



SRI LANKA V SOUTH AFRICA

Pitch baffles sides

AFP, Georgetown



South Africa and Sri Lanka will be entering new territory when they meet in a World Cup Super Eight match at the Guyana National Stadium Wednesday.

The match is the first of any consequence to be played at a new stadium, outside the capital Georgetown, where workers are still battling to get everything ready for Wednesday.

Rain prevented both teams from practising Monday and the pitch remained under cover, so the players could not make any assessment of it.

South African coach Mickey Arthur said he hoped the pitch would have more pace and bounce than Guyana's old international ground, the Bourda in Georgetown, which was notoriously low and slow.

"We have been told by (International Cricket Council pitch consultant) Andy Atkinson that it should have reasonable bounce," said Arthur.

More rain was predicted for Tuesday but it is expected to clear Wednesday, although there may be scattered thundershowers.

It is a crucial match for South Africa, who were beaten by Australia in their group decider in St Kitts on Saturday, whereas 1996 World Cup champions Sri Lanka

carried two points through to the Super Eight phase after defeating both qualifiers Bangladesh.

The previous World Cup meeting between the two sides was dramatic.

When rain ended play in Durban in 2003 the scores were tied on the Duckworth-Lewis method.

South Africa needed to win and for the second time in successive World Cups were eliminated after a tied match. It was an ignominious ending for the Proteas who failed to reach the second round in their own country.

South African captain Graeme Smith said his team would not be haunted by the memories of 2003.

"We haven't discussed it but we haven't forgotten about it either. It has not been a major issue in the team since I have taken over the captaincy."

The pitch could play a crucial role.

If it has pace and bounce, South Africa will be confident that they can overpower their opponents with their seam-based attack.

But if it helps the slow bowlers in any way it will be Sri Lanka who will fancy their chances.

Although South Africa have dominated home matches against Sri Lanka, they have won only one out of 11 matches in Sri Lanka, with their batsmen often getting tied down by the spinners.

Both teams have won eight times in 16 matches on neutral territory, the most recent when South Africa gained a convincing 78-run in an ICC Champions Trophy match in

Ahmedabad, India, last October.

The overall record shows both teams have won 21 times against each other, which gives Sri Lanka a better record against South Africa than any team other than Australia.

South Africa, who need to win to maintain their ranking as the world's top one-day international team and claim a 175,000-US dollar bonus for leading the rankings on April 1, batted well in their group matches in St Kitts.

Openers Smith and AB de Villiers and top order batsmen Jacques Kallis and Herschelle Gibbs showed good form.

But their bowlers were hampered by Australia, with key player Shaun Pollock conceding 83 runs in ten overs as Australia piled up 377 for five.

Pollock is likely to be put under pressure again by Sri Lanka's aggressive veteran Sanath Jayasuriya, who made a rapid century against Bangladesh.

Sri Lanka's batting has been solid all down the order, with Chamara Silva hitting quick-scoring half-centuries in each of his team's first three matches.

Their bowlers have yet to be mastered and were impressive in the win over India which consigned the Indians to an early flight home. Champion off-spinner Muttiah Muralidaran took three for 41.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 4

Australia captain Ricky Ponting is beaten by a throw from Ramnaresh Sarwan (not in picture) during their World Cup Super Eights encounter at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in St John's on Tuesday.



Did U Know?

India's Yajurvindra Singh and Greg Chappell of Australia share the world record of taking the most catches, 7, in a Test match.



Habibul Bashar

(Bangladesh cricket captain)
"As long as we are there I won't miss anyone."

Whether the Tigers would miss India and Pakistan in the Super Eights of the World Cup.



BTW & SET Max

ICC World Cup 2007 (Super Eights)

South Africa v Sri Lanka

Live at 7:30 pm



B.League

Farashganj v Arambagh (4:45 pm)
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium

LOCAL SNIPS

SPORTS REPORTER

Saifuddin had a good time in the NI Khan Independence Day badminton (ranking) tournament at the National Wooden Floor Gymnasium yesterday.

In the men's singles, he beat Nishan 21-14, 21-15 while in the doubles, he along with Tushar beat

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1

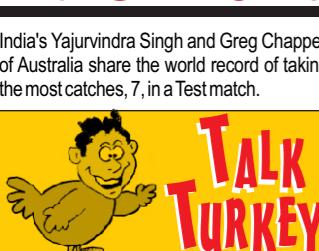
Rahmatganj captain Shoaib Hossain Sony wins a tackle against Muktijoddha Sangsads hattrick hero Alfaz Ahmed (R) during their B. League clash at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 2



PHOTO: AFP

Russel, Mukti smile
Alfaz slams first hattrick



Habibul Bashar

(Bangladesh cricket captain)
"As long as we are there I won't miss anyone."

