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Did U Know?

Current world number one Roger Federer has never won the French Open.



Adam Gilchrist
(Former Australia wicketkeeper)
"My experience has been fantastic. I really enjoyed playing though it has been a new challenge for me to be in this scenario. But when I have to sit back I would wonder why we did not perform better."
On Indian Premier League.



What to WATCH

SET Max
Indian Premier League
Rajasthan Royals v Mumbai Indians
Live from 8:30pm

STAR Cricket
England v New Zealand
Second Test, Day Four
Live from 4:00pm

TEN Sports
West Indies v Australia
First Test, Day Five
Live from 9:00pm

ESPN
Sportscentre India
Sports News
Live at 8:30pm

LOCAL SNIPPETS

SPORTS REPORTER

Eskaton Sabuj Sangha emerged champions of Second Division Cricket after a 13-run win over Prime Dholeswar Sporting Club in the final at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium yesterday.

The final, reduced to a 39-overs-a-side affair, had no consequences as both sides had already been promoted to next season's First Division League after topping their respective Super League groups. Eskaton, who were only demoted last year, returned to First Division while it will be the first time that the Dholeswar outfit would play in that league.

Back to the match and Eskaton reached 149-7 in 39 overs with Emran hitting 64 and Nahian adding 34. Dholeswar were bowled out for just 136 in 35.2 overs after some brilliant bowling from Nahian (3-21) and skipper Shaifq (2-19).

INTER-HALL VOLLEYBALL
UNB adds: Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman Hall made a good start in the Dhaka University Inter-Hall Volleyball tournament bearing Jagannath Hall in straight 0 sets in the opening match at the DU central playground.

Six boys and four girls halls of the university are taking in the respective groups of the meet.
DU Treasurer Prof Syed Abul Kalam formally inaugurated the five-day meet. Convener of University Volleyball Committee Prof Tahmina Akhter was present.

DHAKA COLLEGE FOOTBALL
History will face Political Science in the final match of the Dhaka College Inter-Department football tournament today at the college ground.

Twenty-two teams representing different departments of the college took part in the knockout basis tournament.

Director General of Secondary and Higher Secondary Education Directorate Prof KM Aurangzeb will be the chief guest in the final. Dhaka College Principal Prof Bashirul Haque will preside over the closing function.

Vice-president of Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) Badal Roy and vice-principal of Dhaka College Dr Anwar Alam Khan will be present as special guests.

Usha's 9 out of 9

Abahani's hopes dented

Hockey

SPORTS REPORTER

Tactical masterstrokes by Rana Jahir and clinical finishing from the forwards helped Usha Kriya Chakra outplay Abahani 4-2 in the concluding match of the Green Delta Insurance Premier Hockey League yesterday.

Pakistani coach Jahir relied on swift counter attacks to expose the leaks in the rival backline as Usha maintained hundred percent record in the competition to open up an almost invincible five-point lead ahead of the Super 5 stage that begins tomorrow.

Usha finished nine rounds on maximum 27 points while Abahani, desperate to win and topple the leaders, stuck to 22 points following their maiden defeat.

Usha rushed early blood in the top-of-the-table clash between the defending joint-champions at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium but the old-Dhaka outfit failed to utilise a chance in the first minute with only the rival keeper to beat.

Abahani reassured soon but paid dear for missing countless chances and the occasional defen-

sive errors in addition to poor goalkeeping by Zahid.

The ball remained in the Usha half for the first ten minutes but a counter attack put Titu in a position to set up Habul who placed the ball home after 11 minutes.

In the very next minute, Pakistani centre-half Akhter Ali bypassed the entire Abahani defence from the middle and went round Zahid before hitting low into the board.

Two down, Abahani did not lose the moral and their offensive strategy earned a penalty corner in the 22nd minute. Setpiece specialist Chayan, however, saw his twin strikes denied by Shakil, who was outstanding at the Usha goal but the sky-blues got a lifeline when they were awarded a penalty stroke

during the same move.

This time, Shakil dived to right and parried Chayan's effort from the spot. Jimmy was on fire but his spadework went down the drains as Shuvo failed to sneak the ball through Shakil's pads and again, could not meet a cross by the playmaker that ran harmlessly across the Usha goal.

