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Did U Know?

Bangladesh, with their 226-run win over Zimbabwe at Chittagong on January 10, 2005, registered their maiden victory in their 35th Test. With this win, New Zealand's unwanted record of registering the first win in their 45th Test, would be intact in Test annals.

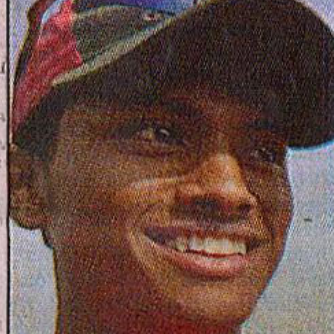


What to Watch

ESPN
England vs South Africa
Fourth Test, Day One
Live at 2:30 pm
Sportscentre
Live at 10:30 pm
STAR Sports
Football Crazy
Live at 5:00 pm
Sportline
Live at 7:30 pm



Talk Turkey



Enamul Haque
(Bangladesh left-arm spinner)
"My mother called me last night from Sylhet and told me to do something for the country. She had faith in me and told me to give everything for the team and the country."
On his inspiration on the final day of the first Test against Zimbabwe.

Jr gymnastics gets underway

SPORTS REPORTER

The 17th National Junior Gymnastics Championships began at the National Sports Council yesterday.

On the opening day, Abul Kalam Azad of BKSP won the boys' horizontal bar gold while his teammate Antara Islam clinched the gold in the girls' side horse.

Four events will be finalised today.

A total of 61 gymnasts from ten teams are participating in the two-day meet.

Liza on top

SPORTS REPORTER

Shamima Akhter Liza maintained her solo lead in the 25th National Sub-Junior Chess Championship at the end of seventh round at the federation hall room yesterday.

Liza defeated Abdullah Saif to secure maximum seven points while Arifa Khatun Moni and Reza Mohammad Bakhtiar followed the leader with six points each.

In the other seventh round games, Bakhtiar beat Minhazuddin Ahmed Sagar, Moni beat Saidul Islam Sayed, Ashraf beat Amir and Saima drew with Olid.

