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No batting for better batting

SPORTS REPORTER

RC COLA
In a bid to end the continuous poor run of form Bangladesh cricket team management took an extraordinary decision of dropping the nets session for the specialist batsman ahead of the RC Cola second one-day international against New Zealand to be held at the Bangabandhu National Stadium today.

Smarting under a 138-run defeat in the first one-day at Chittagong on Tuesday, Habibul Bashar's men returned to training yesterday, but instead of going into the nets the top-order batsmen were seen doing fielding exercises throughout the morning session and also in the evening under lights at the BNS.

"It was a management decision to avoid any batting practice for the specialist batsmen. The decision for a change might inspire them to bat longer in a match that they have failed to do so in recent times," said Bashar on Thursday.

The idea stemmed after Bangladesh's dismal showing in Chittagong where the Tigers crashed to 86, their fourth lowest score in one-day internationals.

But whether the ploy actually works or not, New Zealand stand-in captain Daniel Vettori will be aiming to wrap up the three-match series with another comprehensive victory.

"I think Bangladesh will be hungry to do well especially after the way they batted in the last match. I hope they will come out a lot harder against us tomorrow. But I think my top five batsmen who did not get runs in Chittagong will be able to put together a big score here," said Vettori before the Kiwis engaged in the afternoon training session.

"We were lucky that Cairns and Styris shared an extremely important partnership in Chittagong," said the bespectacled 25-year-old while referring to Chris Cairns' match-winning 74 after the Black Caps were reduced to 94-5.

Replying to a question, Vettori believed that lack of patience and wrong shot selection were the major faults behind Bangladesh's batting failures.

"Though I'm not a batsman I think your coach said those things about where you are going wrong," said left-arm spinner, who starred in

SEE PAGE 14 COL 4



(L) YOU GUYS HAVE TO STAND UP: Bangladesh coach Dav Whatmore (2nd from R) talks to his charges during a practice session at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. (R) New Zealanders enjoy a game of handball during their training session at the Big Bowl. The two sides meet in the day-night second game of the 3-match one-day international series here today.



PHOTOS: STAR

Pool players' transfers Manzarul still searching

SPORTS REPORTER

Manzarul Islam Rana was the odd man left in the cold on the special day for players' transfers for this season's Dhaka Premier Division cricket league yesterday.

Only the 13 players under the national pool who could not appear in the three-day transfers from October 25-27 as they were playing in the second Test and first ODI against New Zealand in Chittagong, were eligible for the transfers yesterday. However, only all-rounder Manzarul failed to commit to a club.

The left-arm spinner who is also a handy middle-order batsman, played for Victoria Sporting Club last season but the defending champions have filled up their three-man quota with Khaled Mashud, Alok

SEE PAGE 14 COL 5

Mariner shut out MSC

Hockey

SPORTS REPORTER

Mariner Youngs Club stunned defending champions Mohammedan Sporting Club to reach the Club Cup Hockey Tournament final yesterday with a gripping 3-2 win in the first semifinal at the Maulana Bhashani National Hockey Stadium.

They will now await the winners of today's second semifinal between last year's runners-up Abahani and Usha Krira Chakra in the November 9 final.

Two former Mohammedan players -- Issa Mia and Rafiqul Islam Kamal -- dashed the Black and Whites' bid for glory putting the Arambagh outfit 2-0 ahead in the first period.

Issa broke the deadlock after 29 minutes when the defender con-

verted Mariners' first penalty-corner while forward Kamal doubled the lead two minutes later with a cool piece of finishing. The player, who was ignored by Mohammedan this season, dribbled past two rival defenders with a through from Hassan Ahmed and neatly placed the ball home.

Kamal then set up a goal for Hassan who sounded the board with an angular hit in the 48th minute to seal victory.

Then the holders hit back twice inside three minutes to stay in contention for a second successive final berth but their late efforts could not save them from defeat.

Zahidul Islam Rajan's powerful hit beat Mariners' keeper after it deflected off Belal's stick in the 51st minute while midfielder Ashiquzzaman diverted Pakistani Aseem Raza's cross with a diving effort three minutes later.

Kamal could have widened the margin five minutes from time when he had only the Mohammedan goalie to get past but the veteran squandered the chance hitting wide of the target.

Nasir shares point

SPORTS REPORTER

FIDE Master Sheikh Nasir Ahmed drew with International Master Volke Karsten of Germany in the third round of the Calvia Open Chess Festival in Spain on Wednesday.

Nasir earned 2.5 points after the end of the third round and he was playing against International Master Alexander Veingold of Estonia in the fourth round game on Thursday.

Corporate cricket GP, Biman enter Cup semis

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Biman and Grameen-Phone ensured their respective Cup semifinal berths in the Grameen-Phone Corporate Cricket League yesterday.

Biman (121-8) defeated Robintex (83) by 38 runs at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium while tournament sponsors GrameenPhone (110-4) handed AKTEL (108-8) a six-wicket to at the BKSP ground.

