



Did U Know?

Yellow tennis balls were used at Wimbledon for the first time in 1986.



Kapil Dev
(Former Indian cricket captain)
"I am always there to help the youngsters. If the cricketers think I can be of some help to them, if Indian cricket needs me then I don't mind offering whatever help I can. But as far as becoming coach or manager is concerned, I think my time is over."



TEN Sports
French Open
First Round
Live at 3:30 pm
ESPN
Sportscentre
Live at 8:30 pm
STAR Sports
Primera Liga
Barcelona vs Villareal
Same Day Delay at 10:00 pm
Sportsline
Live at 8:00 pm

Women's kabaddi

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Ansar and Azad Sporting Club won their respective matches in the Women's Kabaddi League at the Dhanmondi Women's Sports Complex yesterday.

Ansar collected three lonas on way to a 51-12 defeat of Village Defence Party while Azad thrashed Dhaka District Sports Association 72-22 with five lonas.

Youth v'ball begins

SPORTS REPORTER

Comilla, Faridpur, Tangail and Sherpur moved into the Group A semifinals on the opening day of the City Bank National Youth Volleyball Championship at the Shaheed Suhrawardy Indoor Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

Comilla will meet Faridpur while Tangail face Sherpur in the semis today at the same venue.

In the group matches, Comilla beat Sherpur and Gopalganj by 3-0 sets. Sherpur defeated Gopalganj also 3-0 while Tangail outplayed Faridpur by the same margin.

Bright start for Mariners

SPORTS REPORTER

Mariner Youngs Club came back from a first-half deficit to beat Usha Kirra Chakra yesterday in the opening match of the Tibet Women's Handball League Super Three.

Mariner were trailing 10-12 at the break but Shahida's scoring spree steered them to a 23-20 win at the Bangabandhu National Stadium handball court. Shahida netted eight goals but the player of the match award went to Usha's Jahanara who scored noine goals.

Usha take on Arambagh Kirra Sangha in today's match.

Rahim a revelation

Tigers' morale boosted



SPORTS REPORTER

Teenager Mushfiqur Rahim, considered an outside bet before the start of the tour, continued to marvel as he made a fantastic hundred against Northamptonshire and helped Bangladesh restore their shattered morale following the thrashing against Sussex at Hove last week.

Rahim's fantastic effort comes at the back of the uncapped 16-year-old's 63 against Sussex. The wicket-keeper has now surely done enough to have earned a Test debut at Lord's on May 26 as a specialist batsman. He was not out on 115 (167 balls, 15x4, 1x6) at close on the final day of the three-day fixture which ended in a draw after Bangladesh declared on 309 for seven with little time remaining. Mohammad Rafique was the seventh wicket to fall after a blistering 54 (52 balls) featuring four sixes and

two fours. Rafique shared 87 with Rahim.

Rahim was the undoubted hero of the day as he led the recovery act for the Tigers after they had been reduced to 53-4 in reply to Northants' 230 for six declared.

His sixth-wicket stand with stand-in captain Khaled Mashud (31) was worth 91.

The hosts, 149-5 overnight in this rain-hit affair where the whole of Day Two was washed away, earlier declared having hit 81 runs in 15 overs in the morning.

Seamer Anwar Hossain continued his impressive run, bowling Matthew Friedlander for seven to take his figures to 4-113.

Northants Skipper Usman Afzaal crashed an unbeaten run-a-ball 47, including five boundaries.

Bangladesh then quickly suffered a top-order wobble, with South African Charl Pietersen removing openers Javed Omar (caught) and Nafees Iqbal (bowled) and Richard King ousting Aftab Ahmed.

Matthew Friedlander had Rajin

Saleh caught for one just after lunch, following up with the wicket of Mohammad Ashraf to reduce Bangladesh to 105-5.

But, with the assistance of skipper Mashud, Rahim showed maturity beyond his years to steady the innings.

Should Rahim force his way into the Test team to face England, he will become the fifth 16-year-old to represent Bangladesh at the highest level.

SCOREBOARD
Scoreboard at tea on the third and final day of the three-day match between Bangladesh and Northamptonshire at the Wantage Road on Sunday:

NORTHAMPTONSHIRE: First innings

| | |
|---------------------------|----|
| Huggins b Anwar | 8 |
| Shafayat c Iqbal b Enamul | 76 |
| White c Rafique b Baisya | 14 |
| Roberts c Mashud b Anwar | 16 |
| Wessels c Mashud b Anwar | 20 |
| Afzaal not out | 47 |

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Rain worry for BD A



SPORTS REPORTER

The selection trial of the Bangladesh A team for their tour of England in next July is threatened by inclement weather.

All 26 selected cricketers joined the camp yesterday to play two limited-overs and as many three-day games at BKSP in Savar but the grounds of the country's lone sports institute were still waterlogged following seasonal rain for the last few days.

The first one-dayer is scheduled for today but the team coordinator informed that it is likely to take place at the hockey turf with a softball.

