



Did U Know?

On the day the 1948 Olympic Games began at Wembley Stadium in London, June 29, the famed Australian 'Invincibles' cricket side was finishing off England in a Test at nearby Lord's, winning by 409 runs.



Jose Mourinho

(Chelsea manager)
"Frank Rijkaard's history as a player cannot be compared with my history. His history is fantastic and my history is zero. My history as a manager cannot be compared with Frank Rijkaard's history. He has zero trophies and I have a lot of them."

Making comparisons with his Barcelona counterpart.

What to WATCH

ESPN

Football Crazy
Live at 5:00 pm
Sportscentre
Live at 8:30 pm

STAR Sports

Primera Liga
Real Madrid vs Real Betis
Repeat at 5:00 pm
Sportsline
Live at 8:00 pm
English Premier Football League
Man United vs Portsmouth
Taped Version at 12:00 pm



Ispanhi Sixth Nat'l Cricket League

(One-dayer)
Rajshahi vs Dhaka
Venue: Bogra Stadium
Chittagong vs Khulna
Venue: CDVS
Barisal vs Sylhet
Venue: Barisal Stadium
Federation Cup Soccer
Bangladesh Army vs Rahmatganj (3:00 pm)
Agrani Bank vs Youngmen's F'pool (5:00 pm)
Venue: Kamalapur Stadium

Streak makes instant impact

BBC ONLINE, undated

Heath Streak struck 68 in his first game for a year to dig Zimbabwe out of a hole in the final one-day international against South Africa in Port Elizabeth on Wednesday.

Streak came to the crease with Zimbabwe languishing on 35-5, but shared in two key stands to swell the total to 206-8.

He put on 67 runs with Barney Rogers (41) and 88 in 92 balls with Gavin Ewing, who hit a career-best 46.

Charl Langeveldt (2-40) and Monde Zondeki (2-46) ripped out

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Travel method irks Pakistan

REUTERS, Dharamshala

The Pakistan cricket team are concerned that their travel arrangements could hinder their preparation for next week's first Test against India.

The players were forced to take turns to board a small plane out of New Delhi on Tuesday because the Himalayan town of Dharamshala, the venue for their opening three-day warmup match, only has a small airstrip.

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Same old batting story

Cricket

PALLAB BHATTACHARAYA, New Delhi

Another defeat in the Duleep Trophy tournament stared Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) X1 in the face as they crashed to 117-6 in their first innings at stumps on the second day against Central Zone at the Karnail Singh Stadium here yesterday.

The batting collapse came in sharp contrast to their commendable efforts in the morning when the bowlers restricted Central to 351 all out after the hosts resumed at 248-3 overnight.

Bangladesh coach Dave Whatmore described the pitch as "flat" and yet his boys failed to take advantage of it. Worse, the BCB X1 lost both their openers without a single run being put on the board.

Al Shahriar fell off the last ball of the first over from Harbinder Singh when he was brilliantly caught at third slip by Amit Pagnis.

Nafees Iqbal, who did not play in the first match against East Zone that the Bangladesh selection lost by an innings and 149 runs, followed

just a ball later after being trapped leg before by Salabh Srivatsava.

Aftab Ahmed and captain Mohammad Ashraful tried to stem the rot by adding 52 runs for the third wicket before Central skipper and spinner Jai Prakash Yadav removed the duo and he also had Alok Kapali to leave Bangladesh in dire straits.

Aftab batted over an hour to notch 18 while Ashraful played a stroke-filled 30 in 88 minutes with the help of six fours.

Yadav's three-wicket haul put BCB X1 against the wall with only 14 runs coming after the third wicket stand.

Left-arm spinner Manjural Islam, who was batting on 32, offered some resistance and along with fellow spinner Abdur Razaq, on four, held out till close of day's play.

However, the morning looked bright for Ashraful's men when the pace duo of Anwar Hossain Munir and Talha Jubair ran through the home side's batting line-up. The last seven wickets fell for 103 runs.