Both teams have four wins in the Twenty20 competition and will meet in the last league match tomorrow to decide who tops the group.

Defending champions Araf Apparels, meanwhile stayed alive for a place in the last four when they defeated CityCell by four wickets.

In reply to CityCell's 99-8, Araf reached 100-6 with two balls to spare. It was their second win in the Cup phase.

Araf play Robintex in the final round. Robintex and CityCell are both on one win each while AKTEL bowed out with four defeats in a row.

Meanwhile, BEXIMCO reached the semifinals of the Plate stage with four wins in as many matches. Former national skipper Akram

SEE PAGE 14 COL 1

Mumbai turns minefield 18 wickets fall on the second day

AFP, Mumbai

India's prolific leg-spinner Anil Kumble wrecked Australia to leave the fourth and final Test hanging in the balance after 18 wickets fell on a spiteful pitch during the second day's play on Thursday.

India, who crashed for 104 earlier in the day, hit back to bowl Australia out for 203 with Kumble taking 5-90 and Murali Kartik 4-44 on a wicket where the ball turned and jumped to make life miserable for batsmen.

Trailing by 99 runs on the first innings, India were 5-0 in their second knock by stumps, needing a big score on Friday to put Australia under pressure and secure a face-saving win.

Australia enjoy an unassailable 2-0 lead in the series after winning the first and third Tests. The second Test was drawn.

Australia lost four wickets before India's total had been surpassed, but Damien Martyn hit 55 and Adam Gilchrist smashed an 18-ball 26 to boost the score.

On a bowler-dominated day at the Wankhede stadium, paceman Jason Gillespie and debutant spinner Nathan Hauritz combined to bowl India out in just 41.3 overs 10 minutes before lunch.

Gillespie grabbed three wickets in the space of four runs to finish with 4-29 and Hauritz, a last-minute replacement for the injured Shane Warne, chipped in with 3-16.

India, who resumed at 22-2 from 11 overs bowled on the rain-hit opening day, collapsed to 33-5 before the last five wickets added 71 runs to lift the hosts past the 100-run mark.

It was India's lowest total at home against Australia, falling below the 135 they made at the Ferozeshah Kotla in New Delhi way back in 1959-60.

Rahul Dravid, leading India in the absence of the injured Sourav Ganguly, was the lone batsman to offer resistance with an unbeaten 31.

Five of the six specialist batsmen failed to get into double figures. Sachin Tendulkar, looking hope

SEE PAGE 14 COL 2

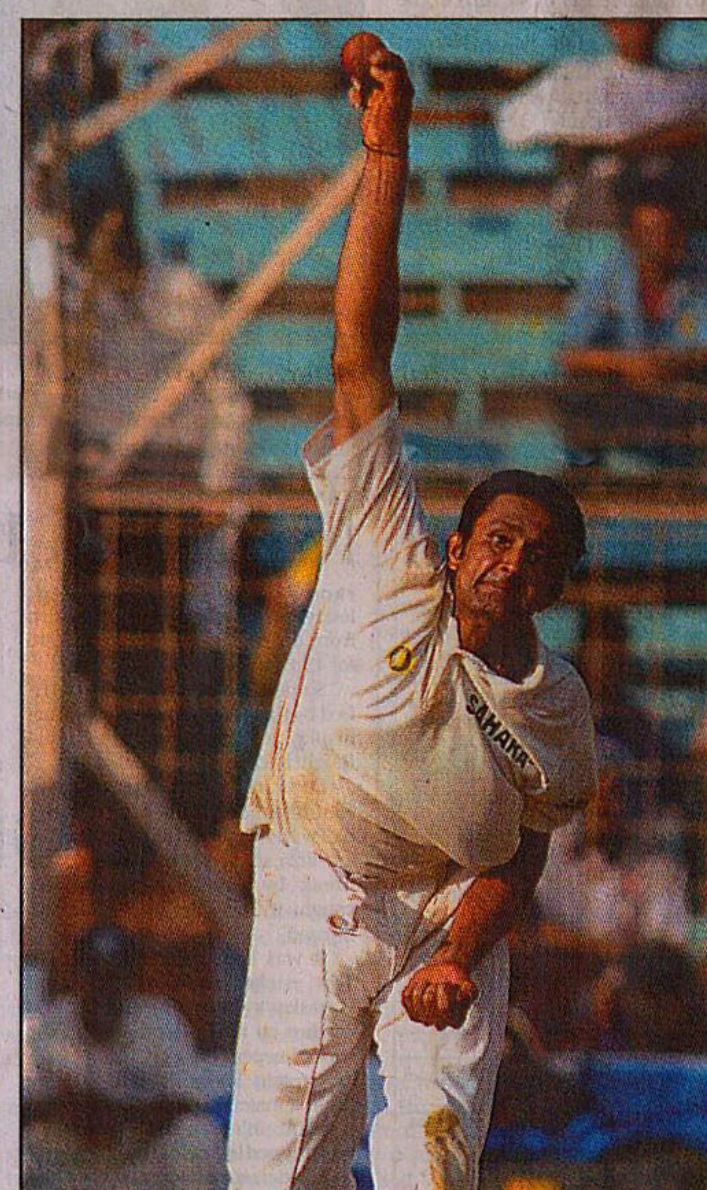


PHOTO: AFP

FIVE ONCE AGAIN: India's Anil Kumble lets go yet another delivery against Australia on the second day of the fourth Test at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai yesterday. The leg-spinner grabbed his 27th five-wicket haul.



