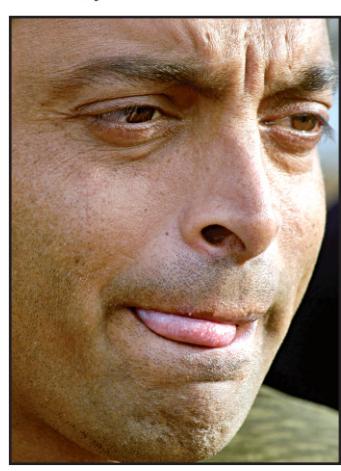




Did U Know?

Baseball made its debut as an Olympic sport at the 1992 Barcelona Games.



Shoaib Akhtar

(Pakistan fast bowler)
"I am sorry for what happened and it should not have happened. I request the authorities not to ban me for a lengthy period."

After the Pakistan Cricket Board banned him for hitting Mohammad Asif with a bat in a dressing-room brawl.

What to WATCH

ESPN
Sportscenter India
Sports News
Live from 8:30 pm

BFF U-19 trial on Friday

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) has called an open trial on Friday for the formation of the Under-19 team to take part in the coming Indo-Bangladesh Bangla Games.

The trial will begin at the Bir Shreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium under BFF coach Mahbub Hossain Rony.

The participants must be born after January 1, 1989.

Meanwhile, the training camps of other seven disciplines for the Bangla Games will begin today in Dhaka and BKSP under the auspices of the Bangladesh Olympic Association.

Shut the door on Shoaib

THE DAWN

Cats have fewer lives than the chances offered to Shoaib Akhtar to make amends for his indiscretions. His sheer pace and charisma were once an asset to Pakistan cricket, and his individuality a refreshing aberration in a team bogged down in overbearing religiosity.

But even his warmest admirers, if he has any left, must now feel that enough is enough. There are no two ways about it: Shoaib Akhtar has to be shown the door -- permanently. Irrespective of the provocation, hitting a team member (with a bat no less) is simply inexcusable.

It is now abundantly clear that Shoaib comes equipped with a self-destruct button that is always within reach and could be pressed at a moment's notice. For him to think is to act and the consequences be damned. Regrets expressed on the morning after hold no water whatsoever, for a refusal to grow up is not a valid excuse in any profession. Mohammad Asif, the victim of Shoaib's assault, is a cocksure individual who can easily rub people the wrong way.

Indeed, Asif may well have been baiting him deliberately in connivance with others. But to fall for it and respond with extreme violence was sheer stupidity on Shoaib's part. He must now pay the price and live with the knowledge -- never easy for those who suffer from a sense of persecution -- that the 'enemy' has won. After the event, Shoaib apologised for his

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Tigers tamed

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh suffered a jolt just before the tournament proper when they crashed to Kenya by six wickets in the last warm-up game ahead of the ICC World Twenty20 Championship.

The brittle batting cost the loss at the Willowmoore Park in Benoni yesterday, which enabled the Kenyans not only to avenge their five-wicket defeat at home in a four-nation tune-up tourney last week but also snapped the Tigers' recent supremacy over them.

Since their 2003 World Cup defeat to Kenya, interestingly also on South African soil, Bangladesh won all their seven one-day internationals against the ICC associate members.

Kenyan skipper Steve Tikolo's decision to bowl first on a lively strip paid off when Mohammed Ashraful's men, who blew Scotland away in the first warm-up game on Saturday, were bundled out for 116 with twenty-two balls to spare.

The Bangladesh batting has had been all but a one man show in the

last four build-up encounters with young opener Nazimuddin dazzling in an otherwise poor top-order show.

And the Chittagonian's quick dismissal for five runs meant his side succumbed to the lowest total in the ongoing Africa trip despite his opening partner Tamim Iqbal offering some resistance during his 56 off 41 balls that contained one six and eight boundaries.

