



Did U Know?

South Africa, with their 19-run triumph over New Zealand in the second one-day international at Cape Town on October 28, 2005, recorded their 11th victory in succession their best winning sequence in ODIs.



Khaled Mahmud

(Former nat'l cricket captain)
"I have seen talents in Ashrafal and he has the quality to lead the nation in future. So it would be better if he hones his skills from now."
After Mohammad Ashrafal was named Dhaka Division's first-class captain.



DD Sports

India vs Sri Lanka
Third ODI
Live at 9:30 am
ESPN
Sportscentre
Live at 8:30 pm
English Premier Football League
Man City vs Aston Villa
Live at 1:55 am (Tuesday)

STAR Sports

ATP Masters Series
First Round
Live at 4:30 pm

It's not Langer who'll decide

AFP, Brisbane

Selectors will rely on medical advice before deciding whether Australian opening batsman Justin Langer will play with a fractured rib in Thursday's opening cricket Test against the West Indies, coach John Buchanan said Sunday.

Langer is adamant he will play in the first of three Tests against the tourists at the Gabba despite breaking a rib while playing for Western Australia against Victoria in a weekend one-dayer.

But Buchanan said the decision will be taken out of the strong-willed Langer's hands on Monday.

"He's a very tough little nut," Buchanan told reporters during the final day of the West Indies' tour match against Queensland here Sunday.

"He's a vital member of our side. For him personally and for us as a team, we want to make sure we make the right decision.

"It's like everybody else understands, that if he was unfit, he wouldn't be playing.

"I know that he desperately wants to play and we desperately want him to play."

Langer's West Australian teammate and one-day international batsman Mike Hussey is the likely standby player to make his Test debut.

But Langer is in no mood give someone else a crack at his hard-earned Test opening spot.

"I've never had a broken rib before. I am certainly feeling it at the moment but I'm sure by Thursday it will be okay," he told reporters.

SEE PAGE 13 COL 1

Big win will do



Football

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) XI must win big today against India to ensure a place in the final of the Grand Royal Challenge Cup football tournament in Myanmar.

A victory in the match, which kicks off in Yangon at 3.30 pm Bangladesh time, will see the SAFF champions finish the league phase with six points but there is possibility of three teams ending level if China upset hosts Myanmar in today's other match.

The unfancied India U-19s are already out of contention following a heavy 11-0 defeat to Myanmar and a 3-1 loss against China.

Myanmar, who edged Bangla-desh 2-1 in their second match, are top of the

table with maximum six points and have all but confirmed reaching the final with a handsome goal difference. They can even afford a modest defeat to China, which is unlikely, but the result would open the door for the Chinese team preparing for the SEA Games.

Bangladesh are ahead of China in goal difference but to avoid elimination for certain, Argentine coach Diego Cruciani's charges who began the tournament with a 3-1 win over China, need to win 6-0. No permutation and combination in the China-Myanmar match would be able to defy that statistics.

However, if Myanmar keep their winning record intact, Bangladesh would need just a draw to enter the November 2 finale and get a chance to take revenge of the league-phase defeat to the hosts.

The team management, however, was not worried about the China-Myanmar clash.

Team leader Ashrafuddin Ahmed Chunnun informed that they had no injury worries in the side but the former national winger hinted at a few changes.

"We are going to rest some senior players and see how the young ones do in the match. As far as we are concerned, the young Indians will not be a threat and we are confident about a comfortable win tomorrow and make the final," Chunnun said over phone.

Cruciani had earlier said that he would use as many players as possible as he took this tournament, his first assignment as Bangladesh coach, as part of his preparation for the Asian Cup pre-qualifiers against Pakistan and the SAFF Championship.

Expected C'wealth squad

25-member Bangladesh contingent for Melbourne

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) on Sunday finalized that it will send a 25-member contingent to the 18th Commonwealth Games to be held in Melbourne from March 15-28 next year.

Earlier, the BOA decided to send a 24-member team but they had to add an armourer to the list for the shooting team.

A total of 17 athletes will represent the nation in the second biggest Games after the Olympics with eight participating in shooting, the only discipline that has brought gold medal for country twice, in Auckland and in Manchester four years ago.

The other disciplines Bangla-desh will take part in are athletics, swimming and weightlifting.

The shooting team will include Asif Hossain Khan, who won gold in the

10m air rifle as a 15-year-old in Bisley, Surrey in 2002. The Bangladesh Shooting Federation, however, has selected nine shooters and they will drop one between Towfiq Shahrir Khan and Anjan Kumar Singha from the final list.

Both the 10m air rifle marksmen tied the scores at 586 in the trial and their future performance will determine who will be on the plane to down under.

SAF Games gold medalist Sharmin Akhtar will be paired with Suraiya Akhtar in 10m air rifle while veteran Saiful Islam Rinki, another SAF Games gold medalist in 1995, will try his luck in 50m rifle three position.

