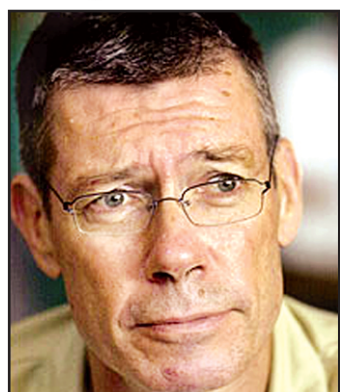




Did U Know?

Sri Lanka scored the highest runs in an innings in the just-concluded ICC World Twenty20 Championship. They amassed 260 for 6 against Kenya.



John Buchanan

(Former Australia cricket coach)
"Fifty-over cricket needs revamping to survive because it's a format that everybody's grown pretty accustomed to and, in a sense, pretty tired of."



ESPN

English Premier League
Everton v Middlesbrough
Live at 8:55 pm

Faridpur ride on Saiful

SPORTS REPORTER

Faridpur reached the Super Six stage of the Araf Apparels 21st National Youth Hockey Championships after their 3-1 win over Comilla made them group champions at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium yesterday.

They became the fifth team after BKSP, Dhaka, Munshiganj and Mymensingh had already made it to the second phase of the competition.

Faridpur's two-goal difference at the end of their match against Comilla made sure that they pipped Rajshahi Division, also with four points.

Saiful struck twice and Ali netted the other while Pavel netted the consolation goal for Comilla.

Dinajpur kept their hopes of making it to the Super Eights alive with an emphatic 5-0 win over neighbours Panchagarh earlier in the morning.

Abu Rohan struck a hattrick with Mamun and Saddam hitting one each. All goals were scored in the first half.

Meanwhile, Sabbir scored twice

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Div 3 soccer

SPORTS REPORTER

Power and Water Development (PWD) drew 1-1 with Friends Social Welfare Organisation (FSWO) in the Super League of the Third Division Football League at the Bir Shrestha Sepoy Mohammad Mostafa Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

Mokhles had PWD ahead in the 13th minute but Shah Alam made sure his FSWO went home with a point with a strike in the 77th minute.

The other match also saw a 1-1 draw, this time between Gulistan and Gazirchot.

Faruq Ahmed scored for Gazirchot in the 57th minute before Mohammad Mafiullah returning for Gulistan with a goal in the 79th minute.

Slow going by BCB



SPORTS REPORTER

When the ad-hoc committee of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) sits for the fourth time in the cosy confinement of its management office in Gulshan today one thing is certain to haunt the policy-makers.

The new body was supposed to orchestrate a 'gameplan' to meet the growing demands of the most popular game of the country and as well as bring more dynamism that was missing in the latter part of the previous body.

True two months is not enough time to measure the success or failure of anything, let alone cricket, but the new committee of Chief of General Staff Maj Gen Sina Ibn Jamali has so far failed to make any headway into the problems that the board has inherited.

This committee started its journey along with two pressing issues that needed to be solved immediately. One was to appoint a new national team coach, a post vacant for the last four months. The other was to start the work for a permanent National Cricket Academy structure in Mirpur.

It seems that the new committee is totally clueless to find Dav Whatmore's successor after the three short-listed candidates -- John Harmer, Dave Houghton and Jamie Siddons -- withdrew their names from the race.

The board named a high-profile sub-committee to deal with the

issue, but the noticeable achievement of it was interviewing a candidate (Harmer) in the last week of August.

On the other hand, it was repeatedly told by development committee chairman Lt Col M Abdul Latif Khan (ret'd) that they would start the work of the much-needed academy by September. But he is destined to miss the deadline.

Unfortunately, the future of the academy hinges on the acquisition of the stadium (a process that was initiated and then got stalled during the past board) from the National Sports Council (NSC).

The last committee had stopped the work citing the acquisition issue with the NSC although they made a benchmark sponsorship deal with Grameenphone in March this year.

The most important thing is that the development activities have been suffering heavily without the permanent structure of the academy.

Moreover, improvement of the National Cricket League is the most challenging issue for Bangladesh and it is inspiring that the budget for the competition this season has been increased a great deal to bring seriousness among the players.

But it appears that everything is handled loosely regarding this competition. The instant example is that the board made chaos while introducing the new system of

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PHOTO: AFP

Australian batsman Michael Clarke lofts the ball over the bowler's head on way to a century in the first one-day international at the Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bangalore yesterday.

Teams want fresh start



AFP, Karachi

South Africa and Pakistan are looking to make a fresh start in Test cricket with both sides fielding new-look squads for the first Test that starts in Karachi tomorrow.

The teams also face the challenge of switching to the longer form of the game from the shortest, following their contrasting fortunes in the inaugural ICC World Twenty20 Championship in South Africa.

For the first game in the two-Test series here, the tourists have dropped veteran all-rounder Shaun Pollock, while Pakistan are playing without experienced batsman and former captain Inzamam-ul-Haq.

This is the first time that the 34-year-old Pollock has been left out of the team after taking 416 wickets in 107 Tests -- leaving the door open for the Proteas to inject new talent in the form of Morne Morkel and Dale Steyn.

But Pollock could get a reprieve after rookie paceman Morkel became doubtful for the Test. He faces fitness tests Saturday and

Sunday. Pakistan will be without Inzamam in a home Test for the first time -- except for seven that he missed through injury -- since he made his Test debut in 1992.

Misbahul Haq, who was Pakistan's best batsman in the Twenty20 campaign, comes back from four years in the wilderness, while ace batsman Mohammad Yousuf agreed to play after cancelling a contract with a rebel Indian league.

