

BCCI confirms ODI dates

PTI, undated

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has announced the itinerary for India's one-day matches against Sri Lanka and South Africa to be held in October-November.

India will host Sri Lanka for a seven-match one-day international series between October 25 and November 12, while South Africa will play a five-match series from November 16 to 28.

"The venue for each match would be decided in consultation with their respective boards," said SK Nair, the BCCI secretary.

According to Nair, Ahmedabad has been allotted a one-day match against Sri Lanka -- the second game it will host this year -- since it had not been able to stage a Test match after Pakistan refused to play there early this year.

Meanwhile, South Africa will play a game at a new stadium in Hyderabad as the Madhya Pradesh Cricket Association revealed they are still not ready to stage an ODI.



PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh football coach Diego Andres Cruciani (L) briefs the press regarding naming the probable team for the SAFF Championship on Tuesday.

Tipu back after four years

Cruciani picks preliminary 28

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

Striker Shahajuddin Tipu earned an expected recall to the national fold after a gap of four years when new Bangladesh coach Diego Andres Cruciani announced a 28-member preliminary squad on Tuesday.

Since his glorious strike in the 1999 SAF Games in Nepal against India in the semifinal, Tipu had spent the last few seasons in virtual wilderness before a strong showing in the ongoing league, especially in the second-leg, drew the attention of the Argentine coach. Tipu notched ten goals including one in the last fixture of the season for his club Abahani yesterday and is joint second in the scorer's chart.

Cruciani picked his probables after watching matches for a month. There were nine new faces -- Atiqul Islam Tareq, Mohammad Shakil, Siraji, Wali Faisal, Arman Aziz, Zahed Parvez, Abul Hossain, Zahid Hossain Emily and Topu who all received their first senior call-up.

Two Asia Cup pre-qualifying matches against Pakistan in November will be the first assignment for Cruciani but he was already looking

forward to the 4th SAFF Championship to be held in Pakistan in December where Bangladesh will defend their title.

"There are a lot of areas the players need to improve. I have considered skill, stamina and movement before selecting the team. There is hardly any chance to experiment with the new players who have impressed me most as we will get only three months to prepare the team for the SAFF Championship," said Cruciani at a press conference at the BFF Bhaban yesterday.

Many were surprised at the omission of Muktiyoddha striker Saiful Islam Moni, Sheikh Russel winger Tanveer and Abahani defender Prodip Poddar but the Bangladesh coach said that he selected the team with a formation in mind.

"I have a plan to play a 4-3-1-2 formation and those who have been left out did not fit into that plan. I am still searching for a player with the ability to cover the midfield and forward with a lot of energy. I am not satisfied with the current state of the players but I understand that I have to work within certain limitations."

Cruciani said that his first challenge would be to ensure fitness when the month-long camp starts from

September 15 at the BKSP.

BFF general secretary Anwarul Haque Helal said that they had given full freedom to the coach to pick his selection.

"He picked up the team almost single-handedly. There was no interference and you can rest assured that he will get full freedom to prepare the team," said Helal.

SQUAD

Goalkeepers: Aminul (Muktiyoddha), Biplob (Mohammedan), Tareq (Brothers) and Shakil (Arambagh)

Defenders: Faisal Ahmed (Farashganj), Sujan, Parvez Babu and Siraji (Brothers), Rajani and Firoz Mahmud Titoo (Muktiyoddha), Nazrul (Mohammedan) and Wali Faisal (Abahani)

Midfielders: Joy, Zahed Parvez, Ujjal (Abahani), Arman Aziz, Matiu Manna, Faisal Mahmud and Asad (Mohammedan), Arman Miah and Hasan Al Mamun (Muktiyoddha);

Forwards: Alfaz (Mohammedan), Farhad and Tipu (Abahani), Kanchan (Muktiyoddha), Emily and Topu (Brothers)

Tri-series goes

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Nehra c Oram b Mills 0
Extras: (lb-5, nb-4, w-13) 22
Total: (All out in 49.3 overs) 276
Fall of wickets: 1-72, 2-155, 3-155, 4-185, 5-203, 6-230, 7-231, 8-255, 9-272

India full substitute: Harbhajan (Rao, New Zealand innings, 4.0 ov)
Bowler O M R W
Bond 9.3 0 44 1
Mills 9.3 3 45 2
Oram 8.3 0 58 4
Styris 8 0 56 1
Vettori 10 0 35 2
Aistle 4 0 33 0

