



Did U Know?

American Gertrude Ederle became the first woman to swim across the English Channel on August 6, 1926.



Diego Maradona

(Argentine football legend)
"I'm proud of him because he is a wonderful boy. He looks like me when I was a player. He is strong, with thick legs. I took notice of that when I was in Spain."
On Atletico Madrid winger Sergio Aguero.



What to Watch

BTV & TEN Sports
Pakistan v Bangladesh
Fifth ODI
Live from 4:00pm
ESPN
English Premiership
Arsenal v Reading
Live from 5:40pm
Fulham v Liverpool
Live from 7:55pm
Primera Liga
Barcelona v Espanyol
Live from 12:30am (Sunday)
STAR Sports
English Premiership
Wigan v Tottenham
Live from 7:55pm
Blackburn Rovers v Man United
Live from 10:10pm
SET Max
Indian Premier League
Kings XI Punjab v Chennai Super Kings
Live from 5:00pm
Delhi Daredevils v Rajasthan Royals
Live from 8:30pm

Tigers fined, Nafees warned

AFP, Dubai

Bangladesh's misery at slumping to their fourth defeat in four one-dayers against Pakistan was compounded on Thursday when they were fined for a slow over-rate and then saw opener Shahriar Nafees reprimanded for breaching the ICC Code of Conduct.

Both incidents arose from the third game of the five-match series played in Lahore on April 13.

Match referee Mike Procter
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Under-15s face Holland today

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh take on Holland in an opening day's knockout phase match of the Clico International Under-15 Challenge Competitions in Barbados today.

In the day's other match, hosts West Indies will meet Zimbabwe, also in Barbados.

The eight-team tournament from April 19, organised by All Sports Promotions, will see West Indies, Pakistan, Kenya, Zimbabwe, Ireland, Holland, Bangladesh and the International Cricket Council (ICC) Americas team comprising players from Bermuda, Canada, Cayman Islands and The Bahamas in action.

The matches will be played in Trinidad and Tobago, Grenada, Guyana, Barbados, and St Kitts.

The championship has been split into two phases -- knockout and league -- the knockout phase from April 19 to 24 and the league from April 26.

Siddons seeks big runs

Cricket

AGENCIES, undated

Bangladesh coach Jamie Siddons said on Friday that his charges must post a score close to 300 runs to have any chance in the fifth and final one-day international against Pakistan at the Karachi National Stadium.

Bangladesh, who lost the fourth match in Multan by seven wickets, are trailing 4-0 in the series but the Tigers showed rare fight in the third encounter in Lahore where they posted 285 in reply to the hosts' 308.

"If we bat first and put up a total (that is) something like we posted in third game then we have a chance in the last match," Bangladesh's Australian coach Siddons said ahead of Saturday's

game.

But captain Mohammad Ashraful has scores of 9, 22, 4 and 16 in the past four matches and only Shakib Al Hasan has scored a century for Bangladesh but Siddons has full faith in the temperamental star.

"He (Ashraful) is hitting the ball well in the nets, in fact better than anybody else and I hope he does bat well tomorrow (Saturday)," Siddons said.

Meanwhile, Pakistan captain Shoaib Malik is relishing the chance to notch a record-breaking 11th successive victory in one-day internationals, although nine of its past 10 wins have come against world cricket's weakest opponents.

"Winning is winning, it's not in our hands who our opponents are," Malik said on Friday, a day before Pakistan take on Bangladesh in the fifth and final one-day interna-

tional in the southern port city of Karachi.

Pakistan's 18-year-old record of 10 consecutive wins in one dayers looks likely to fall.

The current winning streak started against India at Jaipur last year before it blanked strugglers Zimbabwe 5-0 in the home series in February and has now recorded four victories in a row against modest Bangladesh.

"The credit goes to all players and people of Pakistan, who prayed for us," Malik said.

Australia cancelled its scheduled March-April tour of Pakistan at short notice on security grounds, prompting the hasty invitation of Bangladesh to fill its place with five 50-over games and a Twenty20 international.

"It's better to play some international cricket instead of not playing it at all," Malik said.

Media to boycott meet



AFP, New Delhi

Agence France-Presse (AFP) and other top news agencies have said they will not cover cricket's inaugural Indian Premier League, which starts Friday, due to curbs on the distribution of photographs.

IPL officials have prohibited news agencies from supplying photographs to cricket-specific websites for the eight-team, Twenty20 tournament.

The London-based News Media Coalition (NMC), which defends media rights for global news and photograph agencies such as AFP, Associated Press, Getty Images and Reuters, called the restrictions "discriminatory."

