



Today, soccer is played by millions of people worldwide in more than 130 countries, making it the most popular



Justin Langer
(Australian Test cricketer)
"India versus Australia promises to be an absolute cracker."
On the much-anticipated Test series between the two coun-



TEN Sports
Triangular Series Cricket
Pakistan vs Zimbabwe
First ODI
Live at 10:00 am

ESPN
Football Crazy
Live at 5:00 pm
Sportscentre
Live at 11:00 pm
UEFA Champions League
Chelsea vs Porto
Same Day Delay at 1:30 am (Friday)

STAR Sports
Sportsline
Live at 8:00 pm



Competition closes at 8 pm
Oct 1, 2004 and draw shortly afterwards

- Who won the first gold medal in the Athens Olympics?
Galkina Devers
- Who became Asia Cup cricket champs?
India Pakistan Sri Lanka
- Who clinched the Cincinnati Masters tennis title?
Federer Henman Agassi
- Who lifted the 25th nat'l hockey crown?
Usha MSC Bangladesh Army

Name
.....
Class. Roll No.
School Address
.....
Phone: (If any)

Asian University knock NSU out

SPORTS REPORTER

Masud Khan Johnny slammed four goals as Asian University stormed into the final of the Stamford Inter-Private University Football Tournament when they dumped North South University 5-1 in the second semifinal at the Army Stadium yesterday.

An experienced Dhaka Premier League striker, Johnny was adjudged man-of-the-match for his brilliant marksmanship. Mushfiq added the other goal for the winners while Wajed scored the consolation goal for NSU.

Asian University will take on Stamford University in Saturday's final at the same venue. Stamford blanked Northern University 5-0 in the first semifinal.

BHF aims at facelift

U-21 Challenge Cup invitational meet begins today



SPORTS REPORTER

The U-21 Challenge Cup invitational hockey tournament kicks off in Dhaka today in an effort to give the game a facelift in the country.

Desperate to change their image as the favourite punching bag in international scene, the Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) invited under rated teams like Oman, Myanmar, Afghanistan, Singapore and Iran for the eight-day meet.

But the plans of the country's hockey officials to win a title looks set to suffer after India's eleventh-hour inclusion. The BHF turned to their more colourful neighbours only when Iran and Singapore withdrew. This is the first international hockey meet in two years after the federation hosted the Prime Minister Cup Hockey in 2002.

Two matches will be held on the opening day with Oman and Afghanistan battling at BKSP in the morning. But the tournament will be officially declared open by State

Minister for Youth and Sports and chairman of the organising committee Fazlur Rahman at 3.45 pm before the Bangladesh-Myanmar match at the Maulana Bhashani National Hockey Stadium.

Although India's presence will pose a threat to the hosts' bid to win a trophy, it will definitely increase the tournament's attraction with at least one strong team in the competition.

Oman are ranked lower than Bangladesh, Myanmar have no pedigree and the war-torn

Afghanistan team bought proper hockey gears only after arriving here on Saturday.

Although Bangladesh have recently appointed former Pakistan international Qamar Ibrahim, the centre forward need to climb a mountain to deliver success, especially after the youth team's disastrous performance in the Asian

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FIXTURE			
Date	Match	Venue	Time
Sept 30:	Oman vs Afghanistan	BKSP	9:00 am
	Bangladesh vs Myanmar	MBHS	3:45 pm
Oct 1:	Bangladesh vs Afghanistan	MBHS	3:30 pm
	India vs Myanmar	BKSP	3:30 pm
Oct 3:	Afghanistan vs Myanmar	BKSP	1:30 pm
	India vs Oman	BKSP	3:30 pm
Oct 4:	India vs Afghanistan	BKSP	9:00 am
	Bangladesh vs Oman	MBHS	3:30 pm
Oct 6:	Oman vs Myanmar	BKSP	9:00 am
	Bangladesh vs India	MBHS	3:30 pm
Oct 7:	3rd place vs 4th place	BKSP	9:00 am
	1st place vs 2nd place	MBHS	3:00 pm

MBHS: Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium.

Pak tri-series from today



AFP, Multan

Pakistan captain Inzamamul Haq is confident his revitalised team can win their first home one-day cricket title ahead of their opening tri-series match against outsiders Zimbabwe Thursday.

The hosts' real test is expected to come against Asian champions Sri Lanka, the third team in the series in which all sides face each other twice before the top two play-off in the October 16 final.

Pakistan has never won a home one-day tournament after failing in the 1987 and 1996 World Cups and in a tri-series in 1994 and a four-team tournament in 1997.

