

Daughter does where father failed

"Twenty years ago today I competed. Today Valeri Lukin is emotional as his daughter Nastia wins the Olympic gold in artistic gymnastics during the 2008 Beijing Olympics. It was an emotional for Valeri who was all-set to win gold in event in the 1988 Seoul Games before a slip-up in the last routine meant that he finished with a silver medal; one-tenth of the gold margin.



Did U Know?

British singer Leona Lewis is scheduled to perform at the Beijing Olympics' closing ceremony, representing the change from Beijing to London. The ceremony will also include the handover of the Games from Beijing to London.



Pieter van den Hoogenband

(Dutch swimming legend)
"It's been a very long time, my fourth Olympics (Beijing Games), my fourth final in the 100 freestyle. The Olympics is very special to me. When I was 10 years old watching Seoul, watching Matt Biondi, I got really inspired." After announcing his retirement on Thursday.



What to WATCH
BTB
Beijing Olympic Games
Athletics
Live from 7:20am
Aquatics
Live from 8:20am
Athletics
Live from 9:25am
Boxing
Live from 1:15pm
Highlights
Live from 8:30pm
DD Sports
Beijing Olympic Games
Athletics (Men's 100m Sprint Final)
Live from 8:30pm

Yuvraj slams 13 sixes in 172

AFP, Colombo

Yuvraj Singh geared up for the one-day series against Sri Lanka with an explosive 172 to power India to a comfortable 92-run victory in a practice match here on Friday.

The left-hander smashed 13 sixes and eight fours in his 121-ball knock as the tourists posted a challenging 342-5 before restricting a Sri Lankan XI to 250-6 in a 50-over clash.

The five-match one-day series starts in Dambulla on Monday.

Yuvraj went on the rampage after completing his century, hitting four successive sixes off spinner Jehan Mubarak. He was caught at deep mid-wicket by Mahela Udawatte while attempting a big hit off seamer Chanaka Welegedara.

"The knock gave me a lot of confidence. I had prepared well before coming here and hope to maintain my form. My intention was to spend time in the middle because I haven't played for a while. Then I played my strokes," said Yuvraj.

"The conditions will be different in Dambulla, so we tried to have partnerships to make a good total. It's important we play according to the conditions and that's what we will try there."

Yuvraj was involved in three valuable stands, adding 77 for the third wicket with Suresh Raina (45), 85 for the next with Rohit Sharma (24) and 99 for the sixth wicket with skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni (20 not out).

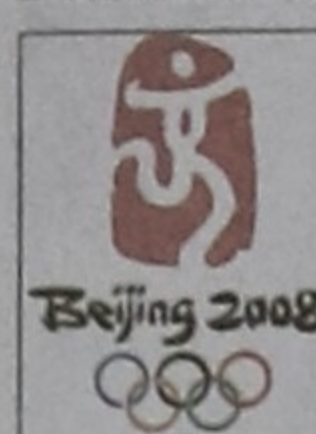
The hosts never looked like reaching the stiff target despite impressive half-centuries from middle-order batsman Mubarak (60) and left-handed opener Upul Tharanga (50).

Left-arm seamer Irfan Pathan was the most successful Indian bowler, taking 2-48, while off-spinner Harbhajan Singh claimed 1-38 off 10 tight overs.

Sri Lanka won the recent Test series with India 2-1.

Rude awakening

SPORTS REPORTER



The Bangladeshi athletes, used to manual time keeping at home, were rudely awakened when they failed to better their personal best marks at the Beijing Olympics 2008 yesterday.

Abu Abdullah and Dolly Akhter, the two Bangladeshis competing yesterday at the Games, both fell well below their best and finished last in their respective event heats.

Abdullah, who broke the 17-year-old national 100m sprint record last April in with a timing of 10.30s (hand timing), clocked 11.07s to creep behind sprinters from Bahamas, Russia, Norway, Nigeria, Gambia, Brazil and Hong Kong at the spectacular Bird's Nest or the National Stadium in Beijing on the opening day of the athletics competitions.

Had he even added 0.15 seconds more to his previous finest record, the 26-year-old Army soldier would have qualified for the second round by finishing among the first 38 in all heats. In the end, Abdullah's timing was 67th best among total 80 sprinters who entered the heats.

