



Did U Know?

Justin Langer (191 and 97) became the first batsman in Test history to be dismissed in the 1980s & 90s in a test match.

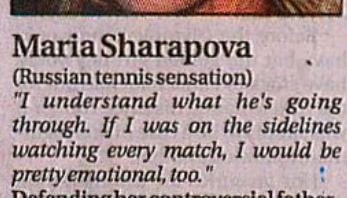


What to WATCH

ESPN
 Sportscentre
 Live at 8.30 pm
 English Premier League Preview
 Taped at 9 pm
 Here We Go

Same day delay at 10.30 pm
STAR Sports

English Premier League
 Bolton v Man City
 Repeat at 12.30 pm
 Sportsline
 Live at 8 pm
 Best of Wimbledon 2004
 Taped at 8.30 pm



Maria Sharapova
 (Russian tennis sensation)
"I understand what he's going through. If I was on the sidelines watching every match, I would be pretty emotional, too."
 Defending her controversial father.



DAY'S EVENT
 Green Delta Premier Div Hockey
 Mariner v Sadharan Bima (1.15 pm)
 Usha v Ajax (3 pm)

Jamiul leads Lalmatia

SPORTS REPORTER

A sparkling century by Jamiul Alam Babu propelled Lalmatia Club's way to a 32-run win against Surjo Tarun in the First Division Cricket League at the City Club ground yesterday.

The one-down batsman hit 118 off 157 balls with the help of 11 fours and one six as Lalmatia made 245 for 7 in 50 overs. In reply, Surjo Tarun were bundled out for 213 in 48.2 overs.

In the day's other match, Tanhar

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Parag begins with a win

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladeshi chess player Mehdi Hasan Parag got off to a fine start in the 27th Asian Junior Chess Championships which began in the Indian city of Bikaner in Rajasthan on Wednesday.

In the first round of the under-20 meet, the Bangladesh national champion defeated Nepal's Rohan Jaiswal.

Batting for a change

Cricket

STAFF CORRESPONDENT, Ctg

Bangladesh's batting finally shrugged off its notorious blues at the MA Aziz Stadium on Thursday.

Although the Tigers lost the first of the three-match one-day series against India by 11 runs, but for a

change the boys of Dav Whatmore showed that they could chase a target and chase it really hard.

The home team scored 234 in reply to India's 245 in their 99th appearance in the shorter-version of the game. Interestingly, it was the first time in nine matches Bangladesh have gone past the 200-mark in an ODI after scoring 221-9 against minnows Hong Kong at this year's Asia Cup in Sri Lanka.

Skipper Habibul Bashar led the Bangladesh fightback with gritty 65 and young Aftab Ahmed kept his nerve under pressure with an aggressive 30. But it was a sensational half-century 39-ball 50 from wicketkeeper Khaled Mashud and some lusty blows by another experienced player Khaled Mahmud that propelled Bangladesh past 200.

And had the start been a bit more positive and Mohammad Rafiq had not been magnificently caught by

Yuvraj Singh at point, the finish could have been even closer.

Still, going into their 100th ODI at the Bangabandhu National Stadium on December 26, Bashar was happy with his side's performance against the formidable Indians in Chittagong yesterday.

"We know that we cannot win overnight. But by bringing down the margin of defeat today we have achieved our first target. If we can carry on like this in the second match we can dream of winning in the third and final game against them. What we always need is a gradual progress and I'm happy with our effort today," the 32-year-old told reporters after the match.

When asked where his team lost the battle while chasing on a wicket that turned more batting friendly after lunch, the Bangladesh captain said that the problem lies in the middle-order.

"We have some weaknesses in the middle-order. But despite the slow progress in the middle I hoped that even if the required run rate was around nine or ten our strong lower-order batsmen were capable of pushing the Indians at the end," said Bashar.

Both teams will now return to Dhaka to play the last two games under lights at the Bangabandhu National Stadium on December 26 and 27.

He however did not want to say much about the sluggish approach of his opener Nafees Iqbal, who

scored a painstaking nine off 52 balls before being carelessly run out. Nor did he comment on the non-performance of Rajin Saleh and all-rounder Mashfiqur Rahman.

Bashar was more than happy with the effort of his bowlers, who at one stage had the Indians reeling at 45-3.

"The three pace bowlers in the team especially Nazmul Hossain bowled really well to contain the vastly experienced Indian batting. Tapas might have conceded a few runs in the final overs but that always happens when everybody throws their bats around," Bashar said.

Sourav Ganguly also praised Bangladesh's fightback.

"I think that they competed well. To be honest when it looked like we are winning easily they really gave us a scare, said the most successful Indian captain.

"With 44 runs needed to win it was clear that they were already out of the game but somehow they took 32 odd runs in the last two overs and that set the game up nicely," said Sourav.

