



Did U Know?

The first Wimbledon Tennis Competition took place in 1877 solely as an amateur competition. Men's singles was the only event that took place. There were 22 competitors and the championship was won by Spencer Gore.



Brian Lara
(Just-retired West Indies batting superstar)
"My teacher said 20 something years ago that I was going to miss school. I did not, and I'm not missing cricket."
While saying that he did not regret the decision to quit.



ESPN
Sportscentre India
Sports News
Live from 8:30 pm
STAR Sports
Wimbledon Championship
Ladies Singles Quarterfinals
& Men's Round of 16
Live from 4:30 pm
TEN Sports
Copa America
Peru v Bolivia
Live at 4:35 am (Tuesday)
Venezuela v Uruguay
Live at 6:50 am (Tuesday)



Vaas won't play third Test

CRICINFO, undated

Chaminda Vaas is returning to England at the end of the second cricket Test against Bangladesh to reunite with his family and also resume his county contract with Middlesex.

Vaas, 33, said that he was being released by Sri Lanka Cricket to resume his contract with the county with whom he has signed to play for 2007. Vaas returned to Sri Lanka for the Test series leaving his family in England.

Vaas will play in the second Test against Bangladesh beginning on Tuesday at the P. Saravanamuttu Stadium. It will be the 98th Test of his illustrious career. He is expected to make way for another young fast bowler whom the national selectors want to include for the third and final Test in Kandy.

Farveez Maharoo, who is bowling and batting exceptionally well according to Mahela Jayawardene, and fast bowler Sujeewa de Silva are the main contenders to take Vaas' place. Vaas scored his maiden Test hundred in the first Test of the series at the SSC which Sri Lanka won by an innings and 232 runs.

Gloves go young



BISHWAJIT ROY from Colombo

Bangladesh are set to draft young Mushfiqur Rahim behind the stumps for the second Test ending a 7-year reign of veteran wicketkeeper Khaled Mashud in the five-day contest.

It's a very demanding job but the 18-year-old Rahim said that he was ready to take up the challenge after the Bangladesh team management decided to sacrifice Mashud in a desperate effort to bolster the batting, which was exposed in the first Test that the visitors lost by an innings and 234 runs.

"We have to bat at least four sessions in the first innings if we want to improve our performance. And that is the reason we have focused on our batting. It was not easy to leave out Pilot bhai (Khaled Mashud) but we thought Muhsfiqur as a better batting option," said Bangladesh captain Mohammad Ashraful ahead of the second Test starting today.

The new Bangladesh skipper also said that only a decent batting display could prevent yet another disaster against Sri Lanka, who won all eight Tests against the Tigers with ease.

Although the team think-tank had termed it a tough decision, Mushfiqur was not surprised by his inclusion and he was quite confident to make his debut as a wicketkeeper.

"I came here to play. It was my ultimate goal to play as a

wicketkeeper, so I am looking forward to take the challenge. Besides, Pilot bhai (Khaled Mashud) wished me luck," said Mushfiqur, who made his Test debut as a batsman against England at Lord's in 2005.

His inclusion in the last World Cup in the West Indies ahead of veteran Mashud, known as a fighter, had sparked criticism in the cricketing circle but the young man from Bogra proved the selectors right.

"I don't feel any pressure. After playing some one-day matches I am now quite confident to do better in Test cricket. My main objective is to serve my team best in any capacity. I played as a batsman in my previous two Tests but had a part time experience as a keeper in the last Test in my home town (Bogra)," he said adding that his unbeaten 33 in the tour-opener was not something to cheer about.

Ashraful and interim coach Shaun Williams also spoke highly about the ability of Mushfiqur as a batsman while most of the members of the national team even rated him as one of the best batsmen in the squad because of his technique and temperament to occupy the crease.

"We felt that the team needed an extra batsman and that is why we have picked Mushfiqur. It was a tough decision to leave out Mashud because undoubtedly he is the great servant of Bangladesh cricket. We believe that Mushfiqur is capable to do better as a batsman," said Williams.

