



Star SPORT

DHAKA TUESDAY AUGUST 31, 2004, E-MAIL: dssports@gononet.com



Athenà Phèvos



PHOTO: AFP

GOODBYE ATHENS: Children stand in front of the diminishing Olympic flame as the cauldron returns to its vertical position during the closing ceremony of the 2004 Athens Olympic Games on Sunday.

Beijing expects to deliver

REUTERS, Beijing

While celebrating unprecedented success at the Athens Olympics, China has its sights firmly set on the Beijing Games in four years when they hope to present the country's new face to the world.

The government has thrown its full weight behind the Games as a badge of legitimacy for the ruling Communist Party, a yardstick for judging three decades of reforms and a symbol of China's rising global clout.

"The international community gave us their vote of confidence," deputy Chinese delegation head Duan Shijie said.

"Now it is up to China to repay that by making our contribution to the development of the Olympic movement."

The official slogan for the 2008 Games is "Green Olympics, High-tech Olympics, People's Olympics", but the old Scouting movement motto "Be Prepared" might better characterise China's priorities at this stage.

China plans to spend \$37 billion (21 billion pounds) on the Games, at

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World's strongest bank!

AFP, Tehran

Iran's national bank, Bank Mellì, announced Sunday it was renaming two of its branches after Hossein Rezazadeh -- a national hero since winning an Olympic gold medal in weightlifting.

The bank said branches in the capital Tehran and the strongman's home city of Ardebil would be dedicated to the champion, who has been plastered over newspapers and featured almost non-stop on television since lifting a new world record of 263.5kg.

He has already been awarded the sum of 120,000 dollars by the Iranian Physical Education Organisation and the country's National Olympics Committee.

A Greek epilogue

AFP, Athens



Greek taxpayers might disagree when they are paying off the most expensive Olympics ever for the next decade, but others will feel

that the Athens Games was 8.7 billion dollars well spent.

The curtain came down on the greatest sporting show on earth here late Sunday, wrapping up a glittering 17-day spectacle which confounded the grim forecasts of disaster that characterised the seven-year build-up.

International Olympic Committee

(IOC) President Jacques Rogge broke with the tradition established by his predecessor Juan Antonio Samaranch and refrained from trotting out "the best ever" moniker handed out to previous Games.

But Rogge left no-one in doubt that the IOC was more than happy with Athens' hosting of the 28th summer Games which came home to Greece 2,000 years after the ancient Olympics.

"You have won by brilliantly meeting the tough challenge of holding the Games," Rogge told organisers in his closing speech.

"These were unforgettable dream Games."

When it was over, the Olympic

pecking order saw the United States scrape ahead of China in the overall standings, with 35 golds to the 32 won by the world's most populous nation, who will host the 2008 Olympics in Beijing.

China's emergence and strong showings by other Asian nations was one of the dominant themes of the Olympics, Rogge said.

"What we have seen here in Athens is the awakening of Asia," Rogge declared.

"The traditional powers of the Olympics will have to work very, very hard to maintain their present positions. This has been an extremely pleasant trend for us to see."

Staged under an unprecedented security blanket that cost 1.5 billion

dollars to stitch together, the Olympics passed off peacefully.

The only blemishes to an otherwise flawless security operation were a man dressed as a clown who somehow managed to bounce off a high board during the diving competition and a spectator who rugby tackled men's marathon leader Vanderlei de Lima of Brazil.

The spectre of doping gate-crashed the party regularly, diverting attention away from the games even before the opening ceremony.

Drugs were never going to be far

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PHOTO: AFP

COME TO BEIJING IN 2008: Mayor of Beijing Wang Qishan waves the Olympic Flag during the closing ceremony of the Athens 2004 Olympics on Sunday. The 2008 Games will be held in the Chinese capital.

Ctg MSC hold BU

SPORTS REPORTER

A spirited Chittagong Mohammedan Sporting Club held title aspirants Brothers Union to a goalless draw in yesterday's final phase match of the Fourth Nitol-Tata National Football League at the Sher-e-Bangla Mirpur National Stadium.

It was the first disappointment for the Premier League champions in the National League after an impressive first phase. Brothers now slipped to third place in the six-team Super League with five points, two behind joint-leaders Abahani and Muktijoddha. All three teams carried four bonus points each from the previous phase.

Chittagong Mohammedan, who started the final round empty-handed, got their first point.

After a boring first half, Brothers' best opportunity came in the 72nd minute when Titu lobbed in a nice free-kick. But Monwar in front of an empty net and with all the time in the world fired the ball wide of the mark. And when veteran striker Alfaz spoiled a sitter after eight minutes a draw was a forgone conclusion. Chittagong Mohammedan's

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Tiger Nafees



SPORTS REPORTER

Nafees Iqbal saved the blushes of the senior team with a match-winning century as Bangladesh snatched a last-ball victory against Ireland in a practice match on Sunday.

Nafees, who joined the Tigers at the end of Bangladesh Under-19s' England tour, smashed exactly 100 off 71 balls as the tourists scrambled past the home side by two wickets in a rain-curtailed match at Stormont in Belfast.

Playing their first warm-up match as part of the build-up for next month's ICC Champions Trophy in England, Bangladesh restricted the ICC associate members to 179-5 in 32 overs but were set a difficult revised target of 206 from the same number of overs.

