



Did U Know?

More than 300 ballboys and ballgirls were hired to fetch balls at the 2007 Australian Open.



Richie Benaud

(Legendary Australian cricket commentator)

"It is a great privilege to be inducted to the Australian Cricket Hall of Fame which, in my view, is the most prestigious of its kind in the sporting world."



ESPN
New Zealand v England
12th ODI, CB Series
Live at 9:15 am
Sportscenter India
Live at 8:30 pm



Bangladesh v Zimbabwe
Second ODI
Venue: Harare Sports Club
Premier Division Cricket League
Old DOHS v Victoria SC
Venue: Fatullah Cricket Stadium
Sonargaon Cricketers v Mohammedan
Venue: BKSP
Biman v Young Pegasus
Venue: Sher-e-Bangla Nat'l Stadium

Breaking records in school cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

With a record participation, the Standard Chartered Young Tigers National School Cricket tournament 2007 will begin on February 8.

BKSP will take on Mirpur Government High School at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in the opener.

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) has managed this time to involve an astounding number of schools in the competition, increasing to 852 from last year's 328.

There would also be a record as the matches will be played at 87 venues across the country.

"We are going to arrange the tournament in a broader approach than the previous ones. We started the competition in 2004 with 140 schools and now we have involved 852," said an excited Khondoker Jamil Uddin, chairman of BCB's game development committee, while addressing a press conference at a local hotel yesterday.

He informed that their main objective is to not only create cricketing atmosphere in the schools across the country but also

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Aziz for more mobility

Bashar didn't want it: Shaheen



SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president Mohammad Abdul Aziz said yesterday that he wants to bring more mobility in the board while observing that some of the sub-committees seemed to be inactive in recent times.

Also the agriculture secretary, Aziz, in his first extensive exchange with the reporters during the Women's Cricket Championship final at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur, expressed his desire to get more involved in cricket affairs.

"I have decided to get involved more in the board activities especially when the World Cup is knocking at the doors. Actually what I want is more mobility in the board activities," said Aziz without elaborating.

The soft-spoken bureaucrat admitted that the changed scenario has compelled him to rethink about his additional role in the most affluent federation of the country apart from his more demanding engage-

ment with a sensitive government organ.

"Initially I thought my association with cricket will be short-lived. But in the changed scenario I now feel that I might have to stay for a longer period. However, everything will depend on the government," said Aziz, who took over the hot seat nearly three months ago after the caretaker government removed politically appointed Ali Asghar.

Although Aziz remained silent over some controversial decisions of the board in recent time, he assured the reporters that he would give a long look into some issues like the appointment of team operations manager and media manager for the World Cup to be held in the West Indies from March 14.

"I saw number of reports in the newspapers about the appointment of team manager for the Zimbabwe trip. I will pay special attention to that matter before the next World Cup. Besides, we have already decided to appoint a permanent media manager," he said.

The board came under fire for the manner in which it appointed

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BHOLA FIRST EVER: Jubilant players and officials of Bhola celebrate their title triumph in the first-ever Women's Cricket Championship at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

Bhola make history

SPORTS REPORTER

In front of a small but cheering crowd Bhola clinched the title of the first ever Women's Cricket Championship with a five-wicket victory over Khulna at the Mirpur Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday.

Chameli Khatun smashed an unbeaten 46 to guide Bhola to 113-5 in 27.3 overs in reply to Khulna's 111 all out in 28 overs.

Deciding to bat first, Khulna lost wickets at regular intervals on the matting wicket where Salma Khatun was the only player to stand tall during a 52-ball 49 featuring four boundaries and a over boundary. Opener Suklara was the other Khulna batter to reach double figures with 14.

The batting of Salma, who smashed a hurricane hundred in the tournament, even impressed Bangladesh chief selector Faruque Ahmed, who watched the final along with some board officials.

"It is nice to see a lady batting like this. It's really encouraging for women's cricket in the country," said the former national skipper.

Bhola never looked to be in trouble while chasing, thanks to a 70-ball 46 by player-of-the-final Chameli, who clobbered six boundaries.

In the final, the big bowl was in a

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Acid test for many

SPORTS REPORTER



Two-time defending champions Old DOHS would be under an unlikely threat of missing out the Super League when they go into the penultimate round of the Kai-Altech Premier Cricket League first-leg today.

The top six teams will play in the championship leg at the end of the first-leg and the big-budgeted DOHS, chasing a hat-trick of league titles, will just make the Super League at their current standing.

Four defeats from nine rounds have all but evaporated their title hopes but not making the Super League would be a blow for the new powerhouse of local cricket.

And the danger looms ahead as both their remaining matches are against teams in better form and

placed above in the table.

On the back of two successive defeats, DOHS face joint-second Victoria at the Fatullah Stadium today but the fact that each of the players have been punished by the club for lack of commitment, might work as therapy.

The DOHS management fined

Teams	M	W	L	Pts
Abahani	9	9	0	18
Mohammedan	9	7	2	14
Victoria	9	7	2	14
Sonargaon	9	6	3	12
Biman	9	5	4	10
Old DOHS	9	5	4	10
Young Pegasus	9	4	5	8
Kalabagan	9	3	6	6
Paritex	9	3	6	6
City Club	9	2	7	4
Indira Road	9	2	7	4
Brothers	9	1	8	2

each of their cricketers Tk 10,000 for under-performing.