While the best timing of the first round heats was recorded at 10.13s, the last man to make it to the second round clocked 10.46s.

Living in false security and satisfaction of hand timing has always led Bangladeshi athletes to uncertainty in foreign meets and this time, it was no different.

For Dolly, it was worse although she clinched overall 73rd place among 90 swimmers in the women's 50m freestyle at the National Aquatics Centre.

Dolly's previous best of 30.17s would have at least given her the satisfaction of beating at least one South Asian rival in the heat but the top Bangladeshi female natant, despite having a better reaction time than Pakistan's Kiran Khan and Maldives' Aminath Hussain, took 30.23s to touch the block. Kiran finished sixth in 29.84s and Aminath came seventh in 30.21s.

Competition for Bangladesh ends at the Games today with veteran Nazmunahar Beauty, the national 100m record holder whose personal best is 12.32s, taking the track.

She will line up for Heats 7 alongside sprinters from Bulgaria, Slovenia, Nigeria, Great Britain, Gambia, Comoros and Cuba.

Ponting, Hayden injured Clarke to lead against Tigers

Cricket

AFP, Melbourne

Australia's batting superstar Michael Clarke will captain Australia in the upcoming one-day series against Bangladesh, with skipper Ricky Ponting sidelined by a wrist injury.

Cricket Australia announced a 14-man squad for the three-match series in Darwin here Friday. The Australians play Bangladesh on August 30, and September 3 and 6.

While Ponting was left out, veteran opener Matthew Hayden was named in the squad despite a lingering Achilles tendon problem.

In the absence of Ponting, the 27-year-old Clarke led Australia to successive wins over the West Indies in one-dayers in early July.

Chairman of selectors Andrew Hilditch said the priority was having Ponting fit for a hectic campaign that includes an away series against India and home Tests against New Zealand and South Africa.

"While it is disappointing not to have Ricky Ponting available we are confident continuing his recovery and missing this series will assure Ricky is ready for the demanding cricket schedule ahead for the Australian team," he said.

"Matthew Hayden has been selected in this side subject to fitness.



MICHAEL CLARKE

"His progress has been monitored closely by our physiotherapist and doctor and his overall participation in the series will be determined as we get closer to the date."

Hilditch said the selectors would call up a 15th player if needed.

Cricket Australia physiotherapist Alex Kountouris said both Ponting and Hayden were making good progress in their recoveries.

"Ricky Ponting is still recovering from wrist surgery... he is making good progress and on track to be available for upcoming cricket," Kountouris said. "Matthew Hayden is progressing well with his rehabilitation following an achilles tendon injury."

"His availability for the series will be determined over the next two weeks."

Young Western Australia batsman Shaun Marsh was named in the squad after impressing against the West Indies.

SQUAD

Michael Clarke (captain), Michael Hussey (vice-captain), Nathan Bracken, Stuart Clark, Brad Haddin (wicketkeeper), Matthew Hayden, James Hopes, David Hussey, Mitchell Johnson, Brett Lee, Shaun Marsh, Andrew Symonds, Shane Watson, Cameron White.



A WARM WELCOME: Bangladeshi expatriates get acquainted with the Tigers after their arrival at the Darwin International Airport yesterday. The Bangladesh team play their first practice match against the Australian Institute of Sports on August 18.

Tigers touch down

Cricket

TIGERCRIKET.COM, Darwin

The Bangladesh cricket team literally slipped into the capital of Northern Territory yesterday after stopovers in Hong Kong and Sydney. The Tigers' arrival in Australia for the Top End tour has coincided with the Beijing Olympic Games nearing its peak excitement phase and quite understandably the team had only drawn a few curious glances from fellow passengers and words of encouragement from some elderly sports lovers before an eventful landing in Darwin.

The Qantas jet carrying the Tigers from Sydney in its first attempt to land at Darwin International Airport had its rear wheels almost brush the runway before hastily taking to the skies again at the last moment, and after a minute of nervous laughs and uncomfortable chatters inside the cabin the pilot's voice finally reassured that a sudden gust of wind was responsible for the incident.

The aircraft circled the Darwin sky for another 10 minutes before it finally touched down amid applause from relieved passengers.

