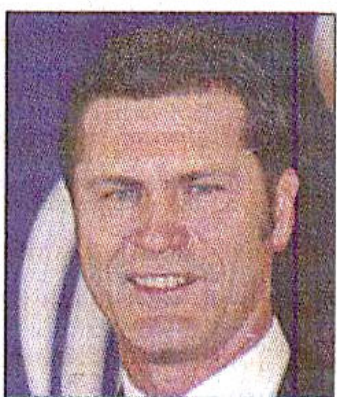




Did U Know?

The longest chess game is 269 moves (Nikolic v Arsovic, Belgrade 1989) which ended in a draw.



Simon Taufel
(ICC umpire)

"I think an umpire needs to have good communication skills. But first, he should be a good human being."



TEN Sports
Pakistan v South Africa
First ODI
Live from 12:00pm

ESPN
Sportscenter India
Sports News
Live at 8:30pm

STAR Sports
Madrid Masters Tennis
Third Round
Live from 12:00am (Friday)

ICC warns BCCI over racism

PTI, Melbourne

The International Cricket Council has warned the Indian Board that it must abide by its anti-racism code and act seriously on the incident of racist crowd behaviour against Australian all-rounder Andrew Symonds in Vadodara.

The BCCI has played down the incident only to irk the Australian team and the ICC, which has sought an explanation from the Indian Board on the issue.

BCCI secretary Niranjan Shah has also conceded that the Board has not appointed an anti-racism officer, despite it being a requirement of the ICC for all Test-playing nations, a 'Sydney Morning Herald' report said on Wednesday.

But both Ray Mali, ICC's acting chairman, and David Morgan, the chairman-elect, have stated in no uncertain terms that India must fall into line with other cricketing nations and abide by the anti-racism code.

"Every member of the ICC is a signatory to that code, and we expect everyone to follow it," Mali told a local daily here.

"If there is someone not abiding by that, then certainly we will do it," he added.

Salman given an earful

PTI, Lahore

Pakistan vice-captain Salman Butt has got a dressing down from the team management for criticising the bowlers at a press conference during the second cricket Test against South Africa here last week.

Sources in the team told PTI that Butt was forced to apologise to the bowlers and other teammates who rounded on him for his critical comments.

"Leg-spinner Danish Kaneria as well as the pacers were not happy when they read Butt's comments and confronted him," sources said.

"One bowler told Butt on his face that being the vice-captain did not give him a license to blame the bowlers publicly and if the team did not do well it was everyone's responsibility," he said.

"He also told Butt that by making such statements he should not spoil the spirit in the dressing room."

Second tier for NCL soon

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) is planning to arrange an additional tournament to the current domestic calendar to accommodate players who are not playing the 9th National Cricket League.

The new look first-class competition gets underway tomorrow across the country and it has the capacity to ensure the participation of around 150 cricketers.

But the reality is that there are a huge number of players who will remain idle for a long period until the Dhaka league starts and the board wants to bring those players into action by arranging a tournament.

"We want to do something for those players who will miss NCL. We believe that it is not good for our cricket to have such a large number of cricketers idle at the start of the domestic season," informed Ahmed Sajjadul Alam Bobby, chairman of media committee and vice-chairman of the tournament committee.

"It is still in the drawing table but we are very optimistic about the inclusion of this competition. We will definitely try to arrange it sometime next month. But we

want to make it a meaningful tournament by ensuring competitiveness. We will definitely try to provide minimum facilities in line with NCL," he added.

According to Bobby it would be second-tier to the premier first-class competition as it would also be of the longer version format.

But the problem lies in the small number of grounds and manpower to run the tournament properly.

"We are trying to devise all those things but we have to do it for the interest of our players. You see already that five players from the 30-member preliminary list of the each divisional squads are left out, and besides there are some other players who have nothing to do," added Bobby.

BCB on track for coach

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) is optimistic in meeting the deadline for the appointment of a national coach.

"Hopefully, we can give you a good news next week," said a confident Gazi Ashraf Hossain Lipu, chairman of the cricket operations

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SIX-SHOOTER KARTHIK: Indian left-arm spinner Murali Kartik (2nd R) celebrates the wicket of Australia batsman Andrew Symonds (not in picture) during the final one-day at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai on Wednesday.

