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Did U Know?

The first golf balls, used in the mid-1500s in Scotland, were made of wood.



Jose Mourinho
(Former Chelsea manager)
"Being the coach of a national team is not the same as being coach of a club. It's a job for someone who doesn't like working much."
While ruling out the possibility of becoming the England manager.



TEN Sports
UEFA Champions League
Besiktas v Liverpool
Live from 12:00am (Thursday)
Real Madrid v Olympiakos
Live from 2:45am (Thursday)
ESPN
Sportscenter India
Sports News
Live at 8:30pm

BFF duo for FIFA course

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Football Federation's (BFF) communication manager Ahmed Sayed Al Fatah and professional league and club manager Abu Nayeem Sohag will leave Dhaka this morning for Pakistan to participate in the 'FIFA Futuro III: Administrative and Management Instructors' Refreshers Course' in Lahore.

The course, to be conducted by FIFA and AFC instructors, will be held from October 25-31. A similar course was held in New Delhi, India last year.

A total of 23 participants will attend from member countries of the South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) apart from Iran.

General secretaries of Bhutan, Pakistan and Afghanistan football federations will also participate.

Dhoni worried of schedule

PTI, Melbourne

Indian cricket captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni has highlighted concerns that his side may be physically and mentally exhausted when it arrives in Australia in December following a gruelling schedule.

The Indians have been flat out almost since May, and they will play archrivals Pakistan in a three-Test and five-match limited-overs series before reaching Down Under.

"We have a 10-day gap right now, and in between the Pakistan series and the Australian series we have just a three or four-day gap," Dhoni said.

"It's quite tough on the cricketers, but that's the way it goes. Even if you're feeling tired or exhausted, you cannot walk out on any of the matches," he was quoted as saying by the 'Australian Associated Press'.

Australia will be relatively fresh by comparison, having started its international season last month.

Australia plays Tests against Sri Lanka in Brisbane (November 8-12) and Hobart (November 16-20), and three one-day matches against New Zealand, before meeting India again.

Mashrafe is back

SPORTS REPORTER



Pace spearhead Mashrafe Bin Mortaza showed signs of returning to his belligerent best with a hostile spell while his new ball partner Syed Rasel lived up to his billing as Mr. Accurate to ensure Khulna complete a successful Dhaka trip with a 39-run win over the hosts in the opening round one-day match of the 9th National Cricket League at the Mirpur Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday.

Left-arm pacer Rasel took a five-for but it was Mashrafe's fiery spell, something which was desperately missing for the last one year, that gutted Dhaka despite a brilliant recovery act by the left-right combination of Mosharraf Hossain (72) and Mahmudullah Riyad (65).

Chasing a fighting Khulna total of 240, Dhaka were bundled out for 201 with more than five overs to spare in front of a strong 8,000 home crowd.

Mashrafe confirmed that there would be no fireworks from Mohammad Ashraful (1) when he had Dhaka and the national captain trapped in front with a superb inswinger in the fifth over, leaving the hosts tottering at 13-3.

The Narail Express then returned to his second spell to effectively dash Dhaka's hopes of

an intriguing finish after Mosharraf and Riyad produced 101 runs for the fourth wicket.

Bowling with extreme pace that was missing since he collapsed in Sri Lanka two years ago, Mashrafe dismissed Dhaka's wicketkeeper Sajjad Kadir for a duck after left-arm spinner Abdur Razzak broke the stubborn fourth wicket stand.

But his third wicket was a spectator's delight. The ball landed at 140kph on Nazmul Hossain's off-stump and the batsman could only fend off the rising ball behind the wicket.

"I haven't seen him bowling so well for a long time. I think he was playing all six matches together here," said Ashraful while praising the fantastic effort of the fast bowler who also bowled brilliantly in the drawn four-day match at the same venue.

