

Star SPORT

DHAKA FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 23, 2005, E-MAIL: sports@thedailystar.net



Did U Know?

India's Irfan Pathan (5-58 in the first Test) became the fifth bowler to bag five wickets in his maiden innings against Zimbabwe. He joined Shahid Nazir (Pakistan), Manjural Islam (Bangladesh), Richard Johnson (England) and James Anderson (England).



Brian Lara

(West Indies batting star) "This is one of the greatest days of my life. We spoke about his love for cricket and what cricket does to influence the world."

On his meeting with former South African president Nelson Mandela.



ESPN Sportscentre Live at 8.30pm English Premier League Preview Taped version at 9pm

National booters report to Cruciani

SPORTS REPORTER

All 28 booters except defenders Rajani Kanta Barman and Firoj Mahmood Titu reported to national football coach Diego Andres Cruciani at the Bangladesh Football Federation Bhawan yesterday after enjoying a seven-day break.

The residential camp for the pre-qualifying round of the Asia Cup begins at the BKSP on Friday.

Cruciani said he would emphasize on fitness during the four-week camp.

Titu has been suffering from fever while Rajani, who was in India, was expected to return home last night.

Bangladesh will play a pre-qualifying round home match against Pakistan on November 11 in Dhaka and the away match on November 18.

Dolaipar rout Mirpur Bangla

SPORTS REPORTER

Defending champions Dolaipar High returned to winning ways in the Pran-Cola School Football Tournament when they posted an 11-0 win over Mirpur Bangla High at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Dolaipar lost to Rayer Bazar High in their previous match.

In the another match, Segun Bagicha High trounced Government Laboratory High School 5-0 at the same venue.

Kamarpara High outplayed Shaheed Nabi High 3-1 in a Group B fixture. In the same group, Khilgaon Model High earned a 2-2 draw with Residential Model College.

SHEIKH RUSSEL SOCCER Motijheel win

BDNEWS, Dhaka

Motijheel registered a 2-0 win over Hajariabagh in the Sheikh Russel Under-14 Football Tournament at the Dhammondi playground yesterday.

Dulal and Sohel netted one goal each for the winners.

The other match between Pallabi and Ramna ended in a 2-2 draw. Vice-president of the tournament committee and former national footballer Badal Roy later distributed prizes among the winners.

'Almost everyone lacked determination'

Cricket

AL MUSABIB SADI from Colombo

A frustrated Habibul Bashar was coming to terms with the realisation at the end of the Test series against Sri Lanka that his team was no longer the fighting unit that had impressed during the summer's trip to England.

"It was totally frustrating. We have had poor series before but I am upset about this one particularly because from the beginning, including the one-day series, there was not much evidence that we had tried hard or we were really up to something," Bashar said after his side lost the second Test on Thursday.

"Every player wants to perform but we never really showed the effort. There was a lack of determination from almost everyone.

"It was a bad series but now, the important thing is to prepare ourselves for the next series. We have four months of domestic cricket in between and we have to do a lot of hard work in all areas."

Bashar admitted that after the highs of England, Sri Lanka was a dampener in every sense.

"We have to think about a comeback now. There won't be any national camps in the coming months but I want every individual to work on their skill and the mental part during the domestic season. Every one would be set a goal and a plan and I hope they follow that for

their own sake. "Sri Lanka are a tough opponent and when Murali bowls, every team gets cautious. But I think we really panicked against him."

Bashar was also self-critical. "A series like this is really hard for a captain because it's not only my performance I have to look after but everything else too. It really makes things harder but I can accept that. That's not an excuse, that's never been an excuse for me. As the captain you have to take everything. That's the job and I admit that I am a failure in this tour as a captain."

"I should have scored more runs, especially in this Test because the wicket was fantastic."

He also felt that the players gave away too many wickets. "I would again say there was a lack of determination. We mentally accepted that Murali is a great bowler and he is difficult to play. But it is not justifiable at this level to panic against big names. We did not actually play the deliveries according to merit."

