

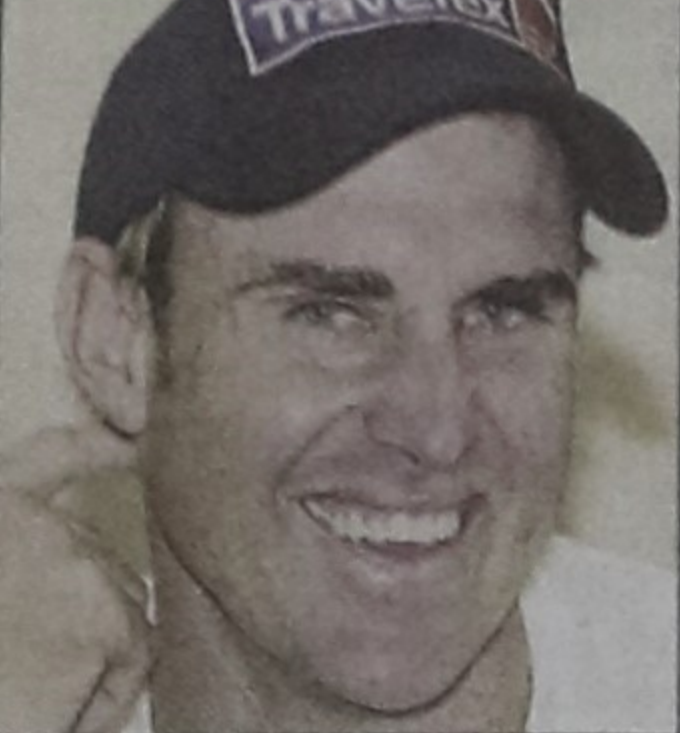


## Did U Know?

The Wimbledon Championships start on the sixth Monday before the first Monday of August. Therefore the tournament this year begins on June 23.



## Talk Turkey



**Matthew Hayden**  
(Australia's opening batsman)  
"He is just young. I have said to him many times, 'You are 19, take it easy'. At the end of the day you are 19, why don't you just worry about your bowling for a while?"  
The 36-year-old Australian's concern about his young Indian opponent Ishant Sharma.



**What to Watch**  
ESPN  
Sportscenter India  
Sports News  
Live at 8:30pm

## LOCAL SNIPPETS

SPORTS REPORTER

A first-half strike by Shamim helped Badda Jagarani beat Purbachal Parisdad 1-0 in yesterday's Senior Division Football League at the Bir Shreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur.

Shamim netted the match winner after 36 minutes.

The day's other match between Agrani Bank and City Club ended in a goalless draw.

### DIVICRICKET

Half centuries by Ashraful (73) and Rezwan (50) steered Rupali Bank (234-4) to a facile six-wicket win over Kathalagan GSC (233-9) at the Jahangirnagar University ground in the First Division Cricket League.

At the Dhanmondi Club ground, Lalmoan hit 54 and Jahangir 51 as Gazi Tank (221-9) downed Dhanmondi Club (189) by 32 runs while Indira Road KC (198) defeated Uttara SC (164) by 34 runs at the Dhaka University ground. JFACUP

Imran slammed a hatrick as Kustia shocked hosts Pabna to reach the zonal semifinals with a 3-1 victory at the Pabna Stadium. It was not all bad for the home sides as Cox's Bazar thrashed Bandarban 5-0 with Ariful slotting a hatrick at the Cox's Bazar Stadium.

### SCHOOL HOCKEY

UNB adds: Ahmed Bawani Academy will face Narayanganj High School in the first semifinal of the Dhaka Bank Shaheed Smriti School Hockey Tournament at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium today. Armanitola Government Boys School will play Mirpur Academy in the second semifinal tomorrow. The final is slated for March 2.

## Jagoroni win cricket title

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Dinajpur

Jagoroni XI won the Golap Cup cricket title here yesterday defeating Balubari XI by seven wickets at the Dinajpur Cricket Ground.