Both teams will now return to Dhaka to play the last two games under lights at the Bangabandhu National Stadium on December 26 and 27.



PHOTO: ZOBAER HOSSAIN SHIKDER

CAPTAIN'S KNOCK: Bangladesh skipper Habibul Bashar sweeps a ball on way to scoring 65 against India in the first one-day at the MA Aziz Stadium yesterday.

Agrani falter again

SPORTS REPORTER

The Green Delta Premier Cricket League resumed yesterday after an eight-day break without any upsets but promoted e

Agrani Bank, the surprise co-leaders at after fifth rounds, crashed to their second successive defeat.

City Club looked set to bury their wretched start in the 12-team fray when the last year's joint runners-up stormed to a four-wicket victory against Agrani at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium in one of the day's three matches.

Victoria Sporting Club recorded their fifth consecutive win to stay on top of the table after six rounds when they beat Young Pegasus by 51 runs, while Bangladesh Biman handed bottom-of-the-table Uttara Sporting Club a 70-run defeat for their fourth win.

CITY CLUB-AGRANI BANK
 Agrani, who tasted their first defeat at the hands of Abahani in the previous match, could not recover from a severe collapse and ended on 155-8 in 50 overs after being put into bat.

Left-arm medium-pacer Ashraf Khan, coming into the attack as first change, grabbed five for 29 to destroy the Agrani batting in a deadly 10-over spell. His victims included top-scorer Golam Mabud, the opener who made 39 off 67 balls to give the bankers a solid start.

Comfortably placed at 50-1, Agrani lost five wickets in a span of 18 runs before the tail halted the landslide.

City also suffered a hiccup on way to their fourth win but opener Mehrab Hossain Junior's 57 and stand-in captain Tushar Imran's unbeaten 40 steered them to the target with more than six overs to spare.

Mehrab Jr, who hit four fours in 128 balls, shared 48 runs for the opening stand with captain Azam Iqbal. There were

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Majeed Saeed but big names like Mehrab Hossain "Opee" (1) and Moniruzzaman (1) were dismissed cheaply.

Tushar, leading the side in absence of Khaled Mahmud, then steadied the innings during an 80-run fourth wicket partnership with Mehrab Jr Tushar's 62-ball knock was laced with three boundaries.

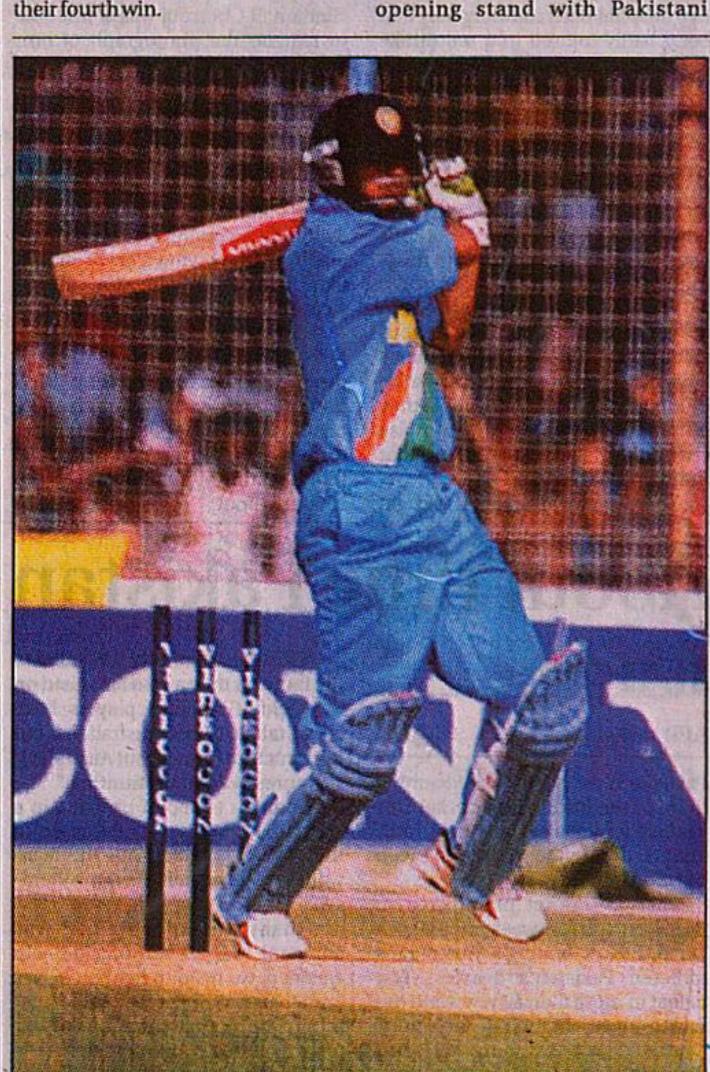
Ashraf was adjudged man-of-the-match.

