



Did U Know?

Pakistani Nasim-ul-Ghani is the first and only nightwatchman to hit a Test ton. He scored 101 against England at Lord's in 1962.



Ali Asghar

(BCB president)

"It was just a responsibility entrusted upon them (Aston Moore) and that arrangement has expired in September. It is no more valid at the moment."

While refuting reports that he had struck a secret deal with the Malaysia-based organisation.

What to WATCH

ESPN
South Africa v New Zealand
Second one-day international
Cape Town
Live at 6.30pm
DD Sports
India v Sri Lanka
Second ODI at Mohali
Live at 2pm

Bracken or MacGill?

AFP, Sydney

Australia have signalled Nathan Bracken might be a better option than reuniting leg-spinner Stuart MacGill with Shane Warne for next week's opening cricket Test against the West Indies in stormy Brisbane.

Bracken, the left-arm New South Wales (NSW) seamer with three Test appearances, was added to a 12-man Australian squad Thursday at the expense of batsman Brad Hodge more with an eye to conducive weather.

Storms and rain have lashed Brisbane this week with more likely next week making for ideal seaming conditions at the Gabba.

MacGill's selection has been championed by pundits led by former captain Steve Waugh and he was endorsed from skipper Ricky Ponting after his nine-wicket haul in the recent Sydney Test match against the World XI.

But the hopes of MacGill, the taker of 169 wickets in 34 Tests, looked to have been effectively dashed by Brisbane's stormy weather.

Bracken, 28, is regarded as the best-credentials swing bowler in the country and is able to extract movement with the new ball and the old with reverse swing.

Selectors also have memories of Bracken's last appearance at the Gabba in last season's Sheffield Shield final, when he destroyed Queensland with first-innings figures of 6-27 to set up a NSW victory.

Chairman of selectors Trevor Hohns said weather and the pitch would dictate who was 12th man at the Gabba but indicated Bracken's swing bowling was more suitable to Brisbane's traditional seam-friendly conditions.

"In the past, at the Gabba, very rarely if ever, have (we) played two

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WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Dear Readers

As The Daily Star approaches its 15th anniversary, the Star Sport team would like to know your feedback on how to make the pages more attractive. So, for the next two weeks send us your suggestions, comments and even criticisms within 200-250 words to sports@theloststar.net. We intend to publish them and wish your valuable views will enrich your favourite pages. The last date for submission of your comments is October 31.

-- Sports Editor

Cruciani's boys impress

BFF XI-3, CHINA-1

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

A double strike from Ariful Kabir Farhad gave Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) XI a flying start in the Grand Royal Challenge Cup football tournament as they thrashed China Under-23-1 in Yangon yesterday.

The Abahani striker, who got the nod from new Argentine coach Diego Cruciani to start as Alfar's striking partner, put the BFF XI -- virtually the national team -- ahead after 11 minutes in the opening match with a deft touch on a trademark Arman freekick.

Before the Bangladesh celebration was over, the Chinese youth team came back with an equaliser five minutes later but the SAFF Champions took total control and outplayed their rivals reportedly with a different type of football' introduced by the Latin coach.

And the pressure told when the shaven-headed Farhad struck his second goal five minutes before the break. It was a dream comeback for Farhad, who first earned his national call during an invitational tournament also in Myanmar in 1995 but remained

in the wilderness for lack of form.

His substitute Ronokuzzaman Kanchan sealed the victory ten minutes from time but could have made it 4-1 had not his powerful drive hit woodwork.

Bangladesh, who won their first ever international title in Myanmar in 1995 under leadership of the late Monem Munna, have a good chance to



FARHAD

play in the final of the four-team meet as the hosts brushed aside an understrength India Under-20s by more than ten goals in the day's other match, according to a message received in Dhaka.

Bangladesh team leader Ashrafuddin Chunnu was ecstatic after the team's impressive win.

"I have not seen any Bangladeshi team play like this in 15 years," Chunnu told phone from Yangon.

"They were tremendous in the first half and played with a definite Latin touch. Playing with short passes, they completely outplayed the opponents," the former national winger said.

Although Cruciani had told before the team's departure that he would not use Aminul under the bar, he finally decided to pick the strongest team with the national number one custodian playing in the first match.

"We fielded Aminul because China were a strong team and we did not want to make a bad start," Chunnu added.

Bangladesh, who are participating in the meet as part of their preparation for the Asian Cup pre-qualifiers against Pakistan and the SAFF Football Championship, will play hosts Myanmar tomorrow and India on October 31 in the last league match.

The BFF XI line-up (4-3-1-2):

Aminul, Hassan Al Mamun, Sujan, Nazrul, Titu, Arman, Joy, Matir Munna, Ujjal (Arman Aziz), Alfaz (Asad) and Farhad (Kanchan).

INDIA V SRI LANKA 2ND ODI

Fast paced at Mohali

Cricket

AGENCIES, Mohali

India skipper Rahul Dravid said Thursday his team were set to try out various new strategies in the ongoing seven-match one-day home series against Sri Lanka.