It was all Abahani after the break and Shakil was finally fooled by Jimmy whose wicked deflection on a powerful hit by Shuvo reduced the margin in the 38th minute.

Pakistani midfielder Modasser had a tiring day but his compatriot Imran spoiled a chance from two yards before Zahid's schoolboy-like keeping gifted Usha their third goal against run of play in the 49th minute.

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POINTS TABLE

Teams	M	W	D	L	GF	GA	Total
Usha	9	9	0	0	47	17	27
Abahani	9	7	1	1	42	12	22
Mohammedan	9	6	2	1	35	14	20
Sonali Bank	9	6	1	2	27	19	19
Ajax	9	4	1	4	19	19	13
Azad	9	4	0	5	26	28	12
Manners	9	2	1	6	10	21	7
Bangladesh SC	9	1	2	6	10	37	5
Wari	9	1	0	8	4	25	3
Bima	9	0	2	7	8	34	2



Abahani captain Rana (R) lunges from behind in a bid to stop a darting run by Usha's two-goal Pakistani centre-half Akhter Ali (C) during their Premier Hockey League match at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Panesar claims six

Cricket

AFP, Manchester

Monty Panesar returned his best figures in Test cricket here Sunday but England were still left needing to rewrite the record books at Old Trafford to beat New Zealand.

At stumps, on the third day of the second Test, England were 76 for one in their second innings, needing a further 218 runs to reach their victory target of 294 and so go 1-0 up in this three-match series.

No side had ever made more to win an Old Trafford Test than the 231 for three England posted against the West Indies four years ago.

Panesar took six for 37, including his 100th Test wicket.

He surpassed his previous best innings return of 6 for 126 against New Zealand at Napier in March as the Black Caps, who had been 85 for two, were bowled out for 114 in their second innings.

But of arguably greater significance, on a day when 16 wickets fell, was the five for 66 taken earlier by Panesar's rival left-arm spinner Daniel Vettori.

New Zealand captain Vettori's return helped dismiss England for 202 and so gave his side a commanding first innings lead of 179.

Vettori struck again before the close when Alastair Cook was well-caught off bat and thigh pad by James Marshall at short leg to leave England 60 for one.

Andrew Strauss was 27 not out at stumps with England captain Michael Vaughan unbeaten on 12.

Worryingly for England, this was the 11th straight match since the fourth Test against the West Indies at the Riverside in June where they'd failed to reach their first innings benchmark total of 400.

The Black Caps' innings ended when they were nine down because

Daniel Flynn was still unable to bat after being hit on the head by a James Anderson bouncer Friday which forced the Northern Districts left-hander to retire hurt.

Panesar's return meant that 25 of his 101 Test wickets had been taken here at Old Trafford.

A notable feature of the 26-year-old Northamptonshire hero's bowling Sunday was the four lbws he won.

Both Vettori and Panesar made the occasional ball turn sharply, a troubling sight for the batsmen.

New Zealand were reduced to 50 for two after Aaron Redmond was caught in the gully by Paul Collingwood off Anderson and Panesar had Jamie How lbw for 29.

Marshall, swishing across the line when well back, was then plumb lbw to Panesar.

The hard-hitting Brendon McCullum, who made a run-a-ball 97 in the first innings at Lord's, had the ability to take the game away from England.

However, he lasted just three

SEE PAGE 18 COL 2



England spinner Monty Panesar celebrates the wicket of New Zealand batsman Jamie How during the third day of the second Test at Old Trafford in Manchester on Sunday.

PHOTO: AFP

Sourav's gift to Kolkata

CRICINFO, undated

Sourav Ganguly ensured a winning departure for Kolkata Knight Riders as his fantastic unbeaten 86 fashioned a close three-wicket victory over Kings XI Punjab at the Eden Gardens last night.

Kolkata had only pride to play for and thanks to their captain, will go home happy with a consolation win. Ganguly's innings aside, the unsung hero for Kolkata was Umar Gul. He walked in and slammed two sixes off his second and third deliveries. That really set Ganguly going at the other end as he smacked Piyush Chawla for 16 off 3 balls to upset the equation for Punjab. Kolkata managed a massive 73 off the last 5 overs as a result of that. They finish at number five in the points table, just behind the four semifinalists.

