



## Did U Know?

In his time, Michael Schumacher was the highest paid sportsman, ahead of Tiger Woods and Arnold Palmer. However the earnings does not include sponsorship endorsements.



### Andrew Flintoff

(England all-rounder)  
"I've been a bit of a grump at times so they're probably looking forward to me playing for England again more than me."  
An alarming sentiment from the player whose family can't wait for him to recover from injury.

## What to WATCH

**ATN Bangla**  
Farashganj v Ctg Abahani  
B.League  
Live at 4:15 pm  
**ESPN**  
Barclays Asia Trophy 2007  
Portsmouth v Fulham  
First Semifinal  
Live at 3:55 pm  
Liverpool v South China  
Second Semifinal  
Live at 6:25 pm  
Sportscenter India  
Sports News  
Live at 8:30 pm

**DAY'S EVENT**  
B.League  
Farashganj v Ctg Abahani  
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium  
Time: 4:30 pm

## ICL ropes in Lara

CRICINFO, undated

Brian Lara has become the first big-name signing for the Indian Cricket League (ICL), which announced on Monday that it has also contracted former Indian all-rounder Madan Lal to coach its Delhi team and Balwinder Singh Sandhu as director of academies.

Lara, who retired from international cricket after the World Cup earlier this year, said he looked forward to playing with promising youngsters and to captaining one of the teams.

"You can't keep me too far from cricket and hence I return to the game in this exciting new avatar," Lara said in a statement issued by the Essel Group, promoters of the ICL.

Rajesh Chauhan and Pranob Roy, former players who had also served as selectors, were roped in as talent scouts for the league. They joined Kapil Dev, Kiran More and Sandeep Patil on the ICL roster.

The Board for Control of Cricket in India (BCCI) had not given its official sanction to the ICL, and had, in a controversial decision, barred current India players and former players on its payroll from associating with it.

Lara's joining the ICL had first been reported in May and at the time the names of Shane Warne and Glenn McGrath, had also been linked with the league.

Lal, who was a part of India's World Cup-winning team captained by Kapil Dev, said his role as a coach included inculcating character in the team and creating a "brand of cricket which possesses killer instinct".

# Coach states the obvious



BISHWAJIT ROY from Colombo

Even for an optimistic man like Bangladesh interim coach Shaun Williams it was hard to find any positives from the Tiger's five-wicket defeat in the second one-day of the three-match series at the R Premadasa Stadium yesterday.

But yet he managed.  
"It was disappointing and again we need to find a way to bat better. You need to give credit to their bowlers. They are doing exceptionally well. We are not playing as well as we need to. We are struggling to cope with the bounce and the Sri Lankan fast bowlers are really exposing that," said the Australian, who always loves to find positives and whose side is on the brink of another embarrassing series whitewash.

"If we are to move forward as a batting side we need to come out with a way to overcome it. The only way to do that is when you go back home you need to have pitches prepared in a way that prepares us better to face the bouncing ball. Even in the Test matches the extra bounce was the major problem," the frustrated coach observed.

The Sri Lanka skipper Mahela Jayawardene and man of the match Sanath Jayasuriya also echoed the Bangladesh coach's sentiment that batting was not so easy in this surface.

"The ball was not coming on that well in this wicket especially in the

latter part and it was a bit difficult to play shots. The overnight rains and the overcast condition all through the day made the pitch difficult for the batsmen," said the Lankan skipper adding that they had wanted to finish quickly thus losing wickets in the process.

He praised his predecessor Sanath Jayasuriya highly for his fine achievement in one-day cricket.

"It's a great achievement when you look back and see that no one has done it. Sanath has done it in a very quiet manner. He hasn't taken a lot of credit for the work he has done for Sri Lanka cricket," he said. "Batting-wise a lot of people have recognised him, not many have recognised his capabilities with the ball. He's made a huge difference to our team over the last 10-12 years with his bowling," he added.

On the other hand champion all-rounder Jayasuriya was a little bit surprised that he could manage four wickets in the match.

"The wicket was not easy for batting but still I never thought of getting four wickets today," said the most capped one-day player, who is the only player has 12,000 runs and 300 wickets in ODIs. The dashing left-hander also struggled during his 39-ball 24-run innings.