"It looked like the Mashrafe of old. It was fantastic to watch the way he bowled in the four-day and then in the one-day game and after a long time he got back his rhythm. We have four regular national team bowlers in the team and that's why we were always confident to defend the total," said Khulna captain Habibul Bashar.

Rasel also played his part in the match. He removed both the Dhaka openers on a wicket that suited his bowling most. The left-arm struck in his very first over with a gangling Al-Shahriar, who

has been out of any competitive cricket for the last six months, paid the penalty for taking the aerial route too early and was comfortably caught at mid-on.

Javed Omar was Rasel's second victim in his next over. He was a surprise inclusion in the one-day set up of Dhaka when many felt Ashraful should have tried one of the new faces after the selectors had dumped the doctored opener from any one-day internationals since the Sri Lanka tour this year.

Earlier, Khulna rode on half-centuries from Imrul Kayes (71) and Shakib Al Hasan (56) to put on a challenging total after deciding to bat first on a surface that could have never been an ideal one ahead of the Tigers' tour of New Zealand.

Opener Kayes anchored the Khulna innings during his 121-ball essay and the left-hander struck three fours and two sixes -- one against Mohammad Sharif and another against Mosharraf over long-on, before he was brilliantly caught by Nazmul Hossain off Ashraful.

Shakib's knock featured five boundaries in 51 balls.

Mashrafe also scored a quickfire 35 in 25 balls that contained two massive sixes against left-arm spinner Mohammad Rafique. He later shared the man-of-the-match award with Rasel, who finished with 5-35.

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JOB HALF DONE: Khulna players unite to celebrate the fall of Dhaka captain Mohammad Ashraful's wickets during the one-day match of the National Cricket League at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

Booters leave today Nayeemuddin's last chance!

SPORTS REPORTER



Syed Nayeemuddin could well have his last match as Bangladesh coach this week when his boys face Tajikistan in the second leg of the 2010 World Cup pre-qualifiers away in Dushanbe.

The only probable chance the Indian coach has to survive a premature chop from the job is to guide the team perform a miracle: either beat Tajikistan or draw at least 2-2 on October 28 to make it to the second stage of the Asian qualifiers.

Bangladesh drew 1-1 with the Tajiks at home on October 8 to stay alive for the second day against the Central Asians, who had won three out of four internationals, 2-0, 2-0 and 6-1, between the two sides.

The former Indian coach and international, who was given the responsibility of the national team with a view to prepare them for the SAFF Championship, seems to have lost his usefulness to a cash-starved Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) since the regional football extravaganza's deferral to

June next year from this December, when Nayeem's contract expires.

The writings are also on the wall. Senior players have deserted the national team now and again and the BFF officials hardly did anything to pursue them back, washing their hands off the matters as well as pushing Nayeem into centre of controversies.

BFF's indifference directs that it would ultimately make Nayeem the scapegoat in a bid to save a few months' salary. And no one would wonder because BFF, under the same leadership, had previously shown the doors to SAFF Championship winning Austrian coach George Kottan and Diego Cruciani of Argentina, whose side were losing finalists in the same tournament, without giving them enough time build on their success.

Nayeem, however, was not bothered by the fact that he has been provided minimum facilities to prepare the side.

"You expect too much from these boys without giving them what they need," Nayeem told from the team's residential camp in BKSP yesterday.

"They played like lions in the home match against Tajikistan. Since then we haven't had any

practice match. But I am happy to see the commitment and fitness levels high.

"Biplab and Rajani did not leave camp to join their greatest festival, the Durga Puja. I also believe the players have the stamina to play with the same pace and spirit for 90 minutes," told the 60-year-old.

Bangladesh's first-leg match in Dhaka was proof of the booters' fitness as they never showed a tired leg or two during the proceedings.