Ganguly smashed half a dozen sixes and as many boundaries in his 53-ball knock but found little

help from the top-order. For Punjab, Sreesanth, VRV Singh and Chawla took two wickets each.

Earlier, Kumar Sangakkara and Shaun Marsh yet again built a solid foundation as Kings XI Punjab reached 174-6.

After James Hopes was trapped in front by Umar Gul, Sangakkara showed off his silken touch and found the boundaries effortlessly.

With Ishant Sharma leaking runs, Sourav Ganguly brought on Sri Lankan sensation Ajantha Mendis in the third over. He conceded just three in his first, but Marsh managed to clear mid-off twice in the next.

Sangakkara's fifty didn't come as quickly it had done against Deccan, but he looked on course for a big one. Unfortunately, a dodgy leg-before decision went against him just after he had walked across his stumps and pulled Umar Gul on the front foot for six.

Ganguly ran back from midwicket to get under the skier, but Aakash Chopra, coming in from deep was better placed to take it: the two collided, and the ball popped out of Ganguly's hands.

Yuvraj added insult to injury by smashing three fours in Ishant's final over, and the IPL's most expensive bowler ended with 49 runs from four overs. Umar Gul came up with the yorkers to strike twice in the 20th, and finished with splendid figures of 4 for 23.

At the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium in Hyderabad, Royal Challengers Bangalore powered to a five-wicket win over Deccan Chargers to register their fourth win of the IPL and assure themselves of seventh place. Set a modest target of 166, Bangalore started slowly, but came on with Misbahul Haq, Rahul Dravid, Cameron White and B Akhil ensured they got home with one over to spare.

Deccan began strongly, but had only themselves to blame for frittering away an outstanding start: Herschelle Gibbs and Adam Gilchrist added 101 in just 11.2 overs, but from there it went rapidly downhill, as they lost nine for 56 in eight overs to slump to 165, after threatening 200 at one stage.

Bangalore's run-chase was

SEE PAGE 18 COL 2

NATIONAL CRICKET

Rangpur bag last semi spot

SPORTS REPORTER

Rangpur completed the last four of the 28th National Cricket Championship after they coasted to a five-wicket win over Khulna in Sylhet yesterday.

They now face Narayanjanj in the second semifinal tomorrow at the same venue, while Dhaka take on Barisal in the first semifinal today.

Tanvir struck a patient unbeaten 48 off 94 balls that included six boundaries as Rangpur reached their target of 124 runs in 41.4 overs. Man-of-the-match Tanvir found good support from Salahuddin (33) and Sujon, who was unbeaten on 21. Masum too two wickets while Dipu picked up one for 18.

Earlier, Khulna were wrapped up for 123 in 48.3 overs with only Dildar (25) and Shamim (20) contributing with the bat. For Rangpur, Rony took three wickets.

WOMEN'S HANDBALL

Bangladesh in final

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh women's handball team reached the final of the 3rd South Asian Handball Championship beating Pakistan 23-16 in the last league match in Lucknow yesterday.

With this victory, Bangladesh reached their initial target and now even hope for a dream result upsetting hosts India for the first time.

Maina Begum and Kamrun Nahar Sheela scored eight goals each for Bangladesh who dominated the first half 11-7.

Bangladesh, which finished runners-up in the last edition of the meet at home in 2000, will again play the final against holders India, who marched to the final with an all-win record securing six points from three outings.

Bangladesh managed the final berth with four points after conceding a 7-28 defeat against India in their first match on Saturday. They returned to the title race outplaying hapless Nepal 33-8 and confirmed the final berth outplaying Pakistan.

BFF delegation leaves for FIFA Congress today

SPORTS REPORTER

A three-member Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) delegation led by president Kazi Salahuddin will leave Dhaka today for Sydney to attend the FIFA Congress.

Vice-presidents Abdus Salam Murshedi and Manzoor Hossain Malu are the other members of the BFF delegation.

The 58th Congress of the world football governing body will be held on May 29-30 in the Australian city.

"I know everyone would be busy during the Congress but I am looking forward to a meeting the FIFA president," Salahuddin said last night.

"If I get any opportunity for the development of the game in Bangladesh, I will be ready to use it," added the BFF chief.

Brothers' big bite

Sujan leaving Abahani, MSC sign 7

SPORTS REPORTER



market in the last two days to strengthen their squads for this year's B League.

