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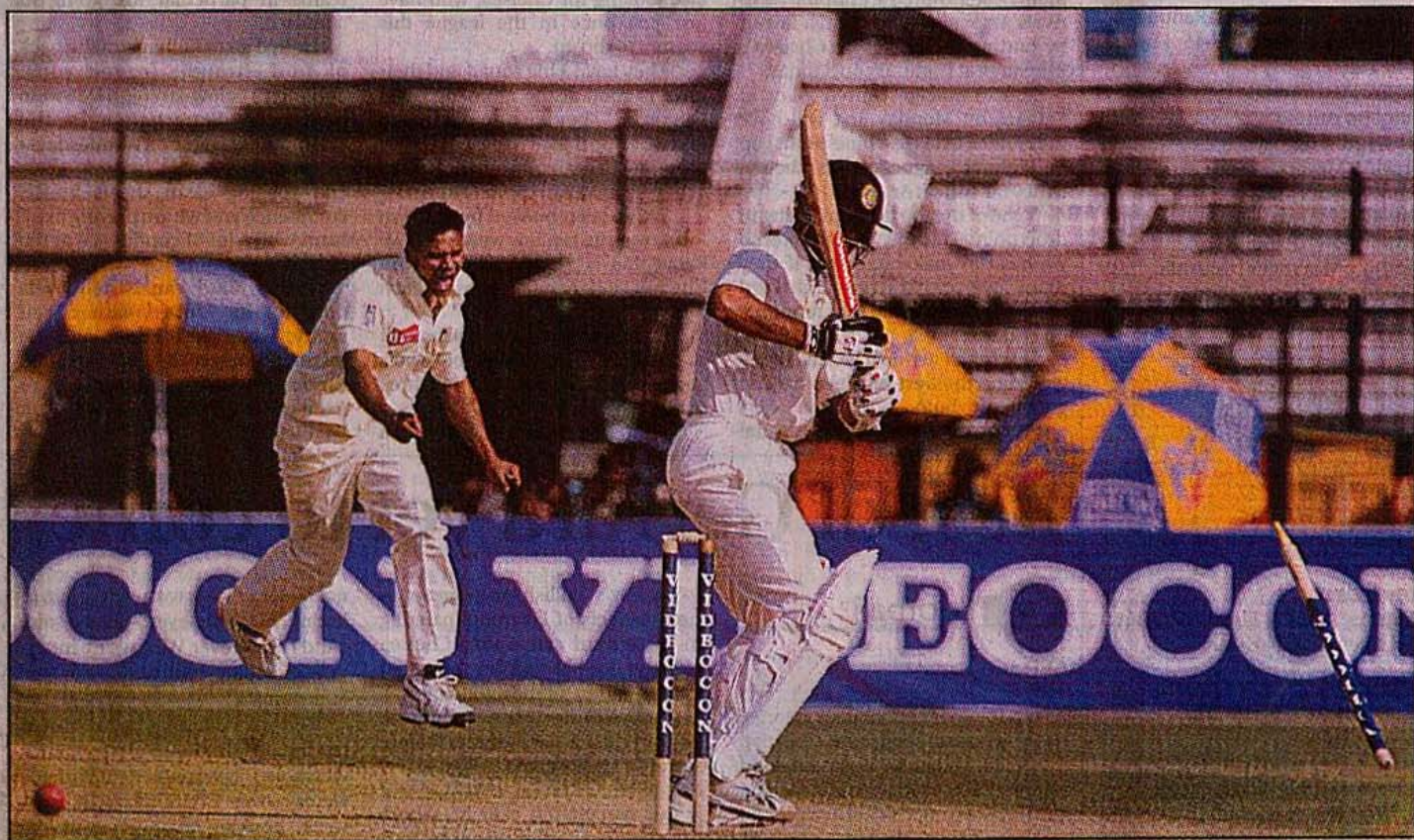
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# Star SPORT

DHAKA SUNDAY DECEMBER 12, 2004, E-MAIL: dssports@gononet.com

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TIMBERI Bangladesh paceman Mashrafe-Bin-Mortuza is over the moon after sending the off-stump of Indian superstar Rahul Dravid flying on the second day of the first Test at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

## Mashrafe roars on return

SPORTS REPORTER

Mashrafe-Bin-Mortuza could have become a hero on the second day of the first Test against India yesterday but for some sloppy catching it never happened.

