

BFF selects 41 for U-16 team

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) yesterday named 41 players for the preliminary Under-16 national squad for the AFC Youth Championship qualifiers. The qualifying round will be held in Dubai from October 17-29. The footballers have been requested to report to coach Jobair Nipu on July 21 at the BFF Bhaban at 5pm.

Eves' handball from today

SPORTS REPORTER

Madaripur will take on hosts Dhaka in the opening match of the Basic Bank 18th National Women's Handball Championship. Bangladesh Handball Federation president Nurul Amin will declare the 16-team event open in the morning at the Dhanmondi Women's Sports Complex. Federation officials at a press conference yesterday informed that sponsors Basic Bank will provide Tk two lakh out of the total budget of Tk 2.56 lakh.

Malik stands by Lawson

CRICINFO, undated

Pakistan captain Shoaib Malik has said that the Pakistan Cricket Board had made the right decision in appointing Geoff Lawson as coach. "It is a positive decision and will help the players," Malik was quoted in the newspaper Dawn. "As for Lawson's expertise, I feel he can do a good job with both bowlers and the batsmen because the batsmen do not need basic level coaching and just need to hone their skills." Talat Ali, the Pakistan team manager, also commended the decision and said that Lawson's experience could benefit the team. Meanwhile, Javed Miandad, the former Pakistan captain, denounced the appointment. "The move to hire foreigners when you have better people here gives a wrong message to the youngsters that our elders are nothing and foreigners will be preferred for key posts over experts such as Hanif Mohammad, Intikhab Alam and many others," Miandad told Dawn. Miandad, who has in the past spoken against the need for foreign coaches, also felt that the board had erred in their choice of a foreigner as coach. "Also, I believe the decision has not been taken on merit since Day Whatmore has better international experience and has a definite edge since he has the experience of coaching Asian teams like Sri Lanka and Bangladesh."

Miandad said that many of Pakistan's successes in the past had come under Pakistani coaches, while little had been achieved under foreign coaches. Lawson, however, said that he would like Miandad to be a member of his team.

Booters report

FROM PAGE 17 "Discipline is the main factor for footballers. All the top players of the world are like you. But discipline is the factor that drives them to success," Nayeemuddin told his squad. "You will have to forget everything to fight for your country as our ultimate target is the SAFF Championship in December," he added. The footballers will again report on July 24 and the camp is expected to start from August 1.

Rooney backs

FROM PAGE 20 Premiership, "Rooney said in Tokyo where United are on an Asian tour. "If we can sign him, he will be a great signing for us and I'd really look forward to playing alongside him up-front. "I don't know how we would turn out as a partnership because I'd have to play with him first, but I'm sure we could. "Top players anywhere can work off each other and that's what we would do." Tevez has already agreed personal terms with United, but the transfer is being held up by a dispute relating to the player's actual ownership. West Ham hold his registration and Media Sports Investments hold his economic rights. United officials, who were flying into Seoul on Wednesday for the second leg of their Asian tour, are determined to push the transfer through within the next week, however. "We are confident that it can all be concluded over the next week or so," United chief executive David Gill said on Monday, adding that the deal had become "over-complicated".



PHOTO: STAR

Farashganj defender Faisal (2nd from right) tackles Rahmatganj's Nigerian striker Francis (R) during their B. League match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Rahmatganj hold Farashganj



SPORTS REPORTER

Rahmatganj finally managed to move from the base of the B. League table when they held fellow old-Dhaka outfit Farashganj 1-1 in yesterday's match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium. Striker Robin, who retained his place in the national team, put Farashganj ahead after three minutes inside from the box. Midfielder Mohammed Ali cut ball back to Robin who unleashed a

powerful drive from the left side of the box for his eighth goal in the competition. However, his teammate Mamun Khan, chosen as the third goalkeeper of the latest national squad, ruined his maiden national call when he committed a gaffe to concede the equaliser by Rasel Ansary in the 20th minute. The young Farashganj keeper, standing far out of his line, was caught napping when Rasel chipped a high ball from the right and Mamun's in a last-gasp effort only managed to push the ball into his own post. Both sides' effort to increase the margin bore no fruit as Rahmatganj took their collection to 13 points after 18 games, just one point above Abahanis from Khulna and

Chittagong. Rahmatganj, however, will be fined Tk 10,000 as six of their players were booked by referee Azad Rahman who cautioned three Farashganj players. The riversiders who drew the first leg match against Rahmatganj 0-0, reached 22 points with just one match to go, against Chittagong Abahani. TEAMS Farashganj: Mamun, Liton (Rajib), Faisal, Khaled, Mamun Mia, Arup, Ali (Palash), Amirul (Kutub), Kabir, Robin and Puma. Rahmatganj: Amjad, Rony, Shipon, Sony, Babu, Rasel, Apu, Emrul (Rimon), Hanif, Milon (Ikgogho) and Francis.

