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Did U Know?

Garry Kasparov of Russia, the greatest chess player of all-time, achieved Grand Master status at age 17 (1980).



Makhaya Ntini
(South Africa fast bowler)
"When I was growing up and hearing we used to have a competition when if you hit the cow's horns you got points. I never missed." While recalling his childhood.



ESPN
English Premier League
West Ham v Everton
Live from 8:55pm
STAR Sports
English Premier League
Portsmouth v Tottenham
Live from 8:55pm
Fulham v Newcastle United
Live from 11:10pm
Primera Liga
Espanol v Levante
Live from 1:30am (Sunday)
Valencia v Barcelona
Live from 3:00am (Sunday)



Net's Cricket League
(Round Eight, Day Two)
Barisal v Dhaka
Venue: Fatullah Cricket Stadium
Rajshahi v Chittagong
Venue: Rajshahi Divisional Stadium
Khulna v Sylhet
Venue: Khulna Divisional Stadium

Kumble banks on runs

CRICINFO, undated

Anil Kumble is confident India can beat Australia in the upcoming series if the batsmen perform the way they did during the previous tour in 2003-04. Kumble, fresh from a 1-0 series win against Pakistan in his first assignment as Test captain, took heart from the manner in which Sri Lanka nearly chased down a target of more than 500 against Australia in the second Test in Hobart last month.

"We have the potential to beat Australia because we have the batting line-up to put the runs on the board," he said during the shoot of a special television programme. "And once we have the runs on the board, I believe we have the ability to get 20 wickets."

Kumble recently trumped Mahendra Singh Dhoni for the Test captaincy, after Rahul Dravid and Sachin Tendulkar had not wanted the job. "I thought the chance had passed me, I thought there was a chance when I was vice-captain in 1996," said Kumble, adding that he didn't expect to be made captain even as recently as two months ago. "When I became captain was not in my control, and I think it has come at the right time."

In front of an audience which included many of his school teachers and college professors, Kumble said being handed the reins of the Test side was a great motivation. The 37-year-old Kumble, whose career contains 17 years and 121 Tests so far, revealed that he had contemplated retirement several

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Tigers tune with time, pitch

Cricket

TIGERCRIKET.COM, Hamilton

Getting used to a sleeping routine is the first adjustment the Bangladesh team have to make here. Hamilton is seven hours ahead of Dhaka and by the time the eyes start getting dozy all of a sudden you realise that its time to train.

The Tigers practiced in two groups on Friday. The first group of players left their hotel by the Waikato River for the Seddon Park at 9:20am local time (2:20am Bangladesh Standard Time) while the second followed an hour and a half later and most of them spoke of some degree of difficulty getting a decent sleep the night before. But training can't wait and there were three separate nets, one with the new Bola bowling machine the Tigers have carried to New Zealand, at Seddon Park's practice area ready for the batsmen. Also there were local net bowlers some of whom may feature in the Northern Districts team that will play two practice games against the tourists on the December 16

and 18.

