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Did U Know?

Pakistan fast bowler Mohammad Sami bowled the longest over in international cricket in his third over of the Asia Cup match against Bangladesh in Colombo in 2004. The sequence of the over was: wd-4-2-nb-wd-1-0-wd-wd-0-wd-nb-wd-wd-nb-0-4.



Harbhajan Singh

(India off-spinner)
"If they play Hogg, I will wish him all the best because (although) I have nothing against him, but I would be happy to see him bowl at our batsmen."

When asked of his opinion on Australia spinner Brad Hogg's appearance in the upcoming Boxing Day Test in Melbourne.



What to WATCH

ESPN
Sportscenter India
Sports News
Live at 8:30pm

TEN Sports

Sri Lanka v England

Third Test, Day Two

Live from 10:30am

Bayliss shocked with pitch

CRICINFO, undated
Sri Lanka's coach, Trevor Bayliss, has expressed surprise at the way the Galle wicket played, after his team scored 147 for 4 on a rain-delayed opening day which was curtailed to 55 overs.

"We would have bowled first as well. What we were surprised about is [that] the wicket probably didn't do as much as both teams thought it might. It certainly swung around as we thought it would due to the humidity this morning, but it has flattened out fairly quickly," Bayliss said.

"It hasn't got a lot of pace in it. The wicket is not too dissimilar to the first that we played on. It's a wicket [where] you've got to work hard to score your runs."

Sri Lanka lost Kumar Sangakkara on the second over after tea and 36 minutes later, Chamara Silva edged a rising delivery to slip, both off Steve Harmison, before the players came off for bad light. "If we hadn't lost the last one we could have had our nose in front," Bayliss said.

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Jamie excited by Glamorgan

BBC ONLINE, undated
New Glamorgan recruit Jamie Dalrymple says he agreed to join them because he believes there are exciting times ahead for the Welsh county.

The England all-rounder, 26, has agreed a three-year deal to play under new Glamorgan manager Matthew Maynard at soon-to-be Test venue Sophia Gardens.

"I came down to visit and quickly got a positive feeling," Dalrymple said.

"I saw the new ground, which is nearly all there already, and Matt's a guy who makes things happen, gets things done."

Dalrymple, an off-spinner and lower middle-order batsman, has played in 27 one-day internationals including the Commonwealth Bank Series triumph in Australia.

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Rajshahi one-day kings

SPORTS REPORTER



Rajshahi

regained the one-day title of the 9th National Cricket League comfortably with two games in hand when they took sweet revenge of their four-day defeat to Chittagong with a 70-run victory at the Rajshahi Divisional Stadium yesterday.

With the seventh win in eight matches, Rajshahi took an unassailable lead in the table with 14 points, six ahead of second placed Khulna, Barisal and outgoing champions Dhaka.

A scintillating 95 from opener Shakil Haider on his national league limited-overs debut, laid the foundation before pacer Delwar Hossain came up with a five-wicket brash to script the hosts' win.

Out-of-favour Alok Kapali was hero in Khulna with his all-round performance as Sylhet handed an 86-run defeat on the home side while another national-discard Shahriar Nafees guided Barisal to an emphatic eight-wicket victory against Dhaka to console a humiliating defeat in the four-day game.

RAJSHAHI-CHITTAGONG

Pointing out the performance of Shakil and Delwar in the eighth round, Rajshahi skipper Khaled

Team	M	W	L	T	Total
Rajshahi	8	7	1	0	14
Khulna	8	4	4	0	8
Dhaka	8	4	4	0	8
Barisal	8	4	4	0	8
Sylhet	8	3	5	0	6
Chittagong	8	2	6	0	4

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5

POINTS TABLE (ONE-DAY)

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SEE PAGE 18 COL 5

Mashud said that the determination of his players was the key behind the success in the tournament.

"The way Shakil played his innings in his first game was outstanding while Delwar simply improved day by day to become a very good one-day bowler. I think Rajshahi players have shown great commitment to take the opportunities in both hands," said an excited Mashud.

SYLHET-KHULNA
Alok Kapali carried his form into the one-day game by making 73 off 93 balls including nine boundaries while Golam Mabud contributed 65 off 90 balls with three fours as Sylhet piled up 278 for eight after deciding to bat first at the Birsreshtha Matir Rahman Stadium.

In reply to a challenging target, Khulna made a bold start but lost their way once the 73-run opening stand between Nazmus Sadat and Imrul Kayes came to an end. They were eventually bowled out for 192.