"I wouldn't say we have been experimenting but that we have been trying out some cricket strategies," Dravid said ahead of the second match to be played here under lights today.

India thrashed the visitors by 152 runs in Nagpur on Tuesday with seamer Irfan Pathan's promotion in the batting-order taking the opposition by surprise.

"We will continue to try out new things but it will all vary from match to

match. Some things are done with the short-term results in mind and others with a longer view," said Dravid, who was man of the match at Nagpur for an aggressive 85 not out after Pathan (83) and Tendulkar (93) had set the tone.

"What is important is a good start like we got in the last match. I think psychological advantage does not matter because we are experienced sides," he added.

Sri Lanka skipper Marvan Atapattu conceded that his team had run out of ideas in the last match.

"India outplayed us in all departments. But then this will be a different game and we are confident of bouncing back," said Atapattu.

"The positives we could draw from the match was that (Kumar) Sangakkara (43) was looking danger-

ous. I also thought Dilhara Fernando bowled well on his comeback," said the Sri Lankan skipper.

"These are home grounds for India and their record too is good at home. It is a challenge for any team to do well abroad and so it is for us," he said.

Sri Lanka coach Tom Moody did not look too much into the one-sided affair in Nagpur saying it was all about who seized the initiative on a particular day.

"There was nothing wrong with our strategy but they took advantage of batting first. India played with a sense of freedom and the risks that they took paid off," said the former Australian player.

Moody said his team had enough options even if all-rounder

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PHOTO: AFP

ALLROUNDER OR A BOWLER WHO CAN BAT? Indian star cricketer Irfan Pathan (L) prepares to bowl as teammate Sree Santh (R) looks on during a practice session at the Punjab Cricket Association ground in Mohali on Thursday.

Pathan's balancing act

Cricket

AFP, Mohali

Rising seamer Irfan Pathan can also bat, but the Indian team think it is too early to hand him the tag of an all-rounder.

Pathan has been an integral part of the side for some time but in the opening outing of the seven-match one-day series against Sri Lanka in Nagpur on Tuesday he gave visions of sealing the seaming all-rounder's slot.

The well-built left-lander from Baroda showed his prowess with the bat as he slammed eight fours and four sixes in a career-best knock of 83 on getting a surprise promotion to the number-three position.

His 164-run second-wicket stand with master blaster Sachin Tendulkar set up a resounding 152-run victory but captain Rahul Dravid said it was too early to call Pathan an all-rounder.

"Let us say that he is a bowler who can also bat. He has to do a lot to be known as a genuine all-rounder," said Dravid, who rubbished comparisons with England all-rounder Andrew Flintoff.

"Pathan and Tendulkar set the game up for us but then it was just one of those matches in which everything went

according to plan for us," said Dravid, who has been named captain for this series as well as the five one-dayers against South Africa next month.

Dravid, though, would be happy if Pathan were to do well with the bat consistently after India's experiments with all-rounders failed to get results.

Ajit Agarkar has always been more of a bowler while others like Sanjay Bangar and Reetinder Sodhi failed to grab the man-of-the-series.

Pathan, who turned 21 on Thursday, thinks it best to just enjoy his batting for the time being.

"I am concentrating on my bowling, though I like to do my best with the bat when I get a chance," said Pathan, who has scored 495 runs and bagged 64 wickets in 39 one-dayers.

In the ongoing series, Pathan has the chance to not only establish

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Goodwill envoys get going

SPORTS REPORTER

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ON A GOODWILL MISSION: (L-R) Bangladesh cricket captain Habibul Bashar, UNICEF Representative in Bangladesh Louis-Georges Arsenault, former table tennis champion Zobera Rahman Linu and batting star Mohammad Ashraful pose for a photograph during the UNICEF Bangladesh GoodWill Ambassadors Introduction program at Hotel Sheraton on Thursday.

NEW ZEALAND V SOUTH AFRICA 2ND ODI

Vettori calls it crucial

Cricket

AGENCIES, Cape Town

South Africa captain Graeme Smith has again spoken out against the 'super sub' rule in one-day internationals.

Speaking before Friday's second one-day against New Zealand at Newlands, Smith said the subject was discussed at an international captains' meeting in Sydney before the recent ICC Super Test between Australia and a World XI.

"There wasn't much support for it, to be honest," Smith told reporters.

"There was a feeling that cricket is an 11-man game and should be played that way.

"The way it works at the moment is unfair and favours the side winning the

toss far too much.

"The general feeling was that if they want to keep a system involving 12 players then maybe both teams could name their respective 12th men after the toss when you know whether you're batting or bowling," Smith said.

The 24-year-old Smith was not in favour of the substitute system when it was introduced in May and has expressed doubts whenever questioned on the subject.

Daniel Vettori, the New Zealand spinner, has said that the match is crucial from the series point of view after South Africa grabbed the momentum with a win in the first game at Bloemfontein.

"Both teams wanted to grab that first game and we were in with a chance all the way through -- we both knew

how important it was," Vettori told.

"If we can take two games this weekend, or even split the games, then we're in with a chance. But the Cape Town game is really, really important."

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