The 20-year-old right-arm pacer made a dream return to international cricket after more than a year when the 'Narail Express' sent the off-stump of Rahul Dravid flying with a gem of an in-swing at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

The wall of India lasted only seven balls before falling for a duck. Mashrafe not only bemused his dream batsman but also welcomed opener Virender Sehwag with a well-directed delivery that whistled past the right-hander in a hostile opening spell that promised so much. He was very close to taking the prized scalp of Sachin Tendulkar but Mohammad Ashraful and captain Habibul Bashar dropped the master batsman much to his agony.

Out of action due to a career-threatening injury, the young tear-away not only bowled his heart out but also took a stunning catch at gully to get rid of Dinesh Karthik.

But after a tough day on the field, SEE PAGE 14 COL 5

## Drop catches, lose matches

Cricket

AL-AMIN

If you want to know how costly missed opportunities can be better ask master batsman Sachin Tendulkar and Indian captain Sourav Ganguly.

The collective contribution of Tendulkar and Ganguly was 230 runs, more than two thirds of India's first innings total of 348-7 at stumps on the second day of the first Test at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

The figure in all probabilities is set to grow even bigger when Tendulkar, unbeaten on 159, walks on the ground today for a final crack

at the ball with a delightful double hundred beckoning him.

But it could have been a totally different tale had the butterfingers Bangladesh fielders not let Tendulkar off the hook three even before the champion right-hander reached his first 50 after a surprising run-drought in the last eight innings since recovering from a tennis elbow.

Tendulkar offered a sharp chance while on nought but Mohammad Ashraful standing at backward short-leg dropped the mistimed pull. A generous Tendulkar, on 28, then edged one off Mashrafe-bin-Mortuza to first slip where Bashar spilled a regulation catch.

It was one of those rare days when Tendulkar, one of the few

batsmen in world cricket who seldom gives the fielder even a half chance, enjoyed life after life. Tendulkar was almost walking back to the dressing room when a Mohammad Rafique delivery popped up from good length and ballooned in the air after kissing his glove. But much to the horror of the ten thousand crowd, Rajin Saleh dropped it at silly point, which any school kid would have accepted like getting a piece of candy. At that stage the little master was on 47. From then on it was payback time for Tendulkar.

The shoddy close catching came to the play again when Manzarul Islam messed up a straightforward offer at slip and this time the batsman

SEE PAGE 14 COL 5

## Mariner back to winning

SPORTS REPORTER

Mariner Youngs Club came from a goal down to beat Wari Club 4-1 in yesterday's lone Green Delta Premier Hockey League match at the Maulana Bhashani National Stadium.

Rajib put pointless Wari ahead after 14 minutes but Asaduzzaman scored four minutes later to level the scores.

Mariner dominated the show but had to remain satisfied with a 1-1 draw at the break. The Arambagh outfit, who drew their last three matches including Abahani and Mohammedan, however, sealed the victory with late goals from Rafiqul Islam Kamal, Issa Mia and Prashanta Kumar.

Mariner have now nine points from five matches.

## Sunil wishes Sachin well

Cricket

BISHWAJIT ROY

Cricket might not be played at the Bangabandhu National Stadium in future, but the grand venue will for sure have a permanent place in great modern day batsman Sachin Tendulkar's mind.

The 31-year-old right-hander yesterday touched a landmark at the big bowl, which is all set to become football's only, making his 34th Test century against minnows Bangladesh that put him on par with legendary compatriot Sunil Gavaskar's world record.

And it was just fitting for the Mumbai lad as Gavaskar was the first man to greet him when he walked off the field after tea had been taken following Sourav

Ganguly's dismissal on the stroke of the break.