After the dismissal of Kayes for 22, Sadat blazed with 83 that came from 78 deliveries including a dozen fours but his departure put an end to the home chase.

Kapali was also the most successful bowler with 3-45 to win the man-of-the-match award.

DHAKA-BARISAL
A 115-run opening partnership between Nafees and Nasiruddin Faruque helped Barisal to overtake

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PHOTO: TIGERCRICKET.COM

SATISFIED? Rajshahi players celebrate their National Cricket League one-day triumph after their 70-run win over Chittagong at the Rajshahi Divisional Stadium yesterday gave them an unassailable lead in the points table.

Opportunity wasted

Cricket

TIGERCRICKET.COM, Hamilton

Bangladeshi bowlers gave a much improved performance and the team moved about with more confidence and energy in the field to restrict the State Northern Knights to 173 for seven in a rain-hit second warm-up match at Seddon Park yesterday before another spell of showers put a stop to the Tigers' plan to bat.

The target for the Tigers was 201 in 41 overs under the Duckworth-Lewis system and on a pitch playing nicely the tourists would have fancied getting there. But rain lashed Seddon Park just when the Bangladesh openers were preparing to come out.

After 22 minutes the umpires concluded that the ground will not be in a condition to resume the match.

The sky was overcast from the morning but Northern Knights' skipper James Marshall preferred to bat on winning the toss on the same pitch that had been used in Sunday's first warm-up that the home team had won by seven wickets.

Bangladesh had rested Mashrafe Bin Mortaza while Syed Rasel was out injured.

Nevertheless Nazmul Hossain and Shahadat Hossain were on song from the start. Nazmul, playing his first game in New Zealand, found the perfect length and troubled the batsmen with movement off the seam. He struck first when Nick Horsley (18) hit a scorching upspin drive and Mehrab Hossain (Jr) came up with a stunning catch at mid-on. Mehrab flung it to his right with both hands and then with the ball popping out held on to it with the right hand.

Nazmul then removed number

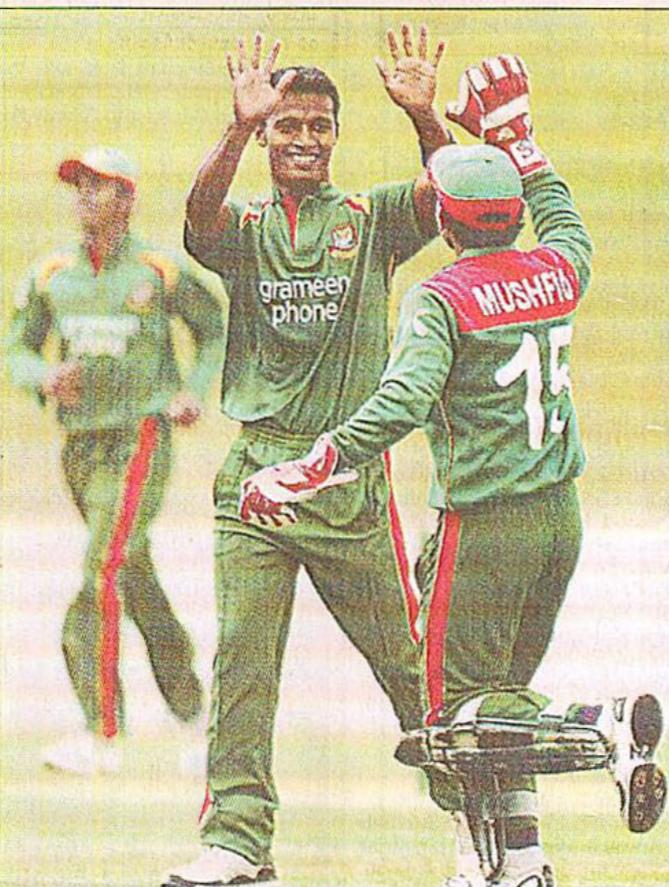
three Daniel Flynn (5) who cut straight to Aftab Ahmed at point.

Abdur Razzak had experimented with flight and length in the first match to find out the right areas to bowl and decided that he would stick to his natural style in this game.

With the wicket becoming skiddy due to mild drizzle he found

immediate results. The second delivery from Razzak hurried on to the open Bradley Watling's (30) pads and umpire Billy Bowden upheld the appeal for lbw as the local side were reduced to 68-3. Razzak was impossible to get away and conceded just seven from his first spell of 5 overs.