"It is discriminatory for the accreditation terms to prohibit international news agencies from

being able to serve a specific group of users, such as cricket websites," the NMC said in a statement.

"The interests of the Indian Premier League are protected by the fact that its accreditation terms limit news content generated by the news agencies to be used for editorial purposes only."

"The News Media Coalition calls upon the Indian Premier League to remove remaining obstacles in the way of full editorial coverage of the tournament," the release said.

The Editors Guild of India also called for the "unacceptable conditions" to be withdrawn.

In an advisory note to clients, AFP said it "will not, until further notice, offer any text, photo or graphics coverage of the inaugural Indian Premier League cricket, beginning Friday, due to restrictions imposed on international news agencies on the distribution of photographs."

The Press Trust of India decided to cover the event "under protest" after the IPL lifted a host of strin-

gent conditions for accreditation but refused to lift the ban on cricket websites.

The tournament marks the first time that international cricketers will put aside national allegiances to play for privately-owned and city-based teams, who selected their players via a multi-million-dollar auction last month.

International cricketers have been offered huge pay packets to take part in the 44-day, 59-match extravaganza across cricket-mad India.

Moves by sports organisers to curb media rights have largely failed in the past.

FIFA tried imposing similar restrictions on photo coverage of the 2006 World Cup but backed down under a threat of a worldwide boycott.

In September last year, organisers of the Rugby World Cup settled at the last minute after a long dispute over media rights.

Two months later, global news

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PHOTO: STAR

Action from yesterday's Brac Bank Club Cup hockey match between Mohammedan Sporting Club and Sonali Bank at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium.

Tutu to give MCC speech

Cricket

AFP, London

Desmond Tutu, the former Archbishop of Cape Town, will give the 2008 MCC Spirit of Cricket Cowdrey Lecture at Lord's Cricket Ground on June 10, organisers Marylebone Cricket Club said Thursday.

The lecture was inaugurated in 2001 in memory of the late Colin Cowdrey, the former England captain, who was instrumental in 'the spirit of cricket' being included in the introduction to the 2000 edition of cricket's Laws.

Tutu, awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1984, is a lifelong cricket fan. He rose to global prominence in the 1980s as an anti-apartheid activist and in 1986 became the first black Archbishop of Cape Town, the major Anglican diocese in South Africa.

He held that position until his retirement in 1996 when he was appointed by then South African president Nelson Mandela to chair

the country's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which looked into some of the worst human rights abuses perpetrated during the apartheid era.

Keith Bradshaw, the secretary



DESMOND TUTU

and chief executive of MCC, said in a statement Thursday: "We're absolutely thrilled that the Most Reverend Dr Desmond Tutu has accepted the invitation to deliver

the 2008 MCC Spirit of Cricket Cowdrey Lecture.

"We are also hugely honoured. Dr Tutu is revered around the world as a moral voice and someone who speaks with gravitas on a range of issues."

"He's an inspirational man who has spent a lifetime speaking out for truth and justice and I am sure that his views on the game -- and the Spirit of Cricket in particular -- will be hugely interesting to cricket followers around the world."

Tutu will become the first person not directly connected with cricket to give the lecture.

Christopher Martin-Jenkins, the cricket correspondent of The Times, became the first career journalist and broadcaster to be invited to speak at this annual event in 2007.

Previously, lecturers had all been former international cricketers, including Richie Benaud, Sunil Gavaskar and Geoff Boycott.

Although it gave up running English cricket in 1969, MCC, which owns Lord's, is still in overall worldwide charge of the sport's Laws.



PHOTO: AFP

Bangladesh captain Mohammad Ashraful lofts the ball during a practice session at the Karachi National Stadium yesterday.

BRAC BANK CLUB CUP MSC taste first victory

SPORTS REPORTER

Syed Al Masum facilitated Mohammedan Sporting Club a 2-0 victory over Sonali Bank in the Brac Bank Club Cup hockey tournament at the Maulana Bhasani National Stadium yesterday.

After the barren first-half Mamun's reverse hit found the target to break the deadlock in the 39th minute and set a piece for Zahid Bin Talib to double the margin at the stroke of the final whistle in a dull and drab match.

The hard-fought victory however relieved the popular Black and Whites, which is a relatively young side this time, as Sadharan Bima held them in the first game.

Mohammedan were lucky enough to secure full points from the match as they continued their ordinary performance while Sonali Bank, which simply blew away Mariner Youngs Club in their first game 7-0, was much impressive than the traditional powerhouse.

Masum took charge to take his side out of trouble as his sudden hit after receiving the ball from the

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McCullum gives IPL a rousing start

STAR SPORT MONITOR

Brendon McCullum's memorable 158 dazzled Indian Premier League's opening night and gave Kolkata Knight Riders an mammoth score of 222 for 3 against Bangalore Royal Challengers yesterday.