"It's tough to get 300 wickets and score over 12,000 runs. Its hard work and a lot of sacrifices in your career. It's not easy because I am not a wicket-taking bowler what I always try to check the runs for my team. Somebody who wants to

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THE OLDER THE WISER: Sri Lanka veteran Sanath Jayasuriya (C) is the toast of his teammates after the all-rounder wrapped up the Bangladesh innings by dismissing Syed Rasel in the second one-day international at the Premadasa Stadium in Colombo yesterday. Rasel's was Jayasuriya's 300th wicket in ODIs also.

PHOTO: AFP

# Abahani stay ahead



## SPORTS REPORTER

Abahani closed in on the B. League title when they blanked Arambagh 3-0 yesterday to maintain their three-point lead over fellow title contenders Mohammedan in the table.

Nazrul opened the account from a first-half penalty before a 5,000-strong sky-blues fans at the Bangabandhu National Stadium while Emily and his substitute Zahed Parvez struck after the break to seal their 12th win in 18 matches.

With just a couple of rounds left, Abahani crossed the 40-point mark with their archrivals Mohammedan on 38 points at end of the 20th week.

The black and whites travel to Khulna for their next game against local Abahani and have a relatively easy draw against Arambagh on the concluding day of the championship.

Amalesh Sen's league leaders, however, have difficult opponents as they meet two of the top four sides -- Sheikh Russel and Muktiyoddha -- in their last encounters. Abahani drew both their first-leg games against Russel and Muktiyoddha, whose hopes for a runners-up finish have already faded away.

Meanwhile, yesterday's result helped Abahani boost their goal-

difference and reduce the gap with Mohammedan to only two. In case both teams end level on points, goal-difference will determine the title.

The sky-blues took control of the match from the word go with an all-local midfield and Abdullah Parvez sent Ibrahim clear after four minutes but the Ghanaian forward shot his chance wide from the middle of the penalty area.

Emily beat an offside trap soon but his effort went straight to goalkeeper Piru, whose reflex kept another Emily flick from point-blank range for a corner after a right-left combination between Siraji and Abdullah Parvez unsettled the Arambagh defence.

The resulting corner produced a penalty in the 18th minute when Abahani skipper Joy was felled by Ugandan defender Biketi inside the box.

Centre-back Nazrul made no mistake to put the ball into the back of the net for his fourth goal -- third from the spot -- this season.

Abul did well to race past Arambagh keeper Piru with a

square pass from Emily four minutes before halftime but the national midfielder committed an unpardonable mistake when he failed to keep is volley on target with two opposition defenders scrambling to guard the open goal.

Mid-table Arambagh showed the knack to attack and created two chances in the dying moments of the first half but Biplab was alert at his near post, palming away a low drive by Domenic and a header by Biketi during a corner.

Ibrahim fluffed the easiest chances of the game as Abahani fired on all cylinders but he was inspirational behind Emily's 11th league goal that doubled the lead in the 56th minute.

The robust Ghanaian sped down the right before cutting a low ball toward the goalmouth where a lurking Emily effortlessly thumped the ball into the roof of the net.

The striker was replaced by Zahed a minute later and the diminutive midfielder made it 3-0 in the 79th minute. Joy sent Ujjal racing down the left flank and the media dribbled past a defender before releasing a square-pass for Zahed who shot home on the trot for his first league goal.

Arambagh, who lost 2-0 in the first-leg, had their chances to reduce the margin but their top-scorer Nicodemus failed to meet a cross before an open net while substitute Ridon's close-range shot came off Siraji's legs.

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Abahani forward Ibrahim (R) tries to purchase space from Arambagh midfielder Zuku in a bid to win a 50-50 ball during their B.League clash at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

## Bangladesh U-19s down Sri Lanka

UNB, Dhaka

All-round performances by Mahmudul Hasan and Tapash Ghosh enabled touring Bangladesh to beat Sri Lanka by 43 runs in the Under-19 tri-nation cricket tournament at the P Sara Stadium in Colombo yesterday.

Bangladesh, who suffered a seven-wicket defeat to India on Sunday, were all out for 204 in 48.4 overs after elcting to bat.

Skipper Hasan made second highest 32 off 47 balls with one boundary and later captured three wickets for 20 runs while lower-order batsman Tapash Ghosh hammered 27 off 20 balls including two fours and a six before grabbing 2-21.

Ashrafur Aziz contributed highest for the Bangladesh U-19s, scoring 35 off 77 balls with three fours. Mithun Ali scored a quickfire 19-ball 27 with six fours while Nasir Hossain made 21 and Hamidul Islam 18.