Kenyans pleased with ICC probe

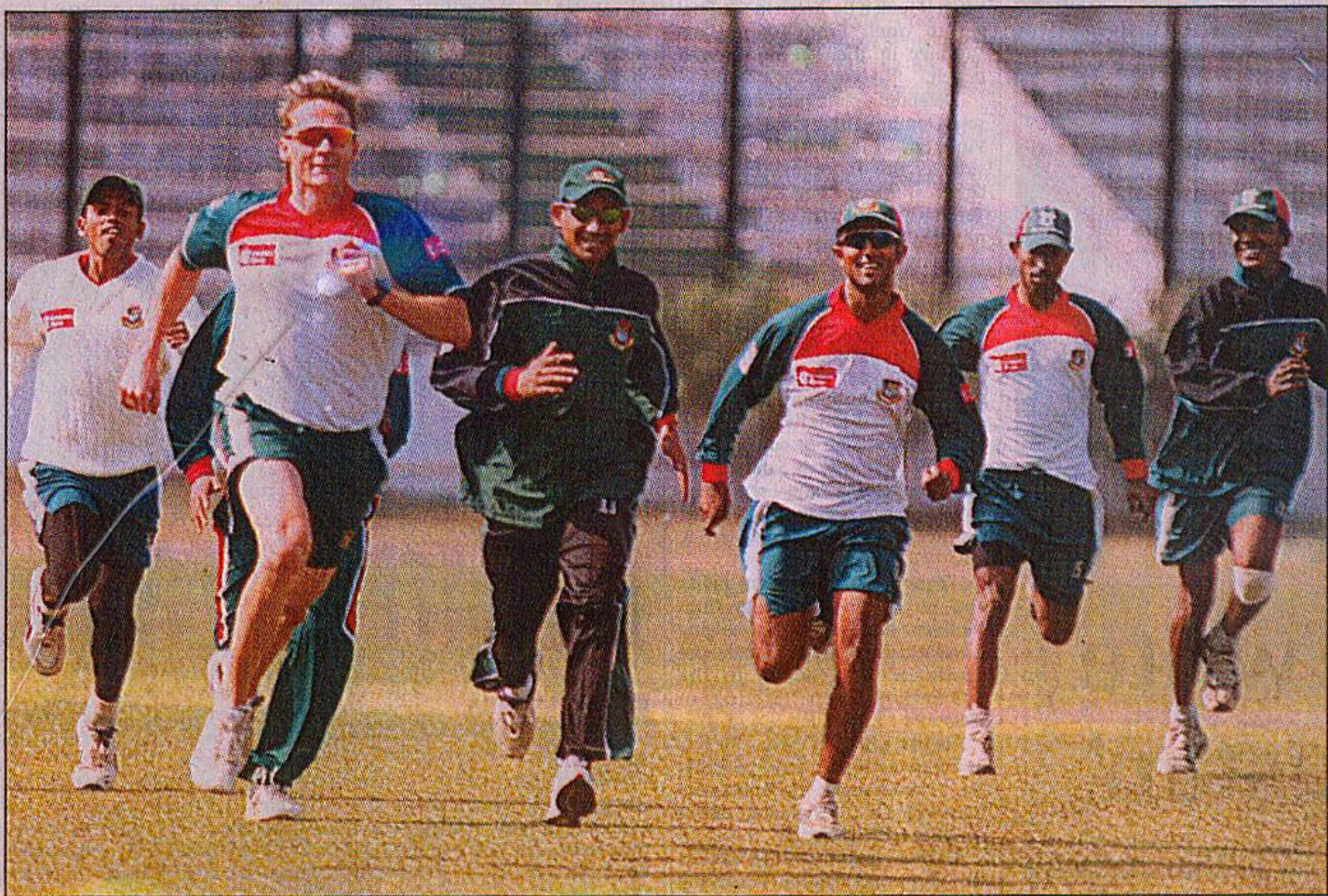
AFP, Nairobi

Top Kenyan cricketers being quizzed about match-fixing allegations by investigators from the International Cricket Council (ICC) are pleased with the probe's progress, their lawyer said Tuesday.

Attorney Alan Kosgey told AFP his clients were satisfied with the way the investigation is being conducted and had been responding well to questions posed by two officials from the ICC's Anti-Corruption and Security Unit.

"I have been accompanying the players to the interviews to give them the legal advice and everyone

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LET'S RACE TO A SERIES WIN! A cheerful Bangladesh team warming-up during yesterday's practice session at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

Pressure of favourites

SPORTS REPORTER

Fresh from the historic Test win in Chittagong, Bangladesh coach Dav Whatmore feels different kind of pressure ahead of the second and final Test against Zimbabweans starting at the Bangabandhu National Stadium on Friday.

"It's a different pressure. Now, we can't lose the series that's one good thing. But the pressure is to maintain the form and finish it off on a high note," said the 50-year-old Australian as his charges resumed training at the BNS after a day's break.

Habibul Bashar's men crushed Zimbabwe by 226 runs in Chittagong to mark the first Test triumph at the 35th attempt, sending the whole nation in delirium of joy.

But now that the euphoria subsided to normalcy and the first series victory look a reality Whatmore said that he did not want to take anything for granted.

"This is the first time the complacency issue might refer to us than other games when the bigger teams were guarding against complacency. We will have to be careful against

these sort of things and continue our gradual progress," said Whatmore adding that he will field an unchanged side that won the first Test on Monday.

The shrewd tactician admitted that the hangover of the epoch making success in Chittagong will continue for quite sometime but said that it is important to remain focussed on the job ahead.

"It's difficult sometime when people refer back to two days ago the historical Test win and that's natural. But we want to look to the future not to dwell on the past."

When asked to comment on the wicket in Dhaka compared to the benign pitch in Chittagong, Whatmore said that he was looking forward to a different wicket in the premier venue of the country.

"Most people would have thought the Chittagong pitch be broken up a little more and offer the spinners more turn. But as we saw it was still hard work on the fifth day to get wickets. I think this one might not be so kind to the batsmen. This one might be little bit harder to play as the game progresses," observed Whatmore.

