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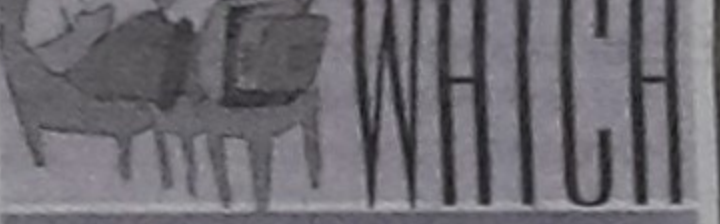
The only southpaw to win a world heavyweight title was Michael Moorer who defeated Evander Holyfield in the 12th round in 1994.



## Shane Bond

(New Zealand fast bowler)  
"Some people are always going to think that you're a traitor and I can live with that. I find it strange though, that in any other job people accept that you try to improve your circumstances and get in a better position for your family but it's almost like you're not supposed to do that in sport."

While expressing his views after he joined the ICL.



## What to Watch

**STAR Sports**  
India v Sri Lanka  
CB Series, 5th ODI  
Live from 5:00am

**SAB tv**  
New Zealand v England  
Second ODI  
Live from 7:00am

**ESPN**  
Sportscentre India  
Live at 8:30pm

## U-19 cricketers warm up well

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Under-19s got off a confident start when they outclassed Malaysia Under-19 by 167 runs in the first warm-up game at the Royal Military Academy ground in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

Mohammad Mithun slammed 81 as the young Tigers piled 270-7 in their stipulated 50 overs after deciding to bat first.

Nasir Hossain scored 36 while vice-captain Mahmudul Hasan chipped in with 31 and Saikat contributed 26.

Captain Suharwardi Shuvo claimed three wickets for 24 runs and Nasir captured three for 23 as Malaysia were bundled out for 103 in 39.4 overs in their futile reply.

Gulam Kibriya, Shubhashish Roy and Mahmudul took one wicket each.

Bangladesh Under-19s will play their last warm-up game against Pakistan tomorrow before starting their Group D campaign in the ICC Under-19 World Cup in Kuala Lumpur.

Bangladesh are pitted along with England and two ICC associates members -- Bermuda and Ireland.

## Sultan returns!

SPORTS REPORTER

SA Sultan returned from a two-month long hibernation to show interest to continue as president of Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF).

The controversial BFF boss, whose resignation last year was rejected by FIFA president Sepp Blatter, officially decided not to continue his duties since December 30, 2007.

Suddenly, Sultan appeared at the BFF House yesterday morning to have a meeting with acting general secretary Manzoor Hossain Malu and vice-president Abdur Rahim.

He also called an executive committee meeting for Wednesday, which has eventually been cancelled.

It was learned that the authority did not take Sultan's return gladly and his wish is not likely to see light of day.

# Please wait: Ashraful

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Despite the Tigers looking pale in their batting in the practice matches, captain Mohammad Ashraful understands that his side is close to getting an outcome from the new idea.

To find a way to cope up with South Africa in the two-match Test series, coach Jamie Siddons tried his changes in a longer-version game at the Mirpur Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday but none of them could utilise the opportunity.

"We have been practising under our new coach in a different manner because we mostly concentrate on match practice rather than only knocking in the nets. I think every batsman benefited from this new practice and it is a matter of time before we get an outcome from it," said Ashraful.

"You might be disappointed by seeing the scorecard but some of our batsman showed character by occupying the crease as much as they could. This match practice will help us a lot to acustom with the

conditions at Mirpur where batting is not so easy," he added.

Ashraful also praised the way their new coach worked with the individual players to rectify small mistakes in their batting.

"He found that I drive in the air on most of the occasions which caused a premature finishing of my innings. Now I am trying to play it in the ground. Most of the other batsmen also found that they have some small problems in their batting," he said.

For the last few days, the Tigers played some 45-overs-a-side matches during the practice sessions but Siddons shifted his focus on the longer-version game yesterday, as the series will start with the Test matches starting from February 22.

Rather than sweating it out in the net, the new Bangladesh coach preferred match practice to find out a solution of the wretched batting but still there was no headway coming from his charges.

Captain Ashraful, former skipper Habibul Bashar and left-handed opener Zunaed Siddiqui had to bat twice in their Green Team's effort to make 146 runs in 86.1 overs.

Rajin Saleh served the purpose slightly by staying in the middle as much as possible as the right-hander occupied the crease for more than two hours (144 minutes) to score 31 off 102 balls while Bashar also survived for more than two hours in his first attempt to score 28 off 88 balls but he failed in the second attempt.