PHOTO: AFP

20 years ago...

Cricket

INTERNET, undated

Where was Sachin Tendulkar this day 20 years ago? It's a question even cricket statisticians, who have kept track of the batting maestro's every run, will struggle with. On October 17, 1987, Tendulkar was at the Wankhede -- not as India's premier batsman like today, but a ball boy at the India versus Zimbabwe World Cup tie.

A few years ago, when Mid Day interviewed Tendulkar before his grand felicitation by the Mumbai Cricket Association, he revealed

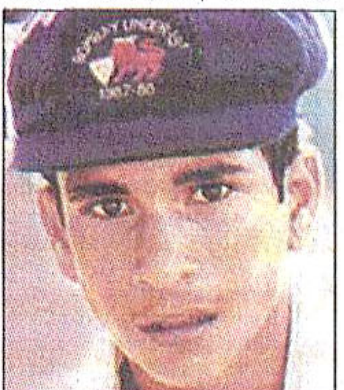


PHOTO: INTERNET

A LONG TIME AGO: Sachin Tendulkar, only 14 years old in the picture, wearing his school cap as he works as a ball boy during the World Cup 1987 tie between India and Zimbabwe.

how batting legend Sunil Gavaskar invited him to the India dressing room. Gavaskar was in his last season of international cricket then. It was Tendulkar's first meeting with the great man.

"It was the first time I spoke to him," said Tendulkar. "Spoke to him in the sense, I just went and stood next to him and shook his hand. That was the first time I was invited to the dressing room to meet senior players."

Childhood chum Vinod Kamble recollected both being given a chance to be ball boys during the India-England World Cup semifinal thanks to local administrator Prakash Kelkar.

"It was a dream come true for us to see our heroes from close quarters."

"Even getting the lunch box gave us a kick. It's 20 years ago, so I don't remember what we discussed after the match, but it was exciting to do duty on either side of the sight screen," said Kamble.

Though Australia clinched the one-day series, Tendulkar will attract most eyeballs. As reported in Mid Day on Tuesday, it could well be his last international match at the Wankhede since the stadium is to undergo renovation soon, to be ready for the 2011 World Cup.

On Wednesday, the MCA and BCCI will felicitate Tendulkar for becoming the first Indian in international cricket to figure in 400 plus ODIs.

October 17 will surely never be forgotten by international cricket's greatest run accumulator.

AFC CHAMPIONSHIP Bangladesh U-16s drub Palestine

SPORTS REPORTER

Four-goal striker Sohail gave Bangladesh a flying start in the AFC Youth (Under-16) Championship yesterday when they brushed aside Palestine 9-1 in one of the three opening day's matches in the United Arab Emirates.

Bangladesh led the Group D match at the Military Physical Education Centre ground in Abu Dhabi 4-0 at the break with Sohail completing his hat-trick by the half hour.

The Bangladesh No. 10 opened the scoring after 12 minutes from a goalmouth melee and converted a penalty ten minutes later to double the lead.

Sohail's treble came on the half hour when he headed home a long throw-in by Saifuddin, the substitute who himself netted two second-half goals.

Saddam made it 4-0 on the brink of halftime while man-of-the-match Sohail got his fourth on the hour-mark. Nadim also scored a brace, in the 75 and 88 minutes, to end the rout.

Run ragged by their opponents, the inexperienced Palestinians reduced the arrears in the 85th minute after going 7-0 down through Al Shaer's consolation goal.

Bangladesh, who had left Dhaka eyeing at least two wins including one against Palestine in the qualifiers, will take on hosts UAE on Saturday.

Dravid rested, not dropped

CRICINFO, undated

Rahul Dravid has been left out of the Indian one-day team -- for only the second time in his career -- in the seventh ODI against Australia at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai. He has been replaced by Dinesh Karthik for the dead rubber.

At the toss Mahendra Singh Dhoni said Dravid was 'rested' but the Board of Control for Cricket in India did not make an official announcement regarding the same.

