



Did U Know?

Basketball made its debut as a sport in the Berlin Olympic Games in 1936.



Michael Atherton
(Former England cricket captain)
"Watching (Sachin) Tendulkar bat throughout this series has been a curious business; his decline at once obvious and yet, since that decline has been accompanied by two telling innings, there comes with it a greater admiration."



ESPN
Sportscenter India
Sports News
Live from 8:30 pm
English Premier League
Tottenham v Everton
Live from 12:55 am (Wednesday)

Harmy on the comeback

BBC ONLINE, undated

Steve Harmison continued his comeback after a hernia operation when he was named in Durham's Championship side to face Surrey over four days from Monday.

Harmison took 1-41 in seven overs in a Pro40 match against Kent on Sunday having skipped his team in a three-day match against Sri Lanka A.

Durham won the toss on Monday and elected to bat first, but lost two wickets in the first 14 overs.

Michael Di Venuto and Shiv Chandrapaul were left to rebuild the innings.

Kamal's death anniversary tomorrow

SPORTS REPORTER

Abahani Limited will observe the 32nd death anniversary of the club's founder Sheikh Kamal tomorrow.

To commemorate the day, directors, officials and players of Abahani will place flower wreaths at Sheikh Kamal's portrait in the Dhanmondi club tent and offer prayers at 12.01 am.

They will organise a qurankhwani and a milad mahfil apart from distributing food among the destitute. They will also visit Kamal's resting place at the Banani graveyard.

Langer staying as Somerset

BBC ONLINE, undated

Somerset captain Justin Langer is set to sign a contract for the 2008 season with the county this week.

The former Australia opener, 36, has enjoyed a successful season leading the team and has guided them to the top of Division Two in the Championship.

Director of cricket Brian Rose told the club's website: "Justin has already publicly stated that he wants to come back and play for Somerset in 2008."

"He is thoroughly enjoying his cricket and has been making positive noises."

New selectors soon



SPORTS REPORTER

The Faruque Ahmed-led selection panel finished their last assignment by submitting the academy squad to the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) on Sunday for the coming tour of Australia.

The Bangladesh National Cricket Academy team will leave Dhaka on August 23 to play six limited-overs, one three-day and a four-day matches against different opponents during their 18-day trip down under.

The contractual tenure of Faruque and one of his colleagues, Athar Ali Khan, has been extended for a period of one month by the new ad-hoc committee and that expires on August 31. Their job was extended keeping in mind the deadlines for selections of the Twenty20 and academy teams.

Speculations are however already on about the formation of the new selection committee and there are whisperings on few known faces like Minhazul Abedin, Aminul Islam, Naimur Rahman, Rafiqul Alam, but like many other burning issues the new board officials are yet to make up their mind in this regard.

The ad-hoc committee in its first

meeting on August 1 formed a three-member selectors appointment sub-committee with Shafiqur Rahman Munna as its chairman and cricket operations committee chairman Gazi Ashraf Hossain Lipu as his deputy and Ishtiaq Ahmed as member.

The members of the committee are yet to meet formally, but Shafiqur Rahman Munna said that they are not completely out of touch as it's a very urgent issue.

"Definitely we will finalise the matter by August 30 because we don't want to keep this important positions vacant and you know our next tour of New Zealand is not far away. True, we are yet to make up our mind but what I can say is that we are thinking on it," said Munna yesterday.

Everybody has been curious about whether the new committee will go for a fresh selection panel. One of the members on the current committee, Akram Khan, was handed a two-year deal last June and he is expected to see out his contract that runs through May 2009.

Athar has hardly any chance to get another extension, but the main question that remains here is whether Faruque will be given another term.

"We don't want to dismiss anybody's chance because we will evaluate everything before naming the team. Our main objective is to

give the job to suitable ones for the greater interest of the game. What I personally believe is that it would not be wise to consider the just-retired players for the posts because of their relationship with the current team members," explained the veteran organiser.

It seems that Faruque, who was appointed in the hot seat in August 2003, was also not interested to continue the job.

"I will seriously consider if I got the offer from the board but surely not for a long period of time," said Faruque.

The advisory committee of Ali Asghar brought the selection panel under payroll to bring accountability in the selectors' activities and it was learnt that this board wants to evaluate their works before making a decision.

What many believe that there was lack of brain storming in the selection process under the leadership of Faruque and this board is also seriously concerned about the issue.

"Just as a coin has two sides they also have success and failure. So, we have to go through all the issues but the most important thing is that one should spend enough time for the job because they are paid," observed one member.



Bangladesh cricket team members go through a stretching session under the supervision of army instructors during a physical training period at the School of Infantry and Tactics in Sylhet on Sunday.

India near series win



AFP, London

India dismissed England captain Michael Vaughan as they closed in on a series victory on the last day of the third and final Test at The Oval here Monday.