When asked whether players who were guaranteed places in the side were indifferent about their performance, Bashar stressed that no one was indispensable. "It's difficult to say whether that had happened. We prefer to give a player more confidence by telling him that he would play for a certain time. Otherwise, most of us take unnecessary pressure to retain his place. Anyway, after two or three bad series, it is hard to survive for any

player and the boys realise that. "Actually, I wanted to see them work hard which unfortunately never happened."

He also said that most of the things that had happened on the tour had a negative feel about them. "Things happened that should not have happened. But as a team, we are fine. The team spirit is there and there are no problems among players. We only need some good performances," he said referring to the altercation between coach Dav Whatmore and Mohammad Rafique ahead of the Test matches.

Bashar's counterpart Marvan Atapattu meanwhile had the luxury of reflecting on a satisfying home win.

"We wanted to approach these games very seriously and prepare for the next couple of months. After the end of the second Test match, I am very happy with the way things have gone. Basically everyone has contributed."

"If we have everybody fit in terms of fast bowlers we can do greater things. Unfortunately many guys are injured and we are thrilled that Dihanara has come back after injury. Atapattu also had kind words for the Bangladeshis.

"Every other country has gone through this. It takes time to get better. I have seen Sri Lanka going through such spells where we played two and half days and three day Test matches."

"I want to say that they have definitely improved from what they were when they came here last time."

Chess for the blind starts today

SPORTS REPORTER

The chess for the blind tournament jointly organised by the Bangladesh Braille Chess Association and Tarunna Chess Club of Gulshan begins at the BIAM Auditorium today.

Editor of daily Amar Desh Amanullah Kabir will open the three-day meet. About hundred visually impaired chess players and their parents are expected to take part in the unique event.

Nat'l pool named

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) yesterday bracketed 20 cricketers in the national pool for this year's GrameenPhone Corporate Cricket League.

Bangladesh captain Habibul Bashar leads the exclusive list from where each of the 12 participating corporate houses can lure a maximum of three players. The Corporate Cricket League, which will mark the start of the domestic season, will commence on October 5.

The following cricketers have been pencilled in the national pool: Habibul Bashar, Rajin Saleh, Javed Omar, Mohammad Ashraful, Manzarul Islam, Tapash Baisya, Mohammad Rafique, Khaled Mashud, Nafees Iqbal, Khaled Mahmud, Aftab Ahmed, Nazmul Hossain, Enamul Haque, Tushar Imran, Anwar Hossain Monir, Mashrafe bin Mortaza, Shahriar Nafees, Shahadat Hossain, Mushfiqur Rahim and Syed Raseel.

Jen Yo pool on

SPORTS REPORTER

The first-ever pool competition titled 'Jen Yo Cue-Cult 2005' got underway at three popular pool clubs in the city yesterday.

The event sponsored by mobile operator Citycell, has generated enormous enthusiasm among youths.

A total of 288 players took part in the first round held simultaneously at Pool Lovers in Banani, Wega Zone in Baily Road and Rack & Q in Dhammondi.

General secretary of Bangladesh Billiard and Snooker Federation Syed Mahboob declared the meet open.

Warne is 'God's gift to cricket'

CRICINFO, undated

Sachin Tendulkar has praised Shane Warne by calling him 'God's gift to cricket'.

He has also predicted that Australia would retain their super-power status even after their current ageing crop of players retire.

"(Warne) plays his cricket the hard way and has the ability to bounce back from the dead. He's God's gift to cricket," Tendulkar was quoted as saying by Inside Cricket.

"How many guys can bowl like him and how many guys can be as exciting as him? I'm least worried about what he does in his private life. It's his life. On the field he has delivered incredibly."

Tendulkar said that Australia's bench strength was the reason they would remain a formidable force even after Warne's retirement.

Sachin Tendulkar, who has outstanding averages of 53.11 and 49.02 against Australia in Tests and ODIs respectively, has not recovered fully from a surgery he underwent for a tennis elbow.

As a result he will miss the Super Series against Australia in October 2005. Tendulkar had been selected in both the Test and ODI squads for the Super Series.



