



Did U Know?

Belgium, in their first appearance at an international tournament, won the gold medal at Antwerp Olympics by beating the former Czechoslovakia 2-0. The Eastern European side was unable to live up to their pre-match billing as favourites and walked off the pitch after 43 minutes in protest at the refereeing. The action saw them subsequently disqualified from the Games and resulted in a play-off between losing quarterfinalists Italy, Norway, Spain, and Sweden to decide the medals. Spain prevailed and later beat Holland 3-1 to take the silver.

What to WATCH

BTV
Nitol-Tata National Football League
Dhaka MSC v Ctg MSC
Live at 4 pm
ESPN
NatWest International
Australia v Pakistan
Live at 3.45 pm
STAR Sports
US Open tennis
Live at 9 pm
US Open tennis
Live at 5 am (Sunday)

TALK TURKEY



Michael Vaughan
England captain
"The thing about India is that while they will miss Sachin, they have the ability to put out another batsman nearly as good."

Star WHIZZ KID COMPETITION 21

Tick the correct answers, post
The Daily Star

Competition closes at 8 pm
Sept 10, 2004 and draw shortly afterwards

1. Who won the first gold medal in the Athens Olympics?	Galkina	Devers
Du		
2. Who became Asia Cup cricket champs?	India	Pakistan Sri Lanka
3. Who clinched the Cincinnati Masters tennis title?	Federer	Hennan Agassi
4. Who lifted the 25th nat'l. hockey crown?	Usha	MSC Bangladesh
Amy		
Name		
Class	Roll No.	
School Address		
Phone: (If any)		

DAY'S EVENT

Nitol-Tata National Football League
Dhaka MSC v Ctg MSC

A classic Brothers win

SPORTS REPORTER



NITOL-TATA
NATIONAL FOOTBALL LEAGUE

Brothers Union sounded a warning to all potential title contenders when they handed defending champions Mukti Joddha Sangsad a 4-2 defeat in a thrilling Fourth Nitol-Tata National Football League encounter at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday.

In arguably the most entertaining match in the competition so far, the crushing loss ended the Reds' seven-game unbeaten streak. But the result, however, had no bearing on tournament prospects as both Dhaka giants had already ensured their places in the last four beforehand.

Mukti Joddha ended their campaign at the top of the six-team table with ten points while Premier League champions Brothers, who have a match in hand against Abahani, moved to second place by virtue of a better goal difference.

Both Brothers and Abahani have sealed their places in the last four with eight points each.

Dhaka Mohammedan Sporting Club look favourites to book the remaining semifinal berth as they

need only a draw against their Chittagong cousins today. Chittagong Mohammedan with only one point face a mission impossible -- to win by a clear four-goal margin -- in order to upset the semifinal plans of both Dhaka Mohammedan (three points) and Sheikh Russel KC (four points).

Despite being weakened by the suspension of key players Matiur Munna, Saiful Islam and Rwandan forward Kabua, Mukti Joddha began lively when Moni put them ahead after 20 minutes. The national striker went on a solo run down the left flank before drilling an angled left-footer into the far post of Brothers keeper Mohammed Ali from the top of the box.

The star-studded Oranges, who were surprisingly held to a goalless draw by rank-outsiders Chittagong Mohammedan in their last match, came close to equalising inside a minute but Monwar's header on a centre by Alfaz missed the target by inches. Two minutes later, Parvez Babu square-passed a chip by Monwar near the penalty spot for Abul who neatly placed the ball home.

There was no respite for the Mukti who survived a close call in the 34th minute when Topu rattled the sidebar from five yards. Brothers

lost Abul through injury but his replacement Rikto gave them the lead five minutes from the break. The midfielder, who found the ball after the rival defence cleared a freekick by Arman, rocketed in a spectacular right-footer from 25 yards into Aminul's top right corner.

Mukti Joddha looked ready to fight back when Topu headed in a left-side cross by Biddyo five minutes into the second half to make it 2-2.

But Arman Mia had other plans and the Brothers playmaker, who was later adjudged man-of-the-match, helped his forwards seal the victory with two brilliant passes inside three minutes.

Even the inclusion of Charles Ghansah did not help the Mukti backbone which was unsettled by a vintage show from Arman.

Monwar chased a superb through by Arman down the right before releasing a perfect cross for Topu who nodded home in the 54th minute. Arman then set Alfaz free with a through down the middle and the Brothers captain made no mistake to put the ball into the back of the net to prolong country's number

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PHOTO: STAR

Brothers Union forward Topu (R) tries to get the better of Mukti Joddha's Belal during their National Football League match at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

Aussies aim for treble

Cricket

AFP, London

Australia will aim to make it three wins out of three against Pakistan at Lord's on Saturday in a warm-up match for the ICC Champions Trophy which gets underway in England later this month.

Back in 1999 Australia won the World Cup final with a crushing eight-wicket win at the 'home of cricket' against Pakistan in a match that lasted fewer than 60 overs.

And two years later, during their successful Ashes tour of England, Australia enjoyed a nine-wicket win against Pakistan at Lord's in the 2001 NatWest Series triangular final.

One consolation for Pakistan is that leg-spinner Shane Warne, currently captain of English county

Hampshire and who took four for 33 in the World Cup final and two years later claimed three for 56, has retired from one-day international cricket.

But Australia skipper Ricky Ponting, who played in both those matches, said he was looking forward to Australia's new breed enjoying the unique experience of playing at Lord's.

"We have some great memories of playing Pakistan at Lords, having beaten them in the 1999 World Cup final and the 2001 NatWest Series," Ponting said Friday.

"It's always a thrill to play at the home of cricket, and it will be special day for a number of our younger players who have yet to represent Australia at the ground."