Devendra Bundela failed to add anything to his overnight score of 83 before being dismissed by Anwar, who finished with 4-58 in 26 overs.

India spinner Murali Kartik with 33 was the other notable scorer.

Talha Jubair also scalped four wickets conceding 122 runs.

Central Zone are favourites to reach the final of the premier Indian first-class competition where any Bangladesh team is taking part for the first time.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard on the second day of four-day Duleep Trophy match between Central Zone and Bangladesh Cricket Board XI at the Karnail Singh Stadium in Delhi yesterday:

CENTRAL ZONE: First innings (overnight 248-3)	
Bangar lbw b Jubair	11
Pagnis lbw b Anwar	12
Bundela b Anwar	83
Abbas c Razzak b Alok	122
Yadav c Sagir b Jubair	10
Ojha run out (Aftab)	25
Doru not out	20
Kartik c Al-Shahriar b Jubair	33
Harvinder c Sagir b Anwar	4
Parida lbw b Anwar	0
Srivastava c Sagir b Jubair	3
Extras: (b-12, lb-7, w-5, nb-4)	28
Total: (All out in 129.3 overs)	351
Fall of wkts: 1-16, 2-24, 3-238, 4-248, 5-262, 6-273, 7-323, 8-332, 9-332, 10-351.	

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Rajshahi out to topple Dhaka

SPORTS REPORTER

Rajshahi will be looking to climb to the top of the Sixth Ispanhi National Cricket League one-day table when they entertain leaders Dhaka in a fourth-round match at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra.

The home side, joint second in the six-team table with four points, require a victory to overtake Dhaka.

Bangladesh wicketkeeper Khaled Mashud will lead Rajshahi against all-rounder Khaled Mahmud's Dhaka.

However, Rajshahi will badly miss the services of their inspirational captain Mashud who is banned for the four-day fixture that starts tomorrow.

Dhaka, on six points, are the only team to win all three matches so far but they will be tested in their first away match.

The four-dayer will also be a crucial one as both teams are jointly leading the table on 12 points each.

Defending champions Chittagong will be playing their third consecutive home match when they host Khulna at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium. Chittagong are upbeat following their first win in the abridged version after two straight defeats.

Khulna, who will be without Bangladesh skipper Habibur Bashar, for their successive game, n o w h a v e

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Study first: Sachin

Cricket

AFP, New Delhi

India's cricket superstar Sachin Tendulkar battled for harried parents across the country Wednesday by calling on students writing examinations not to allow the thrill of the upcoming series against Pakistan to disrupt their studies.

Pakistan's long-awaited tour of India coincides with annual examinations in schools and universities across India and parents are worried children will be distracted from their studies.

Tendulkar, regarded as a demigod in the cricket-mad nation, said he sympathised with the students and recounted how he himself faced

such a dilemma as a student in 1987.

"The World Cup was on in India and Pakistan at that time and it became difficult to concentrate on the exams," he said.

"But I focussed hard on my studies and cleared my exams.

"I feel sorry for the students, but as the cricket calendar is drawn up by the International Cricket Council, there is little that can be done.

"Children have to sacrifice. Cricket will be tempting for students, but the onus will be on them to be true to the task at hand," said the 31-year-old, a father of two children aged six and three.

Pakistan will play three Tests and six one-day internationals on their first full tour of India since 1999.

The first Test begins in Mohali on March 8.

Cricketer board official Ratnakar Shetty said this was not the first time a cricket series was clashing with examinations.

"When the cricket season runs from October to April, matches will often be held at the same time as the exams," he said. "Ultimately, students have to set their priorities."

Deepa Bose, principal of a Delhi-based public school, said she had issued instructions that television sets on the premises will not be switched on for the cricket.

"We can be strict in school, hopefully the parents will be as strict at home," he said.



SACHIN TENDULKAR

Sania scalps Svetlana

Tennis

AFP, Dubai

Sania Mirza again suggested herself a new star in the making by producing a remarkable comeback from a large deficit and from injury to beat US Open champion Svetlana Kuznetsova in the second round of the Dubai Open on Tuesday.