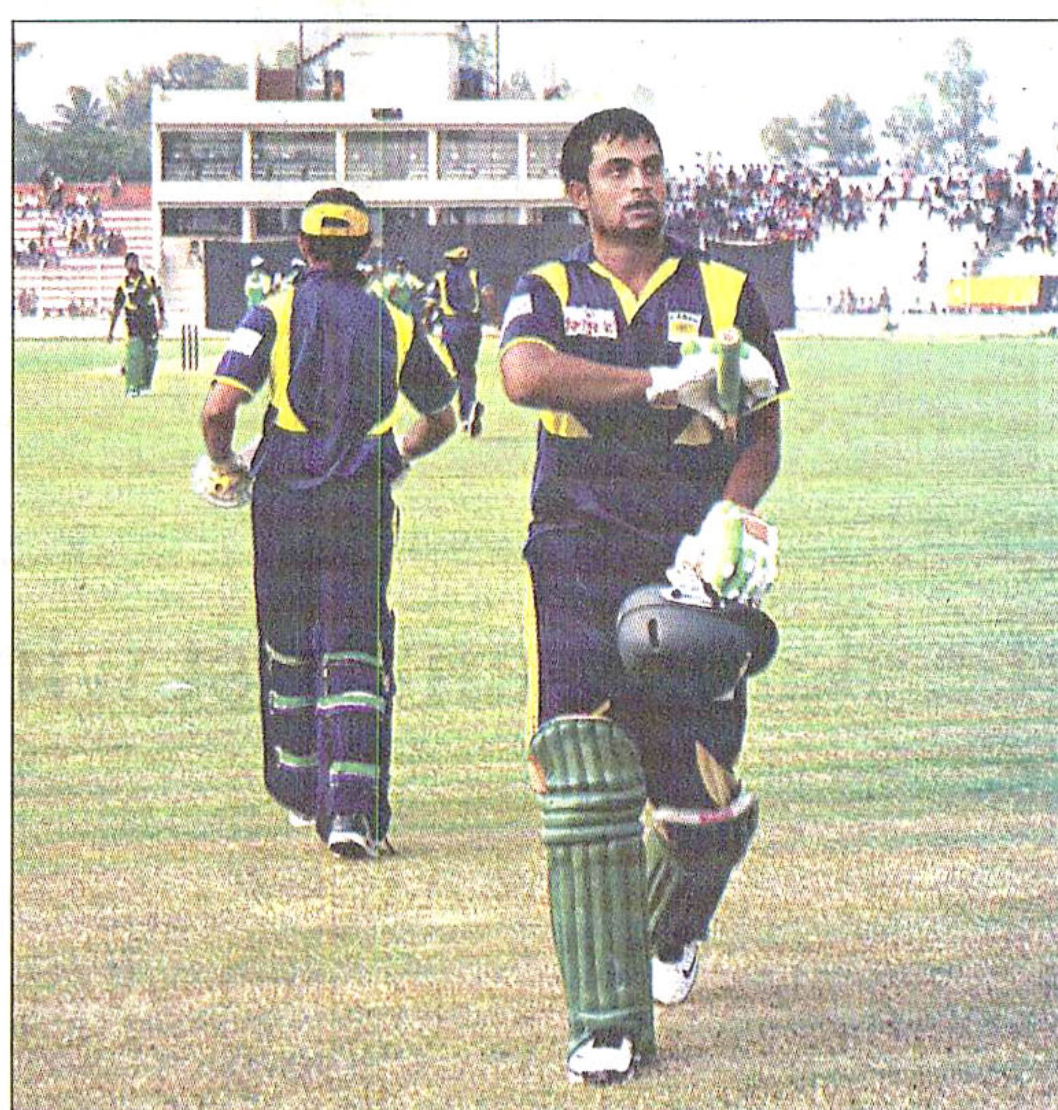
"If we can play like that match again, we have a chance," said Nayeem adding that they would never go for a draw.

"We would be on the backfoot from the word go if we start defensively. We want to play with the attacking mindset like our first game, where we fought till the end."

He, however, will miss the defensive solidity of the team after centre-back Nazrul Islam's walk-out. The options to replace him are young Ariful, an erratic Shuvra or veteran Hassan.

