



## US men's relay team stripped of gold

AFP, Beijing

The International Olympic Committee said Saturday it has stripped the United States' 4x400-metre men's relay team of the gold medal it won at the Sydney 2000 Olympics for doping.

The decision was made after team member Antonio Pettigrew admitted in May to doping as far back as 1997 and agreed to return his Sydney gold medal, IOC spokeswoman Giselle Davies said.

The announcement was made during an IOC meeting here on Saturday.

The Nigerian team, who were second, will now receive the gold medal.

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## Did U Know?

Up until 1994, the Olympics were held every four years. Since then, the Winter and Summer Games have alternated every two years.



## TEN Sports

Sri Lanka v India  
Second Test, Day Four  
Live from 10:45am  
**STAR Cricket**

England v South Africa  
Third Test, Day Five  
Live from 4:00pm  
**ESPN**

AFC Challenge Cup  
Turkmenistan v India  
Live from 6:55pm



## Pep Guardiola

(Barcelona's new coach)

"I understand that everybody thinks that Lionel Messi is different of course he is different, but I have to treat him the same as the others."

## Pioneer football

SPORTS REPORTER

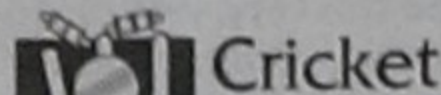
Rampura Kira Chakra brightened their chances of reaching the semifinal of the Dhaka City Corporation Pioneer Football League after winning over Mansoor Sporting Club 3-1 at the Bir Shreshtha Shaheed Sepoy Mohammad Mostafa Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

With the day's result, Rampura lead group C with an all-win record securing nine points from three matches and needs just a draw in the remaining match against Moghbazar on Tuesday to assure their semifinal place.

Arafat, Sourav and Khuku scored once each for Rampura while Sourav netted the lone goal for Mansoor.

In the day's other match, Moghbazar got a walkover against Surjosena as they surprisingly did not appear in the field in time despite winning the last two group matches.

# Stalwarts to help youth



SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammad Rafique loves to do things practically and there was no exception when he was requested to share his South African experience with the cricketers of GP-BCB National Cricket Academy.

The most successful Bangladeshi bowler, who retired from international cricket four months ago, and veteran wicketkeeper Khaled Mashud appeared at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur to interact with the Academy boys ahead of their tour.

The first man to have claimed 100 wickets in both one-day internationals and Test cricket, Rafique, however was not ready to finish the job by only sharing his views with the youngsters rather he bowled for more than two hours and gave them some tips.

The development committee of Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB), under the leadership of Shakil Kasem, has taken the initiative of involving former and current

national cricketers to give the boys an idea about the South African conditions.

The game development committee however took one step forward to give the idea a permanent shape as they have decided to engage former Bangladesh captains Aminul Islam and Mashud and left-armers Rafique as consultants for batting, wicket-keeping and spin bowling respectively.

"This is an effort on our part to make optimum use of local expertise in developing our future cricketers. Aminul, Mashud and Rafique have vast experience of playing cricket at the highest level and can pass on their knowledge to the next generation," said Shakil Kasem, chairman of the committee.

The three stalwarts of the country's cricket will work with the players of the GP-BCB National Cricket Academy, Bangladesh under-19 team and other age-group selections.

Both Rafique and Mashud welcomed the move and said that it will make a big impact in the country's cricket.

"I am still enjoying playing cricket although I retired from

international cricket. It is quite impossible for me to do a permanent job right at the moment but I am ready to help my country during the leisure time.

"I will gladly accept if the board asks me to work with the young guys in the break," said Rafique, who scalped 100 wickets in 33 Tests and claimed 125 wickets in 125 one-day internationals.

On the other hand, Mashud was excited with the decisions as he believed that it would ensure no wastage of cricketers' knowledge.

"I think it's a fantastic idea to ensure maximum use of the cricketers' knowledge for better interest of the game. When we started our career there weren't many cricketers who had the international experience but the situation is totally changed now.

"There are a number of cricketers who have gained international experience and you cannot waste their knowledge," said Mashud, who is yet to have officially retired from the international scene.

"As a cricketer nothing could have been better than to be involved with the game in any way."

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Former Bangladesh wicketkeeper Khaled Mashud (L) makes a point while talking to the GP-BCB National Academy players at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

# 'Work in progress' on

AFP, Beijing



Six days before the Beijing Olympics, Chinese and international organisers were working together on a compromise to unblock more censored websites for foreign media, a senior IOC official said Saturday.

It came the same day the International Organising Committee announced here it had stripped the United States' 4x400-metre men's relay team of the gold medal it won at the Sydney 2000 Olympics for doping.

China has faced severe criticism after foreign reporters covering the August 8-24 Games discovered a range of websites were barred at the high-tech Olympic media centre.

Beijing has since unblocked a number of those sites including that of Amnesty International, but many others remain inaccessible, bringing more unwanted bad publicity for Games organisers and the Chinese government.

International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Jacques Rogge last month had promised unfettered Internet for foreign journalists covering the showpiece event.

