

The Major League Baseball teams use about 850.000 balls per season.





Dav Whatmore

(Bangladesh cricket coach) "If there was one change I'd make it's that you could take to the field with 11, but your 12th man could be a replacement and come on to bat or bowl.

ESPN

Sportscentre

Live at 8 pm

English Premier League Preview

Taped version at 9 pm

Here We Go

Same day delay at 10.30 pm

New Zealand v Australia

Third ODI

Live at 7 am (Saturday)

STAR Sports

South Africa v Zimbabwe

First ODI

Live at 6.30 pm

Live at 10 pm

Ispahani 6th Nat'l Cricket League

(Four-dayer, Day-2)

Dhaka vs Khulna

Venue: FCS

Rajshahi vs Sylhet

Venue: RDVS

Barisal vs Chittagong

Venue: CDVS

Rebels set

for dramatic

comeback?

CricInfo yesterday has learnt that

four of Zimbabwe's rebels -- former

captain Heath Streak, Stuart

Carlisle, Ray Price and Trevor

Gripper -- are on the verge of mak-

remaining striking players back into the fold have progressed well, and

the four could well travel to Kwekwe overnight to play in the final A team

It seems that talks aimed at brokering a deal to bring the

ing a dramatic comeback.

CRICINFO, undated

On an active 12th man.



MIRZAPORE TEA 6th National Cricket League

SPORTS REPORTER

In-form Barisal batsman Shahin Hossain enhanced his growing reputation with a maiden hundred while the effervescent Rajshahi skipper Khaled Mashud missed a ton by a whisker on a first day otherwise dominated by bowlers in the National Cricket League yesterday.

Defending champions Dhaka dismissed Khulna for a paltry 153 at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium but then ran into trouble when they

DHAKA v KHULNA

Skipper Khaled Mahmud led Dhaka from the front with a three-wicket haul as Khulna's first-innings lasted less than 59 overs after they had been put in.

Playing without captain Habibul Bashar, who opted to nurse an old toe injury, Khulna lost the first two wickets on 17. Former national captain Mahmud took both those wickets and then fellow pacers Mahbubul Alam and Niaz Morshed Nahid struck at regular intervals. The Khulna innings could have

experienced more embarrassment but Dhaka dropped no less than 15 catches. Mahmud took the last wicket with his occasional off-break and finished with 3-17. His new ball partner Mahbubul and left-arm spinner Mehrab Hossain Jr chipped in with 2-36 and 2-27.

Only a few lusty blows from Dollar Mahmud (35 off 42), who made most of three missed chances, took Khulna past 100 as he shared 47 runs for the ninth wicket with Monirul Islam (10).

Paceman Dollar then joined forces with stand-in captain Manjurul Islam to rattle the Dhaka top order. Both took two wickets as

Dhaka closed the day on 66 for four. Wicketkeeper Sajjad Kadir was batting on 25 with experienced Halim at stumps

CHITTAGONG BARISAL

Wicketkeeper Shahin's unbeaten 119 -- the seven century in the competition so far -- saved bottom team Barisal's blushes against Chittagong at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium.

The number five cracked 14 boundaries in a valiant 251-ball knock as the tourists, who were tottering at 50-6 after being put into bat, reached 238 all out.

Gazi Alamgir (2-55) and Wayaskarani Palash (2-42) drew early blood as Barisal slumped to 37-4 when Shahin came to the wicket. Fresh from three halfcenturies in the previous two rounds, he repaired the damage during a 114-run stand for the sixth wicket with Mosharraf Hossain (42 from 94 balls).

Shahin in the process became the first player to cross the 300 runs in the ongoing competition. The Barisal middle order was destroyed by part-time seamer Ehsanul Haque who grabbed 3-47.

Chittagong raced to 25 without any damage from two overs in their reply as young opener Tamim Iqbal (21 off 11 balls) smashed five boundaries off left-arm spinner Nadif Chowdhury's only over.

RAJSHAHI v SYLHET

At the Rajshahi Divisional Stadium, the hosts seized the initiative when Mashud's 98 throttled them to a commanding 243-5 at close of play from a precarious 19-3.

While opener Naeem Islam held the fort from one end with an unbeaten 75 from 226 deliveries. Mashud provided the fireworks hitting 16 fours.

The Rajshahi captain had to walk to the pitch after Naeem was retired hurt following the loss of three quick

But Mashud used his experience during a 177-ball knock spanning three hours to steady the innings He was unfortunate to edge the ball to wicketkeeper Babel off left-arm spinner Nabil Samad just two runs short of the magical three-figures.

Naeem, who returned to bat put on 52 runs for the unbroken sixth wicket with Hasanuzzaman Rosel (24 not out).

