

## NAT'L YOUTH SOCCER Eight teams in zonal finals

SPORTS REPORTER

Eight teams emerged group champions yesterday to advance to the zonal finals of the Western Union National Youth (Under-18) Football Championship yesterday.

Jibon slammed his second hat-trick of the group stage as Gaibandha thrashed Nilphamari 6-0 to win their group at Lalmonirhat.

BKSP dumped Jhalokathi 5-0, Tangail were equally bright in a 5-0 win over Jamalpur, Dhaka blanked Munshiganj 3-0 while Noakhali beat Rangamati 4-3 on penalties after a 1-1 draw in regulation time with all winners moving into the zonal finals.

Pabna, Khulna and Narshingdi also made it to the regional finals despite draws against Chuadanga, Magura and Sylhet respectively.

In the day's other match, Naogaon edged Chapainawabganj 2-1 at Jaipurhat.

## BKSP cagers win two titles

SPORTS REPORTER

The BKSP basketball team won two school tournaments in India recently.

The boys from the Savar sport institute defeated Woodstock School in the final of the 21st All India Golden Jubilee basketball tournament in Chandigarh before winning the exciting final of the 17th Afzal International tournament against New Public School 83-82 in Dehradun.

## Academy cricket final today

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Academy will take on their Pakistan counterparts in the final of the tri-nation tournament at BKSP today.

The home side reached the final at expense of Sri Lanka Academy by virtue of better run-rate after all three teams finished level on four points by winning two games each.

## Rajapakse

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assistance to the continued success of Sri Lankan cricket," the president said, adding he wished the team success "in the days ahead."

Just before the match got underway on Saturday in the Caribbean, Rajapakse said over national television he believed Sri Lanka would win the cup because they had a "balanced team."

In Sri Lanka, the game was marred after Tamil Tiger air attacks on the capital during the match forced fans to flee their parties for safety.

Fans dressed in the Sri Lankan team T-shirts and carrying the national flag had earlier braved the rain to gather in their hundreds at playgrounds, clubs, hotels and bars showing live coverage of the match on giant screens.

The rebel Tamil Tigers have waged a campaign for a separate homeland in Sri Lanka that has claimed more than 60,000 lives in the past 35 years.

Australia won the World Cup for a record third successive time when they completed a 53-run victory on Duckworth-Lewis method against Sri Lanka in virtual darkness at the Kensington Oval here on Saturday.

"I think they always keep improving. A lot of teams have competed really well against Australia in the past, but maybe when they come to a big tournament they seem to have that little bit of extra," said Jayawardene.

"They have different ways of going about things. They went unbeaten when it was difficult to remain unbeaten in the tournament because of different conditions and opposition, but they played really good cricket."

Australia are unbeaten in their 29 Cup matches beginning with 1999, with their last 22 wins coming under Ricky Ponting's captaincy.

"Probably wait for some of their players to retire soon. One (fast bowler Glenn McGrath) is going," Jayawardene said when asked of the gap between Australia and other nations.

"We thought we had a very decent chance in the final. We initially thought that it's a 100-over game and had an even chance, but they proved us wrong. They have some very good players who deliver in big games."

The Sri Lankan captain was all praise for Australian wicket-keeper batsman Adam Gilchrist who smashed an unbeaten 149 — the highest ever in a World Cup final — off 104 balls with eight sixes and 13 fours.



Photo: AFP

Pallbearers offload a coffin containing the body of recently deceased Pakistan coach Bob Woolmer at the Doves funeral home in Cape Town on Sunday.

## Coaching option open for Glenn

CRICINFO, undated

Glenn McGrath has spent more than a decade keeping Australia's bowling stocks strong and he has been offered the chance to make sure they remain healthy after his retirement. While McGrath plans a rest of up to 12 months, he has been given the option by Tim Nielsen, the new national mentor, to work as a bowling coach.

"He would be sensible to take a break from cricket, but down the track you wouldn't knock back the opportunity to have a great bowler like him involved," Nielsen said in the Sunday Age. "We use his action as a visual reference point for a lot of our young quicks, especially at the centre of excellence [in Brisbane], and it would be great to use his knowledge."