"Not to worry about one player's absence because we work as a team. My only regret is to not get a practice match during the last two weeks. But it's beyond my control."

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DAY OF PAIN AND PLEASURE: Chittagong opener Tamim Iqbal leaves the field after hammering a 133 against Barisal in the one-day of the National Cricket League at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra yesterday. He received the man-of-the-match award for his match-winning knock, but at the same time received a heavy ban for a scuffle with Talha Jubair.

Tamim, Talha banned over fracas

SPORTS REPORTER

While he scored a scintillating century, Chittagong opener Tamim Iqbal was involved in a clash with Barisal fast bowler Talha Jubair resulting in both players being served a ban by the match officials during a National Cricket League one-day at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra yesterday.

Match referee Akhtar Ahmed recommended a ban of two four-day or four one-day matches ban on both youngsters after receiving the on-field report from umpires Enamul Haque Moni and Abdullah Al Matin.

In the seventh over of Chittagong's chase, Tamim exchanged abuse with Talha after hitting a four through the covers. After the initial verbal exchange, the two went toe-to-toe after which there was shoving between them.

The two were separated by the players and umpires, who warned both players for their misconduct at that point.

Chittagong won the match by eight wickets.

Meanwhile, Khulna captain Habibul Bashar was fined 10 per cent while ten players of his team were charged five per cent of their match fees for failing to meet the over rate during the four-day NCL match in Dhaka on Monday.

We must learn T20: Ponting

PTI, Melbourne

Australian captain Ricky Ponting on Monday confessed that his team did not take Twenty20 cricket seriously and needed to learn the nuances of the game to lift its modest international record in the shortest format.

"I don't think there was any need for it to be taken ultra-seriously before the World Cup. The games that were played before (World Cup) were almost played as exhibition-type matches -- to promote the other forms of the game," Ponting said on returning home from India.

"I think that was the way it was used by most boards around the world, but now it's pretty clear and apparent to us that we'll be playing a lot more. When there's a World Cup event in any form of the game, you want to make sure you understand the game well and you play the game well," he was quoted as saying by the 'Australian Associated Press'.

"Our international record's not great, we've probably only got a 50-50 win-loss record -- and that's something we're going to improve on over the next couple of years," he added.

Ponting admitted his team was still being educated in the nuances of the game.

"We probably learnt a little bit through the World Cup about the format of the game. Going there we

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Tamim storm sinks Barisal

SPORTS REPORTER



Dashing opener Tamim Iqbal smashed the season's first limited-overs hundred as Chittagong rode on the left-hander's blazing 133 to take revenge of their four-day loss with an emphatic eight-wicket victory over Barisal in the one-day competition of the 9th National Cricket League at the Shaheed Chandu Stadium in Bogra yesterday.

Rajshahi, however, were the only team win both the opening round matches as Mushfiqur Rahman's half-century guided the home team to a two-wicket success against Sylhet in a low-scoring affair at the Rajshahi Divisional Stadium.

CHITTAGONG-BARISAL
It was a day of pain and pleasure for left-handed opener Tamim as he put the opponent bowlers to the sword to ensure an easy victory but got himself involved in a scuffle with paceman Talha Jubair to receive match bans.

Barisal won the four-day game by five wickets but Tamim toyed

with their bowlers to make a 224-run target look meagre. Chittagong romped to 225-2 in just 36 overs.

Man-of-the-match Tamim smashed the ball all over the park during his 92-ball essay that contained 15 boundaries and all the rival bowlers except for Arifat Salahuddin and Abul Bashar were punished brutally by the hard hitter.

Tamim had a 146-run partnership with his elder brother Nafees Iqbal for the second wicket before being stumped by wicketkeeper Shaheen Hossain off Tariqul Islam just 25 runs shy of victory.

Nafees was not out on 56 off 98 deliveries that saw six boundaries.

