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Did U Know?
 Michael Slater of Australia is known as 'Sybil' and 'Slats' by his teammates.



TEN Sports
 India vs South Africa
 Second Test, Day Three
 Live at 9:50 am

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

STAR Sports
 Australia vs New Zealand
 Second Test, Day Five
 Live at 6:25 am
 Hockey Series
 India vs Spain
 Live at 1:45 pm
 Sportsline
 Live at 8:00 pm



Monica Seles
 (American tennis star)
 "I'm trying to get ready to play. I don't want to talk about retirement because I'm still trying so hard."



Green Delta Premier Cricket League
 Victoria SC vs Old DOHS (DCS)
 Biman vs City Club (BNS)
 Orient SC vs Agrani Bank (FCS)
Green Delta Premier Hockey League
 Mohammedan vs Azad SC (1:15 pm)
 Sonali Bank vs S Bima (3:00 pm)
Dutch-Bangla Chess League

Channel-i Pepsi Media cricket champs

SPORTS REPORTER

Channel-i won the Third Pepsi Media Cup Cricket Tournament defeating Janakantha by seven runs in a thrilling final at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

A fine 31 by man-of-the-final Palash helped the satellite channel team score 66-5 in the stipulated six overs. Janakantha managed to reach 59-2 in reply.

Earlier, Channel-i eliminated champions Ajker Kagaj by two wickets while Janakantha ousted ATN Bangla by three wickets in the semifinals.

State Minister for Youth and Sports Fazlur Rahman distributed prizes as the chief guest. Golam Quddus Chowdhury, executive director of Transcom Beverages Limited and Bangladesh Cricket Board officials were present.

National cricket coach and captain DavWhatmore and Habibul Bashar, ex-national skippers Gazi Ashraf Hossain and Natmur Rahman and former national all-rounder Jahangir Shah Badshah also graced the final day of the six-a-side competition.

The Bangladesh Sports Journalists Association (BSJA) organised the 17-team meet sponsored by Transcom Beverages Limited.

Grass not on the menu

Home series against India



SPORTS REPORTER

Chief selector Faruque Ahmed has quashed rumours that the pitches for next month's home series against India will be green-top ones.

There have been speculations that the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) might go for seamer-friendly wickets for the two-Test series based on the fact that matches in the ongoing Dhaka Premier Division are being played on grassy surfaces which have been prepared on specific instructions from the Board.

But Faruque, who has been given the responsibility by the BCB to decide on the character of pitches for the games against India dismissed the unprecedented scenario as he felt it could prove suicidal for the home team.

The former Bangladesh captain was aware that although India's strength still lay in spin, they also had new ball bowlers like Zaheer Khan and Irfan Pathan who had the ability to make a difference on seaming pitches especially considering the vulnerability of the Tigers' batting line-up.

"We are not in a position at the

moment to handle quality pacers on pitches where the ball moves. It is not wise to change a tradition overnight," said Faruque adding that he had already instructed the curators to prepare true batting wickets.

India arrive in Dhaka on December 7. Apart from the Tests, the tourists will also feature in three ODIs.

"We had demanded slow wickets for the recently concluded series against New Zealand but this time we have told the pitch staff to make the tracks as hard and bouncy as possible with no grass to aid movement," said Faruque.

The chief selector thought that the Tigers' best batting in recent years have come on wickets with consistent bounce.

"We found our batsmen more comfortable on the hard and bouncy tracks of Pakistan and the West Indies and not on slow or seaming pitches."

Faruque however, was in favour of gradually breaking away from the tradition of flat, slow and low wickets and welcomed the initiative taken for the Premier League.

"We should play domestic cricket on grassy wickets to improve our quality and I believe we will be able to offer green-top tracks for future



HATTRICK HERO: Abahani's Russell Mahmud Jimmy (L), who himself scored four goals, is in control against Ruman Ali of Wari during their Green Delta Premier Division Hockey League clash at the Maulana Bhasani National Stadium yesterday.

Ctg Div Stadium gets ICC nod

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board's (BCB) plans to host two one-day internationals between Bangladesh and Zimbabwe in January at Bogra will have to put back after the International Cricket Council (ICC) gave recognition to the Chittagong Divisional Stadium as the country's new Test and one-day venue.

