

New home makes 'em happy

SPORTS REPORTER

Habibul Bashar's men made their debut at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur when they performed their first net session on fresh pitches yesterday.

The new home of Bangladesh cricket has yet to get the approval of the ICC due to unfinished constructions but the Tigers were excited seeing the out-field surface.

A total of eight pitches have been installed in the middle and Dav Whatmore's charges, who are preparing for the coming home series against Sri Lanka, used three on the first day where bowlers enjoyed most because of the movement offered by the newly-prepared turfs.

"It is really exciting that we can now practice in our home. Understandably there were uneven bounces in the central pitches but it would be okay in time. What impressed me most was the greenish outfield which is not so common in our country," said captain Bashar.

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BCB names SL tour committees

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has yet to finalise the much-talked about standing committees but it at least gave an indication of becoming alive when the management committees for Sri Lanka's tour of Bangladesh were named on Sunday.

BCB announced twelve committees for Sri Lanka's tour this month as well as a ten-member working committee with Aziz Al Kaiser Tito returning to the Marketing and Commercial Committee as chairman.

Mirza Salman Ispahani has been named vice-chairman of the committee. The appointment of Ahmed Iqbal Hossain in the most demanding post of Marketing and Commercial Committee had raised a lot of eyebrows, especially after failures of finding sponsors for country's two major domestic competitions, National Cricket League and the Premier League.



Did U Know?

Unless told otherwise by the referee, players need not to wait for a signal from the referee to put the ball back in play on a goal kick, corner kick, throw-in, or direct/indirect free kick in a soccer match.



Luiz Felipe Scolari

(Portugal soccer coach)

"England have a fantastic national team. But it is not for me at this moment. I am very happy in my job with Portugal. But when I finish my contract in July I will be free."

While making his intentions clear that he is eyeing the England job.

What to WATCH

ESPN

South Africa vs Sri Lanka

12th ODI

Live at 5:00 am

Sportscentre

Live at 8:30 pm

STAR Sports

FA Cup

Birmingham City vs Reading

Live at 1:30 am (Wednesday)



MAN-OF-THE-MATCH: Pakistan opener Salman Butt plays a lofted drive over extra-cover on way to scoring a century against India in the first ODI in Peshawar on Monday.

Pakistan clinch a thriller

Cricket

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AFP/REUTERS, Peshawar

Opener Salman Butt hit a punishing century and Shoaib Malik a quickfire 90 to help Pakistan score a dramatic seven-run win under special bad light rules against India here on Monday.

Pakistan, chasing 329 to win, were 311-7 in 47 overs before the light stopped play with the home team ahead on the Duckworth-Lewis (D/L) scoring system, which establishes a result when a one-day match is not completed.

Butt and Malik had put Pakistan on track for a comfortable win before the home team lost five wickets for 67 runs in a sensational collapse which also included captain Inzamamul Haq's rare dismissal for obstructing the field.

Inzamam tried to keep a throw away from hitting the stumps with the bat after making 16. Australian umpire Simon Taufel adjudged Inzamam out as the Pakistan captain was also out of his crease.

With that he earned the dubious honour of becoming only the third batsman in ODI history to be given out obstructing the field, after compatriot Rameez Raja and Indian Mohinder Amarnath.

"I can't understand the rule. First I was given out during the second Test against England at Faisalabad (last November) when I didn't take evasive action," he said.

"Today I took action and I don't know why they gave me out."

Younis Khan (18) and Navedul Hasan (11) were at the crease when umpires stopped play due to bad light and declared Pakistan winners to the huge applause of a

packed 15,000 crowd.

"We were definitely cruising along nicely but my dismissal nearly cost us the match," said Inzamam.

Pakistan, who won the preceding Test series 1-0, were given a solid 50-run start by Butt and Kamran Akmal (25) before Sri Sreesanth provided India with the breakthrough.

Dhoni hit 11 boundaries and a six during his rapid 53-ball knock before he miscued a drive off Asif and was smartly caught at point by a diving Malik.

Tendulkar, who was bowled by a Naved on ball on 20, also completed his 14,000 one-day runs when his score reached 91.

It was Tendulkar's 359th one-day match.

He completed his hundred with a single off Arshad before being trapped leg before wicket the next ball, and his fall triggered a collapse in which the tourists lost their last six wickets in the space of just 23 runs to be bowled out in 49.4 overs.

Naved bagged 4-62 while Asif took 3-30.

The remaining matches will be played at Rawalpindi (February 11), Lahore (Feb 13), Multan (Feb 16) and Karachi (Feb 19).