NEW ZEALAND

Fleming c and b Sehwaag 61
Aistle not out 115
H Marshall lbw b Sehwaag 3
Styris st Dhoni b Sehwaag 37
McMillan c Dhoni b Yuvraj 13
Vincent not out 33
Extras: (lb-9, nb-1, w-6) 16
Total: (For 4 wkts in 48.1 overs) 278
Fall of wickets: 1-121, 2-125, 3-183, 4-206

Did not bat: Oram, McCullum, Cairns, Vettori, Mills
New Zealand full substitute: Cairns (Bond, New Zealand innings, 27.0 ov)

Bowler O M R W
Pathan 5 1 40 0
Nehra 6 0 40 0
Agarkar 6.1 0 43 0
Harbhajan 10 0 49 0
Sehwaag 10 0 44 3
Yadav 1 0 14 0
Yuvraj 10 1 39 1
Result: New Zealand won by 6 wickets and lift the Videcon Cup.

Man-of-the-match: Nathan Aistle. Man-of-the-series: Shane Bond.

Mashrafe may

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Meanwhile, the team management has asked for a replacement in the event Mashrafe, who missed all the three one-dayers, fails to recover before the first Test starting on September 12.

If Mashrafe is ruled out due to injury Talha Jubair will fly from Dhaka.

Bashar might fly

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can at least watch the second and third day which will be very important for me before the first Test," he added.

Rizia Begum, 60, was hospitalised at the NICDV (National Institute for Cardio Vascular Disease) after suffering a heart attack on August 28.

Rafique again

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rather rely on the medicines the team used to carry.

"We know these medicines work and are better for him. We also have to maintain the anti-drugs rules."

Dav Whatnore however refused to make any comments but the 51-year-old said: "Everybody has seen what has happened. It's an internal problem and hopefully we will make things okay."

This is not the first time Rafique has been involved in such an incident. He was sent back home in the middle of the Zimbabwe tour last year on disciplinary ground after picking a quarrel with skipper Habibul Bashar during a practice session.

But unlike Zimbabwe, the moody and at times ill-tempered Rafique escaped a similar punishment this time after a long meeting involving the manager, coach, vice-captain Khaled Mashud and Close.

"It is not expected but these things can happen. We had a long meeting and I can tell you both of them came out smiling," said manager Latif.

"A report will be sent to Dhaka immediately. Rafique could suffer fines, if not at present, may be in future," he said.

Pierce, Agassi show class



REUTERS, New York

Mary Pierce avenged the most painful defeat of her career when she surprised Belgian seventh seed Justine Henin-Hardenne 6-3, 6-4 in the fourth round of the US Open on Monday.

Three months ago the 30-year-old Frenchwoman sobbed uncontrollably after collapsing 6-1, 6-1 to the Belgian in the French Open final but on Monday a wide grin replaced the tears under the glistening lights on Arthur Ashe Court.

Plagued by double-faults, 2003 champion Henin-Hardenne looked a shadow of her usual self and Pierce controlled her fragile temperament sufficiently to set up an all-French quarter-final with third seed Amelie Mauresmo.

Resilience was the by-word on Labour Day at Flushing Meadows.

Seventh seed Andre Agassi and number eight Guillermo Coria of Argentina came through five-setters and wild card James Blake recovered from a set and 5-2 down to win.

Pierce's nerve has failed her so often in the past but never as badly as in Paris, when she apologised to the crowd for her abject display.

On Monday, though, she ripped into a 5-0 lead with some clubbed forehands and despite some customary wobbles towards the end, drew the decisive error out of the under-par Belgian on her fourth match point.

It was her first win in five meetings with 23-year-old Henin-Hardenne and she said: "I just gave everything I had tonight, I fought and I didn't give up."

Agassi delved into his 20 years of experience at Flushing Meadows and plucked out a 6-3, 6-4, 6-7, 4-6, 6-2 victory over belligerent Belgian Xavier Malisse.

It was hard work for the 35-year-old twice former champion who reached the quarterfinals for the fifth straight year.

"I knew it was on the bubble of getting really tough," said Agassi, who nonetheless added that his back injury had not caused him any

problems.

In the last eight he will face compatriot Blake, who recovered superbly to upset Spanish 19th seed Tommy Robredo 4-6, 7-5, 6-2, 6-3.