VICTORY-YOUNG PEGASUS

Opener Gazi Salahuddin scored 69 and Pakistani Fahadullah made a quickfire 40 off 43 balls as back-to-back league champions Victoria scored 237 before being booked in exactly 50 overs at the BKSP ground in Savar.

Man-of-the-match Salahuddin, who struck six fours and a six in 82 balls, gave the side a fine start adding 55 for the opening stand with captain Azam Iqbal. There were

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ODI tickets now available at BNS

SPORTS REPORTER

The tickets for the two one-day internationals between Bangladesh and India to be held in Dhaka will be available at the Bangabandhu National Stadium counters today and tomorrow.

One Bank has the ticket selling rights for the December 26 and 27 day-nighters. But because of an extended weekend for Christmas, but had to take the decision due to the two-day bank holiday.

The tickets will be sold between 11am and 3pm.

Abahani fly in Dharmasena

SPORTS REPORTER

Sri Lanka international Kumar Dharmasena arrived in Dhaka yesterday to play for Abahani in the ongoing Premier Cricket League.

The off-spinner, who has previously played for Mohammedan Sporting Club in the Dhaka domestic cricket, will replace Abahani's Pakistani opener Taufiq Umar.

The out-of-form Umar will be busy playing domestic cricket in his country and might not return.

Dharmasena, also a useful lower-order bat, completed his registration yesterday and will take the field in Abahani's sixth round match against Orient Sporting Club tomorrow.

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BANGLADESH-INDIA 1ST ODI SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the first one-day international of three between India and Bangladesh at the MA Aziz Stadium in Chittagong on Thursday:

	R	B	4	6
Sourav Ganguly b Tapash Baisya	0	2	0	0
Sachin Tendulkar c Khaled Mashud b Nazmul Hossain	19	32	3	0
Yuvraj Singh lbw b Mashfiqur Rahman	21	33	4	0
Rahul Dravid c Khaled Mashud b Khaled Mahmud	53	80	5	0
Mohammad Kaif c b Nazmul Hossain	80	111	7	0
Sridharan Sriram si Khaled Mashud b Mohammad Rafique	3	5	0	0
Rahul Dravid run out (Khaled Mashud)	0	1	0	0
Ajit Agarkar c Mashfiqur Rahman b Tapash Baisya	25	24	1	1
Iran Pathan not out	21	11	1	2
Joginder Sharma not out	5	2	1	0
Extras (lb, w, nb, nb)	18			
Total: (For 8 wickets in 50 overs)	245			
Fall of wickets: 1- (Ganguly), 2-3 (Tendulkar), 3-45 (Yuvraj), 4-173 (Dravid), 5-180 (Sriram), 6-180 (Dravid), 7-203 (Kaif), 8-232 (Agarkar)				
Did not bat: Harbhajan Singh				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Tapash Baisya	10	0	67	2
Mashfiqur Rahman	6	0	29	1
Nazmul Hossain	9	1	39	2
Khaled Mahmud	10	0	43	1
Mohammad Rafique	10	0	39	1
Aftab Ahmed	5	0	22	0
Nafees Iqbal run out (Rahul Dravid/Ajit Agarkar)	R	B	4	6
Nafees Iqbal run out (Rahul Dravid/Ajit Agarkar)	9	52	0	0

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Abahani overcome Sonali Bank

Hockey

SPORTS REPORTER

Abahani Krira Chakra came from a goal down to edge Sonali Bank 2-1 and return to winning ways in the Green Delta Premier Hockey League yesterday.

The defending champions, who suffered their maiden league defeat against Ajax Sporting Club in the previous round, conceded the lead early but goals by forwards Shamim Reza and Prakash Calke either side of the break helped them survive another scare at the Maulana Bhashani National Stadium.

The Sky Blues, who face arch-rivals Mohammedan Sporting Club in their remaining first-leg match, increased their tally to 19 points with six wins from eight rounds.

Last year's third Sonali Bank, meanwhile, look set to miss the

super league as they remain stuck on six points also from eight outings.

Abahani began brightly but failed to convert any of their two penalty-corners inside the first two minutes, allowing Sonali Bank to snatch the lead from a counter-attack in the seventh minute.

Indian pair Devdwar Singh and Anil Elka began a move down the left flank to set up Hosne Mobarak, who broke the deadlock with a simple tap-in, but the bankers could not hold on to the lead for long.

Russell Mahmud Jimmy split the rival defence four minutes later and found fellow striker Shamim Reza who placed home to equalise for Abahani.

Abahani kept up the pressure on their opponents but once again, showed their inability to score from a series of penalty-corners.

Prakash also looked out of sorts as the Indian forward wasted five

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GLENN MCGRATH