



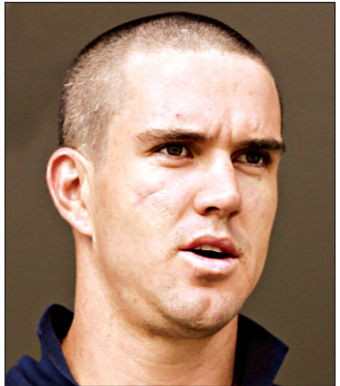
Bangladesh opener Tamim Iqbal runs the ball to third-man during his half-century in the third and final one-day international at the R Premadasa Stadium in Colombo on Wednesday.

PHOTO: AFP



## Did U Know?

Eddie Arcaro, one of the greatest jockeys in horse race history, rode 250 losers before he won his first race. Ultimately, Arcaro won 4,779 races -- including five Derby winners, six in the Preakness, and six in the Belmont Stakes, on such famous horses as Whirlaway, Citation, and Kelso.



### Kevin Pietersen

(South Africa-born England batsman)  
"I've never shied away from anything. I'll always turn up for England. I've never asked for a day off, ever, in terms of an international. As long as I'm asked to play for England I'll play, that's the bottom line."  
While quashing questions over his commitment to England.



**ATN Bangla**  
Sk Russel v Abahani  
B.League  
Live at 4:15 pm



**B.League**  
Kln Abahani v Mohammedan  
Venue: Khulna Stadium  
Time: 4:15 pm  
Sk Russel v Abahani  
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium  
Time: 4:15 pm

## Crucial day in B.League

SPORTS REPORTER

The fate of the inaugural professional football league could well be decided today as title contenders Abahani and Mohammedan both go into action today in the B. League.

In the crucial penultimate round, Mohammedan travel to Khulna in a must win situation against local Abahani, the bottom-table side who have proved difficult to beat at home.

Mohammedan, three points behind their Dhaka archrivals Abahani, cannot afford dropping points with just two rounds remaining in the competition. Even maximum six points would not suffice for the black and whites if Abahani collect four points from their two games.

However, top-of-the-table Abahani who are on 41 points, face the daunting task of meeting two teams they have not beaten this season.

The sky-blues play Sheikh Russel today and Muktiyoddha in next week.

ATN Bangla will telecast the Abahani-Russel match live from the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

## Monty lost his mind!

PTI, London

Practitioner of perhaps the most spectacular celebration in cricket, England's left-arm spinner Monty Panesar revealed he almost lost his mind after trapping Sachin Tendulkar in the Lord's Test.

Tendulkar had scribbled "once in a blue moon" on the ball with which Panesar had removed the Indian for his maiden Test wicket in the Nagpur Test last year.

Panesar, however, was not ready to wait that long and trapped his childhood hero plumb in front before bursting into his trademark celebration in the second innings of the drawn Test at Lord's.

"It was as if I lost my mind. I honestly didn't know what was going on. I just started running and it felt like I was flying somewhere."

"The only thing I can remember is hugging everyone. Afterwards, all I could think to myself was: 'Did I really do that?' I haven't had the chance to see a replay of the celebration but my friends told me that I just went crazy," Monty wrote in his column for 'Daily Mail'.

Despite getting Tendulkar out for a meagre 16, Panesar still remains in the Mumbaikar's awe.

"I was just savouring the moment and the reason I reacted like that was because he is such a great player."

"That is the impact he has on people. I would not have run so far and jumped around like that if he was not so good."

## Brothers ride on Manju

SPORTS REPORTER



Two-goal Ashraful Qader Manju inspired Brothers Union to a come-from-behind 2-1 victory against Rahmatganj in the penultimate round of the B. League yesterday.

Manju, who replaced Faisal Mahmud after the break, cancelled Rahmatganj midfielder Mohammed Mamun's first half strike in the 70th minute and slammed the match winner in the stoppage time as the Oranges recorded their seventh win in 19 games.