Agassi is Blake's idol and the 25-year-old, who shocked Spanish second seed Rafael Nadal in round three, finds himself in uncharted territory after reach his first Grand Slam quarterfinal.

treatment for damaged toenails. Coria later described the incident as a "misunderstanding."

He will face either French teenager Richard Gasquet or unseeded American Robby Ginepri in the last eight. They were due to play in Monday's second evening session match.

In contrast to the men, women's second and third seeds, Lindsay Davenport and Amelie Mauresmo,



PHOTO: AFP

VICTORY IS SWEET BUT REVENGE IS EVEN SWEETER! France's Mary Pierce is ecstatic after defeating Justine Henin-Hardene of Belgium at Flushing Meadows 6-3, 6-4.

"I don't think I'll nervous because I know I have nothing to lose," said Blake.

Coria also showed great resilience to win a bad-tempered five-set encounter with Nicolas Massu of Chile.

The two were involved in heated verbal exchanges on Louis Armstrong Court before the Argentine eventually prevailed 6-4, 2-6, 6-7, 6-2, 6-2 in over four and a half hours to reach the quarterfinals for the second time in three years.

Olympic champion Massu was infuriated after Coria requested

enjoyed a holiday stroll into the quarterfinals.

Davenport thrashed Nathalie Dechy of France 6-0, 6-3.

In the quarterfinals Davenport, the 1998 champion, faces Elena Dementieva, the Russian with the dodgy serve who was runner-up last year. She beat Switzerland's Patty Schnyder 6-4, 6-3 to avenge her fourth round defeat by the same player at the same stage of this year's Australian Open.

Mauresmo, the 2002 semifinalist, was a 6-1, 6-4 winner over Russian 19th seed Elena Likhovtseva.

Arm in arm with Armstrong

REUTERS, Washington

Seven-time Tour de France winner Lance Armstrong is engaged to marry rock star Sheryl Crow, a spokesman for the cyclist confirmed Monday.

No details of the wedding were released, although the spokesman said a spring wedding was likely.

The couple met at a charity event in October 2003 and began dating a short time later. The testicular cancer survivor has three children from his first marriage. It will be the first marriage for Crow, 43, who has previously been linked with rock star Eric Clapton and actor Owen Wilson.

Armstrong, 33, has been dogged by controversy recently when a French newspaper said six of Armstrong's urine samples collected on the 1999 Tour de

France showed traces of the banned substance EPO (erythro-



PHOTO: INTERNET

Lance Armstrong and Sheryl Crow

poietin).

There were no tests to detect EPO, a drug that increases the level of red blood cells and endurance, in 1999. However, samples from the 1999 Tour de France were kept and have been recently retested by a lab based outside of Paris.

Armstrong, a Texan who last month took cycling enthusiast President George W Bush on a 17-mile (27-km) workout, has denied ever taking performance-enhancing drugs.

Crow, a former backing singer with Michael Jackson, has won nine Grammy Awards since breaking through in 1993. The singer/songwriter, best known for such hits as "All I Wanna Do" and "If It Makes You Happy," will release her fifth studio album, "Wildflower," on September 13.

Jones ruled out

Cricket

AFP, London

Glamorgan seamer Simon Jones has been left ruing an injured right ankle which, after a fitness test, ruled him out of selection for England's deciding Ashes Test at The Oval on Thursday.

Jones was put through his paces at Lord's on Tuesday morning but his ankle was still painful and he was ruled out immediately. He had been hoping to recover from the injury, which he sustained during the fourth Test victory at Trent Bridge, after a week of treatment in an oxygen chamber which was supposed to accelerate his recovery.

But after jogging under the team physiotherapist's supervision it was clear Jones, who has claimed 18 wickets at just 21 runs apiece in the series, was not fit enough to bowl.

England may now recall James Anderson or Paul Collingwood as his replacement.

"It is a sickening blow," said Jones, who was ruled out of the Ashes series in Australia after

sustaining a serious knee ligament injury in the opening Test in Brisbane in November 2002.

"I have had a few injuries in my career, you have to get over the disappointment. These things happen."

"It's not very nice watching but sometimes you have to do that to support the boys."

England opening batsman Marcus Trescothick said of Jones's withdrawal. "It's a big blow. He's been a major player in the team. He's unique, so he's going to leave a hole."

"It's a pressure situation, as big a game as anyone of us will ever play in," Trescothick added. Jones's injury blow also denies England's selectors the chance to choose an unchanged side for an entire Ashes series for the first time since Arthur Shrewsbury's side toured Australia in 1884-5.