Ashraful also looked good in his second attempt but the most encouraging sign was the patience shown by Aftab Ahmed who curbed his strokes to make 27 off 98 balls.

Chief selector Rafiqul Alam found some positives from the boys batting despite the poor showing of most of the batsmen in the practice matches.

"Still the batsmen need hard work to make an impression in the coming series but they looked more steady in the middle than the New Zealand tour although they failed to make big scores. I am very impressed with the way practice is going on," he said.

"It is good to knock in the indoor and outdoor but much better to practice in a match and nothing is better than to play competitive cricket," he added.

# India have the edge

CRICINFO, undated

India, at the halfway mark of their CB Series campaign, have the edge over Sri Lanka, whom they meet at the Manuka Oval on Tuesday.

India completed a strong victory against Australia at the MCG, while Sri Lanka suffered a 128-run defeat to the same opponents last week.

The game assumes significance for Sri Lanka, six points behind leaders India in the points table though with a game in hand, who have yet to catch fire in the tournament -- their previous match against India was washed out after India's innings.

Most worrisome for Mahela Jayawardene, the captain, has been

the team's indifferent batting -- apart from Kumar Sangakkara, none of the Sri Lankan batsmen showed character against Australia. "Our batting is a bit of concern," he said. "You can have those days I suppose, just like what happened to the Aussies on Sunday (against India). They played seven batsmen, yet couldn't get a competitive total on the board."

However, he felt there were enough runs in the wicket at the Manuka Oval if the batsmen got it right.

The wicket is nothing different from the tracks in the subcontinent, except for the bounce. Considering the need to aid strokeplay, both teams are expected to opt for batting depth. India wouldn't want to change a winning combination but Sri Lanka may bring in Farveez Maharoof, the allrounder, for Tillakaratne Dilshan, who is recovering from a bout of infection.

Following their unfinished game at the Gabba, where they racked up 267 for 4, India will look to push forward the psychological advantage built by their batsmen against a Sri Lankan attack that's been below par despite the presence of Chaminda Vaas, Muttiah Muralidaran and Lasith Malinga. Only the young Ishara Amerasinghe kept the Indians in check with accurate bowling even when his seniors failed to build pressure. Harbhajan Singh, the offspinner, was especially pleased by the manner in which his batsmen dealt with the danger of Murali. "The way we played Murali was very good," he said. "He got two early wickets but he gave away 50-odd runs."

For India, as the summer extends, every game is proving to



SLINGER RUBEL: Bangladesh pacer Rubel Hossain lets one rip towards Malaysia opener Shafiq Sharif during a warm-up match of the Under-19 World Cup at the Royal Military College in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

# Tough reply expected

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

New Zealand are expecting an English backlash in their second one-day cricket international here Tuesday after pulling off an upset victory in the series opener.

"They'll be feeling the same as we did after the Twenty20 games, they'll come back pretty hard at us," New Zealand captain Daniel Vettori said.

England thrashed New Zealand in the two warm-up Twenty20 games and said their unfamiliarity with the drop-in pitch was partly to

blame for the dramatic form reversal that saw New Zealand win the first one-dayer with 20 overs to spare.

"We were expecting a belter (of a wicket) and instead none of us could get going," England skipper Paul Collingwood said of the slow and low drop-in pitch when they were dismissed for 130 in Wellington.

He was also full of praise for the New Zealand bowlers who he said "thought plenty of cutters." "I thought they did was analyse it very well and adapt from the start," he said.

England's team selection was also a surprise, with in-form



Egypt captain Ahmed Hassan (C) proudly holds aloft the Nations Cup amidst his cheering teammates after defeating Cameroon in the final in Accra Stadium in Ghana on

# Twenty20 from February 14

SPORTS REPORTER

Cricket Committee of Dhaka Metropolis (CCMD) decided yesterday that the Twenty20 tournament involving the Premier League clubs will kick off on February 14.

In a meeting that lasted several hours at its Bangabandhu National Stadium office, it was announced that the league would be deferred by a day owing to the demands of the clubs. The Premier League proper is still slated for a March 1 start. Fixtures for the Twenty20 meet will be revealed today.

Similarly, the First Division Cricket League will begin from February 18, three days later than its original date.

It was also decided that a physiotherapist will be appointed to the Premier and First Division players.

