



Did U Know?

Tapash Baisya (3/69) produced the best figures for Bangladesh against Australia, bettering Mohammad Rafique's two for 31 at Darwin in 2003.



Lennart Johansson
(UEFA president)
"Companies could make use of a sweaty, lovely looking girl playing on the ground, with the rainy weather. It would sell."

On his idea of bringing women's football into the 21st century.

What to WATCH

BTV
NatWest ODI Series
Bangladesh v Australia
Live at 3:45 pm
ESPN
NatWest ODI Series
Bangladesh v Australia
Live from 3:45 pm up to 9:30 pm
FIFA Confederations Cup
First Semifinal
Germany v Brazil
Live at 9:55 pm
STAR Sports
Wimbledon Championships
Third Round
Live at 5:00 pm



Premier Football League
Dhaka Wanderers v YMCA Fakirpore
(5:00 pm)
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium

BDR, BJMC
Pepsi v'ball
champs
SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Rifles regained the men's title and BJMC retained the women's crown in the Pepsi National Volleyball Championship at the Mirpur Shaheed Suhrawardi Indoor Stadium yesterday.

Bangladesh Rifles beat

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Singing for Saturday

Cricket

AL-AMIN from Manchester

Rou-shelm, the famous street in Manchester which is called the longest curvy mile.

The wicket at Old Trafford is also a look alike of Cardiff.

"But I have not seen such a wicket with little grass on it anywhere in England. It will probably take a bit of spin and if the weather was not gloomy we could have easily decided to field Manzoor Islam," said Bashir while talking about the prospect of including a second spinner.

But Bashir played down the expectations revolving round Mohammad Ashraful after the little right-hander crossed every conceivable imagination with a magnificent hundred against Australia followed by a blazing 94 against England.

"I know people are expecting a lot from him. But at the same time it is an additional pressure on him," said the Bangladesh captain.

But the cricket world will definitely focus its attention on the 21-year-old genius who the coach termed an 'underachiever'.

Ashraful is now the mental strength of the team and like any other established sides the rest of the members are eager to prosper revolve round him. His two superb innings have certainly injected confidence among the team that there was nothing to be afraid the big names.

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Hasan Al Mamun banned for four games

SPORTS REPORTER

ICC ANNUAL MEETING Subs coming soon

Cricket

CRICINFO, London

When the International Cricket Council meets this weekend at Lord's, it will discuss the introduction of substitutes in one-day cricket, and the use of more technology to assist umpires in decision-making.

Interestingly, the use of substitutes could come into play in the near future.

"There is a clear possibility it could come into force for the NatWest Challenge," an ICC spokesman is quoted as saying on

the BBC website. This means that the three-match series between Australia and England could be the first one where a bowler could be replaced once his job was done, or a batsman introduced especially because a certain situation warranted it.

Sunil Gavaskar, the former Indian captain and current ICC committee member, said: "It will add more thrill to the game and at the same time will give a captain more tactics to play with."

On the subject of technology, the ICC will debate allowing on-field officials to consult with the third umpire on any decision, barring low

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Div I SOCCER Rahmatganj taste defeat

SPORTS REPORTER

League leaders Rahmatganj Muslim Friends Society suffered their first defeat in the First Division Football League when BRTC Sporting Club beat them by 2-1 at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

There had another blow for the leaders as their two players Mehedi Uddin and GM Mamun received red cards.

Rezaul Hakim put BRTC ahead in the 15th minute and Mohiuddin doubled it after two minutes. The nine-men Rahmatganj pulled back one through a 80th minute strike from Rezaul Karim.

With the outcome, Rahmatganj stayed on top spot with 22 points from nine matches while BRTC improved their tally to nine points from as many matches.

Fahashganj's Nigerian defender Adafa (L) and his compatriot Patrick of Arambagh are locked in a tussle during their Premier Bank Premier Football League clash at the Bangabandhu National Stadium on Thursday.

PHOTO: STAR

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(a career-best 46 not out) and Stephen Harmison (11 not out) batted out the overs with a stand of 50 as England finished on 209 for nine.

"It was a pretty important win for us in the scheme of this tournament but, more importantly than that, I think it repays us for the hard work we've put in over the last few days, particularly after Saturday's loss," Australia captain Ricky Ponting told reporters afterwards.

"As I said at the time we improved a lot going into Sunday's game and if we improved as much in this game I said we'd be pretty hard to beat and that's the way it's worked out."

"The bowling early was fantastic, McGrath and Lee really led the way for us. But we know if we do the basics of the game well we are going to be right in every contest."

Then fast bowler Lee, making his tournament bow after a right shoulder injury, sparked a collapse that saw England slump to six for three.

Last-wicket pair Darren Gough

Farashganj miss chance

SPORTS REPORTER

Promotees Farashganj Sporting Club failed to snatch the top position in the Premier Football League when they were held to a goalless draw by Arambagh Krira Sangha at the Bangabandhu National Stadium on Friday.

The old Dhaka outfit went into the match with the chance of toppling the traditional powerhouses from summit but the day's outcome allowed Mohammedan Sporting Club to keep their solo lead intact.

Farashganj improved their tally to 13 points from six matches and share the second place with holders Brothers Union. Another title aspirant Mukti Joddha Sangsad are one point adrift in third.

On the other hand it was the second draw for Arambagh who have five points from the same number of outings.

Farashganj, who have lost only one game, against Brothers, in five matches before yesterday's match, failed to produce same brand of eye-catching football.

Both the teams played a physical game. Arambagh enjoyed superior ball possession but failed to create a single opportunity to break the deadlock. They also suffered a big blow when their Kenyan striker Dominic left the field in the 26th minute after suffering an injury following an aerial tussle with the Farashganj custodian Zia who also could not return after the first half.