Veteran pacer Hasibul Hossain was the pick of Sylhet attack with 3-46.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboards on the first day of the four-day matches of the National Cricket League yesterday: KHULNA: 1st innings

Sadat b Niaz 22 Shafiul Ibw b Mahmud 15 Rezwan b Mahmud Sazzad c Sunny b Mahbub 10 Jamaluddin run out 17 Asadullah b Mahbub Mashrafee c Anwar b Sunny Salim c Anwar b Mehrab Jr 10 Monirul c Mehrab b Mahmud Dollar b Mehrab Jr

SEE PAGE 14 COL 6



Khulna's last man Manjurul Islam tries in vain to score a few against Dhaka on Day One of their National Cricket League match at the Fatullah Stadium

Big defeat for BCB XI

Cricket

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Nagpur

It took barely 45 minutes yesterday to complete the final rites as Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) Eleven crashed to an innings and 149-run defeat against East Zone in their first-ever appearance in India's Duleep Trophy.

While there was no guessing what the result of the match would be, the interest at the Vidarbha Cricket Association ground was how long could the visitors delay the inevitable.

Resuming at their overnight total of 123 for eight, Abdur Razzak and the ail-enders added 40 more runs before East Zone medium-pacers Shiv

the resistance in the morning. Munir was the first to go on the

third day when he was bowled by Bose for four with only eight runs added to the total. Despite some entertaining

cricket worth 30 runs for last wicket, the visitors' innings ended with Jubair being caught by substitute fielder Satpathy. Razzak, the left-arm spinner,

who started on 32 moved quickly to 58 not out with help of 11 fours and a six in a 61-ball knock.

Paul, the 23-year-old well-built paceman from West Bengal, finished the figures of three for 30 in the second innings to emerge as the most successful bowler with a match haul of nine wickets.

medium-pacer S Sanyal also Shankar Paul and R Bose finished off claimed as many Bangladesh

batsmen for just 34 runs when the visitors batted the second time around.

India and East Zone skipper Sourav Ganguly was satisfied with his innings of 170 in the first essay match and said it would help him get into form ahead of the crucial forthcoming series against Pakistan.

The Mohammad Ashraful-led Bangladesh selection will now turn their attention to Jaipur, where they will meet Central Zone from March 1.

SCOREBOARD

Final scoreboard of the Duleep Trophy match between Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) XI and East Zone at Nagpur yesterday. EAST ZONE: 1st innings 454-6 dec.

in 103 overs (Ganguly 170, Shukla 123, Dhoni 51; Razzak 3-131)

SEE PAGE 14 COL 1

SPORTS REPORTER

The Dhaka domestic football season kicks off today with the Tibet 20th Federation Cup opener between Dipali Juba Sangha and Wari Club at the Bir Shreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur.

Tournament committee chairman ZA Khan will inaugurate the season's curtain-raiser competition in a simple ceremony before the Group A match starts at 3 pm.

A total of 18 teams split into three groups vie for the three qualifying berths for the eight-team finals where they join big guns and automatic qualifiers Muktijoddha, Mohammedan, Abahani, Sheikh Russel and Brothers Union.

Pollock injured for 1st ODI

BBC ONLINE, undated

South Africa all-rounder Shaun Pollock has withdrawn from Friday's opening one-day international against Zimbabwe in Johannesburg with an ankle injury.

Pace bowler Andre Nel is also doubtful because of a hamstring problem. However, captain Graeme Smith

confirmed he would play in the daynight match despite a persistent ankle injury. "We're struggling to work out

exactly what the problem is, but it's pretty much certain that I'll play in all three matches in the series," he

The home side are already without Jacques Kallis, after choosing to rest the all-rounder for the entire series

South Africa (from): G Smith (captain), N Boje, A Bacher, M Boucher (wicketkeeper), AB de Villiers, H Gibbs, A Hall, J Kemp, A Morkel, A Nel, M Ntini, A Prince, J

PCB lets Woolmer off the hook

AFP, Lahore

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has cleared coach Bob Woolmer of criticising umpires in Australia, sparing him a potential fine or ban officials said. "Woolmer was asked to give his

comments and he told the PCB he was quoted out of context. So the matter looks to be over," PCB spokesman Abbas Zaidi said from Islamabad on Wednesday.

The International Cricket Council (ICC) earlier this month said Woolmer was being reported for comments made about the umpires after the tri-series one-day finals in

"It went 29-5 against us," Woolmer was quoted as saying by the Brisbane Courier-Mail, in an apparent reference to the umpiring decisions after Pakistan lost both the tri-series finals against Australia.

Federation Cup TV dispute over

Doordarshan to telecast Indo-Pak series

Cricket

AFP, New Delhi

An Indian court ordered public broadcaster Doordarshan to telecast the upcoming cricket matches against Pakistan, ending speculation the high-profile tour could be cancelled due to a TV rights row.

