



Did U Know?

Golfers use an estimated 800 million US dollars worth of golf balls annually.



Sachin Tendulkar
(India's batting superstar)
"It's obviously a happy feeling."
After he crossed the landmark of scoring 15,000 ODI runs on Friday.



ESPN
Sportscentre India
Sports News
Live from 8:30 pm
STAR Sports
Wimbledon Championship
Round of 16
Live from 4:30 pm
TEN Sports
Copa America
United States v Paraguay
Live at 4:35 am (Tuesday)
Argentina v Colombia
Live at 6:50 am (Tuesday)



India on top

STAR SPORT MONITOR

Ajit Agarkar and Sourav Ganguly captured a pair of wickets each early as South Africa slumped to 35 for four after 15 overs against India in the third and decisive one-day international of the Future Cup at the Civil Service Cricket Club ground in Belfast yesterday.

In a curtailed 31-overs-a-side game, Dravid chose to utilise the seamer-friendly conditions first up after damp weather had delayed the start.

His decision to field first after winning an important toss paid rich dividends as Agarkar, who made his way back into the side replacing Ishant Sharma, removed Morne van Wyk for a five-ball duck in his first over.

Jacques Kallis, who shaped the Proteas' win in the first game, was Agarkar's second victim when the South African captain was clean bowled also for a duck after playing six deliveries.

Struggling on eight for two, AB de Villiers made (15) took the total to 28 before fourth seamer Ganguly had the opener caught behind by Mohendra Singh Dhoni.

Former India captain and medium pacer Ganguly then trapped Jean-Paul Duminy in the first ball to be on a hat-trick but Justin Kemp survived the next delivery.

Kemp was on three and Herchelle Gibbs on 16 till filing of this report.

CRICINFO adds: Although the Indians made most of the pitch, there is also expected to be some uneven bounce later on, an aspect which could help the South African bowlers more.

Ramesh Powar made way for Gautam Gambhir, a decision taken keeping in mind the shortened nature of the game. Gambhir had a

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Rahim set to play



BISHWAJIT ROY from Colombo

There are a few changes on the cards for Bangladesh for the second Test as they are desperately looking to make their batting stronger after a disastrous performance in the first Test which they lost by an innings and 234 runs.

The second Test of the three-match series will start tomorrow at the P Sara Stadium, the only Asian venue where all-time great Australian batsman Don Bradman played a match during his stopover in what was known as Ceylon back in 1948.

Young wicketkeeper Mushfiqur Rahim is likely to replace the long-serving Khaled Mashud as the team think-tank believe that the Bogra stumper has much better technique and temperament than his senior competitor, in a bid to bolster the vulnerable batting line-up of the Tigers.

Veteran Mashud scored an unbeaten 12 in the miserable first innings total of 89 and then was exposed in the second innings when he invited an inswinger between his bat and pad from Lasith Malinga on the fourth morning. That opened the door for Sri Lankan to pick the remaining five wickets within 30 minutes.

Mushfiqur has so far played two Tests, the last of which was against the same opponents at his home ground where he made 2 and 0, as a specialist batsman to score only 24 runs but this time the team management wants to give him the full job as they believe that it is the right time to try the young man in the demanding position. It was learnt that there was a consensus about the change.

The only problem With Rahim is his worth as a 'keeper as he impressed many by his batting in the World Cup in West Indies but his keeping was still not up to the mark.

Bangladesh is also thinking on a third seamer as the P Sara wicket is likely to be in the faster side and in that case Mohammad Sharif will replace left-arm spinner Abdur Razzak while Mehrab Hossain was also in consideration to make his Test debut.

Coach Shaun Williams did not rule out the chance of a few changes but said that they are yet to take the final decision.

"Yes, a couple of changes are not unlikely. We can make a few changes for the sake of the team combination. We need to bat for long periods. We are focusing on the batting," said the young Australian coach.

Although there was much talk about the negative things of the

Tigers after the first match's performance, the interim Bangladesh coach said that he hardly has any problem to motivate his side for the second Test match.

"The players are wholly motivated because I am focusing only on the positive things. Our third day batting was what we exactly need to show our improvement. The way the top order batted throughout the third day was encouraging and I think we can take inspiration from the positives," he explained.

He also disagreed with people who believe that seven years is a long time for a country in the Test arena to show their mettle.

"I don't think seven years is a long time and I just request everybody to go through the history of the game of the other countries. There is no shortcut. There is a structure and passion with the game in Bangladesh and we just have to do all the things properly. It is just a matter of time that Bangladesh start to play good Test cricket," he explained.

"I don't want to be critical on my boys. Yes, others might think differently but I have a very simple philosophy of not being critical," he said.

"Tough one to answer" was his reply when he was asked whether he has a team that is too young for Test cricket.