Farashganj only came alive with ten minutes to go and they had two good chances to cash in. But Arambagh goalkeeper Shakil foiled the attempts.

In the 82nd minute Farashganj's Nigerian striker Felix got inside the opponents' danger zone after receiving the ball from Arup but his left-footer was fisted away by Shakil who denied Johnny's right-footer salvo.

Yellow cards: Johnny (Farashganj), Akram, Kalol and Rintu (Arambagh).

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BRAZIL V GERMANY

Hosts fancy revenge

AFP, Nuremberg



Germany and Brazil have won the World Cup eight times between them and the two great footballing nations lock horns again here on Saturday in the semi-final of the Confederations Cup.

The game is a repeat of the 2002 World Cup final, when Ronaldo scored both goals to help Brazil win 2-0, and the German media are billing this match as a chance for revenge three years on.

"Everyone wants to beat Brazil," declared Brazil coach Carlos Alberto Parreira. "All the teams that we play against produce their best game of the year."

Without the competitive edge of World Cup qualifiers hosts Germany are channelling their energy into the Confederations Cup but West Germany's 1974 World Cup winner, Franz Beckenbauer, is not sure Brazil are doing the same.

"From watching Brazil I sense they are not really taking this competition seriously," Beckenbauer said. "The will to win is not there and this is a great chance for Germany. I think our name is on the cup."

Germany have failed to beat Brazil since a 2-1 friendly win over Cologne back in 1993.

Manager Jürgen Klinsmann played in that game and hopes for a similar result to book a spot in the Frankfurt final on June 29.

"We are determined to reach the final," vowed Klinsmann. "Brazil are very technical and the current world champions but we have our own attributes."

Since Klinsmann took over as coach in July of last year Germany have lost just once - a 3-1 reverse against South Korea in December - with hungry, young players combined with a more attacking

approach.

"We cannot beat Germany if we play like they play, we must play the Brazilian way, the way we know how," said Parreira.

"We want to win this cup but have to consider the physical condition of our players. Some of them are shattered after long seasons."

Germany will play at a high tempo and prevent Brazil from probing for an opening with long spells of possession as Kaka, Ronaldinho and rising star Robinho are all capable of opening a defence on their own.

Germany will field their strongest team with captain Michael Ballack, who memorably missed the World

Ashraful's formula

PALLAB BHATTACHARYA, New Delhi

Mohammad Ashraful, who starred in Bangladesh's stunning victory over world champions Australia in a recent one-day cricket international in England, says playing in the Duleep Trophy competition in India and a piece of advice from Indian skipper Sourav Ganguly helped his batting improve.

"The Duleep Trophy helped us a lot. It enabled me to concentrate on a lot of aspects as far as my batting is concerned. It was a domestic league and I had a lot of time to make necessary improvements in my batting style," Ashraful told Indian Express newspaper in an interview from Manchester.

He said his batting has become more aggressive due to three reasons: the confidence he gained during his stay in India, huge expectations in Bangladesh and, most importantly, his long chat with Ganguly this year.

Acknowledging Bangladesh failed to do perform in the Duleep Trophy earlier this year, Ashraful, however, said there were a lot of important lessons from the competition.

Referring to Bangladesh's first Duleep Trophy match against East Zone in Nagpur, he said: "Playing on that Nagpur pitch was a revelation. Those kind of pitches really help in facing bowlers like Glenn McGrath, Brett Lee and Steve Harmison."

According to Ashraful, "Ganguly's advice really helped me. He told me that my kind of player was very rare,

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PHOTO: FOCUSBANGLA.COM

Aussie service resumes

Cricket

AFP, Chester-Le-Street (England)

World champions Australia won their first match of the triangular series after beating England by 57 runs in Thursday's day/night one-day international here at the Riverside.

Australia's victory owed much to returning players Andrew Symonds and Brett Lee.

Symonds top-scored with 73 in Australia's 266 for five after a two-game ban imposed by Australia officials for being out late Friday saw him miss Saturday's shock five-wicket defeat against Bangladesh in Cardiff and Sunday's three-wicket loss against England in Bristol.

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Symonds, who put on 142 for the fourth wicket with Damien Martyn, 68 not out, said: "The important point for me is that a difficult week has finished with a win."

England stand-in captain Marcus Trescothick deputising as England captain for the injured Michael Vaughan (groin strain), admitted he may have erred in opting to field reporters afterwards.

"I don't think the lights had much effect but the wicket deteriorated more than I expected."

But he insisted no long-term damage had been done. "They bowled well and the confidence and spirit in the side goes deeper than one defeat and I don't think this will hurt us too much."

When England batted, Lee -- who finished with two for 27 -- immediately settled into a probing line and length.

Neither Trescothick or fellow left-hander Andrew Strauss looked

comfortable and Strauss played on to Lee for three.

Trescothick, meanwhile had struggled to get bat on ball at all and, when he did, flat-footedly edged a McGrath delivery angled across him to wicket-keeper Adam Gilchrist for a 15-ball no-bat.

It was a familiar sight from previous Anglo-Australian contests and perhaps a foretaste of things to come in the Ashes Test series.

Two balls later Paul Collingwood, returning to his Durham home ground 48 hours after becoming only the second man to score a century and take five wickets in the same one-day international, the 168-run win over Bangladesh at Trent Bridge, played on to a full McGrath delivery for nought.

England had lost three wickets for two runs in six balls.

Andrew Flintoff and Vikram Solanki then stumped the flow of wickets.

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