Judge KP Sivasubramanian of the Madras High Court ruled in an interim order that Doordarshan be given the rights for the tour and asked the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) to organise the production of the telecast.

"I am sure cricket fans will be happy now," a TV channel quoted the judge as saying on Thursday.

He added a final judgement would be made later in the writ petition filed by Zee Telefilms, India's largest listed media com-

rights by the BCCI last September. The BCCI backed out of a four-

vear, 308-million dollar deal with Zee after it was challenged in court by rival ESPN-STAR Sports, jointly owned by Disney and Rupert Murdoch's News Corp. Doordarshan had also telecast

the home series against Australia and South Africa earlier in the season on the advice of the Supreme BCCI president Ranbir Singh

Mahendra welcomed the interim order, saying all doubts about the Pakistan tour taking place had been removed.

"We will abide by the court's judgement and finalise the production details soon," said Mahendra.

The judge, however, prohibited the BCCI from hiring either Zee or ESPN-Star Sports for the production. Both channels had offered to

insisted on hosting a test in Ahmedabad, the main city of the western state of Gujarat that wit-

dispute over venues.

nessed the country's worst Hindu-Muslim riots in a decade in 2002. India scrapped the Ahmedabad Test while Pakistan agreed to play

produce the telecast to end the

current impasse after the

International Cricket Council (ICC)

said on Tuesday the series was

unlikely to be played if the TV issue

Pakistan are due to arrive here

The tour, shrouded in confusion

and controversy, has already been

delayed by three days due to a

threatened to pull out if India

The Pakistan Cricket Board had

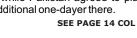
on Monday to play three Tests and

five one-day internationals on their

first full tour of India since 1999.

was not solved.

an additional one-dayer there. **SEE PAGE 14 COL 5**





JUST LIKE OLD TIMES: Pakistan captain Inzamamul Haq is flanked by legends Imran Khan (L) and Wasim Akram during the opening of a sports shop in Lahore on February 23.

Test between Zimbabwe and Bangladesh. If they do play, then it is guite likely that one or more of them will be drafted into the squad SEE PAGE 14 COL 8

NAT'L CHESS Zia faces Mahfuz in first round

SPORTS REPORTER

already in South Africa.

The Mercantile Bank 31st National Chess Championship begins today with GM Ziaur Rahman starting the defence of his title against qualifier Mahfuzur Rahman

A total of 14 players including nine qualifiers are taking part in the round-robin league. Apart from holder Zia, GM Niaz

Murshed, last year's runner-up International Master Abdullah Al Rakib. IM Enamul Hossain Raiib **SEE PAGE 14 COL 5**

Chelsea backtracking Mourinho was reportedly so

*VEF4 CHAMPS LEAGUE

AFP, London

Chelsea insisted Thursday there had been no confrontation between manager Jose Mourinho and a member of the Barcelona coaching staff during their controversial 2-1 Champions League defeat at the Nou Camp.

The match saw Chelsea, who finished with 10 men after Didier Drogba was sent off, beaten after going a goal up at half-time.

And Mourinho was furious that referee Anders Frisk had allegedly spoken to Barcelona boss Frank Rijkaard at the interval, during which, some reports suggested, there had been a tunnel clash between Chelsea staff and Barcelona assistant coach Henk ten Cate.

angry he said the club would be making an official complaint to European soccer governing body

But a statement issued on Chelsea's official website Thursday said: "Following Chelsea's statement after the Barcelona match last (Wednesday) night, it is being reported through various media outlets that an incident occurred hetween Jose Mourinho and a member of the Barcelona coaching

"This incident did not happen and Chelsea can therefore confirm that this will not form part of our report to UEFA which is currently

being prepared." Chelsea lost Ivorian striker Drogba for a second bookable offence then conceded two second

half goals to lose the match 2-1. UEFA have said their own tunnel representative saw nothing unto-

of both Frisk's report and Chelsea's complaint before making further investigations.

Rijkaard could still be in trouble if, as has been reported, he talked to Frisk in the official's own dressing room at the interval.

But regardless of the outcome of their complaint Chelsea could themselves be fined by UEFA for refusing to attend Wednesday's post-match media conference, a move which broke tournament

"We do not understand the Chelsea decision," UEFA spokesman William Gaillard told the BBC. "We will certainly ask them. It is a

violation of the rules." Following the first leg of

Chelsea's League Cup semi-final against Manchester United last month, Mourinho suggested rival SEE PAGE 14 COL 1



I SAW NOTHING! Frank Rijkaard (L), the Barcelona coach instructs his players while his Chelsea counterpart Jose Mourinho does the same during their Champions League match at the Nou Camp stadium in Barcelona on February 23.

SEE PAGE 14 COL 5