There was a pleasant welcome awaiting the team with about a quarter of Darwin's 100-odd Bangladeshi community members present at the airport's arrival terminal with flowers, national flags and banners. The local media was there too with ABC and Channel Nine catching the arrival moments of Mohammad Ashraful's young team.

"We want to show improvement all the way. This is a very challenging tour for us as Australia are a top side but we want to be tough and competitive and will fight all the way. We have the ability and hopefully we can bring our best cricket to this series," said Ashraful when asked about expectations from the three-match ODI series starting here on August 30.

"We have come to Australia a little ahead of the series. We will play five practice matches before the ODIs and that would give us a good idea about the conditions here," added Ashraful who also thought the drop-in pitches would suit the Tigers fine.

"We had played on drop-in pitches in Auckland during the tour of New Zealand and they are nice wickets. Last time we were here (2003) the pitches did not have too much pace or bounce and the weather here (generally between 32-22 degrees Celsius) is almost similar to Bangladesh. I think we'll feel comfortable here."

Darwin, a city of roughly 87,000 is famous for its crocs and the Crocodile Farm here is home to some 15,000 saltwater giants and

Academy in big trouble

SPORTS REPORTER

GP-BCB National Cricket Academy were reeling in their first innings on the second day of the second four-day match against the South Africa Academy at the Laundium Oval in Pretoria yesterday.

The visitors were in trouble at 124 for seven in reply to the hosts' 417 in the first innings.

Shamsur Rahman top-scored with 37 while another right-handed batsman, Nasir Hossain, made 23.

Nasir and paceman Mahbub Alam grabbed two wickets each giving away 59 and 107 runs respectively. Occasional offspinner Marshall Ayub and left-arm Arafat Sunny took one wicket apiece.

SA include 2 spinners

CRICINFO, undated

South Africa have included Johan Botha and Robin Peterson in their 15-man squad for the Champions Trophy in Pakistan next month.

Gerald Majola, the CEO of Cricket South Africa, said the spin duo were included to add depth to the squad. "The selection committee has opted for the two bowlers, considering the tournament takes place in the subcontinent," he said. "And having both left-arm and right-arm options in Robin Peterson and Johan Botha gives the selectors the variation they're looking for."

Botha, who is currently on tour in England with the South one-day side, has played 27 ODIs, taking 19 wickets. He last played against Bangladesh in March 2008.

Peterson, who was part of the Test squad which recently claimed victory in the four-match series in England, was, however, overlooked for the one-dayers. His previous one-day appearance came in the 2007 World Cup, when he played against New Zealand.

South Africa are placed in Group B in the league phase of the

Proteas warm up with win

AFP, London

South Africa warmed up for next week's Twenty20 international against England with a four-wicket win over the England Lions at Grace Road on Thursday.

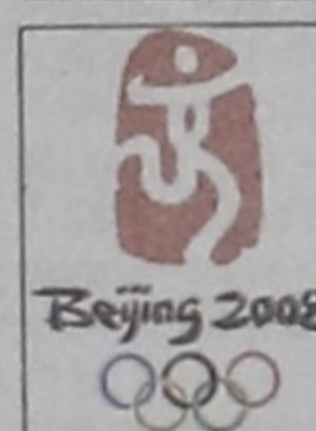
England Lions face South Africa again at Derby on Saturday, when they will be led by Middlesex's Ed Joyce, before the tourists start the one-day series with a Twenty20 international against England at Chester-le-Street next Wednesday.

The tourists, who did not field captain Graeme Smith, all-rounder Jacques Kallis, seamer Morne Morkel and wicketkeeper Mark Boucher, got the required runs with 11 overs remaining in this first warm-up match against the Lions.

Lions captain Rob Key, whose side have six members of England's one-day squad, said: "That was pretty much a drubbing really and that's not a true reflection of the two sides -- I think we're a better side than that."

Nemesis looms for Phelps

INTERNET, undated



On a clear day in Beijing, you can see, well, about five blocks. But a series of thunderstorms and another blazing race rinsed the skies enough for Michael Phelps to make out the looming image of Ian Crocker. Phelps won the 200-meter individual medley in 1:54.23 for his sixth gold medal and sixth world record in as many tries, which means he goes for No. 7 in the 100 butterfly, which means he has to face his quiet, unassuming, 25-year-old nemesis from Portland, Maine.

