



Did U Know?

India have won the first ODI series at home since beating Zimbabwe by 3-2 in March 2002.



Syed Ashraf Haque
(CEO of Asian Cricket Council)
"Nowadays one country has to play nearly eight Tests and 15 ODIs a year. So, the job is demanding. I think the CEO should be local. If I can successfully hold a post at the ACC, why wouldn't a Bangladeshi be able to do it here? Instantly, I can give ten names who are capable of doing this job."
While backing the idea of appointing a local CEO for Bangladesh Cricket Board.

What to WATCH

ESPN
Sportscentre
Live at 8:30 pm
English Premier Football League
Bolton Wanderers vs Tottenham
Hotspur
Live at 1:55 am (Tuesday)

India clinch Lanka ODIs

India fought back from the brink to defeat Sri Lanka by four wickets in the fourth one-day international here on Thursday to take a decisive 4-0 lead in the seven-match series.

Chasing Sri Lanka's 261, India slumped to 180-6 before the seventh-wicket pair of Mahendra Dhoni and Suresh Raina steered the hosts home with an unbroken 82-run partnership.

Dhoni, India's new one-day wonder who smashed an unbeaten 183 in the previous match at Jaipur on Monday, sealed the impressive win in the 46th over with two consecutive sixes off Russel Arnold.

Dhoni returned bat in hand with a 43-ball 45 and super-sub Suresh Raina justified his substitution at the expense of seamer Sri Sreesanth with an unbeaten 39 off 34 balls.

It was India's first one-day series win on home soil since

Watson an injury worry

A possible shoulder injury for Shane Watson has clouded selection issues for Australia ahead of the second cricket Test against the West Indies in Hobart later this month.

The all-rounder fell heavily on his left shoulder in stopping a boundary during Sunday's whopping 379-run Gabba win here over the tourists and was taken from the field for scans.

A decision on his injury will be made on Monday, but at this stage he is in doubt for the Hobart Test starting on November 17.

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

Cruciani not unhappy

Football
SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh football team returned from Myanmar with the team management pleased with the outcome of the Grand Royal Challenge Cup four-nation football tournament.

Although the national team -- playing under the banner of BFF XI -- finished runners-up after their 2-1 defeat to hosts Myanmar in extra-time, coach Diego Cruciani's target to prepare his charges for next month's SAFF Football Cham-pionship in Pakistan was successful.

The team returned home on Eid Day and Argentine coach Cruciani expressed his satisfaction saying that he was impressed the way the boys had played in the four matches.

"I won't say I am unhappy because they played good football in Myanmar. Although the result does not matter at this stage, I would have been happier had we won the tournament," Cruciani told on Sunday at the BFF Bhaban.

"They got tired in the final and could not hold the strength in the end. But I can promise you that this team will start playing better before the SAFF Championship, which is my main target.

"Bangladesh have performed well against strong teams like Myanmar

and China and I was looking forward to this match practice," added Cruciani, who trained the team for less than a month before the Myanmar trip.

"Now I have seen the boys play in matches and I will try to correct the mistakes they have made in the camp. We also need to take the fitness level higher," the Argentine said.

He will get another three weeks before the SAFF Championship kicks off in Karachi on December 7.

The team's 20-day final preparation begins on November 12 at BKSP and trainer Ariel Colman said he would set harder workouts for players.

"The boys need more fitness. In the first match against China they were excellent but looked tired in the second match. They played well in the final but little mistakes cost us the title," Colman told yesterday.

"Farhad found an open net and had he not missed the chance, we would have won the tournament.

"In the preliminary camp, we tried to build the strength in the players. Now, we will work on speed and skills. There would be more with-the-ball workouts. We are overall satisfied but there would be more hard work this time," said the soft-spoken trainer warned the players.

The 24-member squad is expected to be reduced to 22 very soon and if veteran defender Rajani recovers from injury, he will be included in the camp.

"We did not expect the team to do

this well after such a short training," said team leader Ashrafuddin Chunnur.

"The improvement is evident. They looked more confident and mentally strong. Their effort and spirit was marvellous," said the former national winger adding that he had not seen the Bangladesh team play so beautiful in 15 years.

"China are a very strong side but we really played well to get a deserved win. We could not keep up that tempo in the next matches. I also praise the coach because of his match reading capability.

