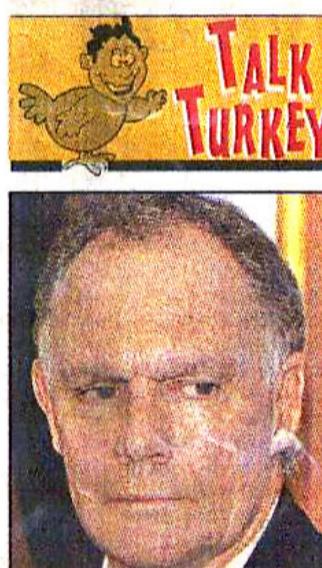
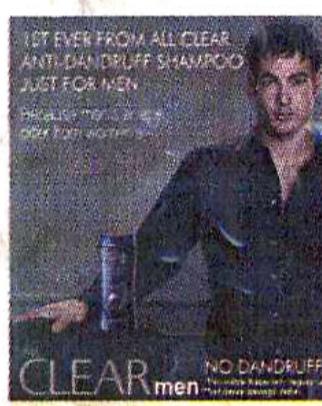




Did U Know?

Mark Gillespie of New Zealand took the highest wickets (4 for 7) in an innings in the just concluded ICC World Twenty20 Championship in South Africa. He achieved this feat against Kenya.



Greg Chappell
 (Former India cricket coach)
 "I had foreseen a great future for (Mahendra Singh) Dhoni. He has proved his potential and as a leader he has been most impressive. The Indians are lucky to have a leader like him."



NSC endorses constitution of DFA

SPORTS REPORTER

The National Sports Council (NSC) has approved the constitution of District and Divisional Football Association (DFA) to open the road for the elections of the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF).

The NSC yesterday sent the approved constitution back to the BFF, which had initially got the endorsement of FIFA before submitting it to the NSC.

The amendments to the BFF constitution, however, will be made at an extra-ordinary general meeting (EGM) of the country's football governing body.

"We have received the green signal from the NSC to take the next step toward an election after getting approval of the DFA constitution," told BFF acting general secretary Manzoor Hossain Malu yesterday.

"The NSC has instructed us to form the DFAs as soon as possible," he added.

BFF's executive meeting on tomorrow will fix the date of the EGM.

The NSC, which received the draft constitution on September 30, was satisfied with the statutes, according to a source.

It was learned that the executive committees of the divisional and district football clubs and selected government officials of related divisional/district will be able to vote.

The BFF, however, will face a big trouble to follow the FIFA guidelines of appointing a paid secretary and a joint-secretary in each DFA as football's ruling body itself has yet to implement the prescription.

NATIONAL CRICKET LEAGUE 2007-08 Rahim boost for Sylhet

SPORTS REPORTER

Sylhet look to set aside their mediocre tag in the National Cricket League, starting their preparation under a local coach as the Bangladesh Cricket Board are yet to confirm who will take coaching responsibilities of the divisional side.

Captain Rajin Saleh's side have won two four-day matches to finish fifth and in the one-day competition, they came third. Such performance, although not bad, never becomes a threat to the top finishers.

Alok Kapali, an enigma in Bangladeshi cricket, was key in Sylhet's limited success as the right-hander was the second highest scorer in NCL with 744 runs, including three hundreds. He chipped in with 24 wickets and his one-day performance was also noteworthy (295 runs in five games).

There were also some notable individual efforts that came from left-arm spinner Nabil Samad, who

claimed 34 wickets in nine games to finish third highest wicket-taker while opener Imtiaz Hossain finished fourth in the batting list, scoring 654 runs.

And of course the Golam brothers Mabud, Mowla and Rahman -- also played important roles throughout the season.

But captain Rajin wants a team effort this time to make a mark in the ninth version of the league which he believes would be a lot more competitive than the previous occasions due to the financial improvement.

"I think our batting has become stronger with the inclusion of wicketkeeper Mushfiqur Rahim. I think this time the players are more focussed than the last few years because of the handsome financial offer. We want to establish ourselves as a strong team this season," said Rajin.

The well-built right-hander said that it would also be tough competition for the national players ahead of the upcoming New

Zealand tour.

"It is encouraging that the national players are able to play maximum number of matches and no doubt the performance will count to get a place in the New Zealand-bound squad," he added.

He was very hopeful with some of his young prospects. "We have some experience players and some quality young players in the squad like all-rounder Shariful, who played for Dhaka last year. Actually there is an excitement with this year's league," he said.