In reply, the Sri Lanka U-19s skittled out for 161 in 45.2 overs with Lokuge making 36, Thirimeane 31 and Priyanjan 29.

Nasir grabbed 2-26 and Rubel 2-27.

## Dhaka eves finish third

### SPORTS REPORTER

Dhaka clinched third place in the BASIC Bank 18th National Women's Handball Championship when they defeated Faridpur 16-8 in yesterday's play-off at the Dhanmondi Women's Sports Complex.

Dhaka, who won the opening match of the competition against the same side, led 8-3 at the break.

Akherunnessa shot eight goals for the winners while Jolly two for Faridpur.

The final between BJMC and Ansars will be held today at the same venue at 3 pm.

## BNS Dockyard Navy handball champs

### SPORTS REPORTER

BNS Dockyard lifted the annual handball championship of Bangladesh Navy when they came from a two-point first-half deficit to beat BNS Haji Mohsin 19-16 in the final on Sunday.

Haji Mohsin led the first half 11-9 at the BNS Issa Khan at Chittagong but their opposition put on a better display after the break to snatch victory.

Rasheduzzaman of Haji Mohsin  
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# Miscommunication?



SPORTS REPORTER from Colombo

The Bangladesh team management made a drama about sending their captain to the post-match briefing after Sri Lanka clinched the three-match series with a five-wicket victory in the second game at the R Premadasa Stadium yesterday.

Everybody including the local media was taken aback when the Bangladesh media manager informed that Ashrafur was not interested to attend the press even though it is an unwritten law that the team captain must come forward to the press after the end of the match.

The question was raised about whether the 23-year old skipper was not courageous enough to face the heat but Ashrafur said that it was not his fault and that he was ready to meet the press despite another disappointing performance.

"I never showed my unwillingness to attend the press because as a captain I have to face it and I am not at all a coward. What I learnt is that you people (the press) demanded our coach," was the surprise response of the disappointed young Bangladesh skipper after the completion of the official press conference.

Although everybody wanted to focus on the difficult conditions due to overcast condition, Ashrafur said that there was no chance for them

to make any excuse for the 137 run total on the board.

"Yes, batting in this condition was difficult but not impossible. We can't give any excuses for this kind of total. I must say our batting was miserable and we lost the game for poor batting because once again our bowlers showed their characters," he admitted.

"But if we could manage a total of 200 runs than it could have been a different story. My partnership with Aftab raised the hopes to reach a fighting total but I misjudged a Jayasuriya delivery to shatter that hope," he explained.

The right-hander, who made a laborious 29 from 59 deliveries with the help of a boundary, also said that there was no scope

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# Bad light holds up hosts



AFP, London

Bad light threatened to give India a dramatic reprieve in the first Test as England's bid for victory was halted with them needing just one more wicket to go 1-0 up in the three-match series at Lord's.

India, when the gathering gloom forced an early tea on the fifth and final day here Monday, were 282 for nine -- still needing a further 98 to reach an imposing victory target of 380.

Mahendra Singh Dhoni was 76 not out and last man Shanthakumaran Sreesanth four not out.

Soon after the umpires brought the players off the field, the square was fully covered and hopes of any more play were in the balance.

India, chasing what would be the fourth highest fourth innings winning total in Test history were they to achieve it, started the second session on 207 for five, with VVS Laxman 29 not out and Dhoni, who'd survived a couple of scares, 28 not out.

The pair, India's last recognised batsmen, had come together following the loss of two quick wickets that left the tourists struggling at 145 for five.

But a stand worth 86 was ended when debutant quick Chris Tremlett bowled Laxman for 39 as he stayed on the backfoot to a full-length delivery.

England, who had reduced India to 231 for six, now found themselves as much in a race against the deteriorating weather, with the light fading and rain falling elsewhere in London, as the remainder of India's batsmen.

They took the new ball as soon as it became available after 80 overs, with India 241 for six.

And three overs later left-arm quick Ryan Sidebottom dismissed Anil Kumble for three with the 14th

lbw of the match.

Dhoni completed a 120-ball fifty, his fifth in Tests, but at the other end Tremlett had Zaheer Khan gloving down the legside to wicketkeeper Matt Prior for nought and India were two wickets away from defeat at 254

for eight.

England captain Michael Vaughan brought himself on to bowl off-spin in a bid to prevent the umpires offering the light.

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England bowler Ryan Sidebottom (C) roars for joy after taking the wicket of Sourav Ganguly of India on the fifth and final day of the first Test at Lord's yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP