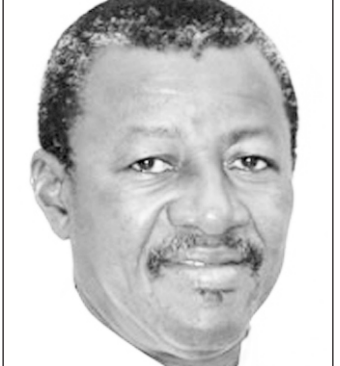
Umar Gul became the second Pakistani batsman after Wazir Mohammad (Peshawar in 1954-55) to be dismissed hit wicket in a Test match against India.



What to WATCH

- ESPN**
English Premier Football League
Aston Villa v Chelsea
Live at 7:55 pm
EPL Postgame Show
Premier League programme
Live at 10:00 pm
Sportscentre India
Sports Programme
Live at 10:30 pm
English Premier Football League
Fulham v Blackburn
Live at 12:55 am (Tuesday)
- STAR Sports**
Sportsline
Sports Programme
Live at 8:00 pm
Augusta Masters Golf
Final round repeat at 11:00 pm
- TEN Sports**
West Indies vs England
4th Test, Day 3
Live at 8:00 pm

TALK TURKEY



Steve Bucknor
(West Indian cricket umpire)
"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."

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?
Eriksson Wenger Ranieri
- What is the title of the official Euro 2004 song?
Forma Forza Forza
- Who clinched the WTA Key Biscayne title?
Venus Henin Serena
- What was the score of the India-Pakistan one-day series?
.....

CJKS-Ispahani cricket

CU CORRESPONDENT

Mohammedan Sporting Club recorded a five-wicket victory over Shaheed Shahjahan Sangha in the CJKS-Ispahani Premier Cricket League at the MA Aziz Stadium in Chittagong yesterday.

Winning the toss, Shaheed Shahjahan Sangha batted first and collected 230 before being all out in 47.4 overs.

Mottau wants less shots



SPORTS REPORTER

Owen Mottau believes that the Bangladeshi batsmen have shown marked improvement during the tour of Zimbabwe but there was still room to work on their shot selection before the Tigers visit the West Indies next month.

The Sri Lanka-born Australian batting coach, who had a brief stint with the Bangladeshi players before they left for Zimbabwe, is back in Dhaka to assist Tigers coach Dav Whatmore in preparing the team for their maiden tour of the Caribbean.

Habibul Bashar's men fly off to the Caribbean in the first week of May to play two Tests and three one-day internationals.

"Definitely they have improved. However, they must learn to curb the tendency of playing too many shots once set at the wicket," said Mottau after the first full training session of the 24 probables at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

He was also delighted with Bangladesh's one-day international victory against Zimbabwe that ended a 47-match losing streak but noted that they still needed to curb their over-attacking instincts.

"They made a few silly mistakes and also went for excessive shot making. I think they will overcome their flaws in the nets," Mottau said.

Whatmore, who returned to Dhaka after spending a ten-day vacation with his family, agreed with Mottau's observation.

"The boys played too many shots in Zimbabwe and I think Owen (Mottau) can correct the mistakes in the nets before the demanding tour of the West Indies," said Whatmore.

Whatmore thought the Bangladesh A team's triumph over visiting Zimbabwe A in the four-day and one-day series recently was a massive inspiration for everyone associated with the country's cricket.

"It was a great achievement as Bangladesh won both the series". I don't think we have ever won any-

thing like this. This is just an indication of Bangladesh's step-by-step improvement," said Whatmore, who expressed his satisfaction at Alok Kapali's return to form with the bat during the series.

Whatmore however, was keen on having a specialist bowling coach at the training camp.

"I think Sarwar Imran and one of our selectors Prince (Golam Nowsheer) can help the boys out in this department," he added.

Whatmore is presently armed with as many as three aids and a fourth is set to join. American baseball coach Mike Young, who worked with the unconquerable Australian side as a fielding coach for quite some time, is expected at the camp on April 13.

The first ever Corporate Cricket League (CCL) will be a 13-team competition after CityCell became a last minute entry to the line-up.

City Cell, one of the top cellular companies of the country, confirmed their participation on Saturday night, the deadline for registration.

Chairman of the CCL's organising committee Khondokar Jamiluddin met with the representatives of the corporate houses yesterday to finalise the groupings.

GramreenPhone, Bashundhara Group, Gazi Tank Cricketers, Biman Bangladesh Airlines, MM Ispahani Limited, Bangladesh Agricultural Development Corporation (BADC) Krira Sangha and BCB Development Squad have been placed in Group A.

Group B has Partex Group, ACME Laboratories, Beximco Group, Aktel Executive Club, CityCell and ARAF Apparels.

The organisers have fixed April 15 and 16 for registration of the players while the league kicks off on April 20.

"The office teams can only register players who have experience of playing in the First Division league atleast. If any side breaches this rule, they will be automatically eliminated from the tournament," said Jamiluddin.