Pakistan, captained by Shoaib Malik for the first time in Tests, will also be without fast bowler Shoaib Akhtar, who is facing disciplinary action for hitting teammate Mohammad Asif with a bat in South Africa earlier this month.

South African captain Graeme Smith agreed both teams will find it challenging to switch from Twenty20 cricket to Tests.

"It's going to be the biggest challenge mentally, not only for us but for Pakistan as well, to get your mindset changed, more so because we haven't played Test cricket for a number of months," Smith said on Wednesday.

As hosts, South Africa put up a disappointing show when they

failed to reach the Twenty20 tournament semifinals while Pakistan finished runners-up. Both teams lost to India.

Both teams' last Test series was in South Africa in January, where Smith led his team to a 2-1 win over Pakistan, captained by Inzamam.

Smith, however, said playing in the subcontinent would be different.

"Test cricket in the subcontinent is always a big challenge. Pakistan is a formidable team at home and they are a tough team to beat at home and so I think we are going to be ready for it."

The tourists face a test of spin, with leg-spinner Danish Kaneria leading the challenge.

"We faced Danish in South Africa, where wickets turned quite a lot. He certainly is a world-class bowler and obviously in the subcontinent he is going to play an important role and how we play him is going to be the key," said Smith.

Malik said he hoped the home team would carry its Twenty20 form into the Test series.

"The way the boys played in the

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BCB holds talks with Shaun

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) clarified their position to interim coach Shaun Williams when they met him yesterday.

The authority told the Australian that he should comply with the existing terms and conditions of his original contract that he signed with the board as a national game development manager.

The members of Cricket Operations Committee and Development Committee met him yesterday after Williams, the interim national coach for the last two trips, had expressed his desire that he is not interested to go back to his original position.

"What we told him is that he has to stay under the existing terms and conditions. But what we can consider is his desire to continue as a coach and of course under development. He will give his opinion within two days," said Gazi Ashraf Hossain Lipu, chairman of the cricket operations committee.

Meanwhile, the post of national development coach has remained vacant for the last few months with the departure of Alistair De Winter.

It was learnt that the BCB authorities were all but sure that Shaun Williams is trying to take the advantage of the situation.

Clarke slams 130



AFP, Bangalore

Michael Clarke hit a career-best 130 as Australia cantered to 307 for seven in the first one-day international against India here on Saturday.

The 26-year-old clobbered 10 fours and three sixes in his 132-ball knock to pull Australia out from a tricky 90 for four after stand-in captain Adam Gilchrist elected to bat in the day-night game.

LATEST

Persistent rain forced the first one-day international between India and Australia to be called off at the Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bangalore last night.

India had lost Sachin Tendulkar, for a duck to paceman Mitchell Johnson, with the score on 1. The other opener Gautam Gambhir was on 4 while pinch-hitter Irfan Pathan had just arrived at the crease.

The second match of the series will be held in Kochi on October 2.

Clarke, who hit a 151 on his Test debut at this very venue three years ago, anchored the innings with perfection, the highlight of which were the two sixes he hit in an over by spinner Ramesh Powar.

He also shared a valuable 144-run stand for the fifth wicket with

Brad Haddin, who chipped in with a 69, to negate the efforts of the home side riding high on their world Twenty20 triumph.

For India, mercurial seamer Shanthakumaran Sreesanth claimed three key wickets to do the early damage after Zaheer Khan had Gilchrist dismissed through a brilliant catch by Yuvraj Singh.

The athletic left-hander lunged full length to his right at point to send back the explosive Australian opener for 12.

Sreesanth, who had dismissed Brad Hodge for a duck in his first spell, returned to claim the big wickets of Matthew Hayden (34) and Andrew Symonds (7) in a space of two overs.

Hayden tried to swing across the line, only to see the ball crashing on to his stumps while Symonds was trapped plumb leg before.

Haddin, a replacement for an injured Ricky Ponting, then joined hands with Clarke to put the innings back on track.

The 29-year-old wicketkeeper-batsman hit seven fours and a six before being stumped by Indian captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni off Yuvraj.

All-rounder James Hopes provided the late sparks with a 37-run cameo off 25 balls before being dismissed in the last over which also saw Clarke being run out by Khan.

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BFF sets Jan date for B.League

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) is likely to stage the second version of the professional football league, popularly called the B.League from mid-January next year.

Chairman of B.League Abdur Rahim provided the news after a meeting with the club representatives yesterday. Except Chittagong Abahani and Khulna Abahani all the club representatives met with the committee.

"We want to start the league from January 15 as the club officials have assured us that they are ready to play the league at any time," said Rahim.

But co-ordinator of the clubs Mustaqur Rahman said that they want assurance about sponsor of the competition first as they have yet to receive their last meet's participating money.

"What we demanded is that they should confirm a sponsor first and give the share of the clubs to prepare the team. We also told them to arrange a warm-up tournament as well as the first division league before the competition," said Mustaqur.

Rahim however hoped that they will get a good sponsor this time to run the show properly.

"We have yet to receive the last year sponsorship money but we are hopeful that we can arrange a good sponsor for the second meet," he assured.

Meanwhile, the inaugural league had been postponed twelve times.



PHOTO: STAR

TOO CRAMPED FOR COMFORT: Members of the Panchagarh youth hockey team enjoying a nice little nap in one of the rooms at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium yesterday. This room has become a temporary abode for the far northern outfit during the ongoing National Youth Hockey Championship since the daily allowance for each player is a mere Tk 120.

Ad