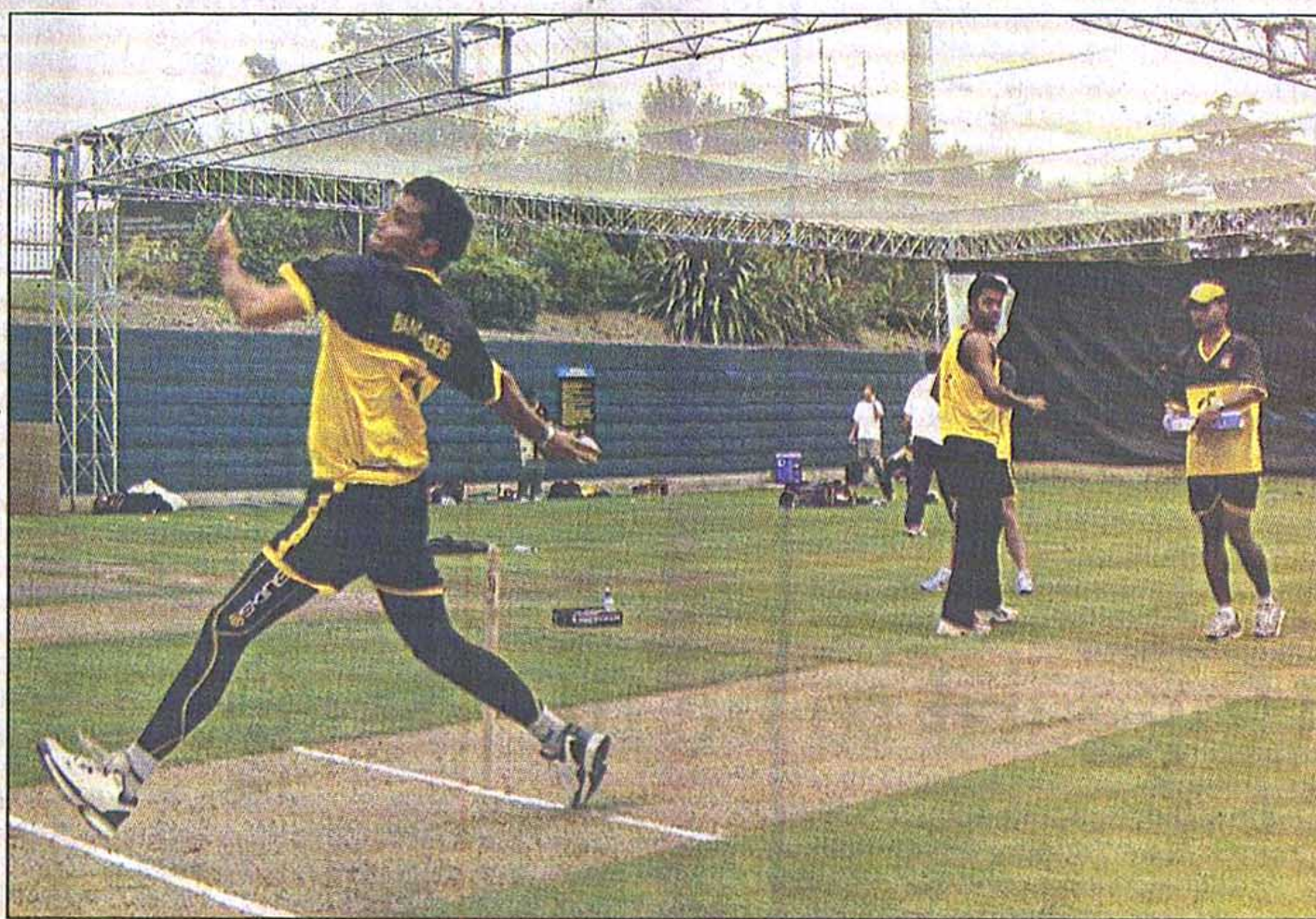
"The practice wickets are good. They are a bit on the slower side but have even bounce," said Aftab Ahmed after his first hit in the nets.

"I pulled a lot of deliveries today (Friday) and it felt pretty good because the timing was there and balls were hitting the right areas of the bat. If the centre wickets are similar in character then we should not have too many problems adjusting," said all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan who also found a bit of turn while bowling his left-arm spinners.

The pacers too enjoyed the natural zip when balls pitched on a length. There was also fielding drill side by side with the nets and after lunch the day's programme rounded off with a gym session.

The weather in Hamilton has been warm lately, unlike the southern parts of the country and the skies are expected to stay clear over the weekend which means Bangladesh's first warm-up game on Sunday is not under any direct threat from elements.

Tomorrow the team will train at Seddon Park from 1:55pm and later in the afternoon the team for the practice match is expected to be named.



WARMING UP: Bangladesh vice-captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza in his delivery stride as Syed Raseel (C) looks back at him during the Tigers' first practice at Seddon Park in Hamilton on Friday.

PHOTO: TIGERCRIKET.COM

Shahjada rips Ctg

SPORTS REPORTER



Rajshahi fast bowler Mohammad Shahjada

shone on a rather slow opening day of the 9th National Cricket League eighth round at the Rajshahi Divisional Stadium yesterday.