Since 1996, when Dravid made his debut, he has only been dropped once, in 1997, when he was struggling to come to grips with the one-day game. He missed eight matches in 1997 and 26 games in 1998. Subsequently, since making his comeback he has played over 300 matches, contributing consistently.

In the recent past, however, barring a sublime 92 against England at Bristol, Dravid has struggled. He has made just 51 runs from five innings in this series, at an average of only 10.20, with a highest of 31. Dravid has faced only 80 balls in all, batting in different positions and has twice been dismissed without scoring.

Dravid gave up the captaincy of the Test and ODI teams just before the start of this series, and the BCCI appointed Mahendra Singh Dhoni the ODI captain. The selectors are yet to appoint a Test captain.

Kartik salvages India

Cricket

STAR SPORT MONITOR

India pulled off a thrilling two-wicket win in the seventh and final one-day international against Australia at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai last night.

Tail-enders Zaheer Khan (31*) and Murali Kartik (21*) shared an unlikely 51-run partnership for the unbroken ninth wicket to give India something to cheer about, after they had lost the series in the previous match. Australia won the series 4-2.

The winning runs came off Kartik's pads in the last delivery of the 46th over, that raced to the fine-ledge.

In a low-scoring match, India faltered at the top while chasing Australia's modest score of 193, as

they slumped to 6 for 64 in the 19th over. Mitchell Johnson took care of the top order as he finished with 3 for 46 in his 10 overs.

Robin Uthappa was the only recognised Indian batsman to stand firm as he hit 47, but his dismissal gave the visitors a genuine chance of a win before the tail wagged.

Left-arm spinner Kartik was the hero of the night for his all-round show as he took a career-best haul of 6-27 earlier as India restricted Australia below 200.

AFP adds: The 31-year-old Kartik flummoxed the Australians in a sensational spell of slow bowling which saw him miss out on two hat-tricks in the dead rubber.

He dismissed Brad Hodge (16) and Andrew Symonds off the last two balls of the 20th over before returning to send back Brad Haddin (19), Brad Hogg and Brett

Lee in the 32nd. James Hopes (22) became the sixth victim of the bowler who was picked midway through the series after 20 months in wilderness.

Kartik's figures just fell short of the best-ever by an Indian spinner, a record held by Anil Kumble who took 6 for 12 against West Indies in Kolkata in 1993.

Captain Ricky Ponting topped scored with 57 off 78 balls with nine fours and shared two half-century stands with Adam Gilchrist (19) and Hodge to lend respectability to the total after electing to bat on a lively wicket.

The visitors got away to a poor start, losing Michael Clarke off the very first ball by left-arm seamer Zaheer Khan.

Ponting though looked in glorious touch, racing to his half-century with the help of nine fours

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SA wary of T20 heroes

1st ODI against Pakistan today

Cricket

AFP, Lahore

South Africa captain Graeme Smith on Wednesday said he was wary of Pakistan's one-day side after their success in last month's Twenty20 World Cup.

The tourists have already downed Pakistan 1-0 in the Test series but Smith said limited-overs cricket was a different proposition ahead of Thursday's opener.

"Pakistan's confidence will be high after their recent success in the

Twenty20 tournament," he said.

"But obviously it's another challenge for their captain Shoaib Malik and we will try to put them under pressure."

Pakistan were narrowly beaten by arch-rivals India in the inaugural Twenty20 final in Johannesburg.

But Smith said South Africa were feeling fresh and rested after sealing their first series victory on the sub-continent since 2000 last week.

In another confidence boost, they beat Pakistan's Patron's XI by 176 runs in their only warm-up match here on Tuesday.

"We are pretty confident after a

rush start to the tour and it was nice to have some good rest and we are going into the one-day series knowing we have the potential to do well," Smith told a press conference Wednesday.

"It is always important to have a good start," said Smith.

The only cloud hanging over the Proteas was a hamstring injury to all-rounder Vernon Philander, the skipper said.

"He hurt his hamstring and is struggling to walk so we are not sure about him," said Smith of Philander, who arrived during the

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