The 18-year-old Indian needed a ten-minute time out for medical attention to an ankle injury after an early fall and was then 0-4 and 30-40 down before recovering to a startling straight sets victory over the Russian.

The 6-4, 6-2 triumph, which was cheered by thousands of Indian expatriates who made it like a home match for Mirza, carried the Hyderabad teenager into the third round of the Dubai Open as a wild card.

It followed her achievement in January in reaching the third round of the Australian Open as a wild card.

What made it all the more extraordinary was that once Mirza started to move better and strike the ball more fluently, she frequently out-hit one of the heaviest hitters in the game, especially with her flat forehand drive.

There seemed no chance of anything like that happening when Mirza was within a point of a 0-5 deficit, and she admitted she had had no hopes of winning at that stage.

"My ankle was killing me," she said.

"It was the third time in three weeks (it happened) and I was crying because I was in so much pain. I was disturbed because always my ankles are getting injured.

"But I got it re-taped and took a pain-killer, and that started to work after about 15 minutes. I don't know quite how I did it because I couldn't move that well.

"I was scrambling to the ball but I

think I made hardly any errors from 0-4 down. I tried to get winners really fast because I thought I might not be able to move.

"I think from about 4-3 she started to get upset. I knew she was getting tense and that was why I wanted to put more pressure on her which I succeeded in doing. The crowd inspired me."

Mirza took seven games in a row before Kuznetsova regained some semblance of rhythm, but although she was trying to hang in hard at 2-3

down in the second set she seemed too unsettled by the barrage of flat fast winners and the noise to regain control.

Once, in the fifth game of the second set, Kuznetsova became so frustrated after a double fault that she launched a ball steeping into the air, something which brought further uproarious cheers from the Indian supporters.

"I started well and she was nervous, but I didn't do anything to

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PHOTO: AFP

IS THIS A DREAM? Sania Mirza of India reacts after she won against US Open champion Svetlana Kuznetsova of Russia in the second round of Dubai Open on March 1.



PHOTO: AFP

NO LONGER A MAN-SPORT: Pakistani female cricketers from the Multan district team appeal for a dismissal decision against a Faisalabad district batsman during their match in the first ever National Women's Cricket Championship tournament at the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore yesterday. Pakistan launched the tournament with the hope that the event will inspire up-and-coming female cricketers.

BD A start one-day challenge

SPORTS REPORTER

Fresh from a Test series whitewash, the visiting Bangladesh A team will open their one-day campaign against their Zimbabwe counterparts today.

The second-string national side, which handed the hosts a 3-0 in the Tests, will play five limited-overs matches.

Opening batsman Shahriar Nafees Ahmed and all-rounder Saqib Al Hasan, the two outstanding performers in the three Tests, however will not be available for the one-day series because they flew home to appear in the SSC examinations.

ONE-DAY FIXTURE

March 3	1st one-dayer
March 5	2nd one-dayer
March 7	3rd one-dayer
March 9	4th one-dayer
March 12	5th one-dayer

Durham sold out for BD-Eng Test!

BBC ONLINE

Durham have announced that 1,000 extra seats will be added at the Riverside for England's Test against Bangladesh.

Interest in the second and final Test against the minnows on 3 June has been encouraging, and the additional seats will take the capacity to 8,000.

It is thought that 1,500 tickets are left for the first day, with only 750 remaining for day two.

Commercial Manager Gordon Hollins said: "We had to make the decision to avoid disappointing a high number of people."

Durham have sold out of their International Ticket Package, which guaranteed seats for both the Test and the NatWest Series one-day match between England and Australia, which takes place under lights on 23 June.

"The response from North East sports fans for both international fixtures here at the Riverside has been immense," Hollins added.

Cricketers continue BNS protest

SPORTS REPORTER

As many as 123 cricketers yesterday put down their signatures in favour of a campaign to keep cricket at the Bangabandhu National Stadium (BNS).