"We definitely felt the absence of Arman in the final but the real difference between champions Myanmar and us was fitness. We have to improve on it this section," said Chunnur.

Manager Sayeed Hassan Kanan also admitted that fitness is the area they need to work on now.

"The coach thinks the players need to change their food habit. We are going to introduce different menu in the camp," Kanan told.

"It seemed that they were not afraid of the opposition any more. Both the goalkeepers (Aminul and Biplab) were superb. Farhad was also a revelation. He missed so many goals in the league but became an instant hero after scoring four goals in the first three games. Now we are going to prepare the hard way for the SAFF Championship," he said.

Hectic cricket lies ahead

SPORTS REPORTER

All's set for an absorbing on and off the field cricket actions after the Eid vacation.

The cricket fraternity is especially looking forward to how the current board resolves its present crisis after joint-secretary and media committee chairman Reazuddin Al Mamun's resignation following a secret media deal struck by its president Ali Ashgar.

On the other hand, the on the field affairs will come alive with the rain-interrupted GrameenPhone Corporate Cricket League resuming on November 9 after almost three weeks' break. On completion of the season's curtain-raiser, the National Cricket League will start on November 19.

But all eyes will be on the three-day players' transfer, which will start on November 14, for the most exciting Premier Division Cricket League, scheduled to kick off on December 9.

The national pool cricketers have almost confirmed their clubs for the league and among them is ace Bangladesh batsman Moha-mmud Ashraf, who is likely to pull off a big surprise in this year's bourse.

It was learnt that the Bangla-desh Biman cricketer is all set to join newcomers Sonargaon Cricketers as the highest paid player.

While Sonargaon are looking forward to make their presence felt on debut in the top flight of local cricket and are in talks with another national cricketer Mohammad Rafique, defend-

ing champions Old DOHS, who have also made their mark on debut last season, made certain the services of former Bangladesh captain Khaled Mahmud, Manjarul Islam and new pace sensation Shahadat Hossain Rajib from the 20-member pool.

Bangladesh captain Habibul Bashar, his deputy Khaled Mashud and Aftab Ahmed are heading for title contenders Mohammedan while last year's runners-up City Club confirmed Tushar Imran, Rajin Saleh and Shahriar Nafees.

Opener Javed Omar and paceman Syed Russel will carry the Biman flag in the competition while Brothers have had a successful negotiation with N a f e e s l q b a l

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South Africa's Andrew Hall jumps for joy after dismissing Scott Styris of New Zealand in the fifth and final ODI at Centurion on Sunday.

Hall checks New Zealand

Cricket
AFP, Centurion

South African all-rounder Andrew Hall produced career-best figures as New Zealand failed to take advantage of a promising position in the fifth and final one-day international at Centurion Park on Sunday.

New Zealand, who were scoring at better than six runs an over early in their

innings, were bowled out for 215 after being sent in.

Hall, in his first bowling stint of the series, took four for 23, while wicketkeeper Mark Boucher, playing in his 200th one-day international, equalled the South African record by holding five catches.

Boucher also threw down the stumps at the bowler's end to run out Daniel Vettori.

Nathan Astle (37) and Lou Vincent (66) put New Zealand in a strong position with a rain-interrupted second wicket stand of 75 but swing bowler Charl Langeveldt took two wickets when play resumed before Hall started his destructive spell.

New Zealand, trailing 3-0, with one match rained out, were sent in on an overcast day and lost captain Stephen Fleming for nought off the second ball of the match when he was caught behind by Boucher off Shaun Pollock.

But Astle and Vincent went for their shots and both survived early chances as the score raced to 57 off nine overs

before rain stopped play.

When the players returned, Astle hit two more boundaries before he was caught by Hall on the cover boundary off Langeveldt.

Hall, bowling at a brisk medium-pace and getting swing and seam movement in helpful conditions, troubled all the batsmen and his haul included the key wicket haul of Vincent, who was caught at short cover off a ball that lifted sharply as he pushed forward.

New Zealand were forced to bring in Craig McMillan, who had been named as a substitute, but he made only nine before being trapped leg before wicket by Hall.

McMillan replaced all-rounder Andre Adams, who will not be able to bowl in the South African innings.

The match started in overcast conditions after heavy rain Saturday and a light shower early Sunday.