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PHOTO: AFP

Experienced Bangladesh batsman Habibur Bashar dives full-length to take a catch during a practice session at the P Sara Stadium in Colombo on Monday.

Lasith lets his hair down

Lasith Malinga has been considered as a 'surprise package' in Sri Lanka cricket. The 23-year-old hardly had any reputation in the domestic circuit before entering the national side.

Many said that he just came from the streets to represent the national side. He is also considered as the most improved bowler in recent time and became the most popular cricketer in his generation because of his brilliant performance in the World Cup as well as for his unusual hairstyle.

The young bowler talked with **The Daily Star Sport's Bishwajit Roy** after practice at the Nondescript Cricket Club ground yesterday.



BISHWAJIT ROY from Colombo

DSS (Daily Star Sport): We just want to know about your action because it is the most talked about issue in world cricket.

LM (Lasith Malinga): It's my natural action. I have been bowling in that way since my childhood when I used the soft ball. I like this action and never tried to change it.

DSS: Had there been any problem when you went to your coach at first, as the action is unusual?

LM: No. Champaka Ramanayake (former Sri Lanka fast bowler who spotted him first from a street) always

insisted that I bowled as fast as I could. He never told me to change my action but pressed me to bowl straight.

DSS: When did you start playing cricket?

LM: When I was 17 years old. I made a late start because I didn't like to bowl with the leather ball. I preferred the soft ball. But I got interested to bowl with the leather ball when everybody was telling me that otherwise I will not be able to play at any level. But you know, I still love to bowl with the soft ball.

DSS: We know that a fast bowler is always born and impossible to make someone a fast bowler...

LM: Everything came naturally to me. I always loved to bowl as fast as I can but it was not as straight in my

early days.

DSS: How did you wrest control in your bowling?

LM: I have been playing for three years now. I think it's all about experience which has made everything possible for me. The more you bowl, more control you get.

DSS: You had a fiery opening spell against New Zealand in the World Cup semifinal. How do you rate that spell?

LM: Some of our selectors started saying that I can't swing the ball. In that match, I showed that I can do that too. I was really happy

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Biddyt Reds' super sub



SPORTS REPORTER

A late strike by Ajmal Hossain Biddyt salvaged a lacklustre Muktijoddha with a solitary goal victory against Brothers Union in yesterday's B. League.

The Dhaka derby between two top teams at the Bangabandhu National Stadium was anything but flashy and Brothers dominated the better part of the proceedings.

However, substitute Biddyt separated the two sides ten minutes from time with his first touch of the game as the Reds returned to the top of the table with 30 points from 16 games.

Still, Abu Yusuf's side are not prepared to celebrate knowing their position is not consolidated with Abahani and Mohammedan chasing just one point adrift, having two and one matches in hand respectively.

Brothers meanwhile, all but gave up hopes of staying in contention following their second defeat to Muktijoddha in the season. The Oranges, who suffered their fourth defeat and have yet to win a big match, stuck to 23 points after 15 outings.

Muktijoddha once again left veterans Arman Mia and Alfaz Ahmed out of the squad and Kanchan, who got his second consecutive start, set up his striking partner Moni with a perfect cross after 14 minutes. But the Muktijoddha skipper's effort from the edge of the area was spectacularly punched out by Nizam at the Brothers goal.

Syed Nayeemuddin's boys picked up the game afterwards with Elijah Junior, top scorer of the

competition with 14 goals, being inspirational. But the Nigerian striker's hard work went in vain as his teammates wasted a series of chances.

Monwar had the entire far post to send his shot after meeting a header by Junior on the half hour but the midfielder blasted his shot over the

lone keeper from a tight angle. Two minutes later Junior's freekick from the left side of the box was dangerously curling when Titumir made a diving save to keep it at bay.

Junior then saw his partner

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PHOTO: STAR

Muktijoddha's Parvez Babu (R) tries to shrug off a challenge from Brothers Union's Rony during their B.League match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

New BCB this month: Tapan

SPORTS REPORTER

Sports Adviser Tapan Chowdhury yesterday reiterated that the government will disband the current executive committee of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) this month.