Matches will be played at four venues: Bangabandhu National Stadium (BNS), Fatullah Stadium, Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium and BKSP.



WHERE DID HE POP UP FROM? Shafiuddin Babu, a member of Bangladesh's 1999 World Cup team who was in the news for wrong reasons in recent past, bowls in the nets during Bangladesh national team's practice session at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Narail Govt, Little Flower in semis

SPORTS REPORTER



Abdus Sabur hit 77 as Narail Government High School registered a comfortable seven-wicket victory over Saint Xavier's High School of Khulna in one of the four low scoring final round matches of the Standard Chartered 22nd National School Cricket Tournament yesterday.

They will play the Group A semifinal today at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium against Willes Little Flower School who also handed Dinajpur Zilla School an identical seven-wicket defeat at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium.

At the Mirpur City Club ground, Narail Govt High raced to 132 for 3 in just 24.5 overs while chasing a

Saint Xavier's score of 130 all out in 49.4 overs.

Meanwhile, Saif Mahmood was the Little Flower hero for their easy win over Dinajpur Zilla.

The losers were bundled out for 126 in 38.4 overs as Mahmood claimed four wickets for 23 and he was ably supported by Raisul Islam who captured three for 20.

Mahmood then hammered 46 as Little Flower sped to 129 for 3 only in 17.1 overs.

In the other matches, Sabuj Kanan High of Sirajganj and Blue Bird High of Sylhet set up a Group B semifinal for today at the City Club ground after winning their respective matches yesterday.

Shafiqur Rahman captured six wickets for 22 but Sabuj Kanan still managed a comfortable 77-run victory over AK High at the Fatullah

Vintage Lara



SPORTS REPORTER

AFP, St. John's

Brian Lara, using the easy nature of the Antigua Recreation Ground pitch, was within sight of his 25th Test hundred as West Indies enjoyed their best day with the bat against England on the rain-affected opening day of the fourth and final Test.

Looking like a true world class act for the first time in the series, the West Indies captain was undefeated on 86 to lift West Indies to 208 for two when bad light stopped play on Saturday.

West Indies vice-captain Ramnaresh Sarwan was not out on 41 and has shared an unbroken stand of 110 with Lara for the third wicket to add substance and stability to the wobbly batting.

With England's bowlers emasculated by the friendly nature of the pitch and not benefiting from the same appreciable bounce and movement they gained in the three previous Tests at Kingston, Port of Spain and Bridgetown, West Indies bullied their way to a confident position at the close.

Chris Gayle had earlier set the tempo for West Indies with a pulsating 69 that included a dozen boundaries from 80 balls in two hours.

"The wicket here is really flat so



West Indies captain Brian Lara leaps as he plays the ball on the on-side during the first day's play of the fourth and final Test against England at the Antigua Recreation Ground on Saturday.

CCL to be 13-team event

SPORTS REPORTER

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U-21 hockey team leaves Thursday

SPORTS REPORTER

AFP, Dhaka

A 24-member Bangladesh hockey team leaves for Pakistan on Thursday to participate in the Fifth Under-21 Asia Cup that begins in Karachi on April 20.

Abahani forward Ashrafur Islam Shishu will lead the team in the 10-team tournament, a qualifying meet of the Junior World Cup.

Top three teams in the meet will earn qualification to the World Cup billed for next year.

Bangladesh will play China in one of the four opening day matches on April 20. They meet Malaysia on April 21, Sri Lanka on April 23 and India on April 24.

Former Sri Lankan cricket captain Arjuna Ranatunga Sunday quit his position in the ruling party after he was passed over for the post of sports minister in the new cabinet.

Ranatunga, 40, who was elected to parliament in the April 2 election, said he entered politics because President Chandrika Kumaratunga invited him to be in charge of sports, but instead he was offered a junior position.

"I did not enter politics to make a name for myself," Ranatunga told AFP. "The president clearly invited me to join her party and make a contribution by taking over the sports ministry.

"By appointing someone else, it shows I have no role to play (in politics). I have resigned as the joint national organiser of the youth wing of the SLFP (Sri Lanka Freedom Party)."

Kumaratunga appointed a close relative, former film star Jeevan Kumaratunga, as the sports minister in the 31-member cabinet.

The SLFP is the main constituent party in Kumaratunga's Freedom Alliance which narrowly

Ranatunga withdraws

SPORTS REPORTER

AFP, Colombo

England will go ahead with their controversial tour of Zimbabwe later this year, according to their senior administrator, amidst growing fears that cancellation would prove financially ruinous.

England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) officials had previously hinted they would boycott the trip in protest at the policies of Zimbabwe President Robert Mugabe.

But ECB chairman David Morgan, announcing their latest U-turn on Zimbabwe, told British broadcaster the Independent on Sunday: "The only way that I can see us not fulfilling the tour is either because of government directive or because of safety and security.

"And let me emphasise we don't see them as being issues at the moment," he added.