Last month Australia defeated Pakistan by 17 runs in the final of the Videocon triangular event in Amstelveen.

But Pakistan were competitive

throughout and had they held their nerve they might just have pulled off a famous win in what was a rain-marred event also featuring India.

And Ponting for one is not underestimating their capabilities.

"Pakistan are a quality side, possessing an excellent pace attack led by Shoaib Akhtar and some dangerous batsmen such as Inzamamul Haq and Younis Youhana."

"Obviously we got a decent look at them in Holland recently, and it was good for our momentum to come away with a win."

"But in saying that, we're not reading too much into the result of the Holland final because we know the conditions in England will be completely different to what we experienced on that occasion."

Looking ahead to Saturday's match, Ponting, who stroked his way to an audacious 140 not out in

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Flint-astic England

Cricket

AFP, London

Andrew Flintoff's 99 took England to an imposing 307 for five in the second one-day international against India at The Oval here Friday.

Flintoff, who came in when England were struggling at 98 for three, put on 174 with Paul Collingwood, 79 not out, after off-spinner Harbhajan Singh (10-2-14-2) threatened to strangle the innings.

Their stand was a fifth wicket record for England in a one-day international, surpassing the 142 shared by Robin Smith and Graham Thorpe against Australia at Edgbaston in 1993.

Flintoff's display in particular was another masterful exhibition of power strokeplay. But one short of

what would have been his third one-day hundred he top-edged a pull off Ajit Agarkar and was caught by wicketkeeper Rahul Dravid. The all-rounder faced just 93 balls with four sixes and nine fours.

Collingwood, whose six in the last over off Ajit Agarkar took England past 300, faced 85 balls with 11 fours after being dropped on 12.

Geraint Jones was 12 not out.

Four India bowlers went for more than 50 runs apiece with Lakshman Balaji (eight overs for 77) the most expensive.

The attack as a whole conceded a mammoth 28 wides in an extras total of 36.

England, who had not won a one-day international batting first since defeating Pakistan at the World Cup in Cape Town last year, started briskly after losing the toss with openers Marcus Trescothick and Vikram Solanki posting fifty in 49

balls.

Harbhajan succeeded though where the quicks had failed and took a wicket with his third ball.

Trescothick swung Harbhajan high to deep square leg where Balaji took the left-hander for 27.

England captain Michael Vaughan came in, looking to end a poor sequence of 47 runs in his last six one-day innings.

But he had managed just four when a glance off Harbhajan was well-caught down the legside by Dravid. England were 93 for two and Harbhajan had taken two for one in 11 balls.

Virender Sehwag, in his 100th one-day international and an occasional off-spinner, removed Solanki, in sight of a second successive fifty, when Dravid took another fine catch off a leg-side deflection.

The Indian-born batsman's runs

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PHOTO: REUTERS

FREDDIE FURY! Andrew Flintoff pulls one to the boundary during his blistering 99 against India at The Oval

Champs Trophy No bonus points

CRICINFO, London

The ICC has announced the playing conditions for the Champions Trophy, and has decided not to have a bonus-points system. The last two one-day tournaments, the Asia Cup and the Videocon Cup, both featured one -- and Pakistan blamed it for their failing to make the final of the Asia Cup.

In case two teams are tied in the league stage, net run-rate will decide who gets through. Two points will be given for a win, one for a tie, and none for losing.

Given the structure of the tournament, though, it is doubtful if any teams will be tied after the league games are over -- there are four groups of three teams, of which two are strong teams and one is a relative minnow. The clash between the two strong teams in each group will therefore virtually decide the semi-finalists.

Of course, it could rain, but the ICC has planned a reserve day for each match, with play being

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The symphony of life nicely set

Football

AFP, Stockholm

A Finnish composer and football-fanatic has created a synthesis that should send purists reeling: the perfect union of the ancient gods of Olympus and today's gods of the game wrapped into an opera on violence and racism in the stands.

"Learning to shout" came to the sport stadium Eriksdal in Stockholm this week after first being shown on the Finnish island of Aaland in the Baltic Sea, home to composer and author of the piece Peter Laang.

Hebe, the Greek goddess of youth personified by soprano Therese Karlsson, sells beer (instead of the nectar of the legends) on the stands, where she meets Hector, Trojan warrior and football supporter.

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REUTERS, New York

Defending champion Justine Henin-Hardenne scraped through to the third round of the US Open on Thursday but her progress was about as smooth as rush-hour traffic in downtown Manhattan.

The Belgian lost her serve seven times and racked up 47 unforced errors during her 6-2, 5-7, 6-2 defeat of former Israeli soldier Tzipora Obziler and she will need a dramatic improvement if she is to advance deep into the tournament.

American trio Andre Agassi, Lindsay Davenport and Venus Williams together with Russia's Maria Sharapova all experienced a few hitches before rolling on, although French Open champions Gaston Gaudio and Anastasia Myskina were sent packing.

Double Olympic gold medalist Nicolas Massu also came down to earth with a bump, losing a five-set thriller to Sargis Sargsian in what, at five hours 10 minutes, was the second longest match in US Open history.

To make matters worse for the 10th-seeded Chilean he failed to convert a matchpoint at 6-5 in a fourth-set tiebreak and received a game penalty at the start of the deciding set after being warned about his behaviour.

Earlier Henin-Hardenne, who returned from a virus to win Olympic gold, cruised through the first set against 31-year-old Obziler before her game began to disintegrate.

Obziler, who had never got beyond the first round of qualifying in four previous visits, seized her chance to level the match before Henin-Hardenne clinched victory just over two hours.

"I was worried at the end of the second set, I was in a hurry to finish

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AIR SHARPOVA: Russian star Maria Sharapova of Russia hits a return to Jelena Jankovic of Serbia during their second round match at the US Open on September 2.