"I am confident that we will win our first home one-day title and although we know Zimbabwe are ranked outsiders due to missing their key players we will not take them lightly," said Inzamam, whose side has shown improvement under

new English coach Bob Woolmer.

Since Woolmer's arrival in June this year, Pakistan won four of their five matches in the Asia Cup in July in Sri Lanka followed by a runners-up finish to Australia in a tri-series in Amstelveen, Holland.

They also came close to beating Australia in a one-off limited-overs international at Lord's before losing to the West Indies in the semifinal of the International Cricket Council (ICC) Trophy in England.

"We have shown improvement but the real thing is (finding) the winning finish where we have shown weakness and need to overcome that problem," said Inzamam.

"We lost to Sri Lanka in the Asia Cup and now need to beat them to win the title," said Inzamam, who last week became only the second batsman after India's Sachin Tendulkar to score 10,000 one-day runs.

Pakistan have included two uncapped players in batsman Bazid Khan, son of former captain Majid

Khan, and pacer Rao Iftikhar in their 15-man squad for the series.

Zimbabwe, mired in turmoil after a rebellion by 15 white players including captain Heath Streak and the suspension of their Test status, drew a two-day tour opener in Pakistan before suffering an innings defeat last week in a four-day match against the Pakistan Cricket Board Patron's XI.

"We are a young team but we can take inspiration from our good showing against Sri Lanka in England earlier this month where we gave them a run for their money," said Zimbabwe captain Tatenda Taibu, who, at 20 years of age, became the youngest ever international captain in April this year.

Following a players' strike over selection policies in April, Zimbabwe lost all five one-day games on home grounds to Sri Lanka and suffered the ignominy of being dismissed for one-day cricket's lowest score of 35.

They also lost both the Tests to Sri Lanka by innings followed by

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PHOTO: STAR

President of Bangladesh Hockey Federation Air Vice Marshal Fakhrul Azam briefs the media about the Challenge Cup under-21 invitational hockey tournament at a local hotel in the city yesterday. The five-nation tournament begins today.

Raul brings back life



INTERNET SOURCE, Madrid

Real Madrid captain Raul was the hero as he scored twice to help his side overturn a two-goal deficit and beat Roma, easing the crisis with the Spanish club while making even worse what has been a dreadful season so far for Roma.

When Daniele De Rossi and Antonio Cassano gave Roma a 2-0 lead, Real must have feared the worst but Raul began the comeback with a deflected goal before Luis Figo levelled from the penalty spot.

Raul, who had not scored in the Santiago Bernabeu stadium since January 3 before Tuesday evening, then gave his side the lead before Roberto Carlos added a fourth and then blew kisses to the crowd.

The identity of the match-winners was symbolic.

Raúl and Roberto Carlos had been blamed as ringleaders of the

dressling-room revolt which forced the departure of the coach José Antonio Camacho last week. On Tuesday night it took their joint efforts to save Camacho's caretaking successor, Mariano Garcia Remón, from suffering a similar fate - after nine days in the job.

Madrid had lost their Champions League opener 3-0 in Leverkusen a fortnight ago.

"The memory of that night put us on edge at the start tonight," said Roberto Carlos. "But we showed the critics we can fight for a result when we have to. That was a comeback which will go down in the club's history."

Madrid had been outplayed by Leverkusen in their opener while Roma were eventually handed a 3-0 defeat by UEFA after their match with Dynamo Kiev was halted after referee Anders Frisk was struck by a missile.

Madrid coach Garcia Remon made two changes from the side that lost 2-1 in Bilbao on Saturday night.

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PHOTO: AFP

SEE YOU SOON: Injured Indian little master Sachin Tendulkar (L) chats with Australian spin wizard Shane Warne during the tourists' training session in Mumbai yesterday.

'Don't rule me out'



AFP, Mumbai

India's star batsman Sachin Tendulkar on Wednesday hinted he may be fit for next week's first Test against Australia, saying the tennis elbow injury was showing "tremendous improvement".

But the 31-year-old, one of the game's most prolific batsmen with 33 Test and a record 37 one-day centuries, said he needed doctors' clearance before making himself available for the Bangalore Test from next Wednesday.

"I am not ruling myself out," Tendulkar told reporters after giving his Mumbai teammates a pep talk ahead of their three-day game against the tourists at the Brabourne stadium from Thursday.

"I am waiting for doctors to give me the green signal. I will know in a few days if I can play in Bangalore.

"I have not practised for six weeks because I was in a lot of pain.

I need to have more strength in my left hand.