Phelps knows Crocker well. For years, he woke up with Crocker staring down at him.

After Crocker beat him at the 2003 World Championships, Phelps stuck the Swimming World magazine cover memorialising the achievement on his bedroom wall,

as a reminder of what it feels like to lose, as motivation.

Phelps beat Crocker at the 2004 Olympics.

Crocker won at the 2005 Worlds. Phelps won at the 2007 Worlds. The margins of Phelps' two victories: .04 and .05 seconds.

"Sports is all about one person trying to dethrone the other person's dreams," Crocker said. "It's kind of the dog-eat-dog part of sports. Michael has his goals and I have mine. I'm not going to feel bad if I race my heart out and end up winning."

Phelps' toughest competition in the 200 IM figured to be Florida's Ryan Lochte. But he got a break from the scheduling gods when the 200 backstroke final was 29 minutes earlier, and Lochte decided to race both.

Lochte won the 200 back and got the individual gold medal he so coveted, derailing the dream of fellow American Aaron Peirsol to sweep the backstroke golds in consecutive Olympics. But Lochte didn't have his usual oomph in the

200 IM, and Phelps beat Hungary's Laszlo Cseh by more than two seconds. Lochte was third.

Phelps' eighth event is the medley relay, and it would take one of the biggest upsets in swimming history for the U.S. men to lose.

That leaves the 100 fly and Crocker.

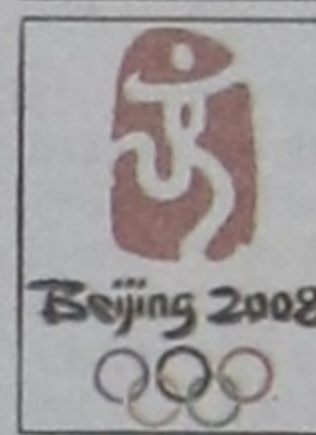
And, suddenly, some guy named Milorad Cavic.

"One day," Cavic said, "if they talk about how Michael Phelps won seven gold medals and lost a chance to win eight, they'll talk about who that guy is who took it away from him. I'd love to be that guy."

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Doping hits Games

AFP, Beijing



Two positive dope tests by Asian athletes overshadowed Singapore's first medal in 48 years and a podium for Malaysia Friday with a North Korean shooter and a Vietnamese gymnast exposed as cheats.

North Korea's Kim Jong-Su, 31, won silver and bronze in shooting events but will be stripped of the medals, International Olympic Committee (IOC) spokeswoman Giselle Davies said.

The Vietnamese gymnast was named as Do Thi Ngan Thuong, who tested positive to the banned diuretic furosemide.

It means North Korea's medal tally has been revised to one gold, one silver and three bronze.

Among other Asian nations, China sits on top of the medal table with 25 gold ahead of the United States. South Korea and Japan both have six.

Thailand, India, and Mongolia have all won one gold each while Vietnam has silver, and Indonesia and Taiwan both have two bronze.

Singapore and Malaysia ensured rare medals for themselves in table tennis and badminton respectively, while Indonesia secured another medal when Markis Kido and Hendra Setiawan made the men's badminton doubles final.

A jubilant Singapore celebrated its first medal since weightlifter Tan Howe Liang won silver at the Rome

Olympics in 1960 after their women's table tennis players made the final of the team event.

Feng Tianwei, Li Jiawei and Wang Yue Gu were the heroines as they beat South Korea 3-2.

"I feel that our mission has been accomplished because I treated today's match as a final," said Singaporean coach Liu Guodong.

"Having worked as a coach in Singapore for two years, I'm very happy to have helped the country end its 48-year medal drought."

Malaysian star Lee Chong Wei powered into the men's badminton final after fighting off South Korea's Lee Hyunil as he guns for his country's first ever Olympic gold medal in any sport.

Lee said he was nervous during the first game and almost gave up

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Kerri Walsh (L) of the United States celebrates with teammate Misty May-Treanor after winning their women's beach volleyball round of 16 match against Belgium's Liesbeth Mouha and Liesbet van Breedam in the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games at Chaoyang Park Beach Volleyball Ground yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

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