Out-of-favour Alok Kapali has been named captain of the Red team while Tushar Imran, who has been selected for the Tiger's triangular one-day tournament in England, will lead the Green team in the first limited-overs

match and three-day game. All-rounder Mushfiqur Rahman will take over from Tushar for the second matches.

Discarded national players like Kapali, Mushfiqur Rahman and Tareq Aziz were desperately looking forward to perform in the preparation matches to grab a place for the second string side which they believe would pave the way for regaining their places in the senior side.

"I am very aware of the fact that performance is a must at every level to regain my place. There is a tough competition but I am looking forward to play in Tests again," said talented batsman Kapali yesterday.

But the fact is that chief selector Faruque Ahmed and his one of colleagues Athar Ali Khan will not be available to watch the matches as both will be with the national team in England.

"Shaun (Williams) and one of our selectors Prince (Golam Nawsher) will look after everything and we will

always be in touch with them," said Athar before his departure to London.

Meanwhile, Shaun Williams, the game development manager of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB), has been named coach for the tour.

Bangladesh side will play five three-day games and four limited-over games during their month-long trip against different county selections.

The selected players are: Golam Rahman, Nasiruddin Faruque, Alok Kapali, Farhad Reza, Manzarul Islam Rana, Hasanuzzaman, Shamsur Rahman, Imran Ahmed, Alamgir Kabir, Gazi Alamgir, Mosharrif Hossain, Dollar Mahmud, Naeem Islam, Tushar Imran, Sakib Ali Hasan, Nazimuddin, Faisal Hossain, Mushfiqur Rahman, Abdur Razzak Raj, Tareq Aziz Khan, Shafiqul Jabir, Mohammad Shahajada, Nabil Samad, Dhiman Gosh (wicket-keeper), Sahagir Hossain Pavel (wicketkeeper).



SACHIN TENDULKAR

Chappell's plans for Sachin



BBC ONLINE, New Delhi

New India coach Greg Chappell is looking forward to presenting Sachin Tendulkar with "some new challenges" in a bid to redefine his role in the team.

Chappell accepts 33-year-old Tendulkar is not quite the force of old, but is confident the master batsman still has much to offer at international level.

"He's had some down periods, perhaps had a bit of a crisis about what his role is in the team," Chappell said.

"I need to sit with him and work out where he's at, where he wants to go."

Tendulkar, by his own high standards, has been somewhat out of form in recent times, and last month was forced to fend off criticism about his perceived more cautious batting style.

Speaking to Australian media from New Delhi, Chappell added: "Everyone goes through different phases in their career."

"He's been around for about 15 years and most of those 15 years have been extraordinary."

"Hopefully I can motivate him and present him with some new challenges."

Right-handed Tendulkar, for so long regarded as the best batsman in the world, has battled elbow problems in the past year and is arguably no longer the best in his own team.

He has a superb Test average of 57.25, with a century coming roughly once every six innings. In the last three years, however, triple figures have been reached in fewer than 10 per cent of his digs.

"I don't think he's ever going to be the player he was," said former Australia batting star Chappell, who was appointed on Friday.

"You change. You're a different person in your 30s compared to when you're an 18-year-old. You just have to learn to play accordingly."

"In many ways you can be better, in many ways you can't be, because you're not as flexible in body and mind as you used to be."

"There are other things going on in his life that he didn't have as a young player. All he needs is to feel welcome, wanted and to have a meaningful role in the team."

"I'm sure he can bounce back, maybe not to the great heights he reached before, but bounce back and play an important role. To work with a player of that quality will be a privilege and an honour."

Chappell revealed he anticipated forging a strong working relationship with India captain Sourav Ganguly.

"I've worked with Sourav before and I enjoy his company," Chappell said.

"I found him to be likeable and a very nice fellow. It will be good to renew the acquaintance there."

Rajib stays on top

SPORTS REPORTER

Enamul Hossain Rajib dropped points against Abdullah Al Rakib in a battle of International Masters yesterday but maintained lead in the Open FIDE Rating Chess tournament.

Rajib extended his collection to 6.5 points after the draw with Rakib in the seventh round match at the BCF hall room.

Closely following the leader were Rakib, Reefat Bin Sattar, Aminul Islam, Sheikh Nasir Ahmed and Monir Hossain -- all on six points.

In other seventh round games, Reefat beat Saifuddin Lavlu, Nasir beat Abdul Maleq, Aminul beat Mohammed Javed, Monir beat Abu Sufian Shakil, Rezaul Haque beat Mohammed Ali, Mehdi Hassan Parag beat Mizanur Rahman, Mujibur Rahman beat Aminul Islam, Nasiruddin Mahmood beat Mostafa, Imran Ali Elin beat Mahbulul Alam and Shamsul Kabir beat Minhazuddin.

Victoria's 2nd win

SPORTS REPORTER

Victoria Sporting Club registered their second successive victory in the First Division Football League when they blanked War Club 2-0 at the Birsreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

Azizur Rahman put the winners ahead on the stroke of the lemon break while Surat doubled the margin in the 58th minute.