# Pharaohs remain kings

AFP, Accra

Egypt retained their African Nations Cup crown here Sunday when Mohamed Aboutraika scored the only goal in a 1-0 win over Cameroon which also delivered a record sixth title.

The defending champions ensured they held on to the trophy when, after a slick passing movement, Aboutraika struck in the 77th minute for a deserved success.

"We are delighted to win. It's a great achievement," said the Al Ahly star who recalled that it was he who had converted the winning penalty that beat Ivory Coast two years ago in Cairo.

"Don't forget in 2006 I got the last penalty that won us our first title, and now today I score again to win the second one."

"Now we have to make sure that we keep this form going into the World Cup qualifiers."

"It's one of the greatest days of my life. It's up there with winning the African Champions League."

Egypt's assistant coach Shawki Gharbi, who first won the title as a player in 1986, added: "I'm thrilled to make history twice for my country, first as a player, second as coach, and to make all our people happy."

Cameroon's Geremi, whose long range freekicks troubled the Egyptians, said: "Like any player I don't like to lose, especially in the final, but the positive thing is we made it to the final, many people weren't giving us much of a chance."

Asked about captain Rigobert Song's mistake which led to Aboutraika's goal the Newcastle player added: "When someone makes a mistake you can't blame him, it happens."

The result was the Pharaohs final act in a hugely impressive campaign which saw them build on the defeat of Cameroon in their opening group game to record

# NSC plans to host football tournament

SPORTS REPORTER

The National Sports Council (NSC) is contemplating to hold the Independence Cup football tournament next month to commemorate the country's Independence Day.

With the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) annual calendar showing the Swadhinata Cup scheduled also for March, the two organisations would be set for a collision course on the same event.

However, NSC secretary Akbar Hossain informed that if the BFF sticks to its calendar, they will look forward to revive the International Invitational Football Tournament that was cancelled earlier this year for the consequences of Cyclone Sidr.

"We want to involve the top clubs of Dhaka for the tournament but have to discuss with BFF and the Liberation War Affairs Ministry before taking a decision," Akbar told the press yesterday.

"If the BFF goes for it, we will consider staging the international meet that was cancelled," the NSC secretary added.

The BFF hosted the Swadhinata Cup in 2006 in association with the ministry and its acting general secretary Manzoor Hossain Malu says it is their duty to organise the event in March.

# Arthur calls the shots

## SA declare squad for Bangladesh sans Gibbs

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

After a week of wrangling, South African coach Mickey Arthur got the squad he wanted for this month's tour of Bangladesh.

Cricket South Africa Monday named the same 14-man squad which was twice rejected by CSA president Norman Airendse last week because he did not believe it adequately followed the body's transformation policy.

There are only four players of colour in the squad, announced just two days before the squad departs.

South Africa will play two Test matches and three one-day internationals. The squad is expected to show several changes for the one-day internationals.

Notably missing is opening

batsman Herschelle Gibbs, who was dropped for Neil McKenzie.

Gibbs, a coloured player, scored a century in the final one-day international against the West Indies eight days ago but has struggled in Test matches over the past three seasons, with a faulty technique and slowing reflexes blamed for his lack of reliable form.

McKenzie was one of three players who had to pass fitness tests Monday before the squad was finalised. The others were batsman Hashim Amla and fast bowler

Andre Nel.

The squad was announced without any comments from officials but in terms of protocol Airendse would have had to approve it before it was released.

In rejecting the squad last week, Airendse said it was Cricket SA policy that seven players of colour should be in a touring party.

Airendse, announced Saturday that Arthur had been dropped from the selection panel following a meeting of Cricket SA's general council.

He was almost immediately repudiated by chief executive Gerald Majola, who said it was in Arthur's contract that he was a selector.

Majola said Arthur, assistant coach Vincent Barnes and captain Graeme Smith would all be part of the panel that selected the squad in addition to three selectors

# Warid steps into cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Another cellular company got involved with cricket when Warid Telecom was named as the title sponsor for the Bangladesh-South Africa Test and one-day series.

Warid bought the right from Axiom Technologies which won the sponsorship right from Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) as the highest bidder to sponsor the two-match Test and three-match one-day series.

Warid joins fellow mobile phone operators Grameenphone, Aktel and Citycell in becoming a partner of BCB for sponsorship.

It was officially announced during a press conference at a local hotel yesterday.

"This is for the first time that Warid Telecom is sponsoring a



Senior marketing manager of Warid Telecom Zeeshan Kingshuk Huq (R) speaks during a press conference at a local restaurant in the city yesterday.