England, at tea, were 232 for three. They needed an improbable 268 runs in the final session to reach a victory total of 500, a target way in excess of the current Test record fourth innings winning score of 418 for seven set by the West Indies against Australia in Antigua in 2003.

Kevin Pietersen was 71 not out and Paul Collingwood 23 not out.

At lunch England were 126 for two with Vaughan, dropped on 18, by India counterpart Rahul Dravid, 22 not out and Pietersen 17 not out.

The duo had extended their third wicket partnership to 66 when, 10 balls after a brief break for bad light, Vaughan flashed at a wide delivery outside off stump from fast bowler Shanthakumaran Sreesanth and was caught behind by wicket-keeper Mahendra Singh Dhoni for 42.

His exit left England on 152 for three. Collingwood was then given a life on 13 when Dhoni dropped an outside edge off spinner Sachin Tendulkar before Pietersen, who'd struck a couple of typically extravagant cover-drives, completed a fifty featuring nine fours.

England resumed Monday on 56 without loss. Andrew Strauss was 23 not out and Alastair Cook 27 not out.

But Rudra Pratap Singh ended a stand between the left-handed

openers worth 79 with his fourth ball Monday following several testing overs from Zaheer Khan and Sreesanth.

The left-armed enticed Strauss, without a Test hundred for over a year, to edge an outswinger on 32 to second slip VVS Laxman.

Veteran leg-spinner Anil Kumble, a thorn in England's side this match, then removed Cook with India exploiting the batsman's fondness for leg-side shots.

Cook, on 43, saw a genuine glance well caught low down by Laxman at short backward square-leg to leave England 86 for two.

Dravid's men, 1-0 up after a seven-wicket win at Trent Bridge followed a gutsy draw at Lord's, had simply to avoid defeat to become only the third India side, after their

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Kumble leaves McGrath behind

PTI, London

Anil Kumble surpassed Glenn McGrath to become the world's third highest wicket-taker in Tests as India bowled England out for 345 on the fourth day of the third and final Test at The Oval on Sunday.

Kumble, who scored his maiden Test century on Friday in India's first innings total of 664, dismissed Monty Panesar to end England's innings and improve his Test tally to 564.

The 36-year-old leg-spinner, India's leading wicket-taker, lies at third place after Australian counterpart Shane Warne (708) and Sri Lanka's Muttiah Muralidaran (700) in the all-time bowlers' list.

Aussie Glenn McGrath, who quit international cricket after the World Cup, claimed 563 in Tests.

Kumble, playing in his 117th Test, also improved his international scalps to 900 -- including 337 in ODIs -- with his 563rd scalp yesterday.

The Karnataka bowler became the first India and fifth overall to accomplish the rare feat.

Muralidaran (1157), Warne (1001), McGrath (949) and Pakistan's Wasim Akram (916) are the other four bowlers in the exclusive club.

WI coach hunt officially on

CRICINFO, undated

More than three months after Bennett King stepped down as West Indies coach, the cricket board has finally advertised for applications to fill the vacancy.

David Moore, King's deputy, took charge on the recent tour of England but on the field the team struggled and there were reports of disharmony off the field and of friction between the management and some players.

The big question seems to be whether the WICB will risk appointing an overseas coach again after King, whose time was not helped by criticism in some quarters which appeared to be based on the fact he was hired from outside the region. His tenure was generally considered not to have

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Hoggard returns for Yorkshire

CRICINFO, undated

Matthew Hoggard returns to the Yorkshire side for their Championship match against Worcestershire at Kidderminster after recovering from the back spasms which have ruled him out of the Test series against India.

It will be Hoggard's first outing since playing against Warwickshire in the middle of July. He had some pain in his back during that match, but was named in the England squad for the first Test at Lord's before pulling up with another spasm two days before the game.

Hoggard's rehabilitation has been hindered by further spasms, which only last about a day but leave him unable to bend or walk properly.

ASIA CUP Bangladesh eye 6th place



SPORTS REPORTER

A depleted Bangladesh hockey team will look to better their last-place finishing in the 2003 Asia Cup when they participate in the seventh edition of the continental hockey championship starting on August 31 in Chennai, India.

The top two teams will confirm World Cup berths while the next four would be entitled to join the qualifiers and Bangladesh will eye one of the spots.

However, coach Mahub Harun knows how difficult the task is. Although Bangladesh clinched sixth place in 1985 at home, in 1993 in Hiroshima

and in 1999 in Malaysia, Harun feels the young side will have to be at their best to achieve the target.

With the likes of ace goalkeeper Rasel Khan Bappi, top centre-halves Musa Mia and Mahub Ehsan Rana and forward Habul not joining the camp, Harun had to rely on youngsters.