Flintoff's time to reflect



INTERNET, undated

Barely a week since Ian Botham was knighted for, among other things, destroying the Australians, England's next greatest all-rounder Andrew Flintoff has been helping the old enemy. He was to be found in the Lord's nets this week offering half a dozen Australian players batting tips.

Admittedly these particular Aussies were the winners of last winter's VVW Touareg/Daily Telegraph competition -- the prize a day's coaching with Flintoff -- and the best advice to most would have been "forget cricket and take up plane spotting", so often did they lift their heads playing a shot. It

appeared, in fact, that the genial Flintoff took a subtle delight in feeding them balls from a bowling machine that were heading for their inside thigh and set a little too fast for their capabilities. Ancient rivalries never subside.

After his latest ankle operation, Flintoff himself is a fair way off playing. He has only started swimming and light training at Blackburn Rovers, and it will probably be mid-August before he is playing again. In the meantime he will spend up to four hours a day with his trainer and soul-mate Dave 'Rooster' Roberts (the former England physio) first walking, then cycling and finally running around the fells and reservoirs of central Lancashire.

Another lay-off is giving him ample time to reflect on his career

so far and how to turn recent failure into future success. Amongst leading England players there has been an interesting diversity of responses to the vicissitudes of life on the ceaseless international merry-go-round. Marcus Trescothick escaped from it, Kevin Pietersen confronted it head on, casting off the bling and the wacky hair in the process of climbing the rankings, while Michael Vaughan took a detached view, increasingly talking about himself in the third person.

Flintoff just wants to be himself. He accepts that there is a time and place for everything and that "in the winter I got it wrong. But I've not changed anything much. I'm still doing the things I've always done. I'm happy with myself".

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PHOTO: STAR

Mohammedan's Nigerian striker Emeka leaps high above the Rahmatganj backline to nod home their equaliser in yesterday's B.League match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

Emeka on song



SPORTS REPORTER

Nigerian marksman Christina Emeka fired all three goals to shoot Mohammedan back to the top in the B. League with a come-from-behind 3-1 defeat of Rahmatganj yesterday.

Rahmatganj stunned their new Dhaka oppositions with a 15th minute goal by Nigerian forward Charles Ikogho but Emeka equalised for the back and whites in the first half stoppage time.

The yellow-haired Nigerian, who also notched a treble in Mohammedan's last league match against Chittagong Mohammedan, added two more goals -- in the 57th minute and second-half injury time -- to complete the seventh hat-trick of the run.

Mohammedan, who enjoyed rest in previous week's fixtures, caught Abahani atop the table with 29 points but have played one match more than their traditional rivals.

Bottom-table Rahmatganj, who crashed 7-1 to Mohammedan in the first leg with rival skipper Paul slotting six goals, have now conceded five hat-tricks in their 11 losses.

The others to score hat-tricks in the league are Muktijoddha's veteran Alfaz (v Rahmatganj), Brothers' Nigerian striker Junior (v Rahmatganj and Khulna Abahani), Abahani's national forward Emily (v Rahmatganj).

However, the old-Dhaka outfit -- now on nine points after 16 games -- showed much better form than their last week's 7-0 demolition at the hands of Abahani or the first-leg humiliation to Mohammedan.

After Emeka put an early chance wide, a harmless looking cross from captain and fullback Jahangir following a quickly taken freekick caught the Mohammedan

defenders napping. Despite having three men in front, the Nigerian used his speed to slice through Biplab and Ariful before drilling in a low drive inside from the box, giving goalkeeper Himel no chance.

Ikogho got two more chances inside the half hour but showed poor control. However, the pressure unsettled the nerves of the Mohammedan backline, which almost gave away a second goal in the 35th minute but thankfully, Peter Odafé's header to clear a long cross by Jahangir ran inches wide of the upright after sending Himel the wrong way.

The wake up call inspired black and whites and it could have been 1-1 two minutes later but Paul failed to reach a low cross by Emeka who snatched the ball from Rahmatganj's on-loan-from-Mohammedan defender Rony.

Paul squandered a sitter in the 43rd minute when he controlled a freekick by fellow Nigerian midfielder Divine with a header but screwed the shot over from

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PHOTO: AFP

Bangladesh opener Shahriar Nafees goes on the drive as coach Shaun Williams feeds the bowling machine during an indoor net session at the Fingara International Cricket Academy at a suburb in Colombo on Sunday.

DANONE CUP Bangladesh finish 23rd SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh finished 23rd out of 40 nations in the Danone Nations Cup under-12 football tournament which concluded yesterday in Lyon, France.

In yesterday's play-offs, Bangladesh lost to England 3-2 in the tiebreakers after a goalless draw but defeated Uruguay 4-3 in the shootout following a 1-1 draw.

Earlier, the kids from Bangladesh lost 1-0 to Vanuatu on Saturday.

South Africa were pitted against the hosts in the final last night.

