

## JFA Cup football Baten slams six goals

SPORTS REPORTER

Abdul Baten slammed a double hattrick as Feni recorded a massive 6-1 victory over Narsingdi in the final round of the JFA Cup Under-16 football tournament at the Birsreshtha Shaheen Mohammad Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

Musharraf netted the consolation goal for the losers.

In the other match, Meherpur edged Sirajganj 3-2 at the same venue. Shahabuddin struck twice and Ripon scored one while Hitler scored both the goals for Sirajganj.

## Ponting ponders using protector

AFP, Melbourne

Australian skipper Ricky Ponting said Thursday he will consider wearing a guard to protect his thumb in a bid to play a role in the Test cricket series against India.

Ponting, who has missed the first two Tests in the four-match series on the sub-continent, broke his left thumb while fielding during Australia's six-wicket loss to England in the ICC Champions Trophy semifinal at Edgbaston.

"I flies out on Friday in the hope of playing in the fourth and final Test against Sourav Ganguly's Indians in Bombay, starting on November 3.

"I'll test things out when I first get there. The first couple of days when I get there I'll just go pretty easily with catching and fielding drills," Ponting told reporters here on Thursday.

"I just want to get used to the feeling of the ball back in my hands again and take it pretty slowly."

"But I have had some protective guards made for fielding, if I'm not overly confident but I've still got another two weeks until the fourth Test comes around and by then I should be confident with it."

Australia lead the series 1-0 after winning the opening Test in Bangalore and drawing the second Madras Test after rain washed out the final day's play last Monday.



PHOTO: AFP

Sri Lanka's Dilhara Fernando looks back after his middle stump was uprooted by Pakistan fast bowler Shoaib Akhtar (L) on the second day of the first Test in Faisalabad yesterday.

## New ball pleases Akhtar

Cricket

REUTERS/AFP, Faisalabad

Pakistan fast bowler Shoaib Akhtar played down the importance of his five-wicket haul in the first Test against Sri Lanka on Thursday.

The express pacer said he was delighted to open the attack with the new ball.

"I love to bowl with the new ball, it's pleasurable and it's nice and I am more effective with the new ball."

"I enjoyed taking the wickets and bowling with the new ball. But the match is not over as yet and there is still a lot to be done yet," he told reporters after completing figures of five for 60, his ninth Test five-wicket haul.

"I will not be satisfied until the Test is over and we can win it," added the 29-year-old.

"Mohammad Sami and I are looking to score around 70 or 80 runs more on the third day. We need

a sizeable lead because the pitch is good for batting," he said.

Shoaib and Sami were batting together at the close of play with Pakistan on 256 for eight after bowling out the Lankans for 243.

The world's fastest bowler, famously known as the Rawalpindi Express, has been a controversial figure of late.

When Pakistan lost to archrivals India for the first time on home soil in April, Akhtar was made a scapegoat and subjected to a medical inquiry to probe allegations he faked injury.

And when he was used as a first change bowler in the recently concluded tri-series one-day tournament, which also included Zimbabwe, he proved less effective and many believed he was not happy at being used as "a stock bowler."

"He (Samaraweera) played very well, but he was vulnerable in the beginning and we should have got him out earlier."

ready to do it, and moreover, when the team needs it," said Akhtar, who now has 130 wickets in 33 Tests.

"I am glad to have my rhythm back and would want to take more wickets to see my team win this Test," he said.

But Akhtar admitted it would be a hard task for the bowlers in the second innings.

"This pitch is going to be a batting paradise and now it's our job to push them hard and get them out for a low score in the second innings," he said.

Akhtar praised Sri Lankan all-rounder Thilan Samaraweera's century but said Pakistan gave away too many loose runs after having humbled the visitors to 9-3 early on the first day.

"He (Samaraweera) played very well, but he was vulnerable in the beginning and we should have got him out earlier."

## Thilan delighted at away ton

Cricket

AFP, Faisalabad

Sri Lankan all-rounder Thilan Samaraweera Thursday hit his first hundred away from home, buoyed by the fact it was done facing what he called world's best attack.