On a rain-soaked pitch at the Bangabandhu National Stadium that reminded the sparse crowd of a paddy-field, football was far from attractive.

Defending looked like a difficult job for both sides who struggled to get purchase on the slow strip but the attackers also shared moments of embarrassment.

Local giants Brothers, who

dominated the show, created the first real opportunity against the second-from-bottom old Dhaka outfit after 35 minutes.

With the rival defence failing to clear a combined Brothers attack, Jalaluddin set captain Masud Rana with a free shot and the veteran leftback kept the ball on target. However, Rahmatganj skipper Sony headed the ball out of the line to keep the scoreline goalless.

Mamun gave Rahmatganj a 1-0 lead at halftime when he broke the deadlock in the 44th minute with his second goal in the league. Taking a pass from Nigerian striker Francis just outside the penalty area, Mamun

unleashed a rising shot from the left side to deceive Mohammed Ali as the ball went in off the rival goalkeeper's near post.

Minutes after his arrival on the pitch, substitute Manju stabbed the ball through a forest of legs for the equaliser after the Rahmatganj backline failed to clear a long ball.

Just when both sides looked settled for a draw, Jalal curved a lob from the right top pick Manju, who nodded home his third league goal in the first minute of the time added on.

Brothers, who play their last match against Chittagong Abahani away at the port city, regained fifth place with 26 points while there was no improvement for Rahmatganj from 13 points.

Yellow cards: Liton, Jalal (Brothers) and Anwarul, Emon, Mamun (Rahmatganj)

### TEAMS

**BROTHERS:** Ali, Rony, Shuvra, Jewel, Masud Rana, Liton (Rintu), Mamun, Faisal (Manju), Inani (Tapu), Junior and Jalal.

**RAHMATGANJ:** Anwarul, Arafat, Shipon, Sony, Jahangir, Faisal (Rimon), Emon, Mamun, Rasel, Adeyinka (Hanif) and Francis.

Referee: Azad Rahman



Brothers Union's Nigerian striker Junior, under pressure from Rahmatganj defender Arafat Rony, takes a backvolley during their B. League match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

## Ashraful remains positive



BISHWAJIT ROY from Colombo

Everybody laughed at Tony Greig when the renowned commentator made a human error by announcing in the presentation ceremony that the one-day series was won by Bangladesh yesterday. There was a reason for the small group of spectators to poke fun at the wrong announcement after the way Bangladesh played during the entire tour against the formidable Sri Lankans. Bangladesh's miserable top-order batting, especially against a second-string attack in the third one-dayer and during the whole series, raised many questions than answers.

Bangladesh skipper Mohammad Ashraful nevertheless believed that they missed out on two good chances to win the one-day series.

"After the first match, we had another chance today (Wednesday) to win a match against Sri Lanka but unfortunately our top-order failed to deliver once again after the bowlers' brilliant effort. It was not impossible to win the one-day series if our

batsmen could have performed like our bowlers," said Ashraful in the post-match briefing.

Although there was much flak towards Ashraful, the 23-year-old right-hander surprised the audience by saying that the tour was not at all disappointing for him.

"It's my first assignment as a captain and I am not too frustrated with the outcome of the series like people have said against us. We hardly made any impression in our previous tours in this country but I must say that for the first time we created opportunities in the one-day series," he observed.

He stunned everyone when he said, "There was a sign of improvement even in the Test series although we lost very badly. To me the most important thing was that we fought back in the first two Tests during our second innings and you know, it was not easy to face an attack like Sri Lanka's."

Ashraful also said that he learned many things as a captain.

"It was not an easy tour for me as a captain. We failed to perform as per our expectations mainly because of our poor batting. We have to work hard to play quality

bowling," he said.

Ashraful also defended his interim coach Shaun Williams when the question was asked whether he missed a high profile coach like Dav Whatmore.

"Shaun (Williams) has done a tremendous job. What can a coach do at this level if we fail to realise our own game? I think we should take the responsibility," he added.