Should the selectors decide on Lancashire seamer Anderson, who has claimed 51 championship wickets this season, it would be a major gamble for such a massive Test as England attempt to claim the draw or victory which would win the Ashes for the first time since 1986-7.

School soccer

SPORTS REPORTER

Dolaipar High and Segunbagicha High moved into the final round of the Pran-Cola School Football Tournament winning their respective matches at the Birshrestha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

Defending champions Dolaipar High School blanked Nabakumar Institute 3-0 and Segunbagicha beat Molijheel Government Boys H.

Abahani blaze

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ninth hatrick in the league. He finished with ten goals to tie teammate Shahajuddin Tipu and Muktiyoddha's Bangladesh international striker Kanchan. Tipu celebrated his call up to the Bangladesh fold after a gap of four years by scoring in the 28th minute.

Abahani captain Joy had opened the floodgates in just the third minute and Rajan Miah equalised for Youngmens in the 17th against the run of play. But Abahani had the match in their pocket before the short whistle racing to a 4-1.

Youngmens defender Arif's own goal in the 60th minute completed Abahani's romp.

3-dayer starts today

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deteriorates. "However, we should leave behind the one-day series and start afresh. It would be a good preparation for the Tests to come and correct our mistakes."

"I know we are facing a young team, but that also would be as strong as our first practice match opponents. In Sri Lanka, they have a very good set of players outside the national team. And to me, playing a match is more important than just training. Performance in a match counts more than even long-term practice. We are taking it seriously because in our first practice match, we were beaten badly," reminded Mashud.

"A good performance in a side match would be a boost to come back after a poor one-day series." With three openers in the side -- Shahrir Nafees being the third in addition to the original Test pair of Nafees Iqbal and Javed Omar -- Mashud said he would prefer the experienced ones to start the innings.

"I prefer Iqbal and Javed to start the innings and Nafees to play down the order," said Mashud adding that

they would look forward to a moral-boosting win in the match.

Sri Lankan Test cricketer Thilan Samaraweera will lead the young and inexperienced squad which have three more players with international experience, Santha Kalavithoda, Thilina Kandambi and wicketkeeper Gihan de Silva. Another important inclusion is left-arm seamer Gayan Wijekoon, who was very impressive against visiting West Indies last month and also played in Bangladesh's warm-up limited-overs match.

SQUADS

BANGLADESH: Khaled Mashud, Javed Omar, Nafees Iqbal, Tushar Imran, Mohammad Ashrafu, Aftab Ahmed, Shahrir Nafees, Manjarul Islam, Tapash Baisya, Syed Rasel, Enamul Haque and Shahdat Hossain.

SRI LANKA DEV SQUAD: Thilan Samaraweera, Santha Kalavithoda, Harsha Vithana, M Gajanayake, Thilina Kandambi, Jeewan Mendis, Gayan Wijekoon, Gihan de Silva, Udara Waruna, Tharanga Lakshitha, Gihan Rupasinghe, Chintika Perera, Sandun Dias and N Randika.



Did U Know?

According to visitors at the FIFAworldcup.com website, South Korea was the most entertaining team of the 2002 World Cup.



TEN Sports
US Open
Live at 5am and 9pm



John Buchanan

(Australian coach)

"We've probably over-analysed our game on this tour. Cricket is a one-ball game, but sometimes players think too much about what's gone before and what the consequences of their actions will be." Realising where they went wrong in the Ashes series.



Premier Football League
Farashganj v Arambagh (5.00pm)
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium

Ronaldinho tips Robinho for greatness

PA SPORT

Real Madrid's newest star Robinho has been told that he can be a world beater by his compatriot Ronaldinho.

Together for Brazil's friendly clash with Sevilla on Wednesday, Barcelona ace Ronaldinho spoke highly of Robinho who made a dramatic impact in his first game for Madrid, helping them to victory over Cadiz after coming off the bench.

"He has everything and his impact is very big on the team as we are seeing," Ronaldinho said.

"He is already known on the world stage and so does not need to be built up. He will be one of the best players in the world."

"I hope that he keeps playing like he is for longer than a year and not just at the moment. I hope he can do this both with Brazil and Real Madrid. I think that he will adapt to the Spanish league quickly and show his quality."



PHOTO: AFP

Brazil superstars Ronaldinho (L) and Robinho pose during a press conference ahead of the friendly match against Sevilla to celebrate the centenary of the Primera Liga club on Monday.