Three more venues -- the Fatullah Cricket Stadium, Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra and Khulna Divisional Stadium -- were also in line to get the ICC's nod as international venues after the Bangabandhu National Stadium and MA Aziz Stadium in Chittagong.

The decision was taken based on a report submitted by ICC inspector and former West Indian captain Clive Lloyd, who visited all four venues earlier this month.

The remaining three venues almost fulfilled the world body's requirements but need some adjustments.

The Fatullah Stadium in Narayanganj requires some attention to player security and reduction of travel time while Bogra and Khulna will need to build standard accommodation facilities before getting approval.

Div I chess Biman share second place

SPORTS REPORTER

Defending champions Bangladesh Biman dropped a point when they posted a 3-1 victory over Narayanganj City Chess Club in the fifth round of the Dutch-Bangla First Division Chess League yesterday.

The national flag-carrier now shares second position with newcomers Muktiyoddha Sangsad Kriya Chakra which had 4-0 win against Destiny2000.

Both sides secured 16.5 points.

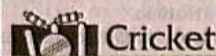
But there was no stopping Leonine Chess Club who inflicted a 4-0 defeat on Anushilan Daba Kriya Chakra in the round to maintain their solo lead at the federation hall-room.

Last year's runners-up Leonine boosted by an all-Grand Master line-up improved their tally to 18.5 after the fifth round.

Dao Thein Hai beat Alamgir Hossain, Iuldashev Saidali beat Giasuddin Mithu, Nguyen Anh Dung beat Rashed Dinayet and local Grand Master Niaz Murshed beat Amir Hossain.

In the other matches, Farahganj Sporting Club beat Bangladesh Ansar 2.5-1.5, Titus Club beat Mohakhali Prodig Sangha 4-0,

Woolmer hopes to spring a surprise



SPORTS REPORTER

A youthful Pakistan cricket squad arrived in Perth Monday night bristling with confidence at the daunting task which confronts them in the upcoming Test series against Australia.

The Pakistanis have never won a Test series in Australia and will spend close to a month in Perth as they build up for the first Test with the home nation starting at the Western Australian Cricket Association Ground on December 16.

The Australians, fresh from a Test series victory over Pakistan's arch-enemy India, are also on the brink of a clean-sweep series win over New Zealand at home.

But the Pakistanis still believe they can catch the Australians on the hop and coach Bob Woolmer said his young team may have a few tricks in store.

"I hope to surprise Australia," he said.

"I suppose everyone does these days, don't they? We're expecting a really tough tour, we're looking forward to it. I think we've got a very nice, young, balanced side.

"Probably not quite ready yet, but on the other hand, you never know. They've got some serious talent and maybe we can give someone a surprise."

The Pakistanis have scheduled three tour matches in Western Australia starting with a three-day run out against a Western Australian Second XI on Wednesday.

ACSU to probe Nairobi meet

AFP, Nairobi

The two International Cricket Council (ICC) Anti-Corruption and Security Unit (ACSU) officials expected in Kenya on Tuesday to interview senior players will base their investigations on a four-nation LG Cup held in Kenya in October 1999.

Kenya Cricket Association (KCA) general manager Sammy Obingo said Martin Hawkins and Alan Peacock, who were involved in investigations that led to an inquiry into former captain Maurice Odumbe earlier this year, will address the players activities during the tournament contested by India, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

South Africa, led by the late Hansie Cronje, beat India in the final.

Most of the players summoned to appear before the investigating team over a three-day period had threatened not to do so, claiming they had been given short notice

4-star Jimmy sinks Wari



SPORTS REPORTER

Russell Mahmud Jimmy fired four goals including a hatrick as defending champions Abahani brushed aside Wari Club 7-0 for their second successive victory in the Green Delta Premier Hockey League yesterday.

Wari came to the game after a fighting 2-3 loss against title-contenders Mohammedan in the first round but they failed to repeat Saturday's heroics against the Sky Blues at the Maulana Bhasani National Stadium.

However, they handcuffed Abahani for the first 23 minutes before Jimmy put Abahani ahead when the striker connected a cross by Shamim Reza.

Rafiqunnabi Nakib doubled the lead on the stroke of the breather when the defender scored off a

rebound after Musa Mia's hit came back during a penalty-corner.

Abahani, who won as many as ten penalty-corners but utilised only two of them in a game they absolutely dominated, made it 3-0 through Shahidullah Titu who converted a 44th minute penalty-corner.