His four-wicket haul helped skittle Chittagong out for 198 in the first innings to which the hosts replied with 24-2.

In Khulna, right-handed batsman Golam Rahman played a lone hand to help visitors Sylhet reach 228-6 while Dhaka crawled to 215-6 at close of play against Barisal at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium.

RAJSHAHI-CHITTAGONG
Coming in at first change after new ball bowlers Alamgir Kabir and Saiful Islam reduced Chittagong to 27-3, right-arm paceman Shahjada got rid of heavy-scoring Nazimuddin for 13.

Captain Ehsanul Haque and

wicketkeeper-batsman Dhiman Ghosh resurrected Chittagong's innings, hitting half-centuries as they shared a 116-run fifth wicket stand. At that point, Dhiman had just reached 50 off 94 balls, but his joy was short-lived as Shahjada returned in his second spell to have him caught behind by Khaled Mashud. Dhiman struck nine boundaries in his two hours stay at the crease.

Shahjada removed Ehsanul, 66 off 83 balls, four overs later in the same manner and then clean bowled Faisal Hossain as Chittagong slipped back to trouble and were eventually bowled out for 198 runs. Beside Shahjada's efforts, Saiful bagged three wickets.

Chittagong's new ball reply was good too, as both Rajshahi openers were sent back to the pavilion but Farhad Hossain and Shakil Haider, of Challengers Cup fame, survived to stumps on 24 for two.

KHULNA-SYLHET
Sylhet opener Golam Rahman carried his bat through the day. In his six-hour stay at the crease,

right-handed batsman Rahman struck seven boundaries to move to 78.

He found some support from brother Golam Mabud, who struck 53 off 119 balls with the help of nine fours. The brothers shared 83 runs for the fifth wicket.

Saif Mahmud was unbeaten on 5 with Rahman.

The hosts depleted bowling attack did quite well as Aslam Khan, Robiul Islam and Murad Khan all took two wickets each.

BARISAL-DHAKA
Dhaka, who lost a few of their big names to the Tigers tour to New Zealand like Khulna, struggled against Barisal's disciplined bowling attack on Day One.

Precariously placed at 69-4, Nadif Chowdhury and Mehrab Hossain took Dhaka out of some trouble with a 60-run fifth wicket partnership. Nadif smashed two sixes and four boundaries in his 33-ball 39 while Mehrab contributed 33 off 78 balls.

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Dilshan returns to nat'l fold

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka have brought back middle-order batsman Tillekeratne Dilshan for the third and final Test against England starting in Galle on Tuesday.

Dilshan, 31, who was ignored for last month's tour of Australia, replaces left-hand batsman Jehan Dilshan, who failed in the first two Tests against England.

Fast bowler Chanaka Welagedera comes in for the injured Dilhara Fernando as the home team's other change for the match.

Sri Lanka lead 1-0 in the three-match series after winning the first Test in Kandy by 88 runs. The second Test ended in a draw here on Thursday.

SQUAD
Mahela Jayawardene (captain), Kumar Sangakkara, Michael Vandort, Upul Tharanga, Chamara Silva, Prasanna Jayawardene (wicketkeeper), Chaminda Vaas, Muttiah Muralidaran, Lasith Malinga, Sujewa De Silva, Chanaka Welagedera, Tillekeratne Dilshan, Malinga Bandara.

Younis willing to lead

CRICINFO, undated

In a surprise change of heart, Younis Khan has said he is now willing to lead the Test side if the Pakistan board asked him to do so.

Younis has long shown a reluctance to lead Pakistan. He gave up the captaincy - and swiftly took it back - last year before the Champions Trophy, and then turned down the post again after the Caribbean World Cup this year.

And he was again an unwilling stand-in captain after Shoaib Malik's ankle injury ruled him out of the last two Tests against India. "If the board wants me to lead the team, I can do it. But first we [himself and the officials] need to sit down, discuss and finalise some things," Younis told PTI.

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Ricky, Adam blaze NZ

Cricket

AFP, Adelaide

Ricky Ponting scored his 24th one-day hundred and Adam Gilchrist clubbed a ferocious half-century to steer Australia to a convincing seven-wicket win over New Zealand in the opening Chappell-Hadlee Trophy series game on Friday.