Mohammedan, runners-up of the inaugural professional football league last year, confirmed seven national footballers including four Muktiyoddha players.

Although Hassan Al Mamun's service was secured yesterday, the local giants signed goalkeeper Aminul, defender Rajani and midfielder Arman Aziz from Muktiyoddha on the previous day.

Farashganj's impressive striker Robin, who was believed to head for Abahani, and Youngmen's forward Komol both signed for the black and whites apart from Chittagong Mohammedan stopper Saikat.

With the national team due to leave Dhaka tomorrow for Bangkok en route to Colombo for the SAFF Football Championship, Mohammedan did not want playing the waiting game.

Brothers, on the other hand, finally solved their financial crisis and all but built their squad on Saturday night.

The biggest catch of the Gopibagh outfit is Abahani centre-back Mohammed Sujan, who was out of action for the entire last season due to injury.

The ex-international, who reportedly took Tk 10 lakh -- over half of his contract money -- from Abahani for 2007, was believed to stay with the sky-blues but became the highest played Brothers player for the same amount.

Brothers manager Amer Khan, however, said he was ready to negotiate with Abahani over Sujan.

"He was our 2005 captain and I saw him play yesterday against the national team. I believe Sujan's fitness level has reached a satisfactory standard and had the national team considered him taking into the camp, he would have been set to play in the SAFF Championship," Amer opined.

"Abahani also left him in the bench but I want a player of Sujan's standard to play. Abahani did not register him last season, so he is a free player. We legally own him."

"But for the money he took from Abahani last season, many feel that he has an obligation to play for them this year. There is still opportunities to talk (with Abahani)," added the former Brothers midfielder.

Amer said that the club have

already started talks with former Sri Lankan international Pakir Ali, a household name in Dhaka in the 80s, to take over the side as coach.

Brothers, whose budget would cross Tk one crore, are set to retain old players like Shuvra, Shahnur Rony, Shakil, Masud, Masud Rana and Tapu.

Jewel Rana is likely to retire this season and wants to return to his old club Mohammedan but Amer says that a player like him deserves the best.

"I would also like to keep Jewel but if Mohammedan properly treat him, I'll let him go," said Amer. "Otherwise he would remain with full honour at Brothers."

Brothers have also completed formalities with Sheikh Russel goalkeepers Zia and Shakil and Mishu and Ritko, rising Mohammedan stars Anful and Zahid, Farashganj's Arup and Rony Islam, Arambagh midfielder Juku, Victoria forward Mithun and Abahani winger Abdullah Parvez.

"We have paid the booters handsomely and they are very happy."

The migration of the Muktiyoddha booters confirmed that they are destined to build a team for just survival in the professional league.

WI spark collapse

AFP, Kingston

Australia suffered a rare batting collapse at the start of their second innings after Shivnarine Chanderpaul survived a stunning blow to the head and scored his 18th Test hundred for West Indies in the opening Test on Saturday.

Australia, leading by 119 runs from the first innings, fell to 17 for four in their second innings when bad light stopped play nine overs early on the third day at Sabina Park.

Fidel Edwards put the skids on the visitors with two wickets for 11 runs from four overs, and Daren Powell gave admirable support with two for five from five overs.

This followed another epic innings of 118 from Chanderpaul which lifted West Indies to 312, in reply to Australia's first innings total of 431.

Stuart Clark was the pick of the Aussie bowlers with three wickets for 63 runs, Brett Lee captured three for 59, Mitchell Johnson took two for 63, and Stuart MacGill two for 100.

Australia were looking to build on their healthy lead but Phil Jaques was caught behind for five, the left-handed opener groping at a delivery moving away from the line of the off-stump.

Australia captain Ricky Ponting led his side's batting in the first innings with a majestic 158, but he had no answer when Daren Powell squared him up and had him caught at third slip for five to leave

his side 11 for two. But more drama was to come, when Edwards gained a palpable lbw verdict to dismiss makeshift

left-handed opener Simon Katich for one, and next over, Australia suffered another blow, when Powell

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West Indies mainstay Shivnarine Chanderpaul raises his bat after a gutsy century against Australia on the third day of the first Test at Sabina Park in Kingston on Saturday.

PHOTO: AFP