Tendulkar faced the obvious question when he appeared at a crowded press conference at the end of the day's play what Gavaskar told him during the emotion-chalked moment.

He smiled and said: "He told me, 'It's good to get to 34 but you should not stop here. Go farther and farther and get to the 50,'" told Tendulkar, who ended the day on 159 not out.

"I don't want to say whether it is possible or not right now. It's not that I'm not going to go for 50 hundreds. At the moment, I'm just going to go out there and play the way I've played."

Records are nothing new to the little Indian maestro, but he branded this hundred as a special one, especially when he has been fighting in another front. His second

battle field is a bad tennis elbow injury that kept him out of the game for almost two months.

"This century is special, because I was coming back from the injury and that was a bad one. I'm still not hundred per cent fit. It was tough because I had to play the ball and at the same time fight this pain. There are plenty of things that people don't know, I was fighting against all these. It's never an easy task. It's been a great challenge and I'm quite satisfied that I've come through."

"The injury was frustrating me because I wasn't able to hold the bat even properly. I wasn't allowed to pick up the bat the way I normally do and hit the ball. To do all that you need strength, and I just didn't have the strength in my left arm," he added.

Tendulkar admitted that he was still battling the pain and that's why SEE PAGE 14 COL 4

## Sorry Sunny!

SPORTS REPORTER

The name Sunil Gavaskar seems to have little significance for a security guard posted at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

The Indian legend turned popular cricket commentator was taken aback when that smart guard, perhaps not aware of whom he was dealing with, barred him from entering the ground.

Gavaskar was rushing from the commentary box to greet Sachin Tendulkar, who had just equalled his world record of 34 Test centuries.

The policeman said something in Bangla, which was obviously difficult to understand for Gavaskar.

Thankfully, a BCB official emerged on the scene and saved him from any further embarrassment. Gavaskar ultimately was able to enter the ground and embrace his fellow Indian great after Tendulkar was returning to the dressing room for the tea break having scored 104 not out.



MISS OF THE DAY: Rajin Saleh (L) juggles with the ball as master batsman Sachin Tendulkar holds his breath (2nd from R) during the second day's play at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

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## As hungry as ever

Cricket

REUTERS, New Delhi

It was the most important single of Sachin Tendulkar's life.

He would have preferred to get it against a bowler of Australian pacer Glenn McGrath's class, but the scampered run off little-known Tapash Baisya in Dhaka firmly cemented Tendulkar's place as one of the best in the game's history.

By equalling Sunil Gavaskar's world record 34 Test centuries in the first Test against Bangladesh, he has proved right all the pundits who predicted big things for him when he made his debut as a curly-haired 16-year-old in 1989-90.

"It's great to have some company at the top," Gavaskar said during commentary on the ESPN sports channel soon after Tendulkar reached the milestone in his 119th Test. Gavaskar played 125 matches. "It's a journey which has been fantastic for Sachin."

Years of hard work have gone into the making of Sachin Tendulkar, who led a busy life even in his early teens.

## TOP TEN TEST TONNERS

REUTERS, Dhaka

Leading century-makers in Test cricket after Sachin Tendulkar struck his 34th in the first Test against Bangladesh on Saturday (tabulated under centuries, player, country, matches; \* denotes match in progress):

34	Sachin Tendulkar	India	119*
34	Sunil Gavaskar	India	125
32	Steve Waugh	Australia	168
29	Don Bradman	Australia	52
27	Allan Border	Australia	156
26	Garfield Sobers	West Indies	93
26	Brian Lara	West Indies	112
24	Greg Chappell	Australia	87
24	Vivian Richards	West Indies	121
23	Javed Miandad	Pakistan	124

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**Bangladesh-India Series Quiz 3**

Who grabbed most test wickets for Bangladesh?

A Manjurul Islam    B Tapash Baishya    C Mohammed Rafique    D Mashrafe Mortuza

Answer by sending SMS\* to the number 2003  
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