His opposite number Mahela Jayawardene echoed Ashraful's sentiment that Bangladesh are an improving side.

"Despite the easy wins in the series, Bangladesh is an improving side but they have had a lack of application. In this level, one should work hard to succeed," observed the successful Lankan skipper, who will go on a two-week break along with his teammates before they are off to Australia.

Jayawardene however added that he never felt that he could lose the match at any stage despite Bangladesh's upperhand in the initial stages.

"I have a lot of confidence in my young players and they proved that

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## New BCB committee next week?



SPORTS REPORTER

The en masse resignation that started on Tuesday left the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) with just three executive committee members including its president MAbdulAziz.

Out of the 31-member committee, the National Sports Council had withdrawn its two representatives while Gazi Golam Dastagir

and Kabir Ahmed Bhuiyan stepped down from the board previously.

A BCB source confirmed it received a total of 24 resignation letters in the last two days following general secretary Mahbub Anam's resignation.

NSC sources claimed that BCB chief Aziz, who received 17 resignation letters till afternoon yesterday, has requested the NSC to take steps to form a new committee to run the board properly.

Although NSC secretary Aminul Islam Khan had informed on

Tuesday that a new ad-hoc committee would be formed within two days, it seems that the ministry would not be able to name a body before Sunday.

Sports Adviser Tapan Chowdhury is expected to be on a visit outside Dhaka today, which is the last working day of the week.

The rumour is that the government will appoint Chief of General Staff Maj Gen Sinha Ibne Jamali as the president of the new ad-hoc committee, which would not exceed 12 members.



PHOTO: AFP

Bangladesh captain Mohammad Ashraful (L) is engaged in a heated exchange with Sri Lanka batsman Kumar Sangakkara during the third and final one-day international at the R Premadasa Stadium in Colombo on Wednesday.

## U-19 CRICKET Bangladesh face India in final

SPORTS REPORTER

While their seniors were white-washed in both the Test and one-day series in Sri Lanka, the Bangladesh Under-19 cricket team salvaged some pride when they entered the final of the tri-nation tournament after the hosts' massive 161-run loss to India yesterday.

Sri Lanka ended their four matches on one point while India and Bangladesh, who play the last league match today in a dress rehearsal of the July 28 final, are on six and three points respectively.

The final will be held at the Colts Cricket Club Ground in Colombo.

Bangladesh, who split points with Sri Lanka after their first match was washed out, crashed to India by 97 runs before beating the home side by 43 runs.

The three teams from the sub-continent are playing the tournament as part of their preparation for next year's U-19 Cricket World Cup.

## Kapil slates Sachin



CRICINFO, undated

Kapil Dev, the former Indian captain, has questioned Sachin Tendulkar's abilities as a match-winner after failing in the first Test against England at Lord's. Tendulkar scored 37 and 16 in a close draw.

Kapil said that Tendulkar has not been able to perform under pressure and deliver in crunch situations. None of the four middle-order batsmen -- Rahul Dravid, Tendulkar, VVS Laxman and Sourav Ganguly -- managed a half century as India made 201 in the first innings and just managed to hang on in the second and save the game before bad light on the fifth day resulted in a draw.

"Every time people hope big things from Sachin Tendulkar but often it is only disappointment that we are left with," Kapil told Aaj Tak, a Hindi news channel. "He is

thought to be the backbone of the Indian team but many times he has not stood up to the occasion."

Tendulkar found form in the three-match one-day series against South Africa in Ireland which preceded the England tour, winning the Man-of-the-Series award. He went on to score an exhilarating 171 in the tour game against England A at Chelmsford, before the Lord's Test.

Kapil felt that Tendulkar was presented with the best opportunity to silence his critics and play a match-winning knock in the second innings with India set to chase 380. Tendulkar fell to Monty Panesar for 16 on the penultimate evening, struck leg before in front of off-stump.

"Figures say that Sachin has not been able to perform under pressure," he said. "Sachin has big records to his name but until he wins matches for India in these conditions, people will raise fingers at him."

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