"I am very happy at scoring my fourth hundred and that too against the world's best attack with Shoaib Akhtar and Mohammad Sami," Samaraweera told reporters.

"It was my second time facing Akhtar so it's nice to have notched a hundred against such a menacing bowler."

The 28-year-old from Colombo hit a laboured 100 to save Sri Lanka's blushes after they were rocked by Akhtar and reduced to 9-3 on the opening day of the first Test here on Wednesday.

"When I walked in with the team having lost three quick wickets, I decided to play it out and had some good partnerships with Sanath Jayasuriya and Jehan Mubarak which worked well," said Samaraweera.

Brought in as an off-spinning all-rounder, Samaraweera hit a century

in his debut Test against India at Colombo three years ago. His stubbornness on the field has made him an invaluable member of the Test side since.

He racked up two centuries and three fifties in his first nine innings, batting at number seven, giving him the astonishing average of 87.16, and he helped his side win nine successive Tests.

"Of course, it's also great to have scored a century outside Sri Lanka because people had started saying I scored all my hundreds at the Sinhalese Sports Club ground in Colombo," he said.

With 97 overnight, Samaraweera reached the three-figure mark with the very first ball of Day Two on Thursday. But he miscued a hook of a rising Akhtar delivery shortly afterwards to be caught out for 100.

Samaraweera, whose elder brother Dilip also played for Sri Lanka, refused to be compared with other cricketers.

"I have not modelled my batting on anyone, but I have always idolised my skipper Marvan Atapattu, Kumar Sangakkara and Sanath Jayasuriya," he said.

"I brought in as an off-spinning all-rounder, Samaraweera hit a century

## Vanuatu to host EAP Cup in '05

AFP, Sydney

Vanuatu will host the East Asia Pacific (EAP) Cricket Cup next year, the International Cricket Council (ICC) announced Thursday.

The ICC said the EAP Cricket Cup, to be held over a nine-day period in September-October, will act as a ranking event for the EAP's affiliate member countries and will form part of the ICC's World Cup Qualifying Series.

Six countries will be competing in the EAP Cricket Cup to qualify for the 2007 ICC World Cup in the West Indies.

They include Japan, Tonga, Indonesia, Samoa, Cook Islands and Vanuatu. Japan and Indonesia will be competing for the first time in a regional cricket tournament in the Pacific Islands.

The EAP Cricket Cup, with specific dates to be announced early next year, will have a round robin format, followed by finals, the ICC said.

"We can not put any pressure on him whatsoever," explained Bierhoff. "We just have to wait for him to recover and show him he has our full backing."

Back in November 2003 Deisler was diagnosed with depression and the playmaker was forced to sit out six months of last season and Germany's disastrous 2004 European championships in Portugal.

He looked to have completed his recovery after making his international comeback against Brazil on September 8 but some poor recent displays have rocked his fragile self confidence.

"It is a shame that I could not prevent the pressure from getting to Deisler," explained Bayern chief Magath. "It was important that he had time to stabilise. He wants too much too soon."

Thank you champion.

## SERIES SALAD

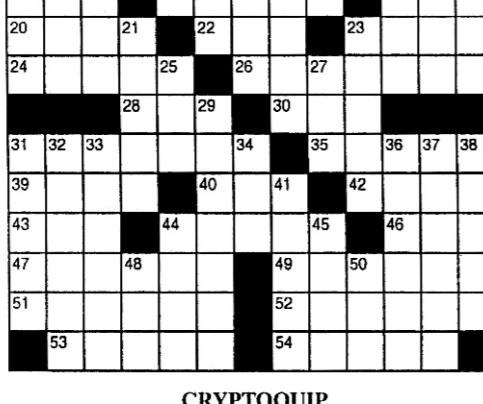
FROM PAGE 13  
boys of Dav Whatmore can feel that it is a small improvement.

"There are lot of positives in Bangladesh's performance and definitely we are improving if we consider what happened against New Zealand in 2001," said a BCB official.

Bangladesh lost their first Test at Hamilton by an innings and 52 runs and suffered a similar innings and 74-run defeat in the second Test at Wellington.

While the officials can claim some satisfaction, fans on the hand voice their frustration after seeing the home bowlers being sent to the cleaners by the lower half of the Kiwi batting.

"I love cricket but of course I would never watch this kind of boring match. I just came here to kill my time while I was fasting," he said.



CRYPTOQUIP

B J F B P J S F R F X S W J ,

X Z J O D J I J P O V J M F D J ,

J P J M X I F J R M J B Z L P F ,

Q I L B Z W M L P P O M Z L P P J R Q J S !

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF YOU OWN A LARGE

COLLECTION OF GREAT SHOES, COULD YOU SAY YOU'RE WELL-HEELED?

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: J equals E

The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

## Chess Olympiad Both men and women beaten

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladeshi men's team lost to Switzerland 3-1 in the sixth round game of the 36th Chess Olympiad at Calvia in Spain on Wednesday.

Grand Master (GM) Ziaur Rahman drew with his counterpart Victor Korchnoi and International Master (IM) Enamul Hossain Rajib shared points with FM Severin Papa, IM Reefat Bin Sattar was beaten by GM Joseph G Gallagher and IM Abdulla Al Rakib went down to GM Florian Janni.

The women's team also lost to Dominican Republic 2-1.

Nazrana Khan Eva won against Gissel Bouret, International Women Master Ramon Hamid was beaten by Kenia Jose Polanca and Zakiya Sultan lost to Mercedes De La Cruz.

The men's team earned 12 points while women's team got 6.5 points.

"Unfortunately, he's not getting a

## Captain asks Lee to wait

Cricket

AFP, Melbourne

Skipper Ricky Ponting on Thursday urged discarded Test pace bowler Brett Lee to stick at it and work towards getting back in the Australian team for the domestic Test cricket series later this year.

Lee is on the outside looking in after missing out to Michael Kasprowicz for the current four-Test series in India.

The 27-year-old Lee, rated one of the fastest bowlers in world cricket, had his career interrupted by ankle surgery earlier this year and has been working his way back to full fitness.

Ponting, who leaves on Friday to rejoin the Australian team in India after recovering from a broken thumb, said Lee faced a struggle to regain his spot.

"Someone's always going to be unlucky -- Brett's the unlucky one at the moment."

Australia have five Tests lined up against Pakistan and New Zealand at home during the November-January period and Lee will be looking to add to his 139 wickets in 37 Tests.

Ponting said Lee remained upbeat and was continuing to work hard on his bowling and in the gym in India.

"We all knew with Brett that the more bowling he did and better physical shape he got in over the next few weeks, his bowling was going to improve dramatically," he said.

"By all accounts he's bowling very, very quick over there at the moment."

"Once again it's always hard work to pick an Australian team."

"At any time there can be three or four guys who can feel they are unlucky not to be in the side and at the moment Brett's probably one of those."

"He's busting to get out there and have a go, but there's some tough selections to come up."

"Unfortunately, he's not getting a

## Henman felled in Madrid

Tennis

AFP, Madrid

Pakistan and India will play a one-day international in Kolkata on November 13 to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the Board of Control for Cricket in India.

Pakistan Cricket Board chairman Shaharyar Khan said on Thursday the match would be followed by a game between the national champions in both countries.

He said captain Inzamamul Haq would lead the side and most of the leading players had made themselves available for the match despite the onset of Ramadan, the Muslim month of fasting.

It will be Pakistan's first visit to India since early 1999 when they played three Tests and took part in a triangular one-day series.

There has been a gradual thaw in political relations between the rival neighbours and this year India visited Pakistan for a full series for the first time in 14 years.

The former Bosnian war refugee claimed victory a game later with a concluding break as Henman's chance for glory this week in Spain evaporated in one hour, 58 minutes.

The Briton was given the top seed point in political relations between the rival neighbours and this year India visited Pakistan for a full series for the first time in 14 years.

The bitter loss was the third in four meetings for Henman against Ljubicic, who improved to 33-21 on the season.

Henman and his 29th-ranked opponent got stuck into battle from the start, with neither man able to dent the other's defences.