Under new sanctions agreed at an International Cricket Council (ICC) board meeting in Auckland earlier last month, England risk a two million dollar fine if they fail to tour Zimbabwe as scheduled in October.

They could also lose their lucrative status as hosts of September's ICC Champions Trophy one-day tournament.

And, worst of all, they could even be suspended from international

Windies dominate

SPORTS REPORTER

AFP, London

African state's economic collapse.

But it has stopped short of ordering the ECB to cancel the trip.

However, the ECB appeared to be preparing the ground for a withdrawal in January when a paper written by senior official Des Wilson argued for the first time that moral reasons could form the basis of a refusal to tour.

England agreed in March last year to tour Zimbabwe in return for Zimbabwe touring England in 2003, having controversially withdrawn from a World Cup match in Harare on security grounds a month earlier.

Selection dilemma of different kinds

SPORTS REPORTER

AFP, Rawalpindi



Injury-hit Pakistan are struggling to pick a team and India don't know who to leave out for the crucial third and final Test starting here on Tuesday.

The 50th Test match between the rivals will decide the current series after India won the opener at Multan by an innings and 52 runs and Pakistan drew level at Lahore with a nine-wicket triumph.

Hosts Pakistan are looking for a seamer to back up local hero Shoaib Akhtar and Mohammad Sami following a spate of injuries which ruled out three contenders, Abdul Razzaq, Umar Gul and Shabbir Ahmed.

Sami was declared fit to play after complaining of back pain two days ago, but a more serious back injury to Gul is a major blow for the hosts after his match-winning 5-31 at Lahore.

"Losing an in-form bowler like Gul has hit us hard and we do have a problem on our hands," coach Javed Miandad conceded.

"But someone will come along because I have always maintained that Pakistan has the best bench strength in the world when it comes to fast bowling."

The toss-up is between Fazle Akbar, a four-Test veteran with 10 wickets who returns to the squad after three years, and rookie Rao Iftikhar, a consistent performer for Rawalpindi in domestic first-class cricket.

India, meanwhile, are beset with selection problems of their own following captain Sourav Ganguly's recovery from a lower back injury which forced him out of the first two Tests.

Left-hander Yuvraj Singh, who replaced Ganguly, scored a maiden century at Lahore to make sure he will not be the one making way for the captain.

The unlucky one likely to miss out is opener Akash Chopra, who managed just four and five in Lahore after making 42 in the Multan opener.

The dour Chopra has formed a trusted opening combination with Virender Sehwag with four century stands in the eight Tests they have

been together, including a 160 at Multan.

If Chopra is omitted, either Yuvraj or young wicketkeeper Parthiv Patel will open the batting so that the seasoned middle-order of Rahul Dravid, Sachin Tendulkar, Venkatesh Laxman and Ganguly remains undisturbed.



BECAME BECKHAM? Pakistan fast bowler Shoab Akhtar is under pressure from leg-spinner Danish Kaneria while playing football during a practice session at the Pindi Cricket Stadium yesterday.



India opener Virender Sehwag bats in the nets during training session at the Pindi Cricket Stadium yesterday.

ECB dispels tour fears

SPORTS REPORTER

AFP, London

cricket. That would prove disastrous for English cricket as a whole as international matches provide some 85 per cent of the ECB's annual turnover of 55 million pounds (101 million dollars).

"I have little doubt that if without acceptable non-compliance we decided not to go, the members of the ICC would find it necessary to ensure that we paid an appropriate financial penalty," Morgan said.

His comments came just when the Zimbabwe team itself appeared to be heading towards collapse.

As many as 14 senior players are considering quitting international cricket following the decision by the Zimbabwe Cricket Union (ZCU) to strip Heath Streak of the captaincy.

If the players carried out their threat it would leave Zimbabwe, already one of world cricket's weakest Test sides, partly because of a small professional playing base, even less able to compete at the highest level.

The ECB's management board are due to discuss the tour at an April 20 meeting at their Lord's headquarters where three ZCU officials, including chairman Peter Chingoka, have also been invited.

The British government has repeatedly urged the ECB to scrap the tour in protest at Mugabe, who has been accused of numerous human rights abuses and has presided over the famine-ravaged

Da's of Anirban Krira Chakra moved into the quarterfinals beating Bappa Shah of Chaturanga Krira Chakra by 2-1 sets.

Gaibandha TT

OUR CORRESPONDENT

Dristi clinched the girls singles title while Babu won the boys singles crown in the Sachindra Kumar Chaki Smrity Table Tennis tournament at the hall room of Gaibandha town yesterday.

Dristi of UNO Club defeated Bristi of Sat Bhai Champa by 3-1 sets and Babu of Madhapara Krira Chakra beat Badhan of Abahani Krira Chakra by 3-1 sets.

In the men's singles Shankar Das of Anirban Krira Chakra moved into the quarterfinals beating Bappa Shah of Chaturanga Krira Chakra by 2-1 sets.