There was dissatisfaction among the local organisers about his appointment as captain by the board as Kapali was their choice. Rajin however had little time for the displeasure of the local organisers.

"I think it's their internal issue but what I can assure you is that Alok and me have no problem. I played under his captaincy and he has also played under me," he informed.

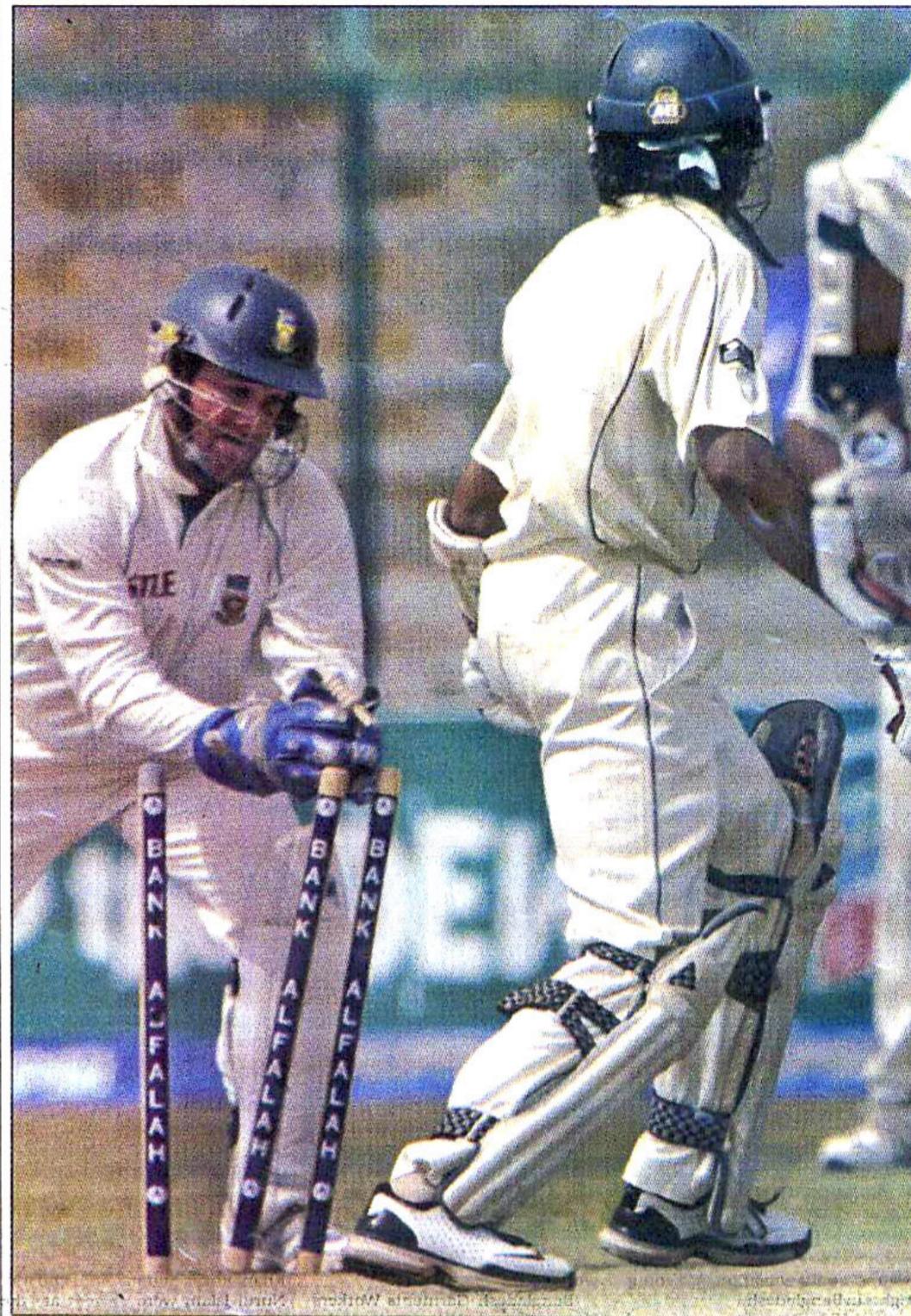


PHOTO: AFP
 THAT WAS EASY: South Africa wicketkeeper Mark Boucher stamps Pakistan tail-ender Umar Gul to break Ian Healy's record on the third day of the first Test at the Karachi National Stadium yesterday.

Harris snares five

Cricket

AFP, Karachi

South African spinner Paul Harris took a career-best five for 73 against Pakistan as the visitors extended their lead on the third day of the first Test on Wednesday.