Earlier, Raisul Islam continued his good form by making 70 off 89 balls with the help of four boundaries to help his side making a decent total after being sent into bat.

Abul Bashar added 42 off 68 featuring three fours and a six and Arifat Salahuddin contributed 41 off 42 balls with one four and two sixes.

Left-arm spinner Elias Sunny was the most successful Chittagong bowler with 4-36.

RAJSHAHI-SYLHET
Sylhet's batting blues continued also in the limited-overs game as

they were restricted to 168 for nine after deciding to bat first.

But still, Rajshahi struggled to achieve the target as they lost eight wickets to score 169 runs with two overs to spare, thanks to out-of-favour all-rounder Mushfiqur Rahman's unbeaten 50.

Mushfiqur, who smashed four boundaries in 75 balls, got valuable support from number ten Mohammad Shahjada as the pair associated in a 71-run stand for the ninth wicket.

Shahjada was unbeaten on 35 off 45 balls, hitting three fours and a six. Rezaul Haque Nayeem caused the initial damage by taking two wickets while Saif Mahmud captured three for 36.

Earlier, a 77-run sixth wicket partnership between Sharifullah (56 off 90 balls) and Saif Mahmud (30 off 71 balls) was the highlight of the Sylhet innings.

Shahjada, Forhad Reza and Saqlain Sajib claimed two wickets each.

SCORES IN BRIEF
BARISAL: 224 all out in 49.3 overs (Nafees 0, Hannan 18, Imran 10, Rokibul 12, Raisul 70, Bashar 42, Salahuddin 41, Talha 3, Sajidul 3)

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5

Discipline scripts Pak win



AFP, Faisalabad

Pakistan produced disciplined cricket to upstage South Africa by six wickets in the third day-night international here on Tuesday to take a 2-1 lead in the series.

Rao Iftikhar returned a career-best 3-33 and leg-spinner Shahid Afridi 3-37 to restrict the tourists to 197 all out.

Mohammad Yousuf then hit an unbeaten snail-paced 58 off 113 balls to help Pakistan reach 202-4 in 48.1 overs.

Yousuf added an invaluable 79 runs for the fourth wicket with captain Shoaib Malik (42) to set up the victory. Yousuf hit just one boundary in his half-century but stayed until the victory was achieved.

It followed a contrasting cameo by Afridi who enthralled the 16,000-strong crowd at Iqbal Stadium with a rapidfire 32.

Afridi gave Pakistan a fiery start when he hit two sixes and four boundaries in his 18-ball knock before Pakistan lost three quick wickets.

Afridi's ferocious shot off Shaun Pollock was held by Graeme Smith before Yasir Hameed (18) fell to Makhaya Ntini and Yousif Khan (10) was caught behind off Albie Morkel.

Morkel also broke the Malik-Yousuf stand. But with only 51 needed for victory it was too late for South Africa as Misbahul Haq (29 not out) helped Yousuf complete the formality.

Malik paid tribute to his team as they edged ahead in the five-match series.

"We overcame fielding problems and this was a complete team effort. Now after this win we are determined to win the series," said Malik, whose team won the second match by 25 runs.

South Africa won the first match by 45 runs.

Captain Smith said South Africa had failed to get a solid total.

"We couldn't put partnerships (together) in the middle overs and had we scored 20-30 more runs it could have been interesting," said Smith.

Earlier, Iftikhar and Afridi shared six wickets to derail South Africa, which won the toss and elected to bat.

Afridi dismissed Jacques Kallis (13), Justin Kemp (42) and Shaun Pollock (one) to trigger a middle-

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MAN-OF-THE-MATCH: Pakistan all-rounder Shahid Afridi (R) and wicketkeeper Kamran Akmal (in the background) appeal for a low decision against South Africa's AB de Villiers during the third one-day international at the Iqbal Stadium in Faisalabad yesterday. Though the appeal was not successful, Afridi still claimed three wickets for 37 before hitting a gusty 32 off 18 balls.