"All I can say at present is that doctors feel there has been a tremendous improvement in my condition."

Tendulkar, who missed three consecutive limited-overs tournaments in the last month due to the injury, said two weeks ago he was unable to pick up a bat due to the pain.

Tendulkar has not played a first-class game since the third Test against Pakistan in Rawalpindi in April, but his return to the national team will be fast-tracked the moment he is declared fit.

Indian captain Sourav Ganguly has said Tendulkar will be played in Bangalore even if he makes himself available on the morning of the match.

"When a player like Tendulkar is missing, it makes a big difference," Ganguly was quoted as saying.

"I want him back fast."

Australian coach John Buchanan

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Pakistan take the lead

AFP, Peshawar

Ace penalty corner specialist Sohail Abbas scored Pakistan's winning goal moments before the end of play to give the home team a hard fought 3-2 victory over India in their third match at the Lala Ayub Stadium here on Wednesday.

The 28-year-old scored in the 68th minute after Pakistan struggled with India's aggressive game in the second period, bringing his tally to 263 goals in 213 international appearances.

Pakistan now lead the eight-match series 2 to 1.

Pakistan won the first match 2-1 in Karachi but India staged a comeback by routing Pakistan 4-1 in the second match at Quetta.

Pakistanis forwards, clueless in their second match defeat, looked more cohesive Wednesday and played to a plan -- scoring two goals in the first half.

Mudassar Ali opened the scoring when he latched on to a beautiful pass from Kashif Jawwad and his hit went through the pads of Indian

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PHOTO: STAR

THIS IS WHERE YOU NEED TO SORT THINGS OUT: National cricket team's computer analyst Nasir Ahmed (C) shows something to left-arm spinner Abdur Razzak (L) during the nets session at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. Razzak is going through a correction phase in his bowling action.

3-dayer starts today Australia may hide Warne

AFP, Mumbai

Shane Warne is likely to be kept under wraps when the tourists begin their Indian tour with a three-day match against national champions Mumbai here on Thursday.

The champion leg-spinner, the second highest wicket-taker in Test history, may not play the warm-up game -- or given very short spells if he does -- to preserve him for the Test series starting next week.

Australian coach John Buchanan was non-committal on Warne's inclusion for Thursday's match, but hinted it was possible he may be rested in the stifling heat and humidity of this bustling western metropolis.

"Shane will be bowling a lot in the Test matches," Buchanan said on Wednesday. "We want to try out as many people as we can since this is the only practice game before the Tests start."

Mumbai, the reigning Ranji Trophy champions, believe the tourists will not expose Warne in the

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JFA Cup from October 2

UNB, Dhaka

The JFA Cup under-16 football tournament, sponsored by Japan Football Association (JFA) and organised by Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF), begins at different venues across the country on October 2.

"In the primary phase, eight districts will play hosts to the 60-team meet," tournament committee chairman Abdur Rahim told reporters at a press conference at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

BFF president SA Sultan, general secretary Anwarul Haq Helal, deputy general secretary Manzoor Hossain Malu, joint secretary Ashrafuddin Ahmed Chunnun and tournament committee secretary Azfaruzzaman Sohrab were present on the occasion.

"JFA wants to extend its cooperation for the development of the game at the grassroots level and they will come up in a greater way if we can successfully hold this

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Kapali to lead BCB XI



SPORTS REPORTER

The enigmatic Alok Kapali was given an early opportunity to show that he has put his lean time with the bat behind him when he was yesterday named captain of the BCB (Bangladesh Cricket Board) XI that will take on touring New Zealand in their first warm-up match, a three-dayer.

Kapali, who's prolonged run-draught saw him being dropped for the recently concluded ICC Champions Trophy in England, was provided a new lease of life by the selectors who called up the prodigious 22-year-old in the 21-man preliminary squad for the Test and one-day series against the Black Caps next month. But he still has to convince the critics that he has

found answers for his form slump.

Kapali was left out of the second Test against the West Indies at Jamaica in May but retained his place in the Asia Cup squad before the selectors ran out of patience with him.

New Zealand are expected to reach Dhaka on October 8 and play the three-day match at the Bangladesh Kirra Shikkha Protisthan (BKSP) from October 14-16. The first of the two Tests start in Dhaka on October 19.

Apart from Kapali, the 14-member BCB XI squad has some other names who will be trying to make an impression.

Bangladesh Under-19 Opener Nafees Iqbal will be looking to earn a maiden Test call-up having already represented the Tigers in ODIs. His competitor for the same role is the more experienced Hannan Sarker

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