Whether the Tigers would miss India and Pakistan in the Super Eights of the World Cup.



BTW & SET Max

ICC World Cup 2007 (Super Eights)

South Africa v Sri Lanka

Live at 7:30 pm



B.League

Farashganj v Arambagh (4:45 pm)
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium

LOCAL SNIPS

SPORTS REPORTER

Saifuddin had a good time in the NI Khan Independence Day badminton (ranking) tournament at the National Wooden Floor Gymnasium yesterday.

In the men's singles, he beat Nishan 21-14, 21-15 while in the doubles, he along with Tushar beat

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1

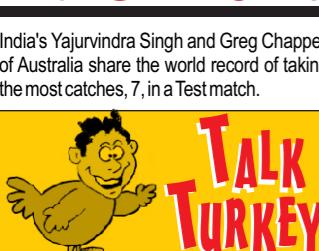
Rahmatganj captain Shoaib Hossain Sony wins a tackle against Muktijoddha Sangsads hattrick hero Alfaz Ahmed (R) during their B. League clash at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 2



PHOTO: AFP

Russel, Mukti smile
Alfaz slams first hattrick



Habibul Bashar

(Bangladesh cricket captain)
"As long as we are there I won't miss anyone."

Whether the Tigers would miss India and Pakistan in the Super Eights of the World Cup.



BTW & SET Max

ICC World Cup 2007 (Super Eights)

South Africa v Sri Lanka

Live at 7:30 pm



B.League

Farashganj v Arambagh (4:45 pm)
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium

LOCAL SNIPS

SPORTS REPORTER

Saifuddin had a good time in the NI Khan Independence Day badminton (ranking) tournament at the National Wooden Floor Gymnasium yesterday.

In the men's singles, he beat Nishan 21-14, 21-15 while in the doubles, he along with Tushar beat

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1

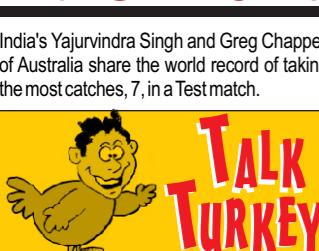
Rahmatganj captain Shoaib Hossain Sony wins a tackle against Muktijoddha Sangsads hattrick hero Alfaz Ahmed (R) during their B. League clash at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 2



PHOTO: AFP

Russel, Mukti smile
Alfaz slams first hattrick



Habibul Bashar

(Bangladesh cricket captain)
"As long as we are there I won't miss anyone."

Whether the Tigers would miss India and Pakistan in the Super Eights of the World Cup.



BTW & SET Max

ICC World Cup 2007 (Super Eights)

South Africa v Sri Lanka

Live at 7:30 pm



B.League

Farashganj v Arambagh (4:45 pm)
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium

LOCAL SNIPS

SPORTS REPORTER

Saifuddin had a good time in the NI Khan Independence Day badminton (ranking) tournament at the National Wooden Floor Gymnasium yesterday.

In the men's singles, he beat Nishan 21-14, 21-15 while in the doubles, he along with Tushar beat

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1

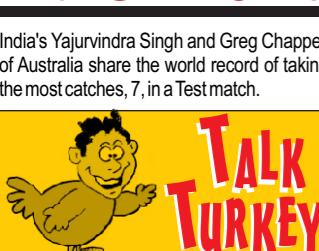
Rahmatganj captain Shoaib Hossain Sony wins a tackle against Muktijoddha Sangsads hattrick hero Alfaz Ahmed (R) during their B. League clash at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 2



PHOTO: AFP

Russel, Mukti smile
Alfaz slams first hattrick



Habibul Bashar

(Bangladesh cricket captain)
"As long as we are there I won't miss anyone."

Whether the Tigers would miss India and Pakistan in the Super Eights of the World Cup.



BTW & SET Max

ICC World Cup 2007 (Super Eights)

South Africa v Sri Lanka

Live at 7:30 pm



B.League

Farashganj v Arambagh (4:45 pm)
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium

LOCAL SNIPS

SPORTS REPORTER

Saifuddin had a good time in the NI Khan Independence Day badminton (ranking) tournament at the National Wooden Floor Gymnasium yesterday.

In the men's singles, he beat Nishan 21-14, 21-15 while in the doubles, he along with Tushar beat

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1

Rahmatganj captain Shoaib Hossain Sony wins a tackle against Muktijoddha Sangsads hattrick hero Alfaz Ahmed (R) during their B. League clash at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.