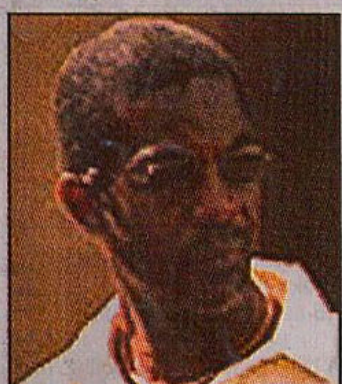
Did U Know?

Australian batsman Simon Katich became the nineteenth Australian player to be dismissed on 99 in the Nagpur Test.



What to WATCH

- BTB**
Second ODI
Bangladesh v New Zealand
Live at 1.20 pm
- TEN Sports**
Fourth Test, Day Three
India v Australia
Live at 9.30 am
- STAR Sports**
Second ODI
Bangladesh v New Zealand
Live at 1.20 pm
Paris Tennis Masters
Quarterfinals
Live at 1.30 am (Saturday)
- ESPN**
Sportscentre
Live at 8.30 pm



Michael Holding
(Former West Indies fast bowler)
"If there was no television, there would be no huddle on a cricket ground."

SEE PAGE 14 COL 5

Warne 50-50 for 1st Test against NZ

AFP, Melbourne

Australian leg-spinner Shane Warne rated himself a 50-50 chance for the first Test against New Zealand later this month after missing the final match of the India series with a fractured thumb.

Warne said the thumb was still throbbing but he hoped to be fit to face the Kiwis in the Test beginning in Brisbane on November 18.

"I'd say I'm a 50-50 chance for Brisbane," he told reporters.

"If it heals quickly in the next couple of weeks, I should be fine."

Australian physiotherapist Errol Alcott said Warne's injury could take two to four weeks to heal.

A four-week recovery period would rule Warne out of the whole two Test series against New Zealand. The second Test begins in Adelaide on November 26.

Warne confirmed his decision to cut the thumbguard out of his new set of batting gloves had contributed to his injury.

He was hit on the end of the thumb by a ball from young Indian spinner Ahmad Nizam, during batting practice in the lead up to the fourth Test in India.

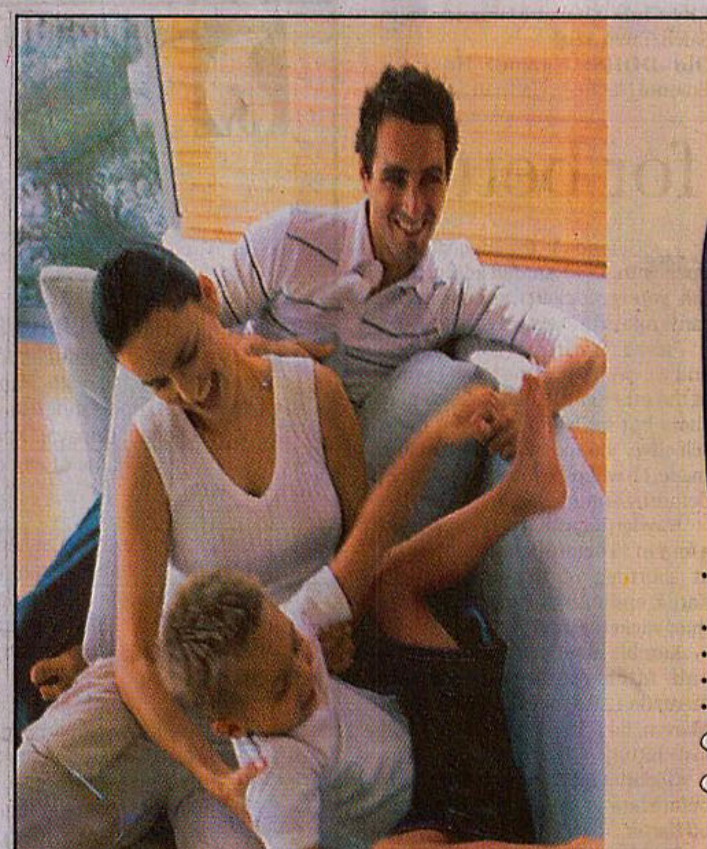


PHOTO: STAR

Action from the Club Cup hockey tournament's first semifinal between Mohammedan and Mariner Youngs at the Maulana Bhashani National Stadium yesterday.



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