NOW THE TEST TROPHY: Sri Lanka captain Marvan Atapattu holds the Test series trophy after beating Bangladesh in the second Test in Colombo on Thursday.

Batsmen to blame: Dav

Cricket

AL MUSABIB SADI from Colombo

Still rueing the wasted chances Bangladesh had thrown away in both the Tests, Bangladesh coach Dav Whatmore blamed the batsmen for errors in decision-making.

"In both Tests on the first days, we had the upper hand. From a position of relative strength, we handed it back to the opposition. Had we taken Tilkakarathne Dilshan's catch when Sri Lanka were 4-60, it could have been different," said Whatmore at the post-match briefing of the second Test on Thursday.

"Most of them got starts but did not carry on. Reasons why these things happen are definitely errors in decision-making as a batsman. One

or two tried to drive when the ball was not at that length to be driven. Consequently the ball deviates and it's on way up when the bat is coming down to meet the ball. And it gets an edge or you get bowled," said the 51-year-old said giving an explanation of the technical faults.

When his attention was drawn to Mohammad Ashraful's performance in the series, he defended his prodigy.

"Ashraful is trying hard not to play rash shots. He is not a naturally defensive player. He is being guilty of playing a lot of shots a little bit too early in his innings and getting out. He is getting criticised by media for this. But he is only a 21-year-old who has a lot of shots, in fact all the shots. It is a bit hard for him to understand his game compared to others who are lot less limited in their strokeplay."

"But we have seen flushes of

brilliance in his 158 against India and a one-day hundred against Australia and also during a 90 against England. But he has got to find it at a level in the longer game to become a consistent performer for Bangladesh. It will happen but it is just taking longer than what we all would like.

"We have a lot of work to do. The domestic cricket starts in a week or so. That's four months of non-international cricket which some ways is good for the lads, to have a knock about, trying to get a little more fitness as well. We will also try to unite them as a group in between matches."

Whatmore thought one of the positives from this dull tour were the quick bowlers Shahadat Hossain and Syed Raseel.

"Other than them, our fielding,

India crush Zimbabwe

Cricket

AFF, Harare

Blignaut survived five dropped catches during his innings but that did not detract from the invaluable 116-run partnership he put on for

the seventh wicket with Hamilton Mazakadsa, who eventually fell lbw to Pathan for 71.

India, inspired by Irfan Pathan's match haul of 12-126, hammered Zimbabwe by 10 wickets in the second and final Test at Harare Sports Club here Thursday to win the series 2-0.

In losing, a hopelessly outclassed Zimbabwean outfit could at least take some pleasure in breaking a sequence of five innings defeats in succession on home soil.

Set to make 205 runs for this purpose, Zimbabwe made 223 in their second innings, leaving India a paltry 19 runs to get to seal victory.

They did in just 2.2 overs.

"I'm naturally pleased to win the series, but the ODI series (won here by New Zealand) was certainly a disappointment," said Indian captain Sourav Ganguly.

Pathan was deservedly named both man of the match and the series after his record-equalling haul of 21 wickets in the two Tests.

The previous 21-wicket takers in a two-Test series were Anil Kumble against Pakistan in 1999, and Johnny Briggs for England against South Africa back in 1889.

"It's good to know about the record," said Pathan, who took three five-wicket hauls, only missing out on a fourth when he took four in Zimbabwe's second innings at Bulawayo last week.

"I'm just pleased to be playing my best cricket at the moment," he said. "My bowling has come on so well recently. It has been a wonderful series for me."

"We bowled poorly and fielded not too well today but these things happen. I leave it to the press to talk negatively about these things. They happen."



THANK YOU VERY MUCH: India paceman Irfan Pathan (L) is being congratulated by captain Sourav Ganguly after he grabbed his fifth wicket against Zimbabwe in Harare on Thursday.

Two bright spots

Cricket

AL MUSABIB SADI from Colombo

Chaminda Vaas has certified that the two young pacemen of Bangladesh have a bright future.