Noted female shooter Sabrina Sultana, gold winner of Commonwealth Shooting Championships and SAF Games gold medal, will compete in 50m rifle three position while the

pistol shooters Towfiqur Rahman Alo and Mahendra Kumar Singha completes the squad.

The four swimmers are Rubel Rana (backstroke), Jewel Ahmed (butterfly), Sabura Khatun (freestyle) and Laboni Akhtar Jui (butterfly) while sprinter Imran Bhuiyan, 400m runner Towhidul Islam and long-jumper Fouzia Huda Jui make up the athletics team.

Weightlifter Ikramul Haque will not make the trip as the 56-kg competitor failed to recover from a calf muscle injury. He will be replaced by female lifter Mollah Sabira Sultana, who won bronze in 48kg category in the Asian Weightlifting Championships last year. The other contestant is Hamidul Islam in the 62kg class.

The contingent will also include four coaches or managers -- Alauddin Chowdhury (shooting),
SEE PAGE 13 COL 5



PHOTO: AFP

SHOW-STOPPER: Gaizka Mendieta (C) is delighted after giving Middlesbrough the lead against Manchester United at the Riverside Stadium, on Saturday.

PREMIERSHIP

Boro floor United



Football

AFP, London

Chelsea finished a stuttering week on a high note when they beat Blackburn Rovers 4-2 at Stamford Bridge to maintain a commanding lead at the top of the English Premiership on Saturday.

But it was a terrible day for Manchester United who were thrashed 4-1 away to Middlesbrough, a result that left them a huge 13 points

behind Chelsea.

Surprise package Wigan went second after a 1-0 win at home to Fulham.

Didier Drogba and Frank Lampard put Chelsea 2-0 up inside 15 minutes before Craig Bellamy struck twice for Rovers before half-time.

However, Lampard's second - his 100th league goal - and Joe Cole's 74th minute effort - secured a win that saw Jose Mourinho's men retain their nine-point advantage.

"I thought we played very well," said Mourinho. "The pace of the game

and the quality was very good. I don't know what would have happened if we hadn't helped them score two goals."

Wigan, only promoted at the start of the season, recorded their seventh win in a row in all competitions as they moved up into second after Pascal Chimbona's injury-time header secured a 1-0 win at home to Fulham.

United manager Sir Alex Ferguson didn't pull any punches after his team's Riverside rout.

"It was a shocking performance," he said. "It was a bad start and we never recovered."

Ferguson is infamous for his 'hair-dryer' rants at players after a defeat but he insisted his feelings were irrelevant. "It doesn't matter if I am angry, the players should be angry with a performance like that."

Middlesbrough manager Steve McClaren, formerly Ferguson's Old Trafford deputy, said: "I've just told the players in the dressing room to enjoy it because moments like this don't come along too often in your
SEE PAGE 13 COL 6

Enamul, Nazmul no more U-19s

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) withdrew two Test caps Enamul Haque and Nazmul Hossain from the under-19 squad ahead of the youth side's hectic assignments in November-December.

"They are now over aged to play with the under-19 team that's why we have released them from their duties," said chief selector Faruque Ahmed after a meeting with the board officials yesterday.

Young left-arm spinner Enamul, who played seven Tests, led the under-19 team to England early this year. Paceman Nazmul Hossain made his Test debut against India last December.

The under-19 team will visit India in mid-November to play in the Afro-Asia Cup. At the same time the BCB's High Performance squad will host England under-19 side.

The visiting England under-19 team will also play a triangular series involving a Sri Lanka under-19 selection.

Premier League now begins on December 9

SPORTS REPORTER

The Cricket Committee of Dhaka Metropolis (CCDM) shifted from its stubborn stance of commencing the Premier Division Cricket League on schedule.

The coveted domestic competition involving the Dhaka clubs, which was earlier scheduled to kick off on December 1, will now start from December 9.

The decision to shift the date came after a CCDM meeting at BCB's management office in Gulshan yesterday.

The CCDM was forced to delay the start of the Premier League after rain earlier this month upset the whole domestic calendar including pushing the Corporate Cricket League fixture beyond the stipulated time.

"We had to compromise because if we start the Premier League on time it would clash with the National Cricket League that has also been delayed for two days. Besides, if we strict to our previous position a number of players will miss some Premier League matches that no clubs will accept," said CCDM chairman Khandokar Jamiluddin after a joint meeting where BCB general secretary Mahbubul Anam and chief selector Faruque Ahmed were present.

Jamil however said that the inter-club players' transfer would be held as per earlier schedule (over November 14-16) despite request of some clubs to defer the bourse.

Jamil also dismissed media reports that they were thinking to change their mind about holding the matches across the country.