Then it was the turn of Jimmy to go into overdrive when he scored his second goal of the match three minutes later and notched up the treble inside 17 minutes.

The Bangladesh youth international fed from a right-flank cross by Titu then dribbled past four Wari players showing flawless stickwork before sounding the board. Jimmy scored again after exchanging passes with Bachchu and finally, Musa and Shamim set up him for the hatrick goal.

Experienced Musa got a deserved goal just two minutes from time when the playmaker utilised a pass from Bachchu to seal an emphatic victory.

Abahani, who beat Azad Sporting Club 3-1 in the league opener, now have six points. They also fielded their first foreign recruit in the league Christopher Edward of India.

MARINER-AJAX

In the day's other match, Mariner Youngs Club blanked Ajax Sporting Club 2-0 to record their first win in two matches.

Club Cup runners-up Mariner, who dropped points against Sonali Bank in a goalless draw in the previous round, led the first half 1-0 through a brilliant move.

Taking a pass from Pakistani Yamin Bhatti, Rafiqul Islam Kamal dashed into the rival D-box before cutting the ball back to an unguarded Prashanta who broke the 32-minute deadlock with a fine reverse hit.

Issa Mia secured three points five minutes into the second half when the national defender converted a penalty-corner.

Sehwag's aggression



SPORTS REPORTER

Opener Virender Sehwag cracked a rapid unbeaten 82 as India rushed to 129 for one in reply to South Africa's first innings 305 on the day two of the second and final Test on Monday.

Sehwag, who hit a fiery 164 in the first drawn Test in Kanpur, hammered 11 fours and one six in his 107-ball innings.

Rahul Dravid was batting on a steady 33 after paceman Shaun Pollock gave South Africa an early breakthrough by trapping Gautam Gambhir lbw for seven.

Sehwag stamped his authority in his typical maverick fashion, punishing leg spinner Justin Ontong for 23 runs off seven balls at one stage.

Jacques Kallis had earlier scored 121 to help South Africa creep past the 300-run mark.

The all-rounder, resuming on 103 on a track offering early seam movement, could not assert himself against left-arm pacemen Zaheer Khan and Irfan Pathan, who took three wickets each.

Kallis was finally bowled by India captain Sourav Ganguly, shouldering arms to a ball that nipped back after the previous one had gone away.

Anil Kumble joined England's Steve Harmison as the highest wicket-taker this year with 61 scalps when he dismissed Pollock for 18, caught at slip by Dravid. Australian spinner Shane Warne is just one behind on 60.

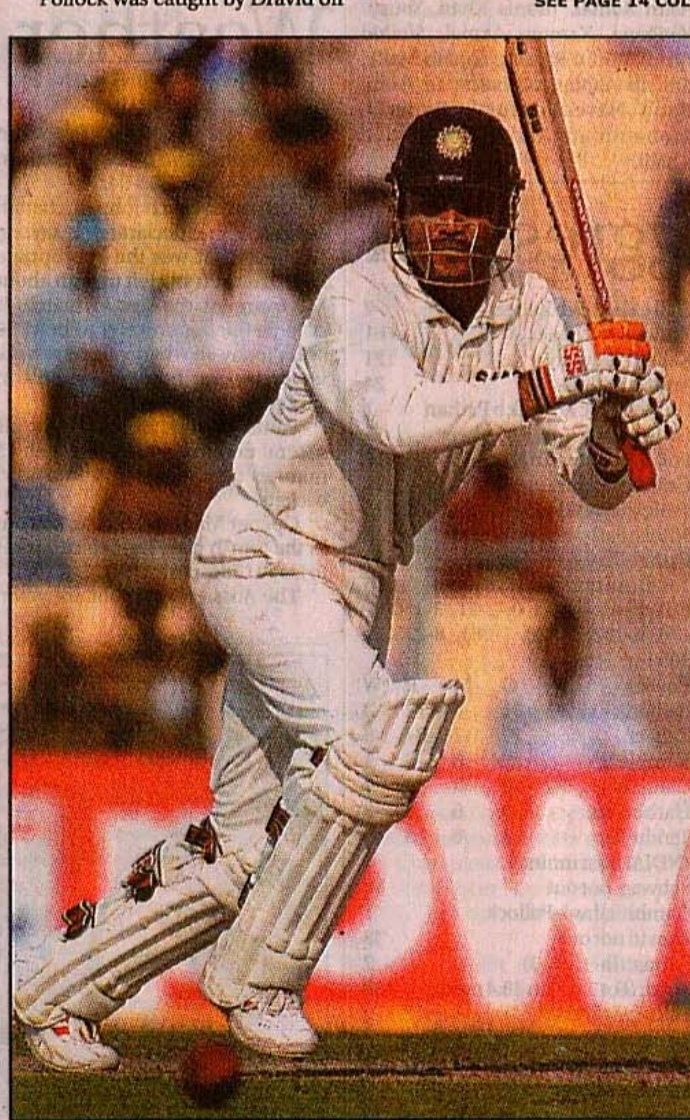
South Africa, slammed for being too defensive after they took more than two days to score 510 in Kanpur, again scored at only 2.52 runs an over.