Balubari were all out for 90 after electing to bat first in the final. Jagoroni XI scored 91-3 in reply.

Mohammed Nazrul Islam, Chairman of National Board of Revenue, handed over distributed trophies as chief guest.

# Hosts' good luck venue

SHAHIDUL ISLAM, Chittagong

## WARID Cricket Series

With one day to go before they lock horns with South Africa, there are a number of positives that the Tiger's can derive from the venue of the second Test.

The Chittagong Divisional Stadium has more often than not proved kind to the Bangladesh team with the memory of some telling individual performances, at least two 300-plus innings in three matches played here against Sri Lanka, Australia and India since 2006 and a good wicket still strong in the memory.

The home team may also find encouragement from the fact that of the three outings two matches were pushed until the fifth and final day.

And, these positives were reflected 'cautiously' by some players of the home team, sports organisers and fans here in Chittagong yesterday while both the Bangladesh and South African players were flexing their muscles in the mild afternoon of the bright spring.

The players trained for around three hours.

"The wicket by and large at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium, I think, will be batting-friendly and

the behaviour of the pitch may change slightly after the second or third day in favour of bowlers," said batsman Shahriar Nafees, expressing hope that the wicket here would play better than at Mirpur.

Captain Mohammad Ashraful reiterated the statement saying, "The wicket in Chittagong is always good for batting and it will be the same as usual."

"What is important is for us to score runs and I hope my team-mates, especially the batsmen won't let us down here," said the Bangladeshi skipper.

Although pitch curator Shafiqul Alam Belal declined to make any comments about the surface or its probable behaviour, eminent sports organiser Ali Abbas said that "everything would depend on the mental and technical application of the ability of Bangladeshi players" who, according to him, "have a tendency to breakdown all of a sudden."

There was a vested interest amongst most youngsters about the cricket and it was evident while speaking to Anis Ahmed, a cricket fan and teacher of physical training institute at Chittagong University.

"We expect at least a competitive edge and some entertainment from our players here in the port city," he said.

Despite an unflattering record of

two defeats and one draw, the Tigers may yet take inspiration from the previous three Test matches played at the Divisional Stadium.

In the last rain-interrupted drawn match here against India in 2007 (from May 18 to May 22), Mashrafe Mortaza, Shahadat Hossain and Mohammad Rafique did exceptionally well with their tight and accurate bowling.

Mashrafe took five wickets in the match besides playing a run-a-ball cameo innings of 79 with three sixes and seven boundaries. The all-round performance had eventually brought the man-of-the-match prize for him.

Shahadat (5 wickets and 31 run) and Rafique (3 wickets and 41 run) also lent all-round contributions in that match.

Ashraful also has fond memories with the stadium back in February, 2006 when he scored an impressive century (136) against Sri Lanka in the Bangladesh first innings (319 all out), for which he won the M-o-M prize.

Bangladesh also scored another 300-plus figure at the venue against Australia and the positive of this match was that that score (304 all out) came in the second innings where Shahriar Nafees (79) and Rafique (53-ball 65 with two fours and six sixes) shone.



Young Bangladesh opener Tamim Iqbal (L) and wicketkeeper Mushfiqur Rahim are all smiles after giving a close knock at the wicket of the Chittagong Divisional Stadium yesterday.

# Rebuke only for Hayden

## Cricket

AFP, Brisbane

Outspoken Australian batsman Matthew Hayden has been reprimanded by Cricket Australia (CA) for calling Indian off-spinner Harbhajan Singh an "obnoxious weed".

CA's code of conduct commissioner, Ron Beazley, "issued a reprimand to Hayden... as penalty for the breach" after a two-hour hearing in Melbourne on Wednesday.

Hayden was charged by Cricket Australia chief James Sutherland

under rule nine of the CA Code of Behaviour which prohibits players from the "public denigration of other players against whom they have or will play".

Despite the damning audio evidence of his comments, Hayden said he was disappointed to have been found guilty.