Last year, runners-up Sonargaon Cricketers -- DOHS's final round opposition -- also fined their cricketers of similar reason and the club went on to win the rest of the fixture.

In an uphill task to revive their faint hopes of regaining the title, DOHS must not lose further. Even that might not be enough to stop the amazing all-win run of Abahani, who enjoy a handsome four-point lead at the table.

At BKSP, Sonargaon and Mohammedan Sporting Club will also meet in a battle for survival in the title race. A win will keep Mohammedan alive and put the pressure on Abahani but a defeat will see them on per with

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Second ODI against Zim today

SPORTS REPORTER

Fresh from a convincing 45-run win, Bangladesh go into the second one-day of the four-match series against Zimbabwe at the Harare Sports Club ground today.

The match will start at 1:30pm (Bangladesh time) but like the first game, it will not be available on television for local fans.

Habibul Bashir led from front in Sunday's opener with a career best 78 to give the Tigers an early advantage in the series unlike the previous occasion, when Bangladesh failed to recover from a losing start and eventually went down 3-2.

In a bid to win the second match and continue their recent good run against Zimbabwe which stretches to eight wins in a row, Bangladesh, are likely to field same squad from

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Habibul not complacent

SPORTS REPORTER

Despite recording a comfortable victory in the first game, Bangladesh captain Habibul Bashir warned that they would need hard work to win the second one-day international of the four-match series against Zimbabwe at the Harare Sports Club ground today.

"It is going to be hard in the second game and if we are to win then we must really work hard during that game. Our main objective is to win the game so that we would be in a comfortable position going into the third ODI," Bashir told a local newspaper.

The Tigers took a 1-0 lead in the series through a convincing 45-run victory over the home side on Sunday at the same venue.

The 34-year-old Tigers skipper, who led from the front with a career best 78 which enabled his side to

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PHOTO: STAR

Shah Masud Imam, head of corporate affairs of Standard Chartered Bank, speaks at a press briefing in connection with the School Cricket Championship 2007 at a local hotel yesterday. Also framed in the picture are Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) CEO Mahamudur Rahman (L) and BCB's games development committee chairman Khondoker Jamil Uddin (R).

Pakistan turn to Mahmood



AFP, Islamabad

Pakistan's forgotten all-rounder Azhar Mahmood was due to fly to South Africa Monday as the latest reinforcement for his country's injury-hit squad, selectors said.

Mahmood, who played the last of his 139 one-day internationals in Australia in February 2005, will travel on Monday night and may be available to play in the second one-day international at Durban on February 7.

"The team management has asked for a replacement for injured paceman Shabbir Ahmed and Mahmood is being rushed to South Africa for the one-day series," selector Iqbal Qasim told AFP.

Shabbir, who joined the team for the one-day series, hurt his groin and is the third player to be sent back from South Africa on fitness grounds after bowlers Shoaib Akhtar and Umar Gul returned last month.

Akhtar was not in the original squad for the Test series but was sent as a replacement for Gul, who twisted his ankle during the team's first warm-up match, barely three days after Pakistan landed in the Republic.

Akhtar's tour also lasted just a

week as he tore his hamstring muscle during the second Test at Port Elizabeth and had to be sent back.

South Africa took a 1-0 lead in the five-match one-day series on Sunday with a thumping 164-run victory over Pakistan at Centurion. They amassed 392-6 in 50 overs

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AZHAR MAHMOOD

Hong Kong team in town



SPORTS REPORTER

Hong Kong Under-23 football team arrived in Dhaka in the early hours of Monday to play the first-leg of the Olympic pre-qualifier against Bangladesh.

The match will kick off at the Bangabandhu National Stadium tomorrow at 5pm. Bangladesh Television is expected to telecast the match live.

The Global Beverage Company, makers of Virgin soft drinks, has bought the commercial rights of the match from the Bangladesh Football Federation.

The 23-member, which includes five officials, had their first practice session at the BUET ground yester-



CRICINFO, undated

In a year when he defined his captaincy with a crushing 5-0 Ashes recovery, Ricky Ponting has created further history by becoming the first man to win the cleansweep of the Allan Border Medal, the Test player-of-the-year and the one-day player-of-the-year.

Like last season, Michael Hussey was the runner-up in the Border Medal tally but unlike 2006 -- when Ponting squeezed home by only three votes -- this year's win was as comprehensive as the Ashes campaign.

Ponting, the only man to win multiple Border Medals, polled 107 votes, almost doubling Hussey's 58 and the 56 collected by Shane Warne in third place. Warne was two votes short of capping off his dream

retirement year with a second consecutive Test title, finishing with 10 votes to Ponting's 12. In the limited-overs contest Andrew Symonds (18) was next in line after Ponting (20).

Ponting said we was amazed to win the one-day award and the Border Medal -- he thought Hussey deserved to be the hot favourite -- and it drew to a close "the best cricketing year of my life".

"I knew I'd had a good Test year," he said. "I thought my one-day season had been very up and down. To win the Allan Border Medal on top of a five-nil Ashes series is a really good year. If we can finish off and win the Commonwealth Bank Series it'd be almost a perfect year for all of us."

He said the focus now turned to Australia's World Cup defence after 18 months of pure determination to regain the Ashes.

"The first part of the summer was



PHOTO: STAR

Players of Hong Kong Olympic team train at the BUET ground in the city on Monday ahead of their first-leg match against their Bangladesh counterparts at the Bangabandhu National Stadium on Wednesday.

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