The visitors had added three to their overnight 227 for five when Khan got the first breakthrough, having Zander de Bruyn caught behind with an away swinger for 15.

Kallis and Pollock managed to

consolidate for the remainder of the first hour but hopes of reaching 400 began to disappear with the loss of two quick wickets.

Pollock was caught by Dravid off



IN FULL FLOW: India opener Virender Sehwag sets off for a run after executing a cover-drive during his stroky unbeaten 82 in the first innings of the second Test against South Africa at the Eden Gardens yesterday.

3 in FIFA world player list

REUTERS, Zurich

Arsenal's Thierry Henry, Barcelona's Ronaldinho and Andriy Shevchenko of AC Milan make up the three-man shortlist for the 2004 world player of the year award.

The winner will be announced on December 20, FIFA said on Monday. None of the three have won the award before.

Henry finished second behind fellow Frenchman Zinedine Zidane in voting for the 2003 award. He finished top scorer in the Premier League with 30 goals, helping Arsenal to the title last season.

However, Henry failed to spark at Euro 2004 as France went out in the quarterfinals.

Brazil's Ronaldinho, a World Cup winner in 2002, has transformed Barcelona since arriving at the Nou Camp at the beginning of last season from Paris St Germain.

Seven points clear at the top of the Primera Liga, Barcelona are playing the most exciting club soccer in Europe and Ronaldinho's skill and vision is at the heart of it.

Ronaldinho did not play in this year's Copa America, which Brazil won.

The consistent goal-scoring of Ukraine's Shevchenko helped Milan to last season's Italian title and his



LAND DOWN UNDER: Pakistan fast bowler Mohammad Sami obliges an autograph hunter at the Perth International Airport upon their arrival in Australia yesterday.

Weather may deny Aussies



SPORTS REPORTER

New Zealand kept an eye on the weather to save them as they frustrated Australia's efforts to wrap up another fast-tracked Test at the Adelaide Oval on Monday.

The Kiwis, humiliated by an innings loss in Brisbane, appeared to be lurking towards another ignominious defeat inside four days when they faltered to 36 for four at tea chasing a record 464 to win.

But Nathan Astle and Jacob Oram resisted Australia's attempts to break through for 90 minutes in a

stubborn 63-run fifth-wicket stand before Astle lost concentration and hit to Justin Langer at short cover to give hometown hero Darren Lehmann his first wicket of the match.

Wicketkeeper Brendon McCullum took up the struggle with Brisbane century-maker Oram and the pair got New Zealand to the close in the gathering gloom and under floodlights at 149 for five with Oram unbeaten on 40 in 129 minutes and McCullum on 34 in 38 minutes.

McCullum's spirited resistance included a six off the world's leading wicket-taker Shane Warne with the pair's 50 partnership coming in a brisk 34 minutes.

It was a victory of sorts for the Kiwis to survive to stumps with

some showers and cooler weather forecast for Tuesday's last day, giving them a remote lifeline to wiggle out from Australia's clutches.

Australian skipper Ricky Ponting had the option of enforcing the follow-on on Sunday's third day with an overwhelming 324-run innings lead, but chose to give his bowlers some respite from the hot weather and time to recuperate for a final victory assault on the beleaguered Kiwis.

Ponting called a halt at 139 for two, setting New Zealand an improbable victory target of 464 runs off a minimum of 143 overs over almost five sessions.

The highest score New Zealand have achieved in the fourth innings