"I maintain my innocence, my intentions were never to denigrate cricket or anyone," he said. "But in the spirit of cricket I respect and accept the decision."

Hayden made the statement on Brisbane radio on Tuesday, after the lingering ill feeling between the sides surfaced again in Sunday's tri-series one-dayer at the SCG.

Teenage pacemen Ishant Sharma was fined after a verbal clash with Andrew Symonds on Sunday, the Indians claiming the youngster was provoked by Symonds and lodging a complaint with match referee Jeff Crowe about the "provocative" behaviour of the Australians, particularly towards Harbhajan.

The bad blood stretches back to the second Test in Sydney in January, when Harbhajan was suspended for three matches for racially abusing Symonds, a ban overturned at a subsequent International Cricket Council hearing.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5

# Hogg calls it quits

## Cricket

AFP, Melbourne

Australia's spin bowling stocks suffered another blow Wednesday when veteran left-arm wrist-spinner Brad Hogg announced his retirement from international cricket.

The 37-year-old, who started his first-class career as a specialist batsman before turning to spin bowling, called stumps on a lengthy career after seven Tests, having debuted in 1996, and 121 one-day internationals.

For many years regarded as a limited overs specialist, Hogg revived his Test career following the retirement of champion leg-spinner Shane Warne early last year.

Hogg played in three of the four Tests against India this summer, but had little impact with eight wickets at 60.12.

He finishes his career with 17 Test wickets at the modest average of 54.88, but in one-day cricket for Australia he has claimed 154 wickets at 26.73 and played in two successful World Cup campaigns.

Hogg said here Wednesday he was close to retiring after last year's World Cup success, but decided to play on to try and revive his Test career after Warne's retirement.

He will call it quits at the end of

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1



Australian spinner Brad Hogg prepares for a practice session after announcing his retirement from international cricket during a press conference in Melbourne yesterday.



Children, attired in colourful dresses and with baskets of petals in hand, greet the South African players on their arrival at the Shah Amanat International Airport in Chittagong yesterday. The Proteas are in the port city to play the second Test which starts Friday.

# DFAs can't be members of BFF

SPORTS REPORTER

The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) has confirmed that the DFAs (district football associations) cannot be members of the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF).

Referring to a meeting between AFC president Mohammad Bin Hammam and a Bangladesh delegation on February 19, the AFC sent a letter to the BFF this week revealing the fact.

"From that meeting we have discovered that there is a misunderstanding between what FIFA and AFC have communicated to BFF and what the BFF has in fact understood," the AFC letter said.

Clarifying the directive, AFC says: "The six Divisional Football Associations that are being formed to be in compliance with the FIFA Standard Statutes can be members of the BFF provided they organise

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1

# Amateur Golf tees-off

SPORTS REPORTER

The opening day of the Cotton Group 23 rd Bangladesh Amateur Golf Championships teed-off yesterday at the Kurmitola Golf Club.

At the end of the day Sri Lanka emerged as the leader of the scrappheap as they rode on the sterling performances of the experienced Mithun Perera and his partner Chandradasa.

They were closely followed by the Myanmar team of Bo Bo Lay and Nay Bala Win Myint who took second place.

Thriving defending champions Bangladesh had a poor day on the green with their team comprising of Millon and Dulal only managing to secure the 4th spot.

A total of 106 golfers teed-off on the first day playing for 72 holes with another 110 scheduled to do the same tomorrow.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 8

# MSC's clash in Kolkata today

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammedan Sporting Clubs of Dhaka and Kolkata will clash today in both sides' opening match of the 113th ESPN IFA Shield tournament today, according to the tournament website.

The match will kick off at 3pm local time (3.30pm Bangladesh time) at the Salt Lake Stadium.

Mohammedan take on Kolkata giants Mohun Bagan on February 1 also at Salt Lake before playing their last group match against I-League runners-ups Churchill Brothers at Howrah.

The prestigious tournament, meanwhile, commenced yesterday with Churchill edging Mohun Bagan 1-0.