Although the Bangladesh Cricket Board looks determined to shift its operations to their new home in Mirpur, past and current cricketers continued their protest against the decision.

They are demanding cricket's return to the ground which is not only the premier cricket venue of the

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Don't call Pakistan weak

Cricket

AFP, Dharamshala

Pakistan captain Inzamamul Haq on Wednesday brushed aside criticism over his team, saying they were talented enough to raise their game against India in the upcoming Test series.

"My team may be inexperienced, but not weak," Inzamam said after his side's practice session amid tight security on the eve of a three-day game against an Indian Board President's team.

"I've been leading more or less the same team for the past two years and we've done well against India, especially in one-dayers. I am sure the boys will put in an impressive performance on this tour," he said.

Pakistan will play three Tests and six one-day internationals on their high-profile tour of India, their first in six years. The opening Test begins at Mohali on March 8.

The Pakistani skipper also played down Shoaib Akhtar's absence, saying his bowlers had delivered without the key fast bowler in recent matches.

Akhtar had pulled out of the tour due a hamstring injury, leaving Pakistan short on bowling experience.

"We did well in a recent triangular one-day series in Australia without him (Akhtar) and we'll try to do the same here. Sportsmen do suffer injuries and it can't be helped," said Inzamam.

"The boys are working hard and keen to give good performances."

Pakistan coach Bob Woolmer echoed his captain's sentiments, saying the team had tremendous talent and would face little problem adjusting to the Indian conditions.

"We expect pitches to turn in India and our players will have to learn to adapt themselves, but we have a talented batting line-up. We have a very good team in the mak-



PHOTO: AFP

Pakistan captain Inzamamul Haq bats in the nets during a practice session at the Himachal Pradesh Cricket Association (HPCA) Stadium in Dharamshala yesterday.

India's top order fixed

Cricket

BBC ONLINE, undated

Captain Sourav Ganguly has revealed India will not be tempted into tinkering with their batting order for the first Test against Pakistan.

"Our batting order for the Tests is fixed. There are no changes from number three to six," Ganguly told BBC.

It means Rahul Dravid will remain at number three and VVS Laxman at six, despite the latter averaging 53.5 at first drop in Test cricket.

"To be honest, Dravid has batted better than Laxman at three," Ganguly added.

"If you ask any batsman, he would like to bat higher up, as it gives a greater opportunity to score.

"While batting lower down the order, you have to play more with the tail."

Ganguly gave his backing to

Gautam Gambhir, banishing speculation Yuvraj Singh could be asked to open the batting again after a failed experiment against Australia last year.

"I feel there is no born opener -- the team has to find one," he stated.

"Look at Justin Langer, he was not an opener, but how well the Aussies have groomed him. Virender Sehwag is a settled opener now both in Tests and one-dayers, and Gambhir is doing well.

"In a year's time, we should have a settled opening pair."

Sachin Tendulkar, who will bat at number four with Ganguly at five, also received the support of his skipper despite concerns over fitness and form.

"When Sachin says he is 100 per cent fit, he is, and nobody has a right to talk about the form of a man who has 70 international hundreds."

With wicketkeeper Dinesh Karthik to come in at number seven, India are left with just four spots for bowlers -- suggesting Yuvraj could miss out.

Mohali, which will host the first Test starting on March 8, is known as a seam-friendly pitch and India have included four pacemen in their 14-man squad.

In addition to spinners Anil Kumble and Harbhajan Singh, India will be forced to choose from the pace quartet of Irfan Pathan, Zaheer Khan, Ashish Nehra and Lakshmi Prasad Balaji.

"In Kumble and Harbhajan, we have two world class spinners and at the moment there is no place for a third one," Ganguly said.

"Our seam attack had done particularly well during the Pakistan tour last year, and we will select the final eleven after having a look at the wickets in Mohali, which has had a record of a seaming track."

Ganguly refused to get carried away with the fact Pakistan's pace attack has been depleted with the absence of Shoaib Akhtar through injury.

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