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LEADING FROM THE FRONT: India captain Rahul Dravid, who struck an unbeaten 103, follows the path of the ball after guiding it to fine leg in the fifth ODI against Sri Lanka at Ahmedabad on Sunday.

Eng batting fails again

AFP, Lahore

Burgeoning paceman Mohammad Asif took seven wickets to end England's hopes of batting practice in their second warm-up match against Pakistan A here on Sunday.

The 23-year-old lanky paceman wrecked England's batting line-up with figures of 7-62 in 16.1 accurate overs to bundle them out for a meagre 126 in 35.1 overs on the first day of the three-day match at Bagh-e-Jinnah Stadium.

England's paceman Matthew Hoggard then put his team back on track by grabbing 4-39 as bowlers dominated on a greenish pitch which saw 18 wickets fall in the day.

Pakistan A, however, recovered through a sixth wicket stand of 60 between Hasan Raza (34) and Aminur Rehman (32) before Ashley Giles removed both of them and Arshad Khan in successive overs.

The home team closed on 127-8, one run ahead with two wickets intact.

England's second batting collapse, after their top order flopped in the tour opener at Rawalpindi last week, triggered alarm in the tourists' camp ahead of their three-match Test series against Pakistan.

The first Test starts at Multan on November 12.

Asif, who played one Test on Pakistan's tour of Australia earlier this year, bowled a superb line and swung the ball. None of the England batsmen could put up any significant resistance after Vaughan won the toss and decided to bat.

Asif's new ball partner Shahid Nazir removed opener Andrew Strauss with a sharp delivery, caught behind for five in the fifth over.

Strauss had managed five and

SEE PAGE 13 COL 5

Sami fit for first Test

REUTERS, Lahore

Pakistan's fast bowler Mohammad Sami has shaken off a leg injury and been cleared to play in the first Test against England in Multan starting on November 12.

Pakistan coach Bob Woolmer confirmed on Sunday that Sami would be available for the opener of the three Test series, dispelling fears that a groin problem might rule him out of the match.

The 24-year-old has taken 70 Test wickets and is certain to share the new ball with fellow paceman Shoaib Akhtar, who has returned to the Pakistan side after a 10-month absence due to fitness concerns.

"Sami is clear to play the Test, which is good for us as we will be without Abdul Razzaq," Woolmer said, referring to the experienced all rounder who is recovering from an elbow problem and has been advised to rest for at least 10 days.

Woolmer said his participation in the remaining Tests and one-day series would be decided after the initial treatment period.

Pakistan has named a 16-man squad for the first two Tests including leg spinners Mushtaq Ahmed, Danish Kaneria and Shahid Afridi and off-spinner Arshad Khan.

Woolmer said Pakistan's preparations for the Tests were on target and that both teams could feel confident heading into the series.

Twin-ton up India

Cricket
AFP, Ahmedabad

Left-handed Gautam Gambhir scored 103 on his first appearance in the series and skipper Rahul Dravid made 103 not out as India piled up 285-8 in the fifth one-dayer against Sri Lanka here on Sunday.

India, who hold an unassailable 4-0 lead in the seven-match series, rested key batsman Sachin Tendulkar and frontline bowlers Irfan Pathan and Harbhajan Singh for the day-night game.

Gambhir, a regular Test opener who last played a one-dayer in April 2003, seized the opportunity to smash 13 boundaries and a six in his maiden limited-overs century.

Dravid reached his 11th century off the penultimate ball of the innings, lofting Dilhara Fernando to the mid-wicket fence for his 11th boundary.

Dravid and Gambhir added 128 for the fourth wicket after India, sent in to bat by Sri Lankan captain Marvan Atapattu, were reduced to 69-3 by the 13th over.

Sri Lankan seamer Farveez

Maharoor, named super-sub before the match, finished with 4-20 from five overs after replacing lanky left-armed Nuwan Zoysa as early as the 15th over.

Maharoor, who came on to bowl in the 37th over, halted India's charge from a promising 197-3 with the wickets of Gambhir, Venugopal Rao, Suresh Raina and Ajit Agarkar in successive overs.

India, however, plundered 34 runs in the last three overs to set Sri Lanka a formidable target of 5.8 runs an over.

Gambhir outscored his opening partner Virender Sehwag in a first-wicket stand of 50 in seven overs, when Zoysa hit back with two wickets off consecutive balls.