The other group involves East Bengal, Mahindra United and South African club Santos FC.

Bangladesh professional league runners-ups Mohammedan last time participated in the tournament in 1998 when they lost the final to East Bengal in the tiebreakers.

# MOHAMMEDAN'S FIFTH LOSS

# City, Torun and Victoria join Abahani in semis

## Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

City Club joined Abahani as surprise semifinalists of the Premier Division Twenty20 Cricket League yesterday as contenders Bangladesh Biman and Kalabagan both fell on the last day of the group stage.

City Club handed Kalabagan a seven-wicket defeat for their third win while Biman crashed to BKSP as the equation in the group changed on the final day.

Abahani emerged group champions maintaining 100 percent record when they routed archrivals and last year's champions Mohammedan Sporting Club by four wickets.

In their worst ever performance in any competition, a depleted Mohammedan failed to win a single match in the league.

In the last four, Abahani will face Surjo Torun while City are pitted against Group B winners and all-win Victoria.

BKSP, who had upset Mohammedan on their Premiership debut, lost three matches in succession before pulling off another impressive victory -- by 30 runs -- against one of the pre-tournament favourites at their home ground.

Having scored 120-6 with skipper Salim Ahmed and Monirul Haque smashing 42 and 34 respectively, BKSP booked Biman for just 90.

Moshir Rahman, the young seamer who has already drawn attention, was adjudged man-of-the-match for his devastating spell of 4-0-17-4.

Biman must rue their washed out match against Kalabagan, the only game to be postponed due to bad weather.

Kalabagan also wasted their

chances when they were shot out for 96 after being sent into bat at BKSP. Golam Mabud's unbeaten half-century helped City recover from early hiccups to reach 98-3 with five balls remaining.

Mohammedan, who have lost key players due to national duty, put on their best performance of the season but even a challenging total of 148-4 was not enough for them to survive at BKSP.

Faisal Hossain clubbed four fours and three sixes in a 33-ball 53 while Rokibul Hasan contributed 40 off 29 balls as Mohammedan rattled 68 runs in the last five overs.

Abahani were tottering at 25-4 as Mohammedan skipper Manjurul Islam (4-24) struck early but wicketkeeper Sahagir Hossain (43 off 42 balls) and pace bowler Ziaur Rahman (35 off 20 balls) produce late fireworks to guide

SEE PAGE 18 COL 2

# End of the warrior?

## Football

INTERNET, Rio de Janeiro

In April 2000, a confident Ronaldo defiantly warned those who were predicting that his serious right knee injury would be the end of his football career. "The warrior is injured, but he is not dead," the striker said.

Indeed, he rebounded, and just two years after that first injury, Ronaldo - then in top-form - commanded Brazil to their fifth World Cup title, in South Korea/Japan 2002.

But the question now is whether

his most recent injury could bring to an end life as a footballer, if his gloomy comments after being released from a French hospital are any indication.

After suffering a similar injury - the complete tear of the rotula tendon - in his left knee two weeks ago, the man Brazilians call "The Phenomenon" is clearly pessimistic.

"Of course, no club wants a 31-year-old, operated twice, who suffered two terrible injuries to his knees. No club can think of signing such a player," Ronaldo said in an interview broadcast by Italy's Repubblica TV Tuesday.

The three-time FIFA World

Player of the Year seems tired of fighting the serious injuries that have plagued his career since 1996 - when he first underwent surgery in his right knee to remove pieces of cartilage which were putting pressure on his tendon.

Ronaldo's body has shown growing signs of exhaustion in recent years. In the 2006 World Cup in Germany, although he scored three goals and surpassed Gerd Mueller as the top scorer in the history of the tournament, his performance was lacklustre.

Since then, he has not been called to the new Brazil team coached by Carlos Dunga, and he

SEE PAGE 18 COL 2



Brazilian superstar Ronaldo (C) is pictured here with girlfriend Maria Beatriz Antony (R) recently. Ronaldo and Maria plan to wed soon.

PHOTO: INTERNET