Skipper Ponting cruised to an unbeaten 107 off 108 balls with 13 boundaries to glide Australia home to victory with 45 balls to spare after opening batsman Gilchrist had crashed six fours and two sixes in his 51 off just 29 balls.

The Australians always were in command, despite a rain delay, and polished off the runs with ease to take a one-nil lead in the best-of-three series with the next match in Sydney on Sunday.

Set 255 to win, Australia reached the target for the loss of three wickets in the 43rd over.

"We did a terrific job to keep them to that total, I remember looking at the board after 30 overs and they were 2-149, we usually go on a ratio of being able to double that after 30 overs," Ponting said.

"For us to restrict them to only another 100 was really where the game turned in our favour."

"(Shaun) Tait got us a couple of wickets in his second and third spells, which was crucial a couple of quite quick breakthroughs, and that changed the momentum of the game, and Gilly (Gilchrist) came out and decided he was still in Twenty20 mode."

Gilchrist's breezy knock, while considerably briefer than his captain's, had a greater say in deciding the match.

Receiving a stroke of good fortune on 38 when he snicked Chris Martin behind only to be reprieved by umpire Mark Benson's call of no-ball, Gilchrist played with uninhibited freedom to virtually

decide the contest.

Gilchrist's exit, skying Martin to cover, left Australia requiring a mere four runs per over.

Ponting, Michael Clarke (48) and Andrew Symonds (28 not out) made light of the run chase despite a 48-minute rain delay.

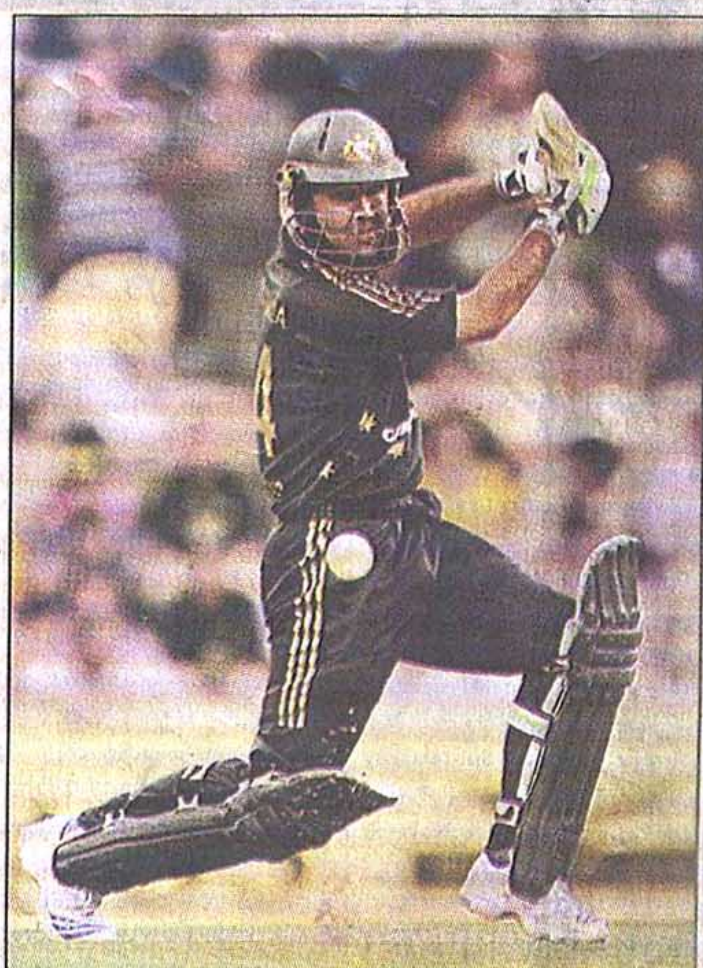
Brendon McCullum fell four runs short of his maiden one-day century as New Zealand totalled

254 for seven off 50 overs.