When reporters attending the concluding ceremony of the Metropolis Table Tennis League at the Woodenfloo Gymnasium asked for his words on speculations of dissolution of the most affluent sport body of the country, the Sports Adviser confirmed the news.

"We are going to form an ad-hoc committee with very few people. Only real organisers and former national cricketers will be there," Tapan told reporters.

He also added that the government will take all steps to make sports free of corruption on the basis of the investigations run by the National Sports Council.

Mahela presses for better show

SPORTS REPORTER from Colombo

Although there was heavy rain here yesterday and the weather forecast predicts more, but the Sri Lankans were not taking it up as a major issue as they looked to confirm a series victory against visiting Bangladesh with a match in hand.

The home side captain Mahela Jayawardene understandably had little doubt about his team's success in the second Test which starts today at the P Sara as he expressed determination while talking to reporters at the Nondescript Cricket Club ground under heavy shower.

"I think it is an ideal situation for us to confirm the series. But I feel we can still improve in all three departments. One area that we can definitely improve is converting those hundreds into 150s and 200s. That'll give our bowlers the ideal platform," said Jayawardene, whose side won the first Test at the Sinhalese Sports Club (SSC) by an innings and 234 runs.

"In patches we bowled off target and gave away too many boundary deliveries. We weren't as consistent as we would have liked. In fielding we can always improve. There were a few catches that went down and we can always create the pressure by a run-out or two," he added.

Praising Bangladesh's third day performance in the first Test, the young skipper said that the Tigers had a lack of purpose in the longer-version game.

"The conditions we played Bangladesh last time were different and the team is also not the same. We had that series over there and since then, we have an improved side. I guess the Bangladeshis are heading in the right direction but they have a lack of determination. A bit more commitment from the players could help them," he observed.

"The positive for them would

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India clinch decider



AFP, Belfast

Yuvraj Singh's unbeaten 61 saw India to a six-wicket win over South Africa at Stormont here Sunday to take the three-match one-day international series 2-1.

In a match reduced by rain to 31 overs per side, left-hander Yuvraj finished the game by smashing Andre Nel for four with four balls to spare after India had slumped to 38 for three. His winning hit sparked a pitch invasion by hundreds of jubilant Indian fans.

Man-of-the-match Yuvraj had also seen India home to a six-wicket win on Friday that had levelled the series, with 49 not out.

Yuvraj, a member of the India side that lost a one-day series in South Africa 4-0 in November and December last year, said: "It gives you a lot of confidence when you win outside India."

South Africa captain Jacques Kallis, who lost the toss and saw his side sent into bat, was left frustrated after another close finish. "We got ourselves into a position where we could have won that match. As much as the toss played a bit of a role, we also gave it a little bit."

Justin Kemp's run-a-ball 61 was the top score in South Africa's 148 for seven after they'd collapsed to 28 for four having had the worst of the conditions after being sent in on a seaming pitch.

Kemp -- fit after a thigh injury -- and Herschelle Gibbs (56) revived the innings in a fifth-wicket stand of 99.

But India dropped Kemp on 10 and twice missed Gibbs in the 40s.

India, like South Africa, lost early wickets.

Man-of-the-series Sachin Tendulkar, who on Friday had become the first batsman to score 15,000 one-day international runs

while making 93, after 99 in the opener, was caught behind by wicket-keeper Mark Boucher off fast bowler Makhaya Ntini for eight.

Gautam Gambhir, pulling, then played on to fast bowler Dale Steyn, one of several players on both sides who'd been struck down by a flu virus.

Then Sourav Ganguly was

caught behind.

Dravid, together with Yuvraj who rode his luck, got India's target down to 64 runs off the last 10 overs.

Yuvraj edged India nearer with an elegant, straight-driven, four off

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PHOTO: AFP

India batsman Yuvraj Singh drives the ball to long-off during his match-winning 61 against South Africa in the third and final one-day international at the Civil Service Cricket Club ground at Belfast on Sunday.

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