IOC executive board member Kevan Gosper said Saturday Rogge had not changed his position on the need for free Internet access, and contrary to reports had not struck a deal with Chinese organisers to block some sites.

"We were able to clarify at a most senior level... there was absolutely no shift that had occurred," Gosper told reporters Saturday.

He said the IOC and BOCOG, the Beijing Organizing Committee for the Olympic Games, have set up a working group to examine which remaining censored websites can be opened up to reporters.

He described the process as a "work in progress", but the Australian said he was hopeful access would improve.

"We believe we are moving to a point where you will be in a position to report in an unfettered way," Gosper said, adding there will always be a debate over whether a country's own regula-

tions meet international expectations.

On Friday, the previously barred websites of Amnesty, media watchdog Reporters Without Borders and German broadcaster Deutsche Welle were accessible.

But many other sites were still blocked, including those linked to Chinese dissidents, the outlawed Falungong spiritual movement, the Tibetan government-in-exile and sites with information on the 1989 Tiananmen massacre.

IOC spokeswoman Giselle Davies said Beijing organisers, when referring to Internet restrictions in previous meetings, had spoken only of pornographic sites and those sensitive for national security reasons.

Meanwhile, a dress rehearsal for the Beijing Olympics opening ceremony was held on Saturday despite security breaches that led to footage of an earlier practice leaking out.

The ceremony directed by Chinese film director Zhang Yimou had been shrouded in secrecy and the first rehearsal took place on July 11 with tight security deployed

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Young dancers practise the lion dance as they wait for their turn to perform in the rehearsal of the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games opening ceremony outside the National Stadium called the Bird's Nest yesterday.

## CITYCELL FED CUP Final round line-up ends

SPORTS REPORTER

Sunrise Sporting Club, Dhaka Wanderers and Victoria Sporting Club completed the line-up of the final round of the Citycell Federation Cup after winning their respective qualifying matches at the different venues yesterday.

Jatrabari Kira Chakra and BKSP are the other teams who have earlier confirmed their final round berths from Group A and these five teams will join eleven B. League clubs in the 16-team final round, which kicks off at the Bangabandhu National Stadium from August 6.

Abahani, Mohammedan, Muktiyoddha Sangsad, Sheikh Russel, Brothers Union, Arambagh Kira Sangha, Farashganj Sporting Club, Rahmatganj MFS, Chittagong Abahani, Chittagong Mohammedan and Khulna Abahani got direct entries.

The sixteen teams will split into four groups for the final round of the season's curtain-raising tournament. A colourful draw will be held at a local hotel today and top four finishers of the inaugural B. League -- Abahani, Mohammedan, Muktiyoddha and Sheikh Russel -- will head the four groups.

Back to the day's matches, Wanderers blanked Bangladesh Air Force 2-0 while Victoria earned a hard-fought 2-1 victory over Bangladesh Navy to confirm final round berths as Group B champions and runners-up respectively.

Sunrise became unbeaten Group C champions when they secured a solitary goal victory over Customs Kira Parisad at the

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## Dollar after Rokibul

SPORTS REPORTER

Dollar Mahmud snapped up five wickets after Rokibul Hasan's unbeaten century as Bangladesh A comfortably beat Marylebone Cricket Club by 80 runs at the Racecourse in Durham University grounds on Friday.

The young pacesman who struggled during the Kipley Cup and Asia Cup in the previous months, made sure his English summer accounted for something as he accounted for the wickets of Akbar Ansari, Will Gidman, Ned Eckersley, John Miles and Kyle Hodnett as MCC were bowled out for 195 in 40.4 overs, in reply to Bangladesh's 275-6.

But all was not smooth sailing for the second string side as a second wicket 98-run partnership between Kunal Jogia (51) and skipper Stuart Law (65) took the hosts to a good position.

But Dollar's efforts and that of Rubel Hossain's three-wicket haul made sure it was smooth sailing for Bangladesh A.

Earlier, right-handed batsman Rokibul smacked a six and eight boundaries in his 112 off 124 balls after he came into the crease with his side in trouble at 17 for two.

Rajin Saleh (five off 23 balls) was the next man out after both openers Tamim Iqbal (11) and Nazimuddin (one) fell early.

Then, Rokibul and Shakib Al Hassan (41) shared 71 for the fourth wicket before the left-hander was clean bowled by pacesman Faisal Shahid.

Another 51 was added between Rokibul and Nayeem Islam (25) for the fifth wicket but the real fireworks started when Dhiman Ghosh joined Rokibul with the score on 149.

Dhiman smashed 55 off 40 balls including four boundaries and two towering sixes as Bangladesh A moved past the 250-mark.

Miles and Gidman took two wickets each for the world's most influential cricket club.

The tourists face Durham in their last match in their trip to UK at the Riverside Ground in Chester le Street on Sunday.

## Zia, Himanshu in joint lead

SPORTS REPORTER

Grand Master Ziaur Rahman and Indian International Master Himanshu Sharma won their respective fifth round matches to jointly lead the table of the 8th United Insurance & United Leasing International Masters Chess tournament yesterday.

Zia beat Joydeep Dutta of India and Himanshu beat FIDE Master Taibur Rahman at the federation hall-room to improve their tally to four points each.