Dashing left-hander Tamim, however, got no support from the other end as Afzal Ahmed was the second highest scorer with 17. Nadir Chowdhury was the other batsman to reach the double digit with 12.

The top order was even put to the test by a team like Uganda in Kenya, where Mashrafe Bin Mortaza's late rally rescued them but there was no such act in the previous four games.

Thomas Odoyo dismissed big hitters Nazimuddin and Afzal to set the tone on way to take 2-21 and he was backed up by fellow right-arm

Scorer Nehemiah Odhiambo, who took 3-37.

Kenya batted sensibly to achieve the small target as the Obuya brothers -- David and Collins -- added 41 in eight overs for the opening wicket while Tikolo provided the acceleration during his 36 off 38 balls that helped his side reach home with one ball remaining.

Ashraful picked up two wickets for 19 runs.

Bangladesh will play their first match of the World Championship against West Indies on September 13 and hosts South Africa on September 15 in their final Group A encounter.

SCORES IN BRIEF

BANGLADESH: 116 all out in 16.3 overs (Tamim 56, Nazimuddin 5, Afzal 17, Ashraful 1, Shakil 2, Kapali 3, Nadir 12, Mushfiqur 2, Mashrafe 5, Forhad 3 not out, Rasel 4, extras 6; Odoyo 2-21, Odhiambo 3-37, Onyango 2-19, Bhudia 2-24).

KENYA: 117 for 4 in 19.5 overs (Obuya 21, C Obuya 16, Mishra 16, Tikolo 36, Odoyo 13 not out, Obanda 9 not out, extras 6; Rasel 1-22, Ashraful 2-19, Forhad 1-19).

Result: Kenya won by six wickets.

Toss: Kenya.

Bangladesh finish 7th

SPORTS REPORTER

A brace by Russell Mahmud Jimmy helped Bangladesh claim seventh place in the 7th Asia Cup hockey tournament with a come-from-behind 3-1 win against Hong Kong in Chennai yesterday.

Bangladesh's hopes of booking a place in the World Cup qualifiers was shattered on Saturday following their 10-0 crashing to Pakistan in the first classification match but Pakistan's miseries continued in the competition as the three-time champions crashed 3-2 to China in the 5th-6th place play-off.

While finalists India and Korea qualify for the World Cup automatically, the next four teams only get into the qualifiers.

Before leaving Dhaka, coach Mahbub Harun had said that their target would be to finish among the top six. But the former Bangladeshi international had also, pragmatically, added that his side would need to beat at least Asian Games silver medallists China or the ongoing tournament's semifinalists Malaysia -- a tough task indeed.

Previously, Bangladesh clinched sixth place in the 1985 Asia Cup at home, in 1993 in Hiroshima and in 1999 in Malaysia but last among eight teams in the last edition in 2003 in China.

Harun's boys got off to a poor start in the early morning match in the South Indian city as penalty corner specialist Arif Ali put Hong Kong ahead after 23 minutes.

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NCA's last match of Australia tour starts today

SPORTS REPORTER

BCB National Cricket Academy (NCA) will meet Northern Territory Strike in their last match of the tour down under from today.

The four-day match will be held at the Mararra Oval.

The visitors have so far won their lone three-day against Tasmania and three limited-overs games against different opponents.

The academy side, who comfortably defeated the NT Strike in the last one-day, are expected to leave Darwin on September 14 for home.

India retain Asia Cup

STAR SPORT MONITOR

India retained the Asia Cup hockey title when they handed a massive 7-2 defeat on South Korea in yesterday's final in Chennai.

India's second title in seven editions of the continental meet was shaped by braces from Rajpal and Prabhjot in an embarrassingly one-sided match at the Radhakrishnan Memorial Stadium.

The hosts went ahead early though Shielded but Korea pulled back the equaliser soon from a penalty stroke.

The Koreans, who had lost their group match 3-2, however, could not stop the floodgate as India took a 3-1 lead at the break.