McGrath, who ended his international career with 1 for 31 in his third World Cup final win, said in the lead-up to the match he felt he had "a role to play in the game later on."

However, his first priorities when he returns from the Caribbean will be spending time with his family and giving attention to his property in ninth week on May 2.

The league committee has also revised fixtures of the last two rounds of the first leg -- which ends on schedule on May 16 -- to accom-

## Muktijoddha to play today

### Russel punishes own officials



SPORTS REPORTER

The B. League match between Muktijoddha and Arambagh will kick off 24 hours ahead of schedule due to the May Day holiday.

The match, which will eventually turn into the battle for the third place, was slated for tomorrow but will now be held today at the Bangabandhu National Stadium at 4pm.

Muktijoddha are third with 15 points from eight games while Arambagh, who have played one match less, are fifth with 13 points.

Local giants Abahani, eyeing the top spot, host their Khulna namesake in the last match of the ninth week on May 2.

The league committee has also revised fixtures of the last two rounds of the first leg -- which ends on schedule on May 16 -- to accom-

modate exhibition matches of visiting English club Llandaff Athletic, who are due on May 7.

The under-20 squad of the century-old club from greater Manchester will play Dhaka heavyweights Mohammedan and Abahani on May 8 and 12 respectively at the Bangabandhu Stadium and the national U-23s in Sylhet on May 10.

Meanwhile, Sheikh Russel Krira Chakra have suspended two officials for assaulting referee Munaf Sarker after their last match, which the league leaders lost 1-0 to Arambagh.

Russel's football manager Mosharraf Dewan has been suspended for four matches and assistant manager Habibur Rahman Manu for six games according to the decision of the football standing committee of the club.

The club have also banned their ball-boy Sayeed from the all venue premises for the rest of the season.

The B. League committee also sat last night to discuss actions against the two Russel officials.

## Chaos in Colombo

AFP, Colombo

Tamil Tiger planes struck fuel depots around Sri Lanka's capital early Sunday, briefly plunging Colombo into darkness and sending cricket fans watching the World Cup final running for cover.

As explosions were heard and the night sky lit up with anti-aircraft fire, fans scrambled to leave parks and hotels where giant screens showing Sri Lanka playing Australia in the final in Barbados were switched off.

Officials said a fuel storage tank was destroyed in the raid.

Flights at the island's only international airport were disrupted as the air defence systems kicked in, officials said adding that one Indian jet was turned back while several departing flights were delayed.

It was the third time the separatist rebels have used light aircraft to hit military targets. The Bandaranaike International Airport shares a runway with the adjoining military base where warplanes are parked.

"It was total panic because we initially thought it was fireworks," said Zaithoon Bin Ahmed who was partying with friends at a Colombo rugby club.

"Organisers were asking people to stay calm, but people were getting nervous over the constant sounds of gun fire. No one really knew what was going on," said Kamini Edward, who was at a hotel following the game which Australia won.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) planes targeted two petroleum storage depots at the Colombo suburb of Kolonnawa and Muthurajawela, on the way to the airport, rebel spokesman Rasiah Ilangithiray said.

The defence ministry confirmed that the two facilities -- one state-owned and the other run by the multi-national Shell -- were hit by four Tiger bombs, but only two exploded at the Shell depot.

## Aussie, Aussie

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It is the world's best Test side and have now gone 29 games unbeaten at the World Cup -- began with the players.

"Each individual has strived for perfection all the time. From a coach's point of view, that is the perfect team. The perfect team is the one that keeps wanting to be better day in and day out."

"I've been basically a passenger for the last three years or so. I get there (to practice), put the gear out and bring it back in again."

But Australian captain Ricky Ponting said: "We shouldn't let the coach get away with that. He's challenged us all the whole time he's been in charge of this team."

"He's always been overlooked."

"It's not an easy thing to do to take over a team that's already playing good cricket and make it better."

"But he's been able to do that with me and with all of us. Some of that is to do with the players, but a lot of it is also to do with how you're coached as well."

And while Buchanan may have called time on his coaching career, McGrath appeared ready to launch his own -- for a price.

Aussie, the smiling fast bowler replied: "I don't think I'll give that away for free."

## WORLD CUP TOP BOWLERS

| Bowler (Country)    | M  | W  | BB   | Avg.  | 4wk | 5wk |
|---------------------|----|----|------|-------|-----|-----|
| G McGrath (AUS)     | 11 | 26 | 3/14 | 13.73 | 0   | 0   |
| M Muralidaran (SRI) | 10 | 23 | 4/19 | 15.26 | 2   | 0   |
| S Tait (AUS)        | 11 | 23 | 4/39 | 20.30 | 1   | 0   |
| G Hogg (AUS)        | 11 | 21 | 4/27 | 15.80 | 2   | 0   |
| L Malinga (SLV)     | 8  | 18 | 4/54 | 15.77 | 1   | 0   |
| N Bracken (AUS)     | 10 | 16 | 4/19 | 16.12 | 1   | 0   |
| D Vettori (NZL)     | 10 | 16 | 4/23 | 27.93 | 1   | 0   |
| A Flintoff (ENG)    | 8  | 14 | 4/43 | 21.28 | 1   | 0   |
| A Hall (RSA)        | 9  | 14 | 5/18 | 23.92 | 0   | 1   |
| C Langeveldt (RSA)  | 8  | 14 | 5/39 | 25.78 | 0   | 1   |

## WORLD CUP TOP BATSMEN

| Batsman (Country)   | M  | R   | HS   | Avg.  | 100s | 50s |
|---------------------|----|-----|------|-------|------|-----|
| M Hayden (AUS)      | 11 | 659 | 158  | 73.22 | 3    | 1   |
| J Jayawardene (SRI) | 11 | 548 | 115* | 60.88 | 1    | 4   |
| R Ponting (AUS)     | 11 | 539 | 113  | 67.37 | 1    | 4   |
| S Styris (NZL)      | 10 | 499 | 111* | 83.16 | 1    | 4   |
| J Kallis (RSA)      | 10 | 485 | 128* | 80.83 | 1    | 3   |
| S Jayasuriya (SRI)  | 11 | 467 | 115  | 46.70 | 2    | 2   |
| A Gilchrist (AUS)   | 11 | 453 | 149  | 45.30 | 1    | 2   |
| K Pietersen (ENG)   | 9  | 444 | 104  | 55.50 | 2    | 3   |
| G Smith (RSA)       | 10 | 443 | 91   | 49.22 | 0    | 5   |
| M Clarke (AUS)      | 11 | 436 | 93*  | 87.20 | 0    | 4   |

## Bob's body reaches SA

### Cricket

AFP, Cape Town

The body of Bob Woolmer, the murdered coach of Pakistan's cricket team, arrived in South Africa on Sunday morning, six weeks after his body was discovered in a Jamaican hotel room.

A casket bearing Woolmer's embalmed body arrived at the Cape Town International Airport shortly before 10:00 am (0800 GMT) on a South African Airways flight from London.

An AFP photographer saw a wooden box wrapped in plastic sheeting being offloaded from the Boeing 747 on the apron and taken with a police escort to the cargo section of the airport. From there it was collected by a van from the Doves funeral group.

Doves Western Cape general

manager Theo Rix confirmed the box contained Woolmer's remains.

The body would be kept at a mortuary while his family makes funeral arrangements.

"We are meeting the family tomorrow morning to make the final arrangements," Rix told AFP.

Woolmer's widow, Gill, who lives in Cape Town's Pinelands neighbourhood, has previously said her English-born husband's cremation ceremony would be a private family affair.

A public memorial service for the former South African coach was held in the city earlier this month.

Woolmer, 58, was found dead in his Kingston hotel room on March 18, the day after Pakistan crashed out of the cricket World Cup in an upset loss to Ireland.

His body was held in legal limbo for weeks after an autopsy indicated the former England Test player had been strangled, but

investigators have yet to make any arrests.

The Kingston coroner in charge of the case ruled that Woolmer's body could not be released until after an inquest that had been scheduled to begin on April 23 was completed.

But the inquest was cancelled following concerns of a lack of police resources as a Cricket World Cup semi-final game was to be played the following day, police said.

Woolmer's body was then ordered to be released to his family.