



Did U Know?

The world's first football club -- Sheffield Football Club -- was founded in 1857 by Colonel Nathaniel Cresswick and Major William Priest, two British army officers.



Brett Lee
(Australia fast bowler)

"To me fast bowling is so exciting because I haven't even hit my maturity as a fast bowler. If you ask me if I can go faster, yes, I definitely do think I can go faster."

What to WATCH

ESPN

Football Crazy
Live at 5:00 pm
Sportscentre
Live at 8:30 pm
UEFA Champions League
Psv Eindhoven vs Ac Milan
Semifinal, Leg-2
Repeat at 9:00 pm

STAR Sports

ATP Rome Masters Series
Last 16
Live at 7:00 pm
Sportsline

'We can surprise them'

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

When his England bound team-mates were enjoying a nice little break from cricket before the tough tour, Bangladesh captain Habibul Bashar was kept busy by demanding consumer brands in front of the camera for shooting commercials.

But the Tigers' captain was only focusing on the upcoming challenge during the first full Test series in England and the triangular one-day tournament against the world's two most formidable opponents England and Australia.

"I have been busy with the shooting for the last three days and no doubt it is a very interesting and refreshing experience for me. But nothing can take my attention away from the tour," said the 32-year Bashar at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday where he was incidentally filming a milk ad. The Bangladesh team leave

Dhaka tomorrow for England. They will open their campaign with a three-day match against the British



HABIBUL BASHAR

Universities from May 10-12 and will play two more three-day games before the first Test at Lord's starting May 26.

There is little interest in the English media about the summer's

new tourists and already their concentrating is solely on the Ashes. But Bashar thinks that the apathy can only make his team more determined.

"I don't see any problems if they are not beating the drums for Bangladesh. The stage is open for us to make an impression and that could be the reply for the ignorance," said Bashar who was confident that the Tigers had the ability to spring a few surprises.

"This is a young side and there are some players talented enough to thrive in any condition. I only want hundred percent effort from them to make our first full series in England a memorable one.

"We are very much aware that it will be a different ball game but don't underestimate our recent success against India and Zimbabwe at home. I think for the first time we are going to play an away series with a free mind," said Bashar.

Bashar also shared his personal wish for the tour.

SEE PAGE 13 COL 5



DID IT OR DIDN'T IT? Chelsea defender William Gallas (L) about to clear the ball while Liverpool striker Luis Garcia (R) watches. The linesman ruled that the ball had crossed the goal line by the time Gallas made the clearance.

Bashar and an American cricketer!

DAUD KHAN

It was apparent from the moment he met Bangladesh cricket captain Habibul Bashar that the American was out of his league and headed for trouble. The two had been brought together on the set of a milk commercial, shot yesterday under a blazing sun at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

"So, you're going to bowl me?" Bashar asked playfully. The American actor, taken aback by the question, replied, "Actually, I don't know a thing about cricket. I was hoping you could teach me." He laughed nervously, oblivious of the eminent personality he was addressing. But Bashar, ever gracious, replied, "Oh, it shouldn't be a problem at all."

Coming from Bangladesh's top batsman who has three hundreds and over two thousand Test runs under his belt, that should have been reassuring enough. However, it meant little to a person whose knowledge about cricket has only seen marginal improvement since arriving in Bangladesh he now

SEE PAGE 13 COL 5

Liverpool near dreamland

AFP, Liverpool



Luis Garcia's fourth-minute shot probably did not even cross the line, but it was enough to carry Liverpool into their sixth European Cup final here at Anfield on Tuesday and end Chelsea's hopes of a trophy treble in manager Jose Mourinho's first season in charge.

After a goalless draw in the first leg, a scoring draw would have been enough for Premiership champions Chelsea, who beat Liverpool in this season's League Cup final.

But the Reds held out and it is they who will face either AC Milan or PSV Eindhoven in Istanbul on May 25.

Liverpool manager Rafael Benitez praised his team for a professional job.

"We worked hard and we had the supporters behind us and we had to believe we could win till the end," said Benitez, who can emulate his Chelsea counterpart Jose Mourinho by winning the UEFA Cup and the Champions League - with Porto - in successive seasons having landed the former with Valencia last term.

Mourinho was grudging in defeat.

"The best team lost," said the Portuguese, who guided Chelsea to their first league title in 50 years last Saturday.

"It was a copy of the game in Cardiff (Chelsea beating Liverpool in extra-time in the League Cup final).

"Nobody knows if it was a goal. One team played and the other defended and the best team lost.

Steven Gerrard had vowed that Liverpool would tear into Chelsea in the opening minutes as they had against Juventus in the previous round, and that was precisely what they did, taking the lead in the fourth minute.

Gerrard hooked the ball over the Chelsea defence for Milan Baros, who jabbed the ball past Petr Cech only to be flattened by the flailing goalkeeper.

It could have been a penalty and a sending off, but as John Terry only half-cleared, the Slovakian referee Lubos Michel played the advantage, allowing Garcia to prod goalwards.

If his shot crossed the line before William Gallas hacked clear it was not by much, but Michel and his linesman Roman Slyscko were convinced, and the goal was given.

With Damien Duff out through a hamstring injury and a recuperating Arjen Robben reduced to starting on the bench, Chelsea were once again short of natural width going forwards.

But time and again through-balls were cut out at the last, by the outstretched legs of Liverpool defenders Sami Hyyia and Jamie Carragher working over time.

Chances were rare, but it was enthralling, beguiling stuff as Chelsea prised and probed at a Liverpool rearguard that gains an aura of impregnability in Europe.

Even without the composed presence of Xabi Alonso - suspended after being booked for a foul on Eidur Gudjohnsen in the first leg - Liverpool remained unflustered, Gerrard and Igor Biscan scavenging and harrying for ball, while Dietmar Hamann played Alonsos role by keeping possession ticking.

Slowly, though, the pressure mounted. Didier Drogba blasted a free-kick well over, but when another foul gave Chelsea a chance from a similar position, Jerzy Dudek, diving to his right, made a fine save to push away Frank Lampard's powerful drive.

With 22 minutes to go, Mourinho

SEE PAGE 13 COL 4



PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN
Muktijoddha's national striker Saiful Islam Moni walks on a crutch as he comes out of the Muktijoddha Sangsad office at Maghbarazon on Wednesday.

Moni's career under threat

SPORTS REPORTER

National footballer Saiful Islam Moni's career could be under threat if he does not undergo an operation immediately.

The Muktijoddha Sangsad striker, who tore a ligament in his right knee just after scoring the winner in their 1-0 semifinal victory over Mohammedan in the Federation Cup on Friday, yesterday said that he was worried about the delay in his treatment.

"The local doctors have advised me to have the surgery as soon as possible. I'm having tremendous pain and despite taking painkillers, it is troubling me. Even when I sleep, I feel the pain," said Moni, who fell awkwardly immediately after scoring the goal and had to leave the field on stretcher.

"I have contacted Doctor Ananth Joshi in India who had treated me previously. But he is now in Australia and will not return home before June. I can't wait that long," the worried forward said.

Local doctors feared that he would be out of action for at least six months even if he underwent an immediate surgery.

He, however, received some good news from the club officials yesterday afternoon.

"They have ensured me that they will bear all the expenses for the

SEE PAGE 13 COL 1