The belligerent wicketkeeper-batsman, opening the innings, crashed 12 boundaries and a six off 103 balls before he holed out to Nathan Bracken in the deep off wrist-spinner Brad Hogg for 96 with a first ODI century beckoning.

The Black Caps, who won the last Chappell-Hadlee series 3-0 at

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THAT'S INTO THE GAP: Australia captain Ricky Ponting drives on the up during his unbeaten century against New Zealand in the first one-day international of the Chappell-Hadlee series at the Adelaide Oval on Friday.

PHOTO: INTERNET

Sultan's claims baseless, tasteless: Tapan

BFF boss may resign today

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

Sports Adviser Tapan Chowdhury yesterday termed the allegations made against him by Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) president SA Sultan as 'baseless'.

The sports adviser also told reporters during the prize giving ceremony of the Victory Day judo competitions that Sultan's remarks against the media was of 'bad taste'.

Sultan lodged complaints against the sports adviser in a letter to the

National Sports Council chairman and Army Chief General Moeen U Ahmed on Thursday, sparking more controversy as the contents of the letter were published in most of yesterday's newspapers.

A war of words had begun between the sports boss of the country and the BFF chief last week, which led to Sultan's outburst and threat to resign from his post.

"I had talked about the poor state of the game and the activities of the BFF. I never attacked anyone personally. But he (Sultan) has attacked me personally. This is mindless and cheap," Tapan told.

"The way the BFF has been trying to form the DFAs will not develop the game in the country. We have always told that the federation and the government must co-exist but the federation's explanations regarding this have been upsetting," he added.

Sultan claimed in his letter that the sports adviser used his 'family TV channel ETN' to wage the war. "This thing about the TV channel is completely baseless," said Tapan, dismissing another accusation that he has avoided meeting the BFF officials.

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Winners of the Transcom Cup Golf tournament pose for photograph with chief guest Chief of Air Staff Air Marshal SM Ziaur Rahman and special guest Latifur Rahman, Chairman and Managing Director of Transcom Limited, during the prize giving ceremony at the Kurmitola Golf Club yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Transcom Cup golf held

SPORTS REPORTER

Sadat Mehdi clinched the men's title while JS Yoon won the women's crown in the Transcom Cup Golf tournament at the Kurmitola Golf Club yesterday.

A large number of participants including high civil and military officials took part in the prestigious two-day meet sponsored by Transcom Limited.

Chief of Air Staff Air Marshal SM Ziaur Rahman inaugurated the meet and later distributed prizes among the winners as chief guest. Vice president of KGC Major General Shafiqul Islam and Latifur Rahman, Chairman and Managing Director of Transcom Limited, attended the prize giving ceremony as special guests.

OTHER WINNERS

Senior winner (9 hole): Brig Gen (rtd) Shahid Hasan Salim; Senior winner (18 hole): CR Kim; Super senior winner: Flight Lt (rtd) Rahmat Ali; Junior winner: Master Imroz Farhan.

Capello divides opinion

Football

AFP, London

Fabio Capello's impending appointment as the new England manager evoked mixed emotions Friday as the stark reality of the country's lack of home-grown candidates hit home.

England's Football Association (FA) on Thursday approved Capello's appointment for a post which has been vacant since Steve McClaren was sacked in the wake of England's failure to qualify for 2008.

Capello, who won nine league titles in 15 seasons with four different clubs in Italy and Spain, is expected to be confirmed in the post Friday once negotiations over terms and the appointment of back room staff have concluded.

However the FA's choice to name the no-nonsense Italian has prompted mixed emotions. Former England captain Paul

Ince said Capello's impending appointment is a "sad indictment of English football".

And Ince, now the manager at League Two side MK Dons, believes the job should have gone to an Englishman.

"It's a sad indictment on English football that we've got to go to Europe for a manager," Ince told Saturday's Football Focus programme according to the BBC.

"We have got enough managers in England who could do just as good a job."

He added: "In English football we say you've got to get your qualifications, you've got to do this, you've got to get that."

"But when you build your CV up and they go out and get a foreign manager, sometimes you think 'what's the point?'"

The 40-year-old added: "In time we're going to get to the stage - whether it's two years, three or four years - that Fabio might go and

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