Sunil and Rajpal scored either side of the break while Prabhjot's 15th goal in the tournament ended India's goal feast six minutes from time.

Two-time champions Korea reduced the arrears just before the final hooter.

'Hosts face stiff test'

CRICINFO, undated

Marlon Samuels has said that the South Africans should expect a stiff challenge when they take on West Indies in the opening game of the ICC World Twenty20 on September 11.

"Hopefully, we could pull off a win like in the 2003 World Cup opener," said Samuels. "They (South Africa) are at home and have the advantage but we are playing very good Twenty20 cricket." West Indies drew the two-match Twenty20 series 1-1 during their recent tour of England and were impressive in the first match, posting a match-winning 208.

"I'm just picking up from where I left off in England with the bat. It's Twenty20 and it's my kind of game," said Samuels, who scored 63 from 30 balls as West Indies clinched an easy victory over Kenya at Benoni. "I went out there after we had lost two early wickets but Shiv (Shivnarine Chanderpaul) was still out there and I bat well with Shiv so I gave him the support by pushing singles as he played a few shots and I got my eye in. Then I carried on by taking on more

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Belgian top seed Justine Henin is ecstatic after winning a point during her US Open final against Russian Svetlana Kuznetsova at Flushing Meadows on Saturday.

Sublime Henin stands tall

AFP, New York



Justine Henin of Belgium capped off a tremendous year by defeating Russia's Svetlana Kuznetsova 6-1, 6-3 to lift her second US Open crown on Saturday.

The top seed took control of the final from the first exchanges, moving into an immediate 4-0 lead, and she gave Kuznetsova no chance to get back into what turned out to be a disappointing, lopsided final.

It was the 25-year-old Henin's second big win of the year after the French Open in June and the seventh Grand Slam title of her career.

The 22-year-old Kuznetsova looked nervous at the start though and the slightly-built Henin pounced immediately, breaking her opening two serves to move into a 3-0 lead.

The Russian had a break point in the following game after two double faults, but could not convert it and Henin made her pay by extending her lead to 4-0.

Kuznetsova finally opened her account in the fifth game, but it proved to be a fleeting respite from Henin's assault as the Belgian won the next two games to pocket the first set in just 33 minutes.

Henin had to battle hard to win her opening serve in the second set and Kuznetsova held her own comfortably as the exchanges became more even.

But two games later, Henin grabbed the vital breakthrough capturing Kuznetsova's serve for the fourth time after a marathon game of seven deuces to lead 3-1.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5

Last laugh England's

Cricket

AFP, London

England produced a clinical team performance to win the seventh one-day international against India at Lord's here Saturday.

Paul Collingwood was there at the end, getting his reign as one-day captain off to the perfect start. Pietersen's fifty was his second in as many games, but like the one at the Oval it came at a price.

Ian Bell (36) became the latest victim of Pietersen's indecisive calling; he was stranded in no-mans land when Pietersen changed his mind about a quick single.

England's win was made possible by some fine bowling.

James Anderson, Dimitri Mascarenhas, and the returning Andrew Flintoff tore apart the Indian batting line-up. Anderson hit Ganguly on the helmet in a fiery opening spell that saw him take 2-19 in his first eight overs.

Flintoff made an instant impact, taking the wickets of Rahul

Dravid, Sachin Tendulkar and Mahendra Dhoni.

The England all-rounder showed no signs of the ankle injury that ruled him out of the games at Headingly and the Oval, and should be on the plane to South Africa when England fly out for the Twenty20 World Cup on Sunday.

Dimitri Mascarenhas who also took three wickets, but conceded just 23 runs from his 10 overs however overshadowed Flintoff's performance. After punishing India with the bat at the Oval, this time he did the damage with the ball, also bowling two maidens in his spell.

With the series tied at 3-3, India's decision to bat after winning the toss seemed to place them in the driving seat. But the pressure

SEE PAGE 18 COL 6



England players celebrate after winning the one-day series against India at Lord's in London on Saturday.