New Zealand wicketkeeper-batsman McCullum smashed as many as 14 sixes and blasted 10 boundaries in his unbeaten innings that spanned only 73 deliveries.

He shared a 61-run stand with skipper Sourav Ganguly after Rahul Dravid won the toss and put the Kolkata Knight Riders in to bat. But Ganguly scored only 12 runs during the blistering opening partnership. Later, Australian captain Ricky Ponting stroked a run-a-ball 20 and David Hussey scored 12.

Zaheer Khan, Ashley Nofke and Jacques Kallis took one wicket each for Bangalore.

Tigers' post-WC slide

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

When Bangladesh beat India and South Africa in the 2007 World Cup, there was reason to believe they would finally shrug off their minnows tag and begin to challenge the top teams more consistently. Both

games against Ireland. Leave those games aside, and they've been beaten 18 straight times, including once by Ireland. The slide started with two defeats at home against India, and it has gone progressively further downhill since Mohammad Ashraful took over the captaincy, with successive defeats against Sri Lanka, New Zealand, South Africa and Pakistan.

BANGLADESH IN ODIS AGAINST THE TOP TEAMS OVER THE YEARS

Period	M	W	L	NR
Mar 31, 1986 - May 31, 1999	24	1	23	0
Jun 1, 1999 - Dec 23, 2004	52	0	50	2
Dec 26, 2004 - Apr 7, 2007	24	5	19	0
Since Apr 8, 2007	17	0	17	0

wins were achieved overseas - though conditions were fairly similar to the ones at home - against tough opponents, on the biggest world stage.

Those wins should have sparked a revival in fortunes, but the last year has been a particularly dismal one for them. Since they beat South Africa, they have been beaten 18 times in 21 ODIs, and their only victories have been in three home

Bangladesh have won 39 out of 176 ODIs so far, but 33 of those wins have been against Zimbabwe and other non-Test-playing teams. The table below traces Bangladesh's performances against the top teams over the years, which clearly shows why their results in the last year have been so disappointing.

Among the players who have played at least ten ODIs against the top teams during this period, only two - Tamim Iqbal and Shakib Al Hasan - have an average of more than 25. The biggest letdown has been the performance of their captain: Ashraful has managed just three scores of more than 25 in his last 17 innings against the top teams, and has lasted an average of 22 deliveries per dismissal.

BATSMEN IN ODIS AGAINST TOP TEAMS SINCE APRIL 8, 2007

Batsman	M	Runs	Avg	SR	100/50s
Tamim Iqbal	17	469	27.58	68.16	1/5
Shakib Al Hasan	17	417	26.06	67.36	1/4
Mashrafe Bin Mortaza	13	221	20.09	65.38	0/0
Aftab Ahmed	14	276	19.71	67.31	0/1
Forhad Reza	11	144	16.00	62.33	0/0
Mohammad Ashraful	17	263	15.47	70.50	0/1
Shahriar Nafees	9	118	13.11	65.55	0/0



PHOTO: AFP

Japanese duo Harada Saho (R) and Suzuki Emiko take part in the duet free routine during the synchronised swimming qualification for the Beijing Olympics in the National Aquatics Centre on Friday.

IPL gets off with a bang

BBC ONLINE, undated

The Indian Premier League (IPL), with its potential to transform world cricket, began on Friday with a spectacular floodlit match in Bangalore.

Acrobats and Bollywood stars took part in a lavish opening ceremony featuring fireworks and cheerleaders. The match was officially a \$5,000 sell-out.

The first contest featured teams led by Rahul Dravid and Sourav Ganguly, both former captains of India.

The Kolkata Knight Riders were batting with gold pads and gold helmets.

Two hours before the match was due to start, music was pumping out of giant speakers at the Chinnaswamy Stadium.

Long queues gathered outside, though most of the stands were already full.

Fans cheered as the eight captains, all smartly dressed in suits, were introduced.

Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) president Sharad Pawar said: "This is a historic day for world cricket."

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Dare fix the match!

SPORTS REPORTER

Cricket Committee of Dhaka Metropolitan (CCDM) has taken an extraordinary measure to make sure nothing goes wrong in today's crucial First Division Super League match between Cricket Coaching School and Gazi Tank.

Winners of the encounter will have one foot in next season's Premier League but CCDM have heard whisperings of possible negotiations between the sides.

"We want to confirm that no matches are fixed. There are some rumours about this match. That's why we have taken some initiatives but it is nothing special," said CCDM member secretary MA Kabir.

He however informed that they requested the selection panel as

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