Rain ruins Scot-Pak match

BBC ONLINE, undated

Scotland suffered a major disappointment for the second time in three years when their one-day international against Pakistan was washed out by rain.

The umpires decided no play would be possible in the early afternoon after a persistent down-pour in Edinburgh.

Two years ago Scotland's game against Australia suffered a similar fate.

On that occasion Cricket Scotland had insured the match in case of rain, but a 4,500 sell-out crowd had to wait five months for refunds to be paid.

16 report for hockey camp

UNB, Dhaka

Sixteen national players reported to the Bangladesh Hockey Federation (BHF) yesterday for the Asia Cup Hockey training camp.

The BHF has selected 21 players for the 7th edition of the continental competition, which will be held from September 1-9 in Chennai, India.

Five players -- Russell Khan Bappi, Issa Miah, Musa Miah, Moksed Alam Habul and Mazharul Islam Moksed -- have yet to report today.

The two siblings Issa and Musa are likely to join the camp today while

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TT leagues conclude today

SPORTS REPORTER

The curtains will fall on the AB Bank Table Tennis leagues with both men's and women's titles to be decided on the final day at the Woodenfloor Gymnasium today.

Biman will make their bids to regain both the trophies but despite being atop the table of the men's competition with 22 points from 11 matches, they will be tested by Sheikh Russel in the finale.

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Colombo Corner



SPORTS REPORTER from Colombo

It was expected that the series between Sri Lanka and Bangladesh will be disrupted by rain which is common in this season but the first Test was completed uninterrupted at the Sinhalese Sports Club ground last week.

There was sunshine for the last few days except yesterday morning. Heavy shower early in the morning forced the Tigers to change their practice venue from Premadasa Stadium to indoor facilities some 15 kilometers away from Colombo.

Bangladesh team however did not mind with the shifting as they were excited with the facilities at the Fingara International Cricket Academy (FICA), which was established by some individuals with commercial purpose but had an objective to provide talented Sri

Lankan cricketers with the world-class training facilities.

There are a number of grounds all over Colombo but it also has practice facilities like FICA where there are bio mechanics, four bowling machines, video library, five indoor nets, cricket shop and a fitness centre.

"It's really fantastic. This might be the one reason why Sri Lanka cricket is improving fast," was how former Bangladesh skipper and now selector Akram Khan saw FICA.

The students of FICA were fortunate to have the services of foreign coaches with the calibre of John Dyson and Trevor Chappell while Sanath Jayasuriya and Kumar Sangakkara will guide and assist the students of the academy from now on.

The question is when will someone or any organization comes forward in Bangladesh to establish something like that because the FICA authority had only spent a million rupees to provide the ser-

vice for cricket as well as earn money.

LET SHAHADAT GRUNT
Bangladesh paceman Shahadat Hossain was in dilemma with his grunting when he delivers the ball. He hardly had any problem with the other countries but the Sri Lankans, especially skipper Mahela Jayawardene, never takes it easily.

"It's really a big problem for me. You know there was even a chance for me to get five wickets in the first Test if he didn't object," said the lanky fast bowler yesterday referring to Jayawardene's protest after he took two wickets.

"It is hard to continue my natural aggressive bowling if I am not able to make the sound because my pace depends on it," he said with frustration.

"is my only desire that they will allow me to do that. I can't understand why they felt bad when other

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Fidel takes five



AFP, London

Fidel Edwards took five for 45 as the West Indies bowled England out for 225 in the first innings of the first one-day international at Lord's on Sunday.

England were 184 for four when the game was halted for an hour by rain and when play resumed with 7.2 overs left Edwards ran riot with a spell of four wickets in 13 balls.

Bowling with pace and ferocity the Bajan started the collapse when he bowled England captain Paul Collingwood for five before dismissing Dimitri Mascarenhas in similar fashion.

After trapping Liam Plunkett caught behind hooking he bowled a bouncer at young Stuart Broad following up to the batsman's end of the pitch and exchanging words.

This may have unnerved the Englishman as his next ball had Broad caught behind.

Owais Shah made 42 whilst all this was going on at the other end but was run out in the last over as he tried to steal the strike.

Shah was one of five of England's early batsmen who got a start and did not convert it into a significant score.

The most culpable was Ian Bell who made 56, from 75 balls with two fours, but managed to run himself out when set for a maiden one-day international hundred.

At the non-striker's end he went for a run when Owais Shah had hit the ball straight to Chris Gayle at cover and was run out by half a pitch length as he tried to scramble back.

Kevin Pietersen played calmly, hitting just two boundaries in his 47-ball stay but perished to a superb leaping catch at cover point by Marlon Samuels off Dwayne Bravo as he tried to impose himself.



PHOTO: INTERNET

West Indies fast bowler Fidel Edwards (R) celebrates the dismissal of England opener Alastair Cook with captain Chris Gayle during the first one-day international at Lord's on Sunday.