The coach has an injury worry with right-arm paceman Tapash,

who gave vital breakthroughs in both innings of the first Test, nursing a bruised right-palm. The x-ray report last night however confirmed that Tapash is fine, which means Bangladesh will field the same side that won in Chittagong.

While Bangladesh coach was upbeat his Zimbabwean counterpart Phil Simmons said that he has no complain despite the defeat.

"I think experience made the difference between the two sides. But I must say some of my boys showed real character in Chittagong. I am not unhappy with the performance of my boys," said the former West Indies all-rounder.

Simmons said that he was particularly impressed the way his batsmen bounced back from an early collapse in the first innings which helped them to avoid the follow-on.

"It is always nice to see such kind of fightback from young guys. It was very much difficult for any team to bat on the fifth day whatever the behavior of the pitch. Actually the young side is improving," he said.

There is good news for Simmons that his experienced opener Dion Ebrahim will return to action in the second Test after serving a one-match suspension.

I'll play in Australia again

CRICINFO, undated

A year ago Muttiah Muralitharan threatened never to tour Australia again.

John Howard, the prime minister, had publicly decided Muralitharan was a chucker, whenever he bowled there were no-ball yells from the stands, and it was the only country where he had been called for throwing.

But the reception Muralitharan received during the World Cricket Tsunami Appeal has changed his mind.

"I will come to Australia from now on," Muralitharan told the Sydney Morning Herald. "Before the game it was one of the things I had to decide, whether to come again or not. The whole crowd was very supportive and helped to raise a lot of money that will help people in my country."

Muralitharan, who decided after Howard's comments not to tour Australia last winter because of "personal reasons", met the prime minister after the match and was welcomed to Australia.

WI pacer believes Aussies beatable

REUTERS, Melbourne

West Indies fast bowler Reon King says world champions Australia will be intimidating, yet beatable, in the triangular one-day series which starts in Melbourne on Friday.

King, who has fought his way back into the side for the first time since 2001, believes the work ethic of new coach Bennett King has made a big impact on captain Brian Lara's team.

"Obviously they (Australia) play good cricket so you have to try to match that, and even play better than that," King told reporters at the Melbourne Cricket Ground on Wednesday.

"They are intimidating. Their batters are up front and their bowlers are Glenn McGrath and company," added the 29-year-old King, who has 48 one-day international caps.

"But if you do the basics well, I think they are beatable." King, from Guyana, took five wickets in two limited-overs matches against Australia A in Hobart last weekend.

"It's good to be back in the West Indies team. The hard work has paid off," he said.

"The difference between Bennett's work ethic and what we have in the Caribbean is much needed. We need a work ethic in the Caribbean when it comes to our cricket."

Australia follow up Friday's game with a match against Pakistan in Hobart on Sunday.

West Indies, who enjoyed a three-month break after winning the ICC Champions Trophy in England in September, have played three warm-up games in Australia.

The tourists lost to Victoria by seven wickets in Melbourne on January 5.

Lara then made 116 not out to lead his side to a four-wicket victory over Australia A on January 8. But with the skipper resting, West Indies lost by 51 runs to the same opposition the following day.

Veni vidi vici for DOHS

Akram leads from the front

SPORTS REPORTER



Old DOHS came, saw and yesterday with a piece of inspiration from captain Akram Khan, won the Green Delta Premier league in their debut season.

Akram, the former Bangladesh captain who joined the season's dream team severing a tie spanning two decades with Abahani, could not have foreseen a more fitting contribution as his unbeaten 53 (85 balls) helped DOHS edge Brothers Union by just one wicket at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium which confirmed the title with a game to spare.

DOHS's last match against

Abahani on January 15 now only has academic interest. The newcomers have already collected 18 points with their ninth victory. Only City Club, on 16 points, can catch them if they win their last match and DOHS lose to Abahani at the same time. However, DOHS will be declared winners by virtue of their head-to-head record against City Club if that situation arises.

Having put Brothers into bat, DOHS did well to restrict their opponents to 166-8.

Bangladesh paceman Nazmul Hossain captured four wickets for 24 as Brothers stumbled to 26-4 by the 11th over before Halim Shah (47 off 95 balls) and Nasirul Alam Nahid gave the total some respectability.