"It is not true. We are preparing the Mymensingh and Comilla venues besides Bogra to hold the Premier League matches," he added.

According to new arrangements, the Premier League will now start on completion of the first phase of the National League, country's lone first-class competition that is scheduled to commence on November 19. Meanwhile, the six divisional teams have been asked to submit their player-lists by November 10 for the scrutiny of national selectors.

Hameed still in trauma

REUTERS, Islamabad

Pakistani batsman Yasir Hameed admits he will find it hard to concentrate on his cricket when he walks out to face England in the tour's opening match on Monday.

Cricket has been furthest from his mind in the three weeks since a devastating earthquake destroyed his village in northern Pakistan.

The quake killed more than 55,000 people in Pakistani Kashmir and Hameed's neighbouring home province of North West Frontier.

"I have not been able to get the immense destruction caused by the earthquake out of my mind. My village Kok Mang has been destroyed, with casualties as well," Hameed told Reuters on Sunday as he limbered up for the tour match.

To make matters worse, the 27-year-old opening batsman has been axed for the first two Tests against England and faces a tough challenge to win back his place in the Pakistan team.

"Only the people whose houses, villages and shops have been destroyed or those who have lost their dear ones in the earthquake can really feel the pain and the trauma of the event," he said.

"It is difficult to get back to normal life when you are directly affected."

Hameed was in the North
SEE PAGE 13 COL 5



PHOTO: AFP

South Africa fast bowler Makhaya Ntini in his final delivery stride during the third one-day international against New Zealand in Port Elizabeth on Sunday.

Fleming, Styris lift NZ



AFP, Port Elizabeth

Stephen Fleming and Scott Styris hit half-centuries as New Zealand recovered from a poor start in the third one-day international against South Africa at St George's Park Sunday.

New Zealand, who slumped to 49 for three after being sent in, made 243 for nine in their 50 overs.

Fleming, the New Zealand captain, made 54 before he was out in freak fashion when the ball deflected off bowler Justin Kemp's boot when Fleming was backing up. Styris went on to make the top score of 78.

With South Africa leading 2-0 in a five-match series, home captain Graeme Smith's decision to send New Zealand in paid off as his pace bowlers

made inroads on a well-grassed pitch which gave them early help.

Makhaya Ntini struck twice in his first spell and finished with three for 37, while Andre Nel took two for 47.

Fleming and Styris steadied the innings with a fourth wicket stand of

59 and Styris had partnerships of 47 and 48 with Craig McMillan and Brendon McCullum.

Andre Adams slammed 25 off 14 balls before being run out off the last ball of the innings.

South Africa were without Jacques Kallis, their vice-captain and star batsman. Kallis was feeling ill before the second match in Cape Town Friday.

He top-scored with 51 but was substituted early in the New Zealand innings. Kallis took part in a fielding practice Saturday but reported ill again Sunday morning.

AB de Villiers, recovered from a calf strain, came in for Andrew Puttick, an emergency replacement Friday, while Jacques Rudolph, who was added to the team on Sunday, was

SEE PAGE 13 COL 5

SL need to step up gear

Crucial third Indo-Lanka ODI today



CRICINFO, undated

The Sri Lankans' confidence will have taken a battering after the bruising they received in the first two one-day internationals, but one can be sure their belief in themselves will be intact.

Tom Moody has kept a straight face at each of the post-match press conferences, insisting that good players and good teams don't become ordinary overnight, and, of course, he is right.

India have had two great days out on the field but this does not mean too

much in the context of the third match that will be played at Jaipur on Monday. The challenge before Sri Lanka -- to forget what has passed and keep an eye on the ball -- is an immense one.

Sri Lanka captain Marvan Atapattu, as has been the norm, refused to divulge any details about the composition of the team. However, it would not be surprising if Thilan Samaraweera are brought into the playing XI, or nominated as the Supersub, to lend some stability and solidity to a batting lineup that has been short on concentration and application.

His India opposite number Rahul

Dravid, for his part, announced that Rudra Pratap Singh and Gautam Gambhir would miss out, and that all the other 13 would be available for selection.

What Sri Lanka need most is for one or more of their senior players to stand up and be counted.

Atapattu's twin failures at the top of the order have given India the early edge in the two matches that have passed. Kumar Sangakkara has looked exceptionally good without really hurting the Indians.

Mahela Jayawardene has twice
SEE PAGE 13 COL 1

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@thedailystar.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 November 15.

-- Sports Editor

TOP SIX

English Premiership table after Saturday's matches (played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, goals against, points):

Chelsea	11	10	1	0	28	6	31
Wigan	10	7	1	2	11	5	22
Tottenham	11	5	5	1	13	7	20
Bolton	11	6	2	3	13	11	20
Charlton	10	6	1	3	15	10	19
Man United	10	5	3	2	15	11	18