



A medal winner of this year's 2nd Indo-Bangladesh Games receives a prize from Bangladesh Swimming Federation president and Navy Chief Vice Admiral Sarwar Jahan Nizam at the National Sports Council (NSC) Tower yesterday.

## Kirby struck in the head

BBC ONLINE, undated

Gloucestershire's Steve Kirby was taken to hospital after he was struck on the head by a short ball in the season opener between the MCC and Sussex.

The fast bowler was knocked out for 30 seconds after attempting to evade a delivery from Luke Wright at Lord's.

Kirby was treated on the field before he was forced to retire hurt and the MCC were bowled out for 205 soon after.

Sussex made a bright start to their second innings, reaching stumps at 174-2 with Chris Nash unbeaten on 82.

The opener struck eight fours in his innings and is 18 runs short of his maiden first-class century, sharing stands of 75 and 76 with Carl Hopkinson and Michael Yardy to give the county champions a 140-run lead.

However, the second day's play was dominated by Kirby's horrific blow to the head.

The quick thinking of Sussex captain Chris Adams and wicketkeeper Matt Prior, who moved Kirby in the recovery position, helped him regain consciousness.

The 30-year-old was treated on the pitch by England and Wales Cricket Board physiotherapist Steve McCaig, who accompanied the tail-end-ender to the pavilion.

But Kirby passed out for a second time in the home dressing room and was soon taken to the nearby Royal Free Hospital in Hampstead, where he will be kept overnight for observation.

"Typical Kirbs, he wanted to go back out and continue batting, then have a bowl," said MCC coach and ECB performance director David Parsons.

"We think he's okay but sent him to hospital as a precaution."

The day began in the worst possible fashion for Owais Shah, who failed to add to his overnight score of 72 in chilly conditions in northwest London.

The England hopeful top-edged a pull off Wright, safely caught by Ryan Harris.

Essex wicketkeeper James Foster edged an outswinger off Robin Martin-Jenkins to Hopkinson at third slip, handing the bowler his 300th first-class wicket.

And leg-spinner Will Beer claimed his maiden first-class wicket, ending Arun Harinath's two-and-a-half-hour innings of 33.

Australian Harris took his fourth wicket of the innings, trapping Durham's Graham Onions leg before with a full swinging delivery.

And James Treadwell's stubborn innings of 21 was ended in similar fashion by medium-pacer Ragheb Aga.

## Hall to contest ECB decision

CRICINFO, undated

Andrew Hall will appeal against the ECB's decision to decline his registration for the 2008 season. The board refused to use its discretion to allow him to turn out for Northamptonshire as he had played for South Africa in August.

Andrew Fitch-Holland, who represents Hall, told Cricinfo that the appeal would be lodged after the weekend. The hearing, which will be in front of a three-man panel, has to take place within 28 days, during which time Hall will not be allowed to play.

A lawyer representing the ICL, Jeremy Roberts, told the BBC that the players whose registrations had been declined would appeal to the ECB, and if their appeals were unsuccessful then court action was inevitable.

Fitch-Holland added that the ECB had been unable to give any clarification whether the same issues of registration would again arise in 2009 with players who turned out for the ICL after the end of the current season.

## Shaun's desire

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Shaun Marsh has set his sights on emulating his father Geoff and becoming an opening batsman for Australia in Test and one-day cricket. Marsh was handed his first Cricket Australia contract on Wednesday and with Matthew Hayden and Phil Jaques the only specialist openers in the 25-man squad, he knows a top-order spot could soon be there for the taking.

Chris Rogers, who filled in for Hayden in the Perth Test in January, was axed from the list and there is also no obvious replacement for Adam Gilchrist as an ODI opener. James Hopes and Michael Clarke have performed the role on occasions, but the inclusion of Marsh in the limited-overs squad to the West Indies indicates he is in the

running.

Andrew Hilditch, the chairman of selectors, said the panel believed Hayden and Jaques had formed such a good Test pairing that a specialist backup was not necessary. They also considered Marsh a potential replacement if required.

"Jaques has grasped his opportunity to open the batting very well, while we've taken the view that Hayden will see his way through to the next Ashes tour of England in 2009," Hilditch said in the Australian. "I'd like to think that was achievable, while on the other hand I'd also like to think a Shaun Marsh, Simon Katich or Brad Hodge could put their hand up for the occasion arose."