Like the Sri Lankan ace left-arm seamer, Syed Raseel is also a left-arm who can swing the ball both ways. Having made his international debut in the recently concluded series, Raseel completed an impressive Test series with six wickets including a four-wicket haul in the second Test.

With Bangladeshi bowlers getting just one innings per Test, it was not possible for them to make more of an impact.

His new ball partner Shahadat Hossain, the right-armed who made an erratic start to his career in England, also adjusted quickly to the

Sri Lankan slow wickets to come out with identical performance, two and four wickets respectively, in the two matches.

When Raseel turned to Vaas for advice on Thursday at the Sri Lankan's hotel room at Taj Samudra, accompanied by captain Habibul Bashar, Vaas said that Raseel did not need to worry about his action or run-up.

"You have a nice action and smooth run-up. So don't listen to any one if he suggests you need to change it to accelerate pace. Just build strength, go to gym regularly for stronger shoulders and waist," Vaas told Raseel.

The 31-year-old himself attends gym three to four days a week and has lasted longer than any other of his country's pace bowlers. Already, he has taken 294 wickets from 88 Tests in a career spanning 11 years.

"Fitness and stamina is more important for pace bowlers. So try to build your strength in those areas,"

was the advice of Vaas who added that Shahadat's aggression has also been impressive. Bashar meanwhile thought the only positives to come out of a miserable tour was through the bowling of Shahadat and.

"They are promising. I have never seen two bowlers bowl equally well with new ball for the country in the past," said Bashar.

Coach Dav Whatmore was also all praise for the duo.

"One was playing his second and the other his third Test. For them, to be able to get four pretty good batsmen out in early overs was an extremely good effort. Then they came back and got a couple more during that innings. There is enough talent to suggest that they might be good students of cricket."

"You add that Mashrafe (Bin Mortaza), you have got a reasonable attack that in time could be match winners for us," felt Whatmore.

All but one Black & White goes through

SPORTS REPORTER

It was almost a disastrous day for Mohammedan as three of the regional namesakes of Dhaka giants Mohammedan Sporting Club made their exit from the qualifying round of the Nitol-Tata National Football League yesterday.

The only Black and White to come out with flying colours were Rangamati Mohammedan when they recorded a lone goal victory against their Chittagong namesake at the Rangamati Stadium yesterday. Nurul Islam scored the all-

important goal 15 minutes into the second half of the see-saw battle in front of a capacity home crowd. Defender Michael of the home side won the man-of-the-match award.

The victory confirmed a maiden passage of the hill tract outfit into the final round of meet.

"The turnout of spectators in today's match broke all previous records," said our Rangamati correspondent quoting a DSA official. But at the Feni Stadium, Chandpur Mohammedan suffered a 1-3 defeat against hosts Soccer Club. The home side led the first half 1-0 with Anwarul scoring in the 10th minute. The visitors restored parity

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BD-SL SCOREBOARD

Final scoreboard on the third day of the second and final cricket Test between Sri Lanka and Bangladesh at the P Sara Stadium in Colombo on Thursday:

SRI LANKA: First innings 457-9 declared (Dilshan 168, Samaraweera 138; Shahadat 4-108, Raseel 4-129)	Ashraf b Samaraweera b Vaas 26
BANGLADESH: First innings 191 (Ashraf 42; Fernando 5-60)	Shahadat b Vaas 1
BANGLADESH: Second innings (overnight 131-4)	Aftab c Samaraweera b Herath 25
Iqbal c Sangakkara b Fernando 30	Mashud lbw b Muralitharan 18
Omar c Atapattu b Vaas 9	Rafique b Herath 9
Bashar c Muralitharan b Fernando 10	Raseel c Jayasuriya b Herath 1
Nafees c Samaraweera b Muralitharan 51	Enamul not out 1
	Extras: (b-7, lb-3, nb-6) 16
	Total: (All out in 60.4 overs) 197
	Fall of wickets: 1-22, 2-44, 3-56, 4-131, 5-136, 6-139, 7-172, 8-194, 9-196