Victoria beat Agrani Bank 1-0 in their first match.

Pakistan set for big total

SPORTS REPORTER

An explosive 30-ball 56 by opener Shahid Afridi gave Pakistan a flying start in the third and final one-day international against the West Indies at the Beausejour Stadium in Gros Islet, St Lucia yesterday.

Pakistan, who have already clinched the series with an unassailable 2-0 lead, were put into bat and raced to 174-2 after 32 overs with Yousof Youhana on 37 and Bazid Khan on 36. Yasir Hameed contributed 41 during an 87-run opening stand with Afridi, who blasted six fours and two sixes.

Sharapova not switching to acting yet?

AFP, Paris

Wimbledon champion Maria Sharapova may be just 18 years old, but the blonde Russian pin-up is already dreaming of a life on the silver screen once her playing days are over.

However, despite being linked with an appearance on the hit American show Desperate Housewives, Sharapova insists that there are more Grand Slams to be won before she switches careers.

"That ambition starts here on Monday when the second seed kicks off her campaign to add the French Open to the Wimbledon crown she spectacularly claimed last summer."

"First of all, I'm not desperate and I'm not a wife so I don't know

Reeve's cocaine admission

REUTERS, London

Former England all-rounder Dermot Reeve has admitted he had a cocaine habit so severe that he has no recollection of two days' Test cricket commentary for the Channel Four team last year.

Reeve told The Mail on Sunday he had taken a combination of alcohol and cocaine after the second day of the first Test between England and New Zealand at Lord's followed by two sleeping tablets.

"I woke up late and didn't arrive at the ground till midday on the Saturday. I was meant to be at the ground for 10 am," he said.

"I have no recollection of seeing the ball on Saturday or Sunday. I had to watch the video of the match to hear what I said."

"My bosses took me to one side at the end of Sunday. They knew I was having problems and suggested I took Monday off. It was a reality check and it was also very frightening."

Reeve, 43, who quit the Channel Four team last week, said the addiction had also wrecked his second marriage.



BEHOLD! Curious onlookers look at the UEFA Champions League Trophy at Taksim Square in downtown Istanbul on Sunday. The cup will be displayed here until the Champions League football final between Ac Milan and Liverpool on May 25 at the Ataturk Olympic Stadium.

Fletcher taking nothing for granted



BBC ONLINE, London

England coach Duncan Fletcher wants his troops to concentrate on the task at hand when the first Test against Bangladesh starts on Thursday.

Fletcher reckons the lowly Tigers could cause some problems if England sell them short at Lord's.

"They are a side that will make some progress. Cricket is a strange game and you can never underestimate anyone."

"It's important we appreciate there are some good players in their side," Fletcher told BBC Sport.

"There have been other sides who have been in the same position when they've entered the international arena and look where they are today."

"On any given day if one or two of their bowlers bowl in the right areas, you've got to make sure you're at the top of your game."

"We've got to make sure we go out there and play and look after our game and get some momentum going into the Ashes."

The England coach gave his backing to Ian Bell, who will make his second Test appearance after seeing off opposition from Robert Key and Kevin Pietersen.



DUNCAN FLETCHER

"He has already done it against West Indies," Fletcher argued.

"It's not as if he's just come in and is totally new, which could mislead you to some extent."

"I think selection is showing that skill of not picking just on performance,

but by seeing something in an individual, doing some investigation on his background and character and seeing if he can grow."

"We wouldn't pick someone just because he has made a few runs over a short period of time."

"He made runs last season, he's made some runs this season and Bell's a good player."

Fletcher was confident Andrew Flintoff would take on bowling duties at Lord's with his rehabilitation from ankle surgery going so well.

The star all-rounder has impressed in a number of spells for Lancashire this season, allaying early fears he would miss the Bangladesh contests.

"His progress has come on very well," Fletcher said.

"We had a chat with him the other day in Manchester and he gave the impression he would be disappointed if he didn't play."

"We must restrict the bowling that he does do, but he must build up mileage in his legs."

"He's all about power, there's no real rhythm in his action so he must make sure there's a slow, steady build-up."

"But he is up for it and enjoying his cricket. There is a lot of energy with Andrew Flintoff at the moment."

Federer's missing piece

Roland Garros takes centrestage



REUTERS, Paris

World number one Roger Federer, a four-time Grand Slam champion, believes this will be the year when he can finally win the French Open for the first time.

"I'm confident I can do it," the Swiss told reporters on Saturday. "If I win the French, I've got them all."

Federer has won every Grand Slam but the Paris tournament, which starts on Monday.

The gifted all-court player has been busy rewriting tennis history but has never gone beyond the quarter-finals in Paris, where he has lost in the first round in two of the last three years.

The quiet Federer, who has the perfect game to shine on clay as he proved by winning in Hamburg last week without dropping a set, is slightly irritated by suggestions he had a French Open problem.

"I agree it's the only one I haven't won but I won three (Grand Slam titles) last year," he said.



ROGER FEDERER