Marsh often comes out first for Western Australia in one-day games but is typically used at No. 3 in Pura Cup matches. The departure of Rogers from the state side will open up a top-two position and

with Hayden, 36, approaching the end of his career, Marsh is keen to try his hand as an opener.

"Obviously in the next few years it is going to change up there, and it is a position that is going to open up," Marsh said. "It is something I want to do."

His Western Australia coach Tom Moody said it was likely Marsh would be bumped up the Warriors order next season.

"He is not stupid," Moody said.

"He realises that with Hayden getting to the stage where he is still in his career, and Phil Jaques still cementing his position, he sees there is an opportunity at the top of the order more than in the middle order. He's a player that has come along enormously in the past 12 months and could easily walk into the opening position, so we will just move the middle order around."

## An agonising wait

Cricket

INTERNET, undated

Brad Haddin never made a point of standing by the phone at selection time. Better not to think about it, he thought, and be pleasantly surprised should the call come. Such was life in the shadow of Adam Gilchrist, perhaps the greatest keeper-batsman to pace the earth.

These days, however, both Gilchrist and shadow have left the scene, and Haddin has barely let the phone out of his sight. Though the world's cricketing cognoscenti were in agreement that the NSW gloveman would be elevated to the Australian Test squad for the tour of the West Indies, Haddin himself could not quite bring himself to believe it. Not without the call.

"That has never happened to me before," he said. "Usually, I just go about my business, and if the call comes, it comes. But I was waiting by the phone all the time and, to be honest, I would have been a prick to live with for those two weeks. I just wanted to hear it officially: you've been named in the squad for the West Indies. I was on edge every time the phone rang. I was like a bear with a sore head until I got that confirmation."

"I think that's just my personality. I never really thought of myself as the second wicketkeeper in the country behind Adam. I was always thinking of ways to improve my game, and how to put pressure on

the top spot. There was always the realistic chance that if Adam had chosen to play on for a couple more years, I could have been overlooked entirely for a younger keeper. I'm not the sort of bloke who takes things for granted."

Only an untimely injury or the alphabetically superior Beau Casson can deny Haddin the honour of becoming Australia's 400th Test cricketer at Sabina Park next month. Certainly, he deserves a prominent place on the list. For precious few of his 399 predecessors can claim to have served a more thorough apprenticeship.

Had he been born in another country, Haddin's CV would boast far more than 29 one-day internationals and four Twenty20s. And had he played in another era, his three successive seasons with a 50-plus first-class batting average -- coupled with a dedication to glovework that borders on the obsessive -- would almost certainly have been rewarded with a Test call-up sooner.

Haddin, though, is not one to dwell. His focus is on the West Indies tour, and the baggy green cap that has eluded him for a decade. In fact, so determined is he to establish himself at Test level, he has turned down the chance to play in the Indian Premier League -- and a pay day that would have swamped any he has previously known -- to stay in Sydney and train under coach Steve Rixon.

"It's not that I'm against the IPL," he said. "I just thought that I had put a lot of work to get to this point heading into the West Indies tour, and I wanted that to be my sole focus over the next six weeks. I didn't want to take any chances. I guess it was a bit of a case of tunnel vision, because I didn't want anything else to get in the way of me playing Test cricket."

It was flattering to hear what some people thought I might have earned in India, and for the guys who are more established than me, I think it's great that they'll be playing over there. But for me, it wasn't a money decision. It just didn't sit right."

Discipline comes easily these days, but it wasn't always so. Earlier in his state career, Haddin's mind was cluttered with thoughts of frustration and envy.

"It probably hit home about five years ago, when I knew I was just thinking too much about playing for Australia and allowing myself to get affected by it when blokes came back to NSW from the Australian side," he said. "It was probably detracting from my performances. Gilly was just starting his career then. There wasn't much I could do about it."

"I had to take everyone else out of the equation and make sure my form and stats were irresistible when the chance came around."

So it has proved. Haddin will complete the transition from understudy to the premier wicketkeeper in the land next month. At 30, the journey begins.

## Records tumble in Manchester

Swimming

AFP, Manchester

Croatia's Duje Draganja edged out home favourite Mark Foster to smash the world 50m freestyle best as records tumbled at the world short-course swimming championships here Friday.

Zimbabwe's Kirsty Coventry took the individual honours with her third title of the meet, while Australia, cheered on from the stands by the legendary Grant Hackett, strengthened their position in the medals table by adding three more golds to their tally to close the third day of competition.