"There is a vacuum but I hope the newcomers would be able to fill in the gaps. If they can play up to their potential, we have a chance to finish sixth. But we have to beat China and Malaysia to do so," told Mahub, a former national captain.

Bangladesh have never beaten Malaysia and their record against China in recent times is not very impressive. Mahub has been running the camp with

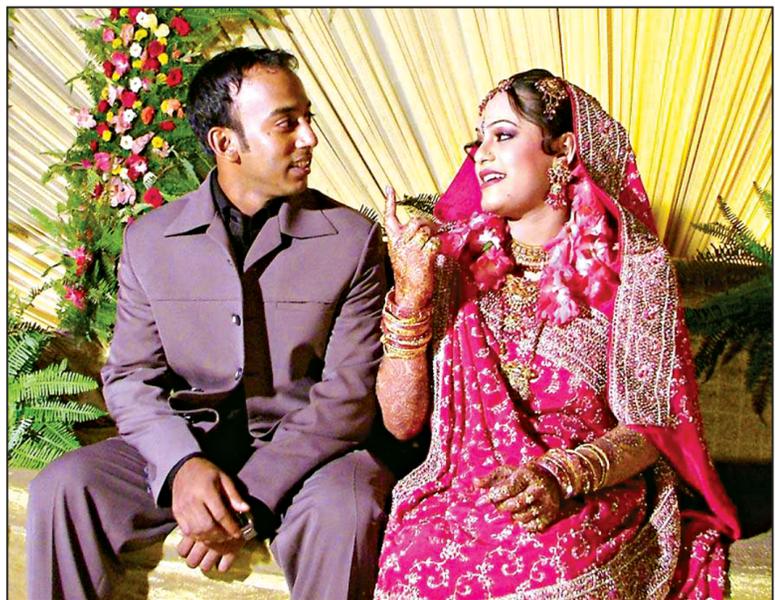
his assistant and former colleague Abdullah Piru for over a month and selected new crops like Imran Hossain, Kamruzzaman Rana, Iqbal Nader Prince and Mosharraf Hossain Kuti for the national team.

Bangladesh are in Group-B with local powerhouses India and South Korea and China, Thailand and Sri Lanka.

"We hope to beat at least Thailand and Sri Lanka to be able to get into the qualification matches," added Harun, who has been trying to find different combinations for penalty corners.

"The top teams have high success rate in penalty corners and we

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REMEMBER, I'M YOUR NEW BOSS! Bangladesh cricketer Aftab Ahmed and his bride Nipa talk during their post-wedding reception at the Engineers' Institute in Chittagong yesterday.

Negatively positive!



CRICINFO, undated

Watching Rahul Dravid during his 96-ball 12 was to see a captain ponder with the bat. The tedious innings, drawn out over two hours and twenty minutes, encapsulated his decision not to enforce the follow-on: defensive but perfectly understandable.

When England were bowled out, with the sun still out, India led by 319; when he walked out to bat, with the cloud cover on, they were effectively 329 for 1, few minutes later it was 330 for 3. The big picture remained rosy, the microscopic view slightly more blurred. India sitting on a 1-0 lead, England hadn't totalled more than 355 in the whole series and no team had successfully chased more than 263 at The Oval. Only on five occasions had a team overhauled 350-plus targets in Test history.

The real-time situation was bleak. The scoreboard read 11 for 3, England's fast bowlers were pumped up. India, it appeared, had provided a small opening. Here was a Test to boss over, instead India needed to scarp. Here was a golden chance to crush the opposition; instead India had loosened the vice-like grip. England, for the first time since the Matt Prior -- Sachin Tendulkar moment, glimpsed an escape route.

Dravid must have churned, memories of lost opportunities whizzing past. Bridgetown 1997, when a batting collapse cost the series, Cape Town 2006, when another opportunity was squandered. Had he just blown his biggest game? His innings was nervy: 12 balls to get off the mark, 35 balls to get off 2. He was beaten by swing, struck on the body by pace. This was exactly like some of his one-day innings in the late nineties, when batting became an almighty struggle. The crowd boomed, he floundered. No boundary till his 91st ball, five balls later he was gone.

He was dwarfed by Sourav Ganguly's brilliance, contributing just five in a 65-run partnership. Like a high-schooler who'd blanked out in an important exam, Dravid groped nervously. He concentrated all his energies on survival, half-hearted drives going straight to fielders. His initial doggedness was understandable but it was soon apparent that he'd cornered himself not to play a stroke. At some level the decision appeared to have got to him.

The decision will be dissected threadbare if England bat out the final day. At that point, though, it wasn't without its merits: India's bowlers would get a rest (it was learnt later in the day that Zaheer Khan was suffering from a thigh strain). Additionally Anil Kumble would get final use of the pitch, on a ground where England had never batted more than 105.1 overs in the final innings.

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