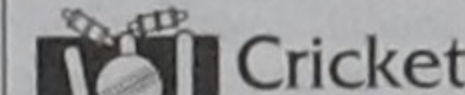
FM Abu Sufian Shakil, FM Mehdi Hasan Parag, FM Minhazuddin Ahmed Sagar, Imran Ali Elin, IM Mahmud Lodhi of

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WHERE DID THAT COME FROM? India opener Gautam Gambhir looks bemused after being clean bowled by a peach of a delivery from Sri Lankan mystery spinner Ajantha Mendis (not in picture) during the third day of the second Test match at the Galle International Cricket Stadium on Saturday. The ball pitched six inches outside Gambhir's leg-stump and spun back to beat his front pad to hit the top of off-stump after the ball was left alone by the left-handed opener.

# Lankans crawl back



AFP, Galle

Sri Lanka grabbed three big wickets in the closing session to throw the second Test against India wide open on the third day here on Saturday.

India were strongly placed at 144-1 before slipping to 200-4 in their second innings at stumps, with Muttiah Muralidaran, Ajantha Mendis and Chaminda Vaas sharing wickets.

The tourists are now only 237 ahead with six wickets in hand.

Sourav Ganguly and Venkatesh Laxman had yet to open their accounts when bad light stopped play.

India appeared to have seized

the initiative after attacking knocks from Gautam Gambhir (74), Virender Sehwag (50), Rahul Dravid (44) and Sachin Tendulkar (31) before losing their way.

Sri Lanka were bowled out for 292 in their first innings on the stroke of lunch in reply to India's 329, with skipper Mahela Jayawardene top-scoring with a stylish 86.

Off-spinner Harbhajan Singh played a big role in India gaining the lead as he grabbed 6-102 for his 22nd haul of five or more wickets in a Test innings. He was brilliantly supported by leg-spinner Anil Kumble (3-81).

Left-handed Gambhir and Sehwag then gave India a flying start for a second successive time in the match, adding 90 for the opening wicket. They had put on

167 in the first innings.

Sehwag again showed the way as he followed his first-innings 201 not out with a blazing fifty, blunting the Sri Lankan spin attack with his aggressive approach.

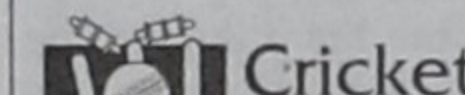
He reached his fifty off 49 balls before he fell playing an uppish drive off paceman Vaas, with Tillakaratne Dilshan timing his jump to perfection to take a superb catch in the covers.

Gambhir, who made 56 in the first innings, also used his feet remarkably well against spinners Mendis and Muralidaran to complete a second successive half-century.

He had been batting fluently before being bowled by Mendis, attempting to pad away a delivery that turned in sharply to hit the off-stump.

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# Test on a knife-edge



AFP, Birmingham

Andrew Flintoff struck twice as South Africa stumbled in their pursuit of a series-deciding win on the fourth day of the third Test against England at Edgbaston on Saturday.

Needing 281 to win, South Africa were 111 for four at tea.

Flintoff, who first swung the momentum towards England with a fiery spell on the second evening, made vital breakthroughs with full deliveries which the batsmen appeared not to see.

He trapped Neil McKenzie leg before for 22 after McKenzie and South African captain Graeme Smith put on 65 for the first wicket.

McKenzie appeared to lose the ball completely and was ducking when the ball hit him on the boot.

Jacques Kallis also ducked against a ball which struck him on the full on his right thigh in line with the stumps.

Kallis, bowled by a Flintoff yorker in the first innings which he admitted he did not pick up from the bowler's hand as it was delivered against the backdrop of the committee room balcony immediately above the sight screen, showed his anger as he was given out leg before.

In between Flintoff's two wickets, Hashim Amla was leg before to an arm ball from left-arm spinner Monty Panesar.

Flintoff was rested after taking two for 28 in eight overs but Ashwell Prince was caught behind off James Anderson as South Africa crashed to 93 for four.

Smith survived the carnage and was on 55 not out at tea.

South Africa, leading the four-match series 1-0, earlier bowled out England for 363 in their second innings. Paul Collingwood was last man out for 135.

Starting the day with the second new ball, South Africa struck with the second delivery when Morkel bowled Tim Ambrose without addition to the overnight total of 297 for six.

But Collingwood and Ryan Sidebottom put on 65 for the eighth wicket to ensure South Africa would need to make the highest fourth innings total in a Test at Edgbaston if they were to win.

## SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at tea on the fourth day of the third Test between England



England batsman Paul Collingwood drives on the up during his career-saving 135 against South Africa on the fourth day of the third Test at Edgbaston in Birmingham on Saturday.

### Bangladesh Cricket Board

The BCB offices have moved to:

**Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium**  
Mirpur, Dhaka 1216, Bangladesh

Tel : +880 2 8031001 - 4  
Fax : +880 2 8031199  
E-mail : [info@bcb-cricket.com](mailto:info@bcb-cricket.com)

All correspondences and contacts should now on be made to the new address.