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Bangladesh paceman Nazmul Hossain (C) celebrates one of his two wickets with wicketkeeper Mushfiqur Rahim during their second warm-up game against Northern Districts at Seddon Park in Hamilton on Tuesday.

PHOTO: INTERNET

Hogg, Tait drafted in

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Brad Hogg will face another last-minute battle to resume his Test career after he was named in a 12-man squad alongside Shaun Tait for the first match against India. Hogg lost a bowl-off to Stuart MacGill for the opening game of the Sri Lanka series, but he is now in a different fight as the selectors decide whether to field an all-pace attack at the MCG on Boxing Day or include his left-arm spin.

Steve Waugh has pushed for Hogg's inclusion and Harbhajan Singh would love him to play, believing he is significantly inferior to MacGill or Shane Warne. "Brad deserves the opportunity to once again represent Australia in Test cricket," Andrew Hilditch, the chairman of selectors, said.

Hogg, who has not appeared in a Test since 2003, has been an outstanding performer in Australia's one-day sides, but he has struggled in first-class fixtures since taking eight wickets against Victoria, adding another five victims in three games. With MacGill out following

wrist surgery for at least two matches, and probably the entire series, Hogg has an opportunity to play a string of games.

However, containing India's batsmen during 25 overs a day is a much harder task for Hogg than attacking them during a one-day international when they are obliged to hit out. India's plans could involve going after Hogg or sitting on him - and his hard-to-pick wrong'un - while waiting for a loose delivery. The threats are much easier than the dangers provided by Tait.

India have come from a series on their low-bounding pitches and they have only three days to acclimatise during a match against Victoria at the Junction Oval. Tait's pace has been fierce against New Zealand over the past week and Australia will wait to analyse the drop-in surface at the MCG before making a call. Originally in the opening squad for Sri Lanka, Tait pulled out with injury and is looking to play his first Test since 2005 after regaining his spot from Ben Hilfenhaus.

Australia already have three bowlers who complement each other, with Brett Lee providing the pace, Stuart Clark and Mitchell Johnson might be less attractive to India than Brad Hogg.

Anil Kumble believes India can handle a four-man pace attack if Australia choose to overlook spin in the Boxing Day Test at the MCG. The prospect of the raw speed of Shaun Tait backing up the existing trio of Brett Lee, Stuart Clark and Mitchell Johnson might be less attractive to India than Brad Hogg.

Naghmi said one reason why the board was improving the financial incentives for players in the domestic matches was to discourage players from signing long-term league and county contracts.

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Kumble cool on speed

CRICINFO, undated

Leonine going great guns

SPORTS REPORTER

Leonine Chess Club maintained their winning run in the Dutch-Bangla Bank First Division Chess League to stay atop the table after yesterday's sweeping 4-0 victory against iSoft Solution.

The leaders increased their tally to 32 points after nine rounds while holders Bangladesh Biman moved to second place with 29.5 points.

Chittagong Mohammedan Sporting Club followed on 28 points.

Leonine's Indian duo GM Neelopal Das and IM Sriman Jha and local players GM Niaz Mursheed and FM Khondokar Aminul Islam won their boards against Nahid Parvez, Obaidul Islam Shahin, Amirul Islam Chowdhury and Shahjahan Kabir of iSoft respectively.

In other ninth round matches at the federation hall room, Biman blanked Toyota Motors 4-0, Chittagong Mohammedan drew with Pritam Priyam, Destiny 2000 beat Farashganj 2.5-1.5, Dhaka University drubbed Friends 4-0 and Sultana Kamal Smite Pathaghar beat Faith 2.5-1.5.

A senior board official said that recently the board had not permitted pacer Rao Iftikhar to accept a contract offered by Gloucestershire for 2008.

"We know some of our players are in demand in English cricket. Although we have not finalised any policy as yet but we are clear that first and foremost national duty and requirements will take precedence over everything else," Shafqat Naghmi, chief operating officer of the board told PTT Tuesday.

Naghmi said when players approached the board for permission to play county cricket, the PCB said if it gives permission only after seeking guarantees that the player is not overburdened with workload.

"But personally we will not encourage county signings," he said.

Pakistani players Danish Kaneria already has a two-year contract with Essex while Mohammad Asif and Umar Gul have also been made fresh offers. Yasir Arafat is another bowler who has played regularly for Scotland and Kent in recent years.

Sources in the board said the issue would be discussed at the next governing body meeting in January, as the feeling was the players gained nothing professionally by playing in England where the standard of county cricket was not high.