Despite a difficult lane one draw, Draganja powered home to deny Foster a seventh world crown in a new best for the blue riband event of 20.81.

The 26-year-old paid tribute to the veteran British star and he said: "I can only apologise to Mark for beating him in his own house."

Silver was ample consolation

from the 37-year-old, who admitted: "I've said all along he was the one to watch and I knew he'd fight all the way for gold."

Coventry insisted there's more to come after setting one of five world records to fall on another action-packed night.

The Zimbabwean Olympic medal favourite continued her stunning run of form in preparation for this summer's Beijing games by adding the 200m backstroke to the 100m backstroke and 400m medley titles, in the process shattering the world record by more than two seconds in 2:00.91.

"It's a great feeling," said Coventry, 24, after another awesome performance which saw her leave a high-classline-up trailing.

"My preparations for the Olympics are going really well and the buzz of setting world records just makes you want to break as much as possible."

"I'm pretty tired and my legs are sore but it's exciting. It's extra special because I've got some family in the crowd and it's the first time

## Not in Aaron's wildest dreams

CRICINFO, undated

Aaron Redmond, the latest player to earn a call-up into New Zealand's ever-changing top-order, is hoping to make his tour of England more successful than his father did 35 years ago. Redmond was named in the 16-man Test squad and could become the eighth person to follow his father into New Zealand Test cricket if he makes his debut in the three-game series.

Rodney Redmond played one Test and was highly successful, scoring 107 and 56 against Pakistan in Auckland in 1972-73. However, he then struggled to adjust to new contact lenses on the visit to England later that year and managed only 483 runs at 28.41 and had to settle for being remembered as a one-Test wonder.

The younger Redmond learnt of his call-up at his father's house in Perth and he said it was a special moment for the family. "A big smile came over his face and he cracked open his hand to congratulate me and opened up a bottle of red wine to celebrate," Redmond told the Otago Daily Times.

Redmond was en-route from New Zealand to England, where he was planning to play league cricket for Wigan, when the phone-call came from the chairman of selectors Richard Hadlee. "It is something you always dream about, but it has definitely come as a surprise," Redmond said. "My initial goals were hopefully to get the opportunity later down the track."

"But to get the call [on Saturday] and be told it has come a little bit earlier, it just wasn't in my wildest dreams. It's one thing getting the chance -- now I've got to make the most of the opportunity."

Redmond's elevation came after a solid State Championship season during which he made 447 runs at 40.63 for Otago. However, he said it was "bitter-sweet" that his promotion came at the expense of his domestic teammate Craig Cumming, who was left out of the squad after being one of four openers used by New Zealand in the past six months.

"I'm great friends with Craig and he has played some awesome cricket this year and is a great player," Redmond said. "I'm sure it won't stop him. You have your good and bad times in cricket and I know he'll bounce back."

Akram's mother passes away

SPORTS REPORTER

Hazra Khatun, mother of former Bangladesh cricket captain Akram Khan, breathed her last in Dhaka in the early hours of Saturday. She was 75.

She had been suffering from prolonged illness with various old age complications.

Hazra Khatun was buried at the family graveyard in Chittagong after Jhoro prayers yesterday.

Bangladesh Cricket Board condoled the death of Hazra Khatun and expressed their deep sympathy to the family members of her.

Cricketers Welfare Association of Bangladesh (CWAB) also condoled the demise of Akram Khan's mother and prayed for the salvation of her departed soul.

## Ganguly's gutsy

FROM PAGE 17

Jaffer Ibw b Morkel 15

Schwlgwb b Steyn 8

David b De Villiers b Morkel 29

Laxman b Morkel 50

Ganguly c Amla b Steyn 87

Yuvraj c De Villiers b Harris 32

Dhoni st Boucher b Harris 32

Harbhajan lbw b Steyn 6

Chawla c Smith b Ntini 4

Sreesanth not out 9

Sreesanth not out 0

Extras: (b-8, lb-4, nb-3, w-1) 16

Total: (Forne: wkt in 88 overs) 288

Fall of wickets: 1-18, 2-35, 3-113, 4-

123, 5-188, 6-248, 7-268, 8-279, 9-

279.

Bowler O M R W

Steyn 16 1 60 3

Ntini 19 6 41 1

Morkel 13 1 57 3

Harris 29 7 89 2

Kallis 9 1 23 0

Amla 2 0 6 0

Sreesanth not out 0

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