Korea secure

FROM PAGE 20 Verbeek's policy of picking tall players almost paid dividends on 54 minutes as Korea played head tennis in the box only for Cho Jae-jin to waste a chance from eight yards as he tried to set up Kang Min-soo rather than go for goal. On 70 minutes Kim Jung-woo had an opportunity to notch a second from 12 yards but Markus came to his side's rescue. A minute from time Elie was presented with a great chance to equalise and send Indonesia into the knock-out phase but he lost his footing as he was about to pull the trigger. After he hit the deck, several of his teammates also slumped to their knees in despair. In Pelambang, goals from Ahmed Al Moussa and Abdulrahman Al Qahtani and a brace by Taisir Al Jassam were enough for the Saudis to top group D and remain in Jakarta for their semifinal. It was redemption for the "Sons of the Desert" after their disastrous campaign in 2004 when they finished bottom of their group.

Sides keep faith in pace

FROM PAGE 17 Harmison, who has a hernia injury, and Andrew Flintoff, sidelined with a recurrence of a longstanding ankle problem. The home side are now set to decide between the uncapped duo of Stuart Broad and Chris Tremlett, both tall bowlers in the Harmison mould, and James Anderson for the final place in a four-man attack which is likely to be reliant again on spinner Monty Panesar both for control and wickets.

Broad, the son of former England opener Chris, would appear to be the leading candidate out of the three seamers on account of his batting. Last weekend the 21-year-old Leicestershire quick took a career-best five for 76 against India while playing for the A side at Chelmsford, having previously scored a fifty in the match. "He's come off the back of a five-wicket haul and a fifty against India which is great for his confidence and

belief," said England coach Peter Moores. "He's aggressive in how he bowls. He's also got a bit of pedigree as a batter. That's certainly an advantage." Panesar, who snared Tendulkar for his first Test wicket, could end up anchoring England's attack if India get after the quicker bowlers and Moores said: "I know he's excited about the challenge of bowling against some of the Indian batters and he's moved forward very quickly over the last 12 months."

Ganguly too was full of praise for the left-armed. "Monty is doing very well in international cricket," said the former India skipper. "He's a quality bowler and so is Matthew Hoggard but obviously they will miss Harmison and Flintoff."

TEAMS England (from): Andrew Strauss, Alastair Cook, Michael Vaughan (capt), Kevin Pietersen, Paul Collingwood, Ian Bell, Matt Prior (wk), Ryan Sidebottom, Matthew Hoggard, Monty Panesar, James Anderson, Stuart Broad, Chris Tremlett India (from): Rahul Dravid (capt), Sachin Tendulkar, Wasim Jaffer, Dinesh Karthik, Gautam Gambhir, Sourav Ganguly, Venkatsai Laxman, Yuvraj Singh, Mahendra Singh Dhoni (wk), Zaheer Khan, Shanthakumaran Sreesanth, Rudra Pratap Singh, Ishant Sharma, Ranadeb Bose, Anil Kumble, Ramesh Powar Umpires: Steve Bucknor (WI), Simon Taufel (Aus).

Evans emerges

FROM PAGE 20 for Valverde, who came over to the finish to take a few extra bonus seconds. Vinokourov, who began the Tour as the main favourite, finished nearly three minutes later as Kloden, a runner-up in 2004 and a third place finisher last year, took virtual leadership of their Astana team. Kloden assumed the role well, finishing the stage just 46sec behind Soler, and just seconds behind a few of his yellow jersey rivals to sit eighth overall at 3:50. Vinokourov, perhaps riding his last Tour and still fighting the pain of knee injuries from a crash on the fifth stage, was visibly distraught. "On the Telegraphe (climb) I held on okay, but it was a different story on the Galibier. I was in pain all over," said Vinokourov who now has at least a five-minute deficit to a handful of his rivals. "I did what I could to stay with the contenders, and the team are

StanChart Chess Shaati girls' champion

SPORTS REPORTER

Indian player Shaati Majumder emerged unbeaten champion in the girls' group of the 9th Standard Chartered School Chess Tournament yesterday. The student of Kolkata Indira Gandhi School secured 6.5 points after the seventh and final round while her compatriot Arna Sarkar also form Kolkata became runner-up. Bangladesh player Aeon Sarkar of Motijheel Girls School became 3rd with 5.5 points, followed by Pritika Tayal and Sadekun Nahar. In the boys' Class VI to X group, five players shared the lead with six points each after seven rounds. They are: Sayantan Das of Kolkata Scottish Church School, Sharif Hossain of Nakhapara School, Abdullah Al Saif of Quality School, Prantik Roy of Carmel School, Kolkata and Delhi's Akshat Agarwal. Shayan Majumder of Kolkata Indira Gandhi School was leading the boys' KG to Class V group with Mainuddin Ahmed Asif of Hazrat Shah Ali School.

Powell buries own rib

CRICINFO, undated

It has been, not to put too fine a point on it, a hell of a few weeks for Glamorgan's Mike Powell. Just over a month ago, he faced life-threatening complications following surgery on a blood clot which involved having a rib removed. Happily, he's now recovering - and can see the lighter side of life, after having the rib buried at Sophia Gardens. It was his own idea, dreamt up during his time in hospital after doctors said he could keep the bone. He proposed the idea to the chief executive Mike Fatkin, not expecting him to agree.

"He surprised me when he said 'Yes', but I was chuffed," Powell told the South Wales Echo. "I knew that a lot of people have had their ashes buried there, but I am the only living person ever to have part of their body buried there. "It felt quite weird when we buried it, but it was exciting. I am glad that part of me will be at Sophia Gardens for ever. That is my legacy to the club and it feels right. "The grass has not grown back properly yet, so everyone can see where it is, but I will always look after it when I am fielding out there."

Drogba delights

FROM PAGE 20 to watch his players over two matches, Mourinho said he would expect his starting side to go deeper into the match against the Galaxy. "Against the Galaxy, it will be the first time I don't play two teams," he said. "Now is the time I start having to make my decisions." He said he hoped Beckham would be able to play for the Galaxy on Saturday. "It would bring some life to the game to have David playing," he said.

Lazio, Stuttgart

FROM PAGE 20 There were many substitutions for both sides in the second half and Lazio's best chances to sneak a win fell to Christian Manfredini and Simone Inzaghi. Delio Rossi's squad will enter the Champions League preliminary round on August 14 or 15. Inter, Roma and Milan are already qualified for the tournament proper.

Roche to coach

FROM PAGE 20 know what we need to do to get on the top of the game again." Roche said he would not have taken on the role if he doubted Hewitt's ability to regain the number one spot. "That's the goal, I think we've got to shoot for the top," he said. Roche said he planned to make minor adjustments to Hewitt's game. "I think just a little bit more variety, not so predictable and also a little bit more aggressive," he said. "Also, we'll be doing a lot of work on the serve." Roche has previously worked with Ivan Lendl and Pat Rafter.

Roma complete

FROM PAGE 20 Giuly came through the Lyon set-up as a teenager before moving to French first division rivals Monaco in 1998. He left Monaco to join Barcelona following the French club's defeat to FC Porto in the 2004 Champions League final. Giuly eventually won a Champions League winners medal two years later when the Spanish giants won the 2006 final against Arsenal. He was overlooked for the French squad which reached last year's World Cup final in Germany, which they lost to Italy after a penalty shoot-out. Roma finished second in Serie A last season and reached the quarterfinals of the Champions League.

That special something



CRICINFO, undated

On June 20, 1996 Father Michael John, the principal of St Joseph's Boys' High School in Bangalore, ended the morning assembly with an announcement: "One of our own, Rahul Dravid, will be making his Test debut at Lord's today. There is no better place for a cricketer to play his first match." Come Thursday, Dravid will walk out for his third, and possibly last, Lord's Test, hoping to match Kapil Dev's side of 1986, who remain the only Indian team to triumph at Lord's, and the last to return home with a series win in England.

A few hours after Father John's announcement, Dravid was on the field, all neat and dapper, getting a taste of playing Test cricket for India. On the third day, when he got his chance to bat, he duly made a half-century; on the fourth, with only the tail for company, he neared his century. On 95, with a chance to become only the fourth cricketer to manage a century on debut at Lord's, he nicked to the wicketkeeper and, this is the most memorable part, walked. It prompted Father John to make another announcement: "The school congratulates Rahul Dravid on making such a fine debut. Not many batsmen walk on 95 in their debut innings, and we're proud he did so."

Dravid remembers the goosebumps he felt as he walked through the Long Room at Lord's for the first time. "I couldn't have scripted it better," he told Cricinfo. "Just playing for India would have been special, to be honest with you - whether it had been in Chittagong or at Lord's. But for it to have happened at Lord's - really the home of cricket... To have known that so many great cricketers had played at that ground - the tradition, history. They really have maintained

the culture and traditions in the ground. "And whatever people may say, you do feel it. There's something about walking down those steps at Lord's. I do feel it definitely. So for me it was special to have played at Lord's and to have actually done well there. Every time I've gone there, I've always felt nice in some ways." For most Indian cricketers, Australia is the team to beat and England the country to tour. Dravid agrees, listing the reasons why playing in England has often brought out the best in him. "I guess it's got to do with the common history that India and England share," he says. "It's got to do with some of the fascinating tours that Indian teams have had in England, and English teams have had in India. There is a connection. So many Indian cricketers go to England to play every year - whether it's in the leagues or counties. We had a rich tradition of some of our greats playing in England. "A summer tour to England is something you always grew up hearing about even before you actually got a chance to play at grounds like Lord's, The Oval, Trent Bridge, Headingley. You've heard these names on commentary, you've heard about Indian teams that have gone there, and people who have performed in those places." The 95 on debut was followed by an equally proficient 84 in the third Test at Nottingham, but it was six years later, when India toured in 2002, that Dravid came of age as a batsman. A series when he went from being a very good batsman to a great batsman. "I must admit that during the last tour I went through a bit of a purple patch. I think it was the beginning of a very successful run which lasted almost two and a half years. I felt my game peaked at that stage, I was playing at the top of my game, playing

really well. What made me happy was that we all played some good cricket on that trip - to win the Headingley Test after taking a decision to bat first on that wicket... that century was the highlight of the tour. It set the tone for us, allowed us to fight back in the series. "I think all those three innings were special. At Trent Bridge we were trying to draw, at The Oval England had made more than 500 runs. I just felt in really good batting form. I was happy with where I was physically, I was relaxed mentally. Playing in England helps me relax." Surely there must be more to Dravid's phenomenal average of 87.66 in England - a figure that surpasses his numbers in all other countries, Bangladesh and Zimbabwe included? "There's not as much travel, there's so much stuff to do. There are shows to be seen, people to meet, friends who I've known for so many years now. I guess there's a nice feeling about the place that, so far, has brought the best out of me. I hope this time is no different. Being a captain is probably going to be different in that sense. I may not have the kind of time I had earlier, but I hope I'll be able to relax, enjoy myself, and play some good cricket. "I know I'm not going to go back (to England) as an Indian cricketer, so I'm looking at this as an opportunity to go out there and do well in front of a public that really appreciates the sport, knows their cricket. There's a charm to that as well - playing in front of people who appreciate the game and the cricketers." Eleven years on, there may be no announcement at St Joseph's Boys', but the anticipation at watching one of their own will not have diminished a bit. As Father John was to say several years later, "The school's motto is 'Faith and Toil'. Nobody stood by it more religiously than Dravid."

High on passion

FROM PAGE 17 as free as possible so you can watch the ball as clearly as possible," added Tendulkar, who warmed up for the first Test of a three-match series by scoring 171 against England Lions, the national 'A' side, at Chelmsford last weekend. Tendulkar, whose 10,922 runs leave him fourth in the list of Test cricket's leading run scorers behind leader Brian Lara, Allan Border and Stephen Waugh - all of whom have retired - reckons this could be his fourth and final Test tour of England. "It looks like that. God knows what is in store for me. But the previous tour was 2002 and this is now 2007, so

2011 or 2012 would require a special effort." In England, Tendulkar can enjoy a degree of anonymity unknown to him in India where his mega-star status means he is subject to a level of attention beyond even that experienced by England footballer David Beckham. "I just want to make sure I enjoy every moment I spend in England," Tendulkar said. "Rather than dividing my energy in various directions, I just want to focus on this series and enjoy it." On this occasion he is unlikely to face England all-rounder Andrew Flintoff, currently sidelined with an ankle injury.

"He's a great player. When India's not playing here, I would want to see him," Tendulkar said with a smile. India have come to England without a head coach as such but in Chandu Borde, the former Test batsman and chief national selector, who is 73 on Saturday, they have a vastly experienced tour manager and someone for whom Tendulkar has immense respect. "Chandu Borde was my first manager in 1989 when I was picked to play against Pakistan," Tendulkar said. "He has seen a lot of cricket in his life. He's a wonderful person to have around and he's helped us."



PHOTO: STAR

Girls' champion Shaati Majumder makes a move against her Indian compatriot Arna Sarkar during their final round match of the 9th Standard Chartered School Chess Tournament at the BCF chess room yesterday.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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CRYPTOQUIP

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Yesterday's Cryptquip: SINCE I WAS LEGALLY ORDERED TO KEEP DRY, I AM TAKING PART IN A WETNESS PROTECTION PROGRAM.

Today's Cryptquip Clue: I equals S