



Did U Know?

In 1993, a person was shot and killed while playing a chess game in Bosnia-Herzegovina, the first to die from sniper fire while playing chess.



ESPN

Sri Lanka vs Zimbabwe
First Test, Day One
Live at 1:50 pm
Sportscentre
Sports News
Live at 9:00 pm

STAR Sports

Sportsline
Sports News
Live at 8:00 pm
UEFA Cup
Valencia vs Villarreal
Live at 1:30 am (Friday)



Nelson Mandela
(Former South African president)
"Where is Brian Lara?"
The first question posed by him after his arrival in Trinidad.

Star WHIZZ KID
COMPETITION 21
Tick the correct answers, post to
The Daily Star
Win attractive prizes
Competition closes at 8 pm
May 7, 2004 and draw shortly afterwards

1. Who is Bangladesh's fastest woman?	Iva	Chumki	Sabrina
2. Who is Zimbabwe's cricket captain?	Taibu	Streak	Olonga
3. Name the man-of-the-series in the India-Pakistan Test series.	Sehwag		
4. How many runs did Brian Lara score in the first innings of the final Test against England?	400	388	380
5. Who won the Singer 30th national			
Name			
Class			
School Address			
Phone: (if any)			

CCL 2nd phase from today

SPORTS REPORTER

The second phase of the GrameenPhone Corporate Cricket League begins today with Aktel taking on BADC in a Plate match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

The Cup competition, involving the top six finishers of the first phase, will start on May 9 with Partex Group pitted against GrameenPhone.

Whatmore backs Tigers

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Nearly a year into his job and coach Dav Whatmore already has reasons to believe that his Tigers are ready to bite.

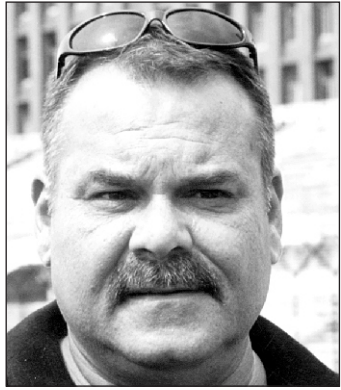
"On our day we are very much capable of upsetting any side in world cricket but at the same time it is never an easy task. However, the boys are fully motivated to fight all the way," said an unusually pumped Bangladesh coach after the West Indies bound squad's last practice session at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

The team leaves Dhaka today morning for their first ever official tour of the Caribbean where they play three one-day internationals and two Tests.

Whatmore said the strong showing in Zimbabwe in their last trip was the base for his bold optimism. Still hurting from the 2-1 loss in the ODI series against Zimbabwe, the coach was adamant that the Tigers deserved to win.

"We were simply unlucky not to take the series. Still that one victory gave my team the belief that they

were a capable lot. I have seen improvement across the board in the last tour.
"I am confident that we will make an impression the West Indies and show the world that Bangladesh are not easy opponents to beat. I would



DAV WHATMORE

like to see gradual progress from them which will justify my views," said Whatmore.

In order to counter the Windies on an even keel, Whatmore felt that the wise thing to do would be to think as little as possible about Brian Lara's world record score of 400 and their new look pace-attack.

"Our main objective is to play our own game and keep focus on individual improvement. Lara is a dangerous batsman and it is extremely difficult to get him out once he settles down. But it is also a fact that he won't be getting a hundred everyday," said Whatmore as he reminded that the master batsman's possible run-feast wasn't an automatic ticket to success.

"I will never mind if he made 600-odd runs like he did in Sri Lanka last time and his side still lost the series," quipped Whatmore.

The Bangladesh coach believed that the West Indies were still on the lookout for quality fast bowlers who would continue the legacy of the likes of Joel Garner, Curtly Ambrose or Courtney Walsh.

"The West Indies attack is not as fearsome as it was once was but they are showing signs of developing quickly. Interestingly, they even depend on the slow bowler nowadays," he observed.

Whatmore did not give away much about the likely composition of the team despite his captain Habibul Bashar's interest in seeing Alok Kapali as an opener.

SEE PAGE 14 COL 4

Rafique fully focused

SPORTS REPORTER

There is hardly any doubt that left-arm spinner Mohammed Rafique will be Bangladesh's main weapon against the West Indies in the coming Test and one-day series in the West Indies and the man himself was raring to go.

"It's a big challenge for any spinner to be successful in West Indian conditions which is traditionally in favour of fast bowlers. But I am not someone who looks too much into wickets or weather. That's why I am confident of providing the kind my service I have been giving to my country," said Rafique who has bagged 46 wickets in 56 ODIs and 42 in 10 Test matches.

The 34-year old is particularly relishing the prospect of bowling against the world's best batsman Brian Lara.

"Lara is my idol but that doesn't deter my focus which is getting his wicket. He did struggle a bit against me in the last World Cup in South Africa," said Rafique.

The experienced campaigner thought that one delivery held the key against the left-handed batsmen dominated West Indies side.

"I think my arm-ball will be difficult for them. I have seen all the matches between England and the West Indies in their ongoing series to find out their weaknesses," said Rafique.

Sher-e-Bangla Cup Two hattricks on Day 2

SPORTS REPORTER

Humayun Kabir slotted the third hattrick in the Sher-e-Bangla Cup National Football Championships as Bogra dump Chapainawabganj 7-1 at the Joypurhat Stadium yesterday.

Kabir completed his treble inside 35 minutes in the Jamuna Zone match while Karim, Mostafa and Bulbul added the rest for Bogra, who set a zonal semifinal against Sirajganj. Zahidul pulled one goal back for Chapainawabganj.

Ishadul notched the other hattrick on the day in Kurigram's 4-1 rout of Thakurgaon in Teesta Zone at Nilphamari.

A 23-minute strike by Aminul saw Jessore reach the Kapotakkha Zone semis with a 1-0 win over Sathkira at the Chuadanga Stadium while Chandpur scored an identical victory against Moulvibazar at Colima to enter the Surma Zone semis with Mafiz scoring an 11-minute winner.

Two-goal Shariful Islam was Faridpur's hero in a 2-0 victory against Munshiganj at Gopalganj in Padma Zone while Arman and Shahbuddin's second-half strikes helped Rangamati come from a goal down to beat Laxmipur 2-1 at Cox's Bazar. Earlier, Akbar put the losers ahead in the 17th minute in the Karnaphuli Zone match.

Barisal thrashed Perajepur 4-1 in Meghna Zone with Shamim, Milon, Arif and Titu scoring for the winners at the Bhola Stadium. Faisal scored for Perajepur.

In the Services Zone, Bangladesh Navy blanked Bangladesh Rifles 2-0 with Mamun scoring twice after the break at the Kamalapur Stadium. Bangladesh Air Force handed Bangladesh Police a 3-0 defeat at the same venue. Shah Zaman, Hasnat and Awal scored for the winners.

Quader visits ailing Rahim

SPORTS REPORTER

Former State Minister for Youth and Sports Obaidul Quader visited the ailing football coach Abdur Rahim at the Bangladesh Medical College Hospital yesterday.

Quader, also the joint general secretary of Awami League, handed over a cheque of Taka one lakh to Rahim on behalf of Leader of the Opposition and Awami League President Sheikh Hasina.

Youth and sports secretary of AL Dewan Shafiqul Arefin Tutul, former national footballers Badal Roy, Khorshed Alam Babul, Monem Munna and many other sports organisers and players also visited the reputed coach, who has been suffering from heart ailment.

DAY'S EVENT

GP Corporate Cricket League
Aktel vs BADC Krira Sangha
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium



Muktijoddha forward Saifur Rahman Moni jumps to evade a sliding tackle from Nisa FC's Cholilyev Nazar during their AFC Cup match at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

Draw pleases both

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

Muktijoddha Sangsad Krira Chakra finally put an end to their losing sequence in the AFC Cup when the Dhaka giants drew goalless with Turkmenistan's Nisa FC at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

The draw presented Muktijoddha their first point after four defeats including a walkover against Al Shabb Ibb of Yemen in the competition.

The stalemate was however a moral victory for the handicapped visitors who played without a single substitute on the bench on a hot and humid afternoon.

On seven points, Nisa can still book a place in the next round as one of the three best runners-ups if they beat Al Shabb Ibb on their home ground on May 19.

Muktijoddha, who are already out of the race, will travel to Lebanon to play their final group league game against Nijmech Club also on May 19.

Playing in front of almost an empty stadium, the National League and Federation Cup champions came tantalisingly close to winning the match only to be denied by Nisa's towering goalkeeper Matus Pavel.

Pavel made a brilliant save of a Saifur Rahman Moni's low drive inside the box early in the first half.

Pavel, also the national custodian of Turkmenistan, saved his side again a minute later when he tipped away another Moni effort from 25 yards.

Moni however did put the ball into the net past Pavel after the break but was disallowed for offside.

The visitors also had their share of chances. Nazarov Artyom, who struck the match winner in Nisa's 1-0 victory at home against the Reds, sent down a defence splitting

through from the right but Atayev Dovletmurod's first time shot whistled past the near post much to the relief of Muktijoddha custodian Aminul.

Rezepov Guvanch then started a darting 60-yard run down the middle in the 37th minute but the left full-back's placing shot went just wide.

Nisa coach Kurbanmamedov Rahim said that he was happy with the result.

"A draw is a draw and it means a point," the coach said after the match.

"We still have a chance to go through to the second phase. But the heat and an empty reserve bench hampered our natural game," said Rahim who is also the national team coach of Turkmenistan.

Muktijoddha coach Shafiqul Islam Manik rued the missed chances and claimed that his side was denied of two penalties.

"I am not complaining against refereeing but I feel that there was

SEE PAGE 14 COL 5

End of road for Gough?

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

The vultures are circling round Darren Gough.

Although endless rain has limited him to three and a bit appearances in the Caribbean, many people have seen enough to convince themselves that Wednesday's seventh and, mercifully, final one-day will be the last of his illustrious career.

It's not that Gough hasn't been trying. As always, he has given his all, but his all is no longer good enough. As a one-day bowler, he will be remembered as one of England's finest. But whereas in the past he mixed pace with guile, now all that's left is guile, and even then there hasn't been too much evidence of that.

On Sunday, Gough commanded no respect from the West Indies

batsmen -- several times he was smacked back over his head. Until recently that would have



DARREN GOUGH

been answered with a snorter, either a yorker or bouncer, to remind the batsman how unwise his actions had been and just who he was dealing with.

But in St. Lucia there was no response. Gough ended with 1 for 67 off 8.1 overs, conceding more than eight an over for the first time in his ODI career.

The decline has been alarming, and it must be causing a few jitters with his new employers in Essex. As recently as last summer, he was at his chest-puffing best against South Africa. But less than nine months later, the cupboard looks bare.

In fairness, it is hardly surprising, given the seriousness of the injuries he has suffered in the twilight of his career, that his body is packing in fairly rapidly.

He worked hard in the gym after the end of the English summer and convinced the selectors that he was fit. But he was like a shot heavy-weight -- physically looking as good as ever, but with no punch. They say a boxer can "lose it" alarmingly quickly, even in the course of one fight. So, it seems, can fast bowlers.

SEE PAGE 14 COL 1

Rebels withdraw

Cricket

REUTERS/AFP, Harare

Four Zimbabwe players including former captain Heath Streak have ruled themselves out of the first Test against Sri Lanka by refusing to train on Wednesday.

Quick bowler Streak, left-arm spinner Ray Price, all-rounder Sean Ervine and batsman Trevor Gripper, who are among 15 white players in dispute with the Zimbabwe Cricket Union's (ZCU) selectors, failed to attend nets at the Harare Sports Club on the eve of the match.

"They didn't turn up for practice this morning, so they will not be considered for the match," Zimbabwe team manager Babu Memensaid.

The rebels, who believe black players are being promoted ahead

of whites because of political reasons, also announced they would walk out for good if the board failed to agree to binding arbitration to try and solve a row raging for the past month.

"We have no more time left," one of the rebels told Reuters on Wednesday.

"We want the ZCU to agree to arbitration by Friday. If they don't, we are going to cancel our contracts."

The rebels are unhappy over the way Streak lost the Zimbabwe captaincy last month -- the ZCU said he resigned but this has been contested -- and argue there has been political meddling in selection.

They say they do not oppose positive discrimination by ZCU selectors to promote cricket among the black population but argue the policy should be carried out in a more controlled manner.

The ZCU earlier offered non-

binding mediation this week to try and resolve the dispute and included the four rebels in a squad of 17 for the first Test against Sri Lanka starting in Harare on Thursday.

The rebels, however, rejected the offer, arguing that nothing would be solved unless decisions were accepted as binding.

Zimbabwe, whose most experienced players are all white, fielded a young and largely black side in a five-match one-day series against Sri Lanka last month, losing 5-0. They are due to play two Tests.

Meanwhile, the 12 white rebels are preparing to take the ZCU to court for breach of contract after the sports supremos rejected their proposals for arbitration on Tuesday.

SEE PAGE 14 COL 1

HISTORY WON'T REPEAT ITSELF. WATCH MURALI GET 520.

Sri Lanka - Zimbabwe series. Live and exclusive on

Two Sri Lankans ride past a billboard in Colombo yesterday showing a life-size picture of star spinner Muttiah Muralitharan.