Nafees came to the wicket after the early departure of Mohammad Ashraful but the 20-year-old from Chittagong repaired the damage sharing 126 runs for the second wicket with experienced opener Javed Omar who contributed a stubborn 39 from 66 balls.

Man-of-the-match Nafees, who was dropped from the one-day side after Bangladesh's dismal home series against England, single-handedly led

the chase with authority hammering ten fours and three sixes before being dismissed.

He left new captain Rajin Saleh with



NAFEES IQBAL... 100

the side well placed at 162-3 however the Tigers again went into reverse gear losing five wickets for 20 runs.

Rajin, who had captured two wickets in the Irish innings, steadied the ship with a useful 24 off 21 balls. After adding 20 runs with Tapash Baisya for the eighth wicket, the Bangladesh captain and Nazmul Hussain were left needing two runs from the last two deliveries

and they got those without much of a fuss.

Earlier, Ireland captain and opener J Molins top-scored with 64. His 87-ball knock was featured with six boundaries and one six.

SCOREBOARD

IRELAND

J Molins c sub (Tareq) b Rajin	64
J Bray b Tapash	16
A Botha c Tapash b Mahmud	23
A White c Nazmul b Rajin	12
P Gillespie not out	19
K McCallan run out	2
D Joyce not out	17
Extras: (b-3, lb-12, nb-3, w-8)	26
Total: (5 wickets, 32 overs)	179
Fall of wickets: 1-27, 2-89, 3-120, 4-136, 5-141.	
Tapash	7 0 30 1
Nazmul	6 0 31 0
Mushfiq	2.2 0 10 0
Rajin	3.4 0 28 2
Mahmud	7 0 41 1
Manzarul	6 0 24 0
BANGLADESH (Target: 206 in 32 overs):	
Javed Omar lbw b White	39
M Ashraful c Botha b McCoubrey	8
Nafees c White b Cooke	100
Rajin Saleh not out	21

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Bashar goes to Australia today

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh captain Habibul Bashar is expected to leave Dhaka for Australia's Melbourne tonight to undergo a surgery on his injured right thumb.

"The ticket is confirmed and I hope to get the visa tomorrow. If everything works out okay, I will fly

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BD 231

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh were all out for 231 in 49.4 overs in their second warm-up match against Ireland at Limavady in Belfast yesterday.

The home team were 59-2 after 13.1 overs when reports last came.

Vice-captain Khaled Mashud's 51 not out and a combative 42 by Mohammed Rafique salvaged the side after they were reduced to 116-6 by the 32nd over.

G Cooke with 5-55 was responsible for Tigers' top-order collapse. But the lower half fought gallantly to put up a fighting total with 50 runs coming in the final six overs. McCallan took 3-33 for Ireland.

McInnes looks beyond results



SPORTS REPORTER

The results might have not have gone their way but Bangladesh Under-19 cricket team's coach Richard McInnes has seen signs to feel positive about from the just concluded Test and one-day series against England Under-19 in their first ever official tour.

The youth side returned home on Sunday after losing two out of the three Tests they played and also lost the U-19

one-day international series 1-0 but the Australian coach preferred to look at the bigger picture rather than dwelling on results.

"It was a different experience for us. I am satisfied with the way my boys played in the series irrespective of the results. Like anybody else I also love to win but you should take into consideration the conditions and the opponent before saying anything about our performance."

"Bangladeshi players hardly had any knowledge about the seaming conditions in England. They played well in the

warm-up matches but England Under-19s were very good opponents," said McInnes.

The 29-year-old said his main objective was to see the players' improvement on the tour and at the end of the trip he is happy with the progress.

"I never focus on wins or losses. Some people might say that our batting was not good during the series but even the England players struggled in their own conditions."

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BTV

Nitol-Tata National Football League
Muktijoddha vs Sheikh Russel
Live at 4:00 pm

ESPN

Football Focus
Live at 6:30 pm
Sportscentre
Live at 8:30 pm

STAR Sports

Sportslive
Live at 8:00 pm
US open Tennis
Men's & Women's First Rd
Live at 9:00 pm

TEN Sports

Sri Lanka vs South Africa
Fifth ODI
Live at 10:00 am



PHOTO: AFP

THE LAST RITES: Men's marathon winner Stefano Baldini of Italy is exultant as he crosses the finish line at the Panathinaiko Stadium in Athens on Sunday. The men's marathon is the final event of the Olympic Games.



Final medals table of the Athens Olympic Games:

Country	G	S	B	Total
United States	35	39	29	103
China	32	17	14	63
Russia	27	27	38	92
Australia	17	16	16	49
Japan	16	9	12	37
Germany	14	16	18	48
France	11	9	13	33
Italy	10	11	11	32
South Korea	9	12	9	30
Great Britain	9	9	12	30
Cuba	9	7	11	27
Ukraine	9	5	9	23
Hungary	8	6	3	17
Romania	8	5	6	19
Greece	6	6	4	16
Norway	5	0	1	6
Netherlands	4	9	9	22
Brazil	4	3	3	10
Sweden	4	1	2	7
Spain	3	11	5	19
Canada	3	6	3	12
Turkey	3	3	4	10

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