The 28-year-old left-arm took full advantage of a spin-friendly pitch to dismiss the home team for 291 after Pakistan fought hard to avoid the follow-on at the National Stadium.

South Africa reached 76-3 at close of play to give them an overall lead of 235 with seven wickets intact, having scored 450 in the first innings. Jacques Kallis was unbeaten on 18 and Ashwell Prince on 11 not out.

Proteas' wicket-keeper Mark Boucher meanwhile set a new world record in Tests for victims behind the stumps, surpassing former Australian player Ian

Healy's tally of 395.

Boucher -- with 378 catches and 18 stumpings -- beat the record in his 103rd Test, compared with 119 Tests for Healy.

The tourists will now rely mainly on Kallis, who hit 155 in the first innings, to take them to a winning total on the fourth day when the pitch is set to further deteriorate and aid the spinners.

South Africa were given an untroubled start of 41 in their second innings before Abdul Rehman struck twice in the space of two runs.

The left-arm took Smith caught behind for 25 and in his next over got Hashim Amla stumped off a looping delivery. Amla failed to score.

Leg-spinner Danish Kaneria then dismissed Herschelle Gibbs for 18 when Faisal Iqbal smartly caught an attempted sweep at silly mid-off.

Harris, whose previous best of 4-46 was also against Pakistan at

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Eng to retain Swann

Cricket

BBC ONLINE, undated

England are set to retain Graeme Swann as their sole spinner for Thursday's second floodlit one-day international against Sri Lanka in Dambulla.

That would mean no place for Monty Panesar, who missed the 119-run defeat in game one of the five-match series.

England must win at least one of the two remaining Dambulla matches to keep the series alive for the Colombo games.

Meanwhile, Swann said he hoped to pair up with former Northants colleague Panesar at some stage in the tour.

Swann made an international comeback on Monday after more than seven years in the wilderness.

He took 1-47 and was one of the few England batsmen to score his runs -- 24 off 12 balls -- at a decent rate.

Swann added: "I didn't really look at it as me being picked instead of Monty."

"When the team was announced I was a bit hazy after my name was read out as to who the other bowlers were and I had to go and ask a few minutes later."

"It would have been nice to have

SQUAD

SRI LANKA (from): Mahela Jayawardene (captain), Kumar Sangakkara, Sanath Jayasuriya, Upul Tharanga, Tillakaratne Dilshan, Chamara Silva, Jehan Mubarak, Kaushal Lokurachchi, Dilhara Fernando, Chaminda Vaas, Lasith Malinga, Farveez Maharoof.

ENGLAND (from): Paul Collingwood (captain), Alastair Cook, Phil Mustard, Ian Bell, Kevin Pietersen, Owais Shah, Ravi Bopara, Stuart Broad, Ryan Sidebottom, James Anderson, Graeme Swann, Monty Panesar, Dimitri Mascarenhas, Luke Wright, Chris Tremlett.

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bowled with Monty and rekindle the partnership we had at Northants six or seven years ago.

"But there are four more games to go and hopefully at some stage on this trip I will get the chance to bowl with him."

England are likely to resist making any changes, and captain Paul Collingwood was pleased enough with wicket-keeper Phil Mustard's debut.

Collingwood and Mustard are club colleagues at Durham, and the skipper added: "I thought the way he kept and the way he was buzzing around the field was impressive for his first game."

"You do see a lot of people go into their shells a bit, but he had a big smile on his face, he enjoyed his little cameo and I'm sure he'll learn a lot from that."

"He'll be disappointed to get out first ball to a new bowler without giving himself the chance to have a look at him."

"He's shown potential there



PHOTO: AFP

Dhaka meet BKSP in repeat final

SPORTS REPORTER

BKSP will defend their National Youth Hockey Championship title against Dhaka today in a repeat of last year's final.

The final will kick off at 2.15pm at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

The two sides set the final clash after emerging as respective super league group winners yesterday with Dhaka hammering Munshiganj 13-0.

Rakib fired four goals and captain Mamun and Faisal three each for the last year's runners-up who led 3-0 at half-time. Alarigir netted two and Rashid the other goal.

Holders BKSP defeated Rajshahi 4-1 in the day's other match with braces from Belal and prolific scorer Jubair. Rajshahi, who trailed the first half 2-0, scored a consolation goal through Rana Kumar.

England will be disappointed to get out first ball to a new bowler without giving himself the chance to have a look at him.

"He's shown potential there

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Denmark

Denmark