



Did U Know?

Archery first appeared as a sport in the 1900 Olympics Games in Paris.



Jose Mourinho
(Chelsea manager)
"To lose on penalties is different to losing in 90 minutes. In 90 minutes normally the best team wins but penalties are details that can decide matches."
After losing the Community Shield to Manchester United in penalty shoot-out.



ESPN
Sportscenter India
Sports News
Live from 8:30 pm

Six-star Ghosh sinks Malaysia

Taposh Ghosh bowled Bangladesh Under-19 to a 34-run victory in a Twenty20 match against Malaysia at the STC ground yesterday.

The young leg-spinner claimed six wickets for just 10 runs and Rony Talukdar took three for 26 runs as the local side were bundled out for 94 runs with an over to spare.

Earlier, Bangladesh Under-19 scored 128-8 in their allotted 20 overs with Ariful Haq making 51. Rony contributed 28 runs and Hamidul Islam made 19.

The visitors play their last game today when they meet the Malaysia Under-19 in the fourth limited-over match. They lead the series 2-1.

Bangladesh pitted against Tajikistan

Bangladesh will once again play Tajikistan in their World Cup pre-qualifiers, confirmed the Asian Football Confederation (AFC).

The AFC unveiled the draw for the first round of regional qualifiers for the 2010 World Cup on Monday. Bangladesh lost both the home and away matches to the central Asian nation, who also drubbed hosts Bangladesh 6-1 in the AFC Challenge Cup in Dhaka last year.

Bangladesh will host the first leg on October 8 and make the trip to the former Soviet Union state for the away match on October 28.

AFC adds: Asian champions Iraq were unable to play at home while Afghanistan and the Palestinian team were also barred from playing home matches for security reasons. AFC tournament director and assistant general secretary Carlo Nohra told.

"We decided this after due consideration and also after discussing it with FIFA. I think the soccer authorities in Iraq understand why we made this decision," Nohra said.

"Besides Iraq, Palestine and Afghanistan will also not be allowed to play their home matches in their country because of the same reason."

"We will give them time to nominate the country where they will play their home matches and give the green light after discussing it with FIFA," he said.

Final say board's

Selectors pick T20 team tomorrow

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

The national selectors will sit tomorrow to pick the 15-member squad for the Twenty20 World Championship to be held in South Africa this September.

But in an aberration of standard practice, the new executive committee of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) will have its final word on the selection. Besides, the selectors will also not make the squad public, something that has been the case for the last four years.

Previously the board president only endorsed the selector's choice regarding the final squad.

Although it was not confirmed whether the ad-hoc committee have decided to get back to the old policy of overruling the selector's team if needed, confusion looms large since BCB's media committee chairman Ahmed Sajjadul Alam said: "Form now on the team will be finalized in the board meeting" after the first meeting last week.

"It's not clear to me because in

our whole tenure, the president just endorsed the list. I hope it would be just a formality," said chief selector Faruque Ahmed, who got a month's extension to select the Twenty20 side and the academy team for this month's tour of Australia.

Chairman of cricket operations committee Gazi Ashraf Hossain Lipu however was also not ready to consider it a serious issue.

"I don't think it's a big issue. We go for executive committee approval because we want to work as a team. As a former player, I always love to see the selectors do their job without any interference. We will definitely change our guard if it hurt the sentiment of the selectors," said Lipu, also a former national skipper.

Faruque Ahmed-led selection panel will short-list the squad from the 30-member probables that they announced on July 11. The preliminary list has included thirteen uncapped players and the chief selector hinted that a good number of new faces are likely to win the national cap for the latest version of the competition.

"You know we have so far played only one international Twenty20 game and played some domestic

matches last year. So, you can't consider some players as Twenty20 specialist. We have to focus on the national team players first and then go for other options," said Faruque.

"The last domestic Twenty20 performance would also be one of the criterions. It's a different type of game and no doubt your and multi-skill players are suitable for this kind of game," he added.

The fact is that not too many players in the probables shone in the Twenty20 competition in December last year. Left-handed opener Junaid Siddique however has a good chance to make it, as the big-hitter was the top scorer with 249 runs in six matches at the strike rate of 166.

Nadif Chowdhury and Nazmul Hossain Limon are the other players who have also impressed many by their big-hitting abilities.

Bangladesh vice-captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza missed the last two one-day matches in Sri Lanka because of his ankle injury

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India wicketkeeper Mahendra Singh Dhoni is about to take a catch during a practice session at The Oval in London on Tuesday.

PHOTO: AFP

Emily aims higher

Football

AL MUSABBIR SADI

Those who watched Zahid Hassan Emily score a sublime equaliser for Bangladesh against India in a group match of the SAFF Football Championship in Karachi in December 2005 could never doubt in the young footballer's skill.

He was not even the mainstream striker of the country then, playing in the shadows of Alfaz Ahmed and others, but the talented 21-year-old came of age in the recently concluded B. League by notching the best player's award.

"It is an honour for me to be voted the best player of the country's inaugural professional football league. Having won the title with Abahani and getting reward as an individual, I think it is my best achievement," Emily told this correspondent yesterday.

The goal that gave Bangladesh's second string side a 1-1 draw against India might have been dubbed as a fluke but spectacular goals have become a trademark of Emily.

While playing for Brothers, he battled his way to earn a first team place and outfoxed country's number one goalkeeper Aminul with a stunner and also, struck an equally beautiful goal in an AFC Cup home match against India's Mahendra United.

The Barisal lad's start to the professional league, however, was as tough as it could have been.

Despite being Abahani's top striker, he failed to deliver and ended the ten matches of the first



ZAHID HASSAN EMILY

leg with just two goals, both scored in one match against Farashganj.

Having fired blank in the first five games during when he was not even used in the second match against Chittagong Mohammedan, Emily was not in the good book of Argentine coach Diego Cruciani, who preferred an adventurous 4-3-3 line-up.

Emily was substituted often before he hit the mark for the first time in the sky-blue shirt, the brace against Farashganj.

"I took pressure on myself. When I joined Abahani, they told me I was going to be the main forward. There was pressure of the fans and the burden of expectation. Everyone wanted me to score in every match," said Emily, who finished the league with a dozen goals that made him the best performer among locals and overall third highest scorer, behind Nigerian duo Elijah Junior and Paul Mwach Ukwu.

"The first goal of that match is my best in the competition," opined Emily, who is now at the national camp in BKSP.

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Helal's last day at BFF?

SPORTS REPORTER

Anwarul Haq Helal had his last day at office as the general secretary of Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) yesterday.

Helal had tendered his resignation on July 24, which was only made public on Monday by BFF president SA Sultan.

The outgoing general secretary, while talking to reporters at his office, told that he would not reconsider withdrawing his resignation under any circumstances.

"It's personal. I want to give more time to my family," said Helal, who has been involved with football for three decades.

When asked, he said that his decision had nothing to do with the government's call to sports organisers, who have failed in their duties, to quit.

"We have done many things for football even if some of them were not satisfactory. There had been some lacking though, but most of them were due to unavoidable reasons."

"There is no criteria for failure and I am not resigning for my failures. Whatever, I will not leave football."

"I thank my colleagues for their cooperation and probably this is my last day at office. I will attend tomorrow's emergency executive meeting if the president asks me."

The fate of Helal, whose prescription to develop the game in the country is to give more emphasis on school football and go to the grassroots, would be decided at the BFF meeting today.

SA Sultan said he and his colleagues were sorry for Helal's resignation.

"It's disheartening and unexpected," said Sultan denying any

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India drop Sreesanth

AFP, Mumbai

India on Tuesday left out fast bowler Shanthakumaran Sreesanth for the seven-match one-day series against hosts England starting later this month.

Sreesanth was replaced by seamer Munaf Patel in the only change to the 15-man squad that defeated South Africa 2-1 in the Future Cup series in Ireland in June.

Sreesanth, 24, was fined 50 percent of his match fees by referee Ranjan Madugalle after shoulder-bumping England captain Michael Vaughan during the second Test at Trent Bridge last week.

Sreesanth also hurled a head-battering at Kevin Pietersen and later overstepped the crease by several feet while bowling a bouncer to Paul Collingwood in the hotly-contested match that India won by seven wickets.

It is unclear if the Kerala fast bowler will be picked for the third and final Test starting at the Oval in London on Thursday that England must win to draw the series.

The first one-dayer will be played in Southampton on August 21.

SQUAD

Rahul Dravid (capt), Sachin Tendulkar, Sourav Ganguly, Yuvraj Singh, Gautam Gambhir, Robin Uthappa, Rohit Sharma, Dinesh Karthick, Mahendra Singh Dhoni, Ramesh Powar, Piyush Chawla, Ajit Agarkar, Zaheer Khan, Rudra Pratap Singh, Munaf Patel.

Dhoni made T20 captain



AFP, Mumbai

Wicketkeeper Mahendra Singh Dhoni will lead a revamped India team missing five top stars at the inaugural Twenty20 World Championships in South Africa in September.

Regular captain Rahul Dravid and senior pros Sachin Tendulkar,

SQUAD

Mahendra Singh Dhoni (capt), Virender Sehwag, Robin Uthappa, Yuvraj Singh, Gautam Gambhir, Rohit Sharma, Dinesh Karthick, Yusuf Pathan, Harbhajan Singh, Piyush Chawla, Irfan Pathan, Ajit Agarkar, Rudra Pratap Singh, Shanthakumaran Sreesanth, Joginder Sharma.

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A Jharkhand fairytale

PTI, London

Mahendra Singh Dhoni today termed his elevation to Twenty-20 captaincy three years after his India debut as a "fairytale" and said he would strive hard to meet the challenges and expectations.

"To be honest, I never dreamt of playing for India. I just played the game for the love of it. So just to play for India was like a good fairytale. And it still continues," Dhoni told PTI here.

"It's more special because I'm just three years old in international cricket. Now, it's important to go out and lead from the front."

"It's a great honour and a privilege to be leading the country and I'll strive hard to measure up to the expectations of the people back home." The 26-year-old Ranchi-born player, who has caught the imagination of the country with his big hitting and long locks, owed his success to the best wishes of the people of his native state.

"Five years back, no one from Jharkhand would even have imagined that someone from their state would be privileged to don the

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India await history

Cricket

AFP, London

Rahul Dravid didn't take long to ponder the question when asked about India's unfortunate habit of squandering away leads.

"Thank you for reminding me," said the polite India captain in deadpan fashion, with just the merest hint of a smile crossing his face following a second Test win at Trent Bridge that put India win one-up against England in a three-match series with just The Oval finale, starting on Thursday, to come.

There was a time when Indian away wins in Test matches were almost as rare as jellybeans on a pitch, a sight which so enraged India's Zaheer Khan in Nottingham the left-arm quick went on to complete his best Test figures as India won by seven wickets.

For example, England great Fred

Trueman used to recall how, when taking three wickets in 14 balls on his Test debut at his Headingley home ground in 1952, certain India batsmen could be seen backing away towards square leg.

Well the stereotype of the Indian cricketer who could be intimidated by rougher, more aggressive foreign types ought to have been banished long ago.

The likes of Sunil Gavaskar, Kris Srikkanth and later Sachin Tendulkar didn't just get into line they hit back too while few who ever saw Kapil Dev in action, as a fast bowler or dynamic batsman, would label him a meek cricketer.

And who was it that managed to get under the skin of former Australia captain Stephen Waugh, who tried to take sledging up-market by calling it "mental disintegration"? Why, none other than India's Sourav Ganguly.

Yet India's win at Trent Bridge was only their 20th victory in 200

overseas Tests in 75 years. But since the turn of the century they have won more Tests away from home (16) than anyone bar Australia (26).

However, they have struggled to string away wins together. For example, an impressive victory against Australia at Adelaide in 2003 was followed by defeat in the Boxing Day Test at Melbourne.

And earlier this year in South Africa, India blew another 1-0 lead with a win at the Wanderers the prelude to defeats in both Durban and Cape Town.

"We have played a little better over the last four or five years abroad," said Dravid. "There has been an improvement but not as quickly as we would all like."

If the current squad find the weight of sporting history oppressive they could talk to Farokh Engineer.

The former wicket-keeper, who

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Monty urges right spirit

Cricket

AFP, London

Monty Panesar has defended England's behaviour ahead of the third and final Test against India, which starts at The Oval on Thursday.

England are 1-0 down in the series after a seven-wicket second Test defeat at Trent Bridge which was overshadowed by unsporting behaviour on both sides.

India batsman Zaheer Khan reacted furiously after jellybeans were left in his crease while he was batting, brandishing his bat in the direction of gully, where Kevin Pietersen was fielding.

England's own chairman of selectors, David Graveney, branded the jellybean incident "childish".

More seriously, India's Shanthakumaran Sreesanth was

fined 50 percent of his match fee for shoulder-barging England captain Michael Vaughan.

And the fast bowler was involved in another controversial incident when bowling an illegal 'beamer' at Pietersen, the batsman just getting his head out of the way in time.

Meanwhile the amount of sledging by players was frequently excessive with England wicket-keeper Matt Prior one of the worst offenders.

But Panesar, who himself this season has received a verbal warning for over-enthusiastic appealing, said nothing untoward had happened in Nottingham.

"We all want to see cricket played in the right spirit and that is what happened," the England left-arm spinner explained Monday.

"You want to be competitive but you need to play the game in the right spirit, which is important."

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BFF General Secretary Anwarul Haq Helal addresses a press conference at the BFF Bhavan yesterday following his resignation the day before.

PHOTO: STAR