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard in the opening one-day international between Pakistan and India at the Arbab Niaz Stadium in Peshawar on Monday:

INDIA

Sehwag c Akmal b Asif 5

Tendulkar lbw b Arshad 100

Pathan c sub (Farhat) b Naved 65

Dhoni c Malik b Asif 68

Yuvraj c Arshad b Razzaq 39

David c Arshad b Naved 1

Kaif Butt b Asif 8

Agarkar run out 3

Zaheer c Yusuf b Naved 5

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Rajani survives a scare

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh international Rajani Kanta Barman is expected to join the national camp today but the key central-defender was on the verge of being axed from coach Diego Cruciani's list for the delay.

Rajani, who was in India with his family, crossed the border yesterday and immediately notified national team manager Sayeed Hassan Kanan about his arrival.

"He called me from Jessore to confirm that he would be available at tomorrow's training. The phone call perhaps saved him because the coach had given him a deadline which expires today. The team management was also looking for a replacement," said Kanan to The Daily Star over phone.

"We know he is an important player but he has been doing this for long. This is a concern for us. We want to make sure he does not do it again. So the management committee wants to sit with him when he arrives," Kanan added.

Rajani was also late to join the camp before the SAFF Championship but got back into the side simple because of his class.

However, the Argentine coach would never tolerate such irregularities and it could be a last warning for the former national captain.

The national team, preparing for the Asian Cup qualifiers, will leave Dhaka on February 19 by an Air India flight that will take them to Uzbekistan's capital Tashkent via Kolkata and Delhi. Bangladesh take on Uzbekistan on February 22 in the group opener.

The 22-team squad is expected to be short-listed by February 17 but there is very little chance Cruciani's charges would get a match practice

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Sachin fells 14,000 runs

Goes another ton up

Cricket

AFP, Peshawar

India's Sachin Tendulkar on Monday set new world records by completing 14,000 one-day runs and hitting his 39th century in the opening one-day international against Pakistan here.

Tendulkar, who turns 33 next month, achieved the milestone in his 359th match when his score reached 91. His tally of 359 matches and 39 one-day hundreds are both world records.

He finally fell for 100 in India's 328 all out in 49.4 overs after India were sent into bat at the Arbab Niaz Stadium in the northwestern Pakistani city of Peshawar.

Pakistan's Inzamamul Haq is second behind Tendulkar in terms of runs, having scored 11,141 runs in 351 one-day internationals before going to bat in the Peshawar one-day match.

Sri Lanka's Sanath Jayasuriya (10,456 in 350 matches) and India's own Sourav Ganguly (10,123 in 279 matches) are the only other two batsmen who have scored more than 10,000 one-day runs.

Ganguly is second behind Tendulkar in terms of one-day hundreds with 22.

Tendulkar, who made his one-day debut against Pakistan at Gujranwala in 1989, notched his 38th hundred against Pakistan at Indian city of Ahmedabad last year.

He also holds the record of most Test centuries with 35, having scored 10,386 in 129 Test matches.

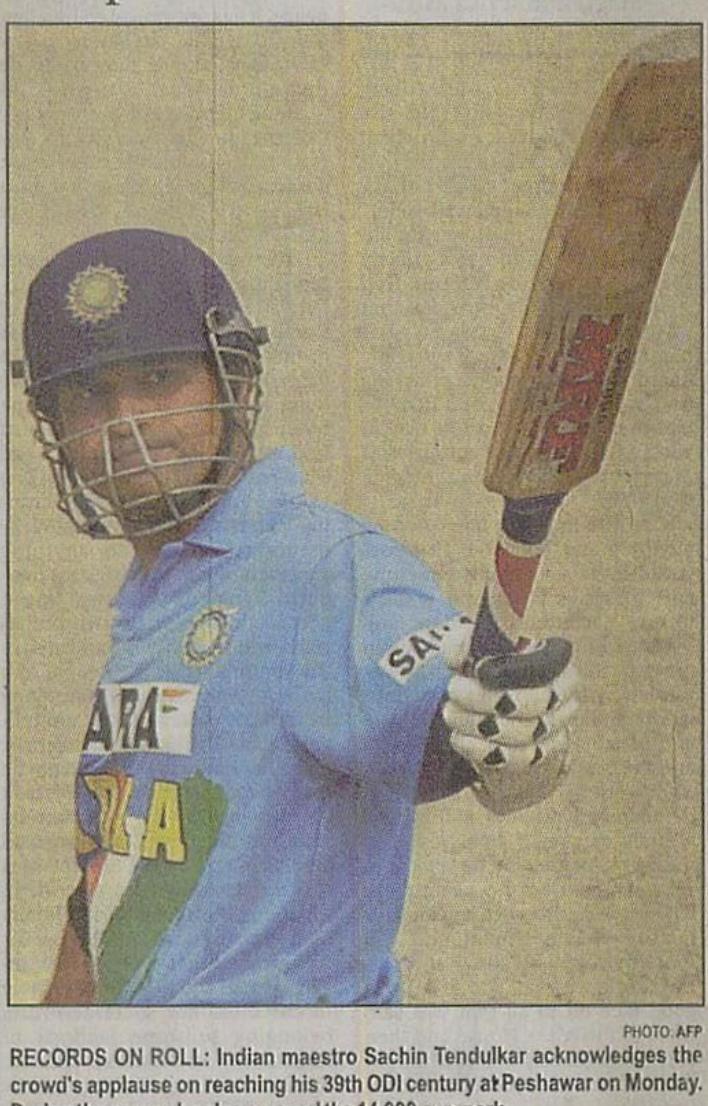


PHOTO: AFP
RECORDS ON ROLL: Indian maestro Sachin Tendulkar acknowledges the crowd's applause on reaching his 39th ODI century at Peshawar on Monday. During the course he also crossed the 14,000-run mark.

One last chance for SL

Cricket

AFP, Hobart

Sri Lankan coach Tom Moody knows his team are lucky to be in the hunt for a berth in the finals of the triangular series and this time he wants to make sure there are no mistakes.

The Sri Lankans have hosted Australia to thank for keeping their prospects in the limited-overs competition alive after they scored crushing wins over South Africa in the last two matches.

The South Africans only had to win one of the fixtures to ensure they would play Australia in the best-of-three finals starting in Adelaide on Friday.

"We've got to play the full 50 overs and tomorrow we hope to play a full hundred overs and bat, bowl and field very well."

But it was not to be and Sri Lanka, three points behind the Proteas coming into the final qual-

fying match, can now overhaul their rivals should they win.

The nervous wait for Sri Lanka was largely their own doing after opener Sanath Jayasuriya had set them up for a huge total in their last match against the Proteas in Perth, only to throw it away by losing nine wickets for just 84 runs.

Moody said afterwards it was one of the worst batting collapses he had seen, as his team lost by five wickets.

"As we recognised... it's not only the first 15, 20 overs that are important, it's the 30 after that," Moody said here Monday.

"You've got to play the full 50 overs and tomorrow we hope to play a full hundred overs and bat, bowl and field very well."

Moody said Sri Lanka were expecting veteran South African bowler Shaun Pollock to play, despite heel and ankle injuries.

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'Simpson should change'

Cricket

AFP, Sydney

Former Australian coach Bob Simpson should change with the times and understand the role of the modern-day cricket team coach, national coach John Buchanan said Monday.

Simpson, 70, who will later Monday be inducted into Cricket Australia's Hall of Fame, has criticised contemporary coaches' methods.

The former Test skipper said coaches should spend less time

behind the laptop analysing statistics and more time developing players' ability.

Simpson was appointed Australia's first full-time coach two decades ago and his ability to transform a struggling cricket nation to a World Cup winning side within a couple of years was credited as the start of Australia's resurgence as a power.

Although a fan of using video analysis for reviewing players' techniques, Simpson questioned the effectiveness of computer analysis over the game itself.

"We've got all the computers and we've got everything like that and you'd think that you'd get your

fielding positions perfect wouldn't you," Simpson said Monday.

"You should know where the ball is. Why do we have two men behind square leg? Why do we have no one at third man for so long when something like 25-30 percent of runs are scored at third man?"

But Buchanan, a former university lecturer who guided Australia to a successful World Cup defence in 2003 and kept the side on top of the Test rankings, hit back at Simpson's criticism.

"I think sometimes people make comments out of ignorance," Buchanan told Australian Associated Press.

"I really just think people don't understand what the role of the coach is now," he said.

"It's evolving with new technology. It doesn't mean what was done before was wrong."

"For those people who choose to criticise they should spend some time with the team and try to come to terms with what's required."

Buchanan, 52, said the Australian Cricket Board (now Cricket Australia) desperately needed a mentor to put Allan Border's young side "back on the right path" in the mid-1980s.

"They found in Bobby Simpson the right person to do that," he said.

"He should be praised because he established the role."

Buchanan was last October re-appointed as the Australian team coach through to after next year's World Cup in the West Indies.

Buchanan's contract with CA was due to expire amid raging debate over his influence on the Australian team during last year's 2-1 Ashes series loss to England.

One of Buchanan's fiercest critics has been former Australian Test captain and now television commentator Ian Chappell, who urged skipper Ricky Ponting to seek guidance from senior players rather than Buchanan.



PHOTO: AFP
Chelsea marksman Hernan Crespo roars for joy after his strike against Liverpool in their Premiership clash at Stamford Bridge on Sunday.

PREMIERSHIP

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