DOHS also suffered early setbacks when they were reduced to 9-2 but Pakistani Zahoor Elahi, the highest scorer in the championship

so far, and Akram repaired the damage.

Zahoor made 31 off 54 balls but his departure saw another collapse as they were reduced to 76-6. Akram however, called on all his experience to guide the side home with four balls to spare.

DOHS lost two wickets in the 49th over to go nine down but could still count on the big man from Chittagong to pull them through. Spinner Rezaul Haque almost bowled his side to victory with a brilliant spell of 10-3-12-4.

"It was a fine all-round team effort of players, the management staff and team officials. There was no pressure on the coach or on myself. We did what we thought right and no one interfered," said the DOHS captain on his club's recipe for success. "I think this is a great result

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SCORES IN BRIEF

Venue: Fatullah Stadium BROTHERS: 166-8 in 50 overs (Halim Shah 47, Nasirul 26, Kumaran 14, Shuvo 16 n.o.; Nazmul 4-28, Sabbir 2-41, Faisal 2-34). DOHS: 167-9 in 49.2 overs (Hannan 14, Zahoor 31, Akram 53 n.o., Sabbir 18, Enamul 16, Aslam 2-46, Rezaul 4-12, Kamrul 3-23). Result: DOHS won by one wicket.	Venue: BKSP INDIRA ROAD: 129 all out in 22.4 overs (Pavel 22, Aumi 31, Russell 2-26, Mushfiq 3-14, Sharif 2-30). BIMAN: 74 all out in 20.3 overs (Mushfiq 31, Sarwar-9, Sajal 2-20, Robin 2-2, Nabil 3-15). Result: Indira Road won by 55 runs.	Venue: Dhanmondi Stadium PEGASUS: 213 all out in 50 overs (Forhad 22, Ashraful 50, Jubair 24, Mahbub 24, Nadim 37, Aminul 1-29, Sajal 2-37, Yasin 4-42). ORIENT: 213-9 in 50 overs (Masum 23, Rashid 68 n.o., Sadid 23, Yasin 27, Forhad 2-51, Arif 1-29, Jubair 1-12, Mahbub 1-22). Result: Match tied.
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SHOW ME A NEW TRICK! Bangladesh's first Test hero Enamul Haque (L) listens to veteran Mohammad Rafique during yesterday's practice session.

SA may field Langeveldt

Flintoff fit for today's fourth Test

Cricket

REUTERS, Johannesburg

South Africa are considering playing fast bowler Charl Langeveldt for the fourth Test against England despite his fractured hand, Graeme Smith said on Wednesday.

"He's not going to be 100 per cent fit if the selectors do decide to pick him," the South Africa captain told a news conference.

"The injury doesn't affect his bowling and fielding, just his batting. I feel he added value to our bowling in Cape Town."

Langeveldt injured his left hand while batting in the third Test, his first match, but then took five for 46 after taking pain-killing injections. South Africa won by 196 runs to level the five-match series at 1-1.

The fourth Test starts in Johannesburg on Thursday.

Smith added that Mark Boucher, recalled to the squad after missing South Africa's last five Tests, was odds-on to replace AB de Villiers behind the stumps.

"It does look that way at the moment," Smith said.

De Villiers, 20, opened the batting in the first Test on his debut before taking the gloves from Thami Tsolekile in the second and third Tests.

He now seems likely to be selected as a batsman ahead of struggling Hashim Amla, thus giving him his third role in four matches.

"We do need to settle down with him, but there's not a great deal of difference about batting at number five, six or seven," Smith added.

"It's crucial that we start well, because England will come back fighting."

But he dismissed the idea that the momentum in the series had swung their way after Cape Town.

"Momentum means bigger all,"

he said. "Once that coin goes up it's a new game. We've played well without dominating."

Meanwhile, England all-rounder Andrew Flintoff will play in the fourth Test after passing a fitness test.

Flintoff tore a side muscle during the third Test, but captain Michael Vaughan told a news conference on Wednesday that he would be ready to bowl in Johannesburg.

However, former South Africa vice-captain Boucher says it will feel like his Test debut if he plays against England in the fourth Test on Thursday.

