



## Did U Know?

Until 1967 it was not illegal for Olympic athletes to use drugs to enhance their performance during competition.



### Danish Kaneria

(Pakistan leg-spinner)  
"He is so straight and negotiates almost every delivery with his bat, why does he need pads at all?"

While indirectly ruling out Rahul Dravid as a likely candidate for lbw.



ESPN  
Sportscenter India  
Sports News  
Live at 9:30 pm  
STAR Sports  
Australian Open  
Live from 10:00 am  
Men's singles semifinal  
Live from 2:30 pm



Bangladesh A vs UAE  
One-day match  
Khulna Divisional Stadium

### Agrani stay alive, Orient go down

#### SPORTS REPORTER

Half centuries by Jamal Faisal and Nazmuz Sadat kept Agrani Bank alive in the race to keep their Premiership at the cost of Orient Sporting Club yesterday.

In the Premier League relegation play-off at the Dhammudi Cricket Stadium, Agrani recorded a comfortable eight-wicket victory against Orient who were relegated to First Division after two defeats in the play-offs.

Orient, who lost to Indira Road KC in the first play-off, were bundled out for 173 in 48 overs after being put into bat. Agrani leg-spinner Towhid Hossain was the wrecker in chief with 4-26 from nine overs. Number five Sumon made 54 for Orient.

Agrani, who now must beat Indira Road in the last play-off to stay in the Premier League, coasted to 179-2 in 37.3 overs with Faisal (54 off 43 balls), Sadat (61 not out) and Mohammad Kalim (45 not out) spearheading their batting.

### BKSP tennis

#### SPORTS REPORTER

Henry Prithul Mondol of Bangladesh and Hung of Taipei reached the boys' doubles final of the BKSP International Junior Tennis Tournament defeating Korean pair Chol and Jeong 7-5, 6-3 in the semifinals at BKSP yesterday.

Prithul -- a BKSP student and national champion -- and Hung will face Taipei duo Chen and Peng who ousted Ceban of Malaysia and Biktayev of Uzbekistan 6-4, 6-3 in the other semis.

Hsin Hsin Lee of Taipei will meet Joshua Dandan Kyles of Philippines in the boys' singles final while Russian Viktoriya Kamenskaya battles with Uzbekistan's Nigora Sirojiddinova in the girls' singles final today, the concluding day of the competition.

## Cruciani picks 2 rookies

### Football

#### SPORTS REPORTER

Coach Diego Cruciani has picked two new faces for the national camp for Bangladesh's coming Asian Cup qualifier against Uzbekistan.

Bangladesh, who finished runners-up in the SAFF Championship in Karachi last December and later won their Asian Cup qualifying berth with an aggregate 1-0 win over Pakistan under Argentine Cruciani, will take on the mighty Uzbeks on February 22 in Tashkent in the group opener.

Cruciani, who returned to Dhaka on Tuesday night after a deserved vacation, also recalled midfielder Asadur Rahman and fullback Ibrul Siraji to the camp. The two were last-moment exclusions from the SAFF squad and they replace striker Shahjuddin Tipu and defender Faisal Ahmed.

The new kids are Sunny, a prom-

ising centre-back from First Division side Rahmatganj, and Arambagh media Rintu.

While talking with reporters yesterday at the BFF Bhaban, Cruciani said that he was very happy because Bangladesh will play a number of international matches this year.

"I'll resume my work on Monday (January 30) at the Bangabandhu National Stadium but we have very short time to prepare for the first match. In these 16 days, we are hoping to make a compact job," the 41-year-old said.

"We have a very strong opposition in the first match but I am confident we won't lose big. The result would be 2-1 or 2-0," he said making an optimistic prediction.

"They are a team from a different level and a much superior side. But we will go and play good football. I have very little idea about Hong Kong but as Bangladesh drew 2-2 with them in the Asian qualifiers a few years back, I think we would be able to beat them."

"I have talked with (Argentine

coach) Jose Pekerman's assistant (Hugo Tocalli) in Buenos Aires and he has told me that Qatar are also a good team," he added assessing Bangladesh's three opponents.

Qatar played Argentina last October and Cruciani was eager to do some homework.

"Don't mind if we lose some games to strong oppositions. Playing these matches would do well because we need to play a lot of international matches for exposure. See teams like Togo or Ivory Coast who were losing matches 6-0, 7-0, five, six years ago. They are playing World Cup now."

"It's not impossible for us to be there one day, but we have to do a lot of work and play a lot of international games to reach there. When you play teams of different level, it improves your game in the long run," said Cruciani who still faces the threat of a ban and fine from the AFC for charging the referee after Bangladesh's Asian Cup pre-qualifier against Pakistan in Dhaka.