Zoysa bowled Sehwag for 19 and then trapped Mahendra Dhoni, India's batting hero in the previous two matches, leg-before to make India 50-2.

It soon became 69-3 when Yuvraj Singh, who groped for 21 deliveries to score three, was caught at mid-wicket off Chaminda Vaas.

SCOREBOARD
Scoreboard of the Indian innings in the fifth one-day international against Sri Lanka at the Motera Stadium on Sunday:

INDIA					
Gambhir c Atapattu b Maharoor	103				
Sehwag b Zoysa	19				
Dhoni lbw b Zoysa	0				
Yuvraj c Jayawardena b Vaas	3				
Dravid not out	103				
Rao c Tharangab Maharoor	6				
Raina lbw b Maharoor	13				
Agarkar c Arnold b Maharoor	4				
Kartik c Atapattu b Fernando	8				
Rudratap not out	9				
Extras: (b-1, lb-3, w-7, nb-6)	17				
Total: (For 8 wks in 50 overs)	285				
Fall of wickets: 1-50, 2-50, 3-69, 4-197, 5-208, 6-224, 7-230, 8-262					
Substitutes: Maharoor replaced Zoysa					
Bowler	O	M	R	W	
Vaas	10	1	56	1	
Fernando	10	0	77	1	
Zoysa	5	0	29	2	
Muralitharan	10	1	37	0	
Dilshan	3	0	19	0	
Jayasuriya	6	0	35	0	
Arnold	1	0	8	0	
Maharoor	5	0	20	4	
SRI LANKA: Atapattu, Jayasuriya, Sangakkara, Tharangab, Jayawardena, Dilshan, Arnold, Muralitharan, Vaas, Zoysa, Fernando.					
Substitute: Maharoor.					
Toss: Sri Lanka.					

Australia wallop Windies

Cricket
AFP, Brisbane

Brett Lee and Nathan Bracken returned best Test figures to spearhead Australia to one of their biggest victories over the West Indies, winning the first cricket Test by 379 runs with a day to spare at the Gabba here Sunday.

Lee finished with 5-30 and Bracken, playing in his fourth Test match, captured 4-48 as Australia routed the Caribbean tourists for 129 off 49 overs.

The heaviest West Indian Test loss by runs to Australia was 382 at the Sydney Cricket Ground in 1968-69.

The Caribbean second innings capitulation recalled memories of their woeful 82 in the corresponding Test here on the last tour in 2000-01.

Australia's win was more remarkable for the inability of their two match-winning bowlers, Shane Warne and Glenn McGrath, to take a wicket in the second innings.

"It's not often that the two super-stars Shane and Glenn don't take a wicket and it was great that (captain) Ricky Ponting gave myself and Nathan an opportunity and we tried to back up the captain," Lee said.

Man-of-the-match Ponting conceded that the West Indies did not play well, but he praised Australia's overall team performance.

Australia declared Sunday on their overnight total of 283 for two, leaving the West Indies with a record-breaking task of scoring 509 runs for victory.

They were nowhere near up to the task and capitulated once their champion batsman Brian Lara fell for 14 soon after lunch.

The West Indies dropped their last nine wickets for 76 in their downward spiral after their first innings 210 left

them trailing by a massive 225 runs.

Lara's miserable run this summer continued when he was splendidly caught by Matthew Hayden in the gully off Bracken for 14 after 69 minutes at the crease.

Since arriving here last month to play for the World XI, Lara has scores of 0, 5, 0, 5, 36, 1, 30, 14 -- 91 runs at an average of 11.3.

Lara's dismissal triggered a mini-collapse. Skipper Shivnarine Chanderpaul didn't play a shot and

was trapped leg before wicket by a Bracken in-swing for seven and Ramnaresh Sarwan fell next ball, fending a Lee lifter to Adam Gilchrist for 31.

Denesh Ramdin was snapped up by Gilchrist off Lee for six to expose the mediocre West Indian tail.

Daren Powell was lbw to Bracken for a duck and Fidel Edwards was bowled with the next ball, putting the left-arm seamer on a hat-trick.

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Australia speedster Brett Lee appeals successfully for an lbw decision against Corey Collymore of the West Indies on the 4th day of the first Test on Sunday.