Boucher, capped 76 times, has not figured in the series after being left out of the first Test in favour of Tsolekile and subsequently De Villiers.

"I was prepared to work for a long time -- a couple of years -- to get back into the team, so it was a big surprise to get back at this stage. But I guess the selectors looked at my experience and felt they needed it," Boucher told reporters on Tuesday.

"In a way it will be like my debut all over again, except it's more exciting. I feel like a youngster again."

Boucher, who is approaching 3000 Test runs, said he was sure when the 20-year-old de Villiers came into the side that his chances of playing in

the current series had gone.

"I rate AB (de Villiers) as a serious player with a lot of talent and flair and when he kept wicket I started to feel dropped and out of the loop," Boucher said. "It was tough watching the guys playing while I was on the beach."

Boucher and De Villiers are likely to play in the fourth Test.

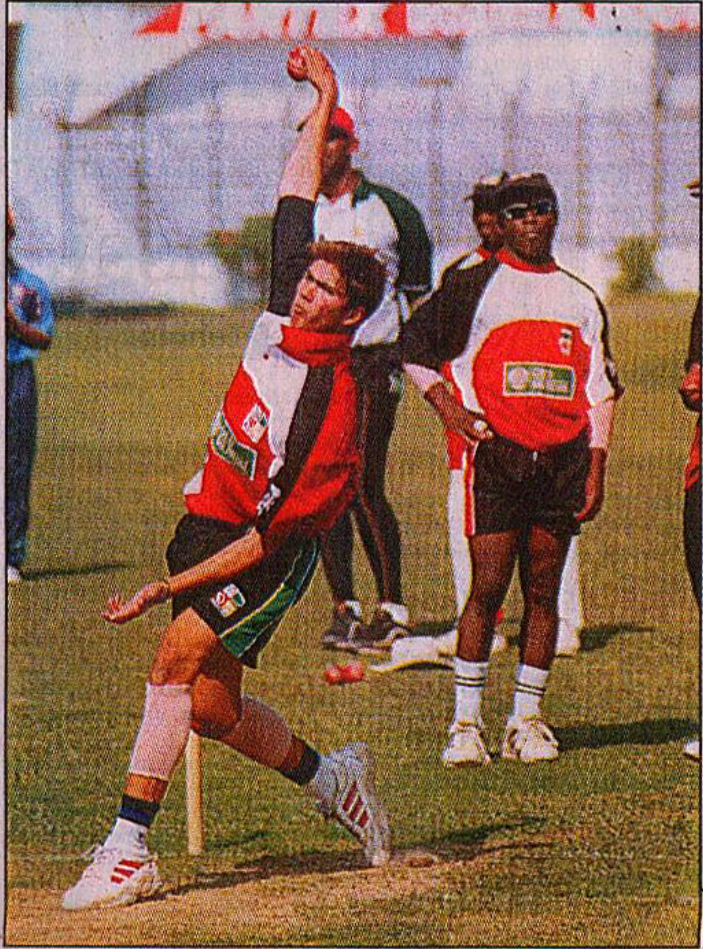
"I know what it takes to perform at international level and I can lift my game when necessary," he said. "I feel in form, I'm hitting the ball well and I've had lots of starts -- 40s and 60s -- in domestic cricket."

TEAMS

SOUTH AFRICA (from): Graeme Smith (captain), Herschelle Gibbs, Jacques Rudolph, Jacques Kallis, Boeta Dippenaar, Hashim Amla, AB de Villiers, Mark Boucher, Shaun Pollock, Andrew Hall, Nicky Boje, Makhaya Ntini, Dale Steyn, Charl Langeveldt.

ENGLAND (probable): Michael Vaughan (captain), Marcus Trescothick, Andrew Strauss, Robert Key, Graham Thorpe, Andrew Flintoff, Geraint Jones, Ashley Giles, Matthew Hoggard, Simon Jones, Steve Harmison.

Umpires: Aleem Dar (Pakistan) and Steve Bucknor (West Indies).



Graeme Cremer, the Zimbabwean leg-spinner, bowling in the nets yesterday at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

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See page 5 for details...