Captain Rajin Saleh elected to bat after winning the toss and contributed a patient 45 while opening the innings. Golam Rahaman made 69 off 89 balls but the real fireworks came from local boy Tushar Imran, the national cap who smashed a 54-ball 70 featuring seven fours and two sixes coming in at number four.

Mashrafee's bat produced one six in his undefeated knock.

The UAE, who lost three wickets for eight runs during an opening salvo by Mahabubul Alam Robin and Mashrafee, never recovered from the poor start and survived 42.1 overs.

Fahad Usman top scored with 37 while Saqib Ali made 32. Mahabubul and Alok Kapali chipped in with a couple of wickets each.

UAE, who have lost both their previous matches to a young Academy side, will play another limited-overs match today at the

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1

SEE PAGE 17 COL 5

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1

## It's Amelie vs Justine Contrasting ladies in final

### Australian Open

APP, Melbourne

Two more different players could not be lining up for the Australian Open women's final than Amelie Mauresmo and Justine Henin-Hardenne.

Once infamously referred to as "half man" by Martina Hingis, the imposing Mauresmo is a power player of the new order, weighing in at 69kg and standing 5ft 9ins tall.

On the other side of the net is the petite Henin-Hardenne, a tigerish baseliner 10 kilograms lighter and four inches shorter.

While their physiques couldn't be more different, they have one thing in common -- they are playing some of the best tennis of their lives.

Henin-Hardenne holds the upper hand in having won their last

two encounters, in the final of the 2004 Athens Olympics and in Toronto last year.

Overall, the Belgian has a 4-3 win record against the French star.

Mauresmo has been in ominous form since winning the season-ending WTA Tour Championship last year and fought her way into the final when Kim Clijsters retired injured down 2-3 in the third set, giving the Frenchwoman a 5-7, 6-2, 3-2 triumph.

As a 19-year-old, she lost in the final here in 1999 to Hingis, when the infamous "half man" comment was made, but she says she's learnt a lot since then.

"I've been waiting for this for so long ... like everyone else I grew up, I got more mature and I know a little bit more what I have learned now," said the now 25-year-old.

"Seven years ago I was only 19, so I'm older now and it's good to get into the final again."

It is a major breakthrough for Mauresmo, who despite maturing has subsequently failed to make another Grand Slam final, stretching over 24 attempts.

To win her first Grand Slam title she will have to grind down Henin-Hardenne, who has an amazing record in Australia, unbeaten in 20 matches including her Sydney and Australian Open titles in 2004 and her run in 2005.

She missed the 2005 Open with injuries, which dogged her for much of last year.

"I watched a little bit of the first semi-final," said Mauresmo. "She's a tough fighter, great player, and she has a lot of experience."

"I know it's going to be a tough one, and I know we both want the tide, we're both going to fight for it."

On Thursday, Henin-Hardenne again showed the battling qualities

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1

SEE PAGE 17 COL 5

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4

## Cypriot wonder for final

### Australian Open

APP, Melbourne

Young Cypriot Marcos Baghdatis capped an extraordinary Australian Open by reaching his first Grand Slam final with a stirring five-set fightback victory over Argentina's David Nalbandian Thursday.

The 54th-rated Baghdatis added fourth seeded Nalbandian to his list of seeded victims at the year's first slam with a 3-6, 5-7, 6-3, 6-4, 6-4 win in 3hr 27min to reach the top 30 after the tournament.

His infectious grin and passion on court has won fans throughout Australia and made him a hero in Cyprus.

"I think everybody in Cyprus," he said. "I love my country, I love being a Greek Cypriot."

Meanwhile, Cyprus erupted into jubilant celebrations its after homegrown star Baghdatis made tennis history by reaching the final of the Australian Open in a five-set thriller.

Cypriots took to the streets, honking car horns and waving

SEE PAGE 17 COL 5

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1

SEE PAGE 17 COL 5

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4

much to everybody in Cyprus," he said.

"I love my country, I love being a Greek Cypriot."

Meanwhile, Cyprus erupted into jubilant celebrations its after homegrown star Baghdatis made tennis history by reaching the final of the Australian Open in a five-set thriller.

Cypriots took to the streets, honking car horns and waving

SEE PAGE 17 COL 5

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1

SEE PAGE 17 COL 5

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1

SEE PAGE 17 COL 5

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1

SEE PAGE 17 COL 5

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1

SEE PAGE 17 COL 5

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1

SEE PAGE 17 COL 5

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1

SEE PAGE 17 COL 5

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1

SEE PAGE 17 COL 5

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1

SEE PAGE 17 COL 5

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1

SEE PAGE 17 COL 5

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1

SEE PAGE 17 COL 5

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1

SEE PAGE 17 COL 5

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1

SEE PAGE 17 COL 5

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1

SEE PAGE 17 COL 5

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1

SEE PAGE 17 COL 5

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1

SEE PAGE 17 COL 5

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1

SEE PAGE 17 COL 5

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4