



Did U Know?

Roy Emerson of Australia won a record six Australian Open men's singles titles: first in 1961, and then from 1963 to 1967.



Robinho
(Brazilian football star)
"I accept Pele's criticism as he is the king of football, but if he had been me, he would have done the same." Responding to Pele's criticism for joining Manchester City.



STAR Cricket
Australia v Bangladesh
Third ODI
Live from 6:00am
ESPN
FIFA WC qualifiers
UAE v DPR Korea
Live from 12:25 am (Sunday)
STAR Sports
FIFA WC qualifiers
Bahrain v Japan
Live from 12:25 am (Sunday)
TEN Sports
US Open Tennis
Day Thirteen
Live from 9:00pm

Footballers report to Manik

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammedan defender Rajani Kanta Barman and midfielder Arman Aziz were the only absentees among the 30 players of the preliminary national squad that reported to coach Shaiful Islam Manik yesterday afternoon at the BFF House.

With no chance of a residential camp for preparation for next month's Merdeka Cup in Malaysia, the new Bangladesh football coach will look forward to use free time of the footballers to convey his method to the boys.

National team management committee chairman Badal Roy admitted that with the B. League starting on September 13, it would be impossible to run a residential camp. "Still, we decided to call the squad because we want to assemble them during the breaks of the B. League," the BFF vice-president said.

"All the players reported to the coach but Rajani and Arman were not there. But both have called the coach," informed Badal, also a former national captain.

Sachin batted thru' injury

INTERNET, undated

Had the Champions Trophy gone ahead, Sachin Tendulkar is unlikely to have been fit to play for India following his elbow injury in Sri Lanka.

Tendulkar picked up the injury whilst fielding in the third Test in Colombo and was taken to Apollo Hospital where Amod Harip examined him.

"Sachin was brought to me when he got injured while fielding during the third Test between Sri Lanka and India," confirmed Dr. Harip. "He has hemarthrosis of the right elbow, which is a bleeding into joint spaces."

"I wanted to insert a needle and

Last chance for solace

Cricket

TIGERCRIKET.COM, Darwin

With the series gone already and their image taking a beating Bangladesh know that tomorrow's third and final ODI against Australia will be the final opportunity to recover lost pride.

The Tigers have lost the two games by 180 runs and 8 wickets and scored 74 and 117 which is not the team's real game, said captain Mohammad Ashraful.

"We have not played the cricket we are capable of. It has been a very disappointing series so far but still there is one game to go and hopefully the batting will click tomorrow (Saturday)," said Ashraful who also reminded the openers of their responsibility.

"If the bat out 10-12 overs then the rest of the batsmen can play their natural game. That can get us to a decent total. We have not had an opening stand in this series and

that hurts the team's chances." On the talks and speculations regarding his captaincy and whether he needs a break Ashraful said he hasn't even contemplated the issue.

"Only thing I am thinking about right now is the match and how we can all bring our best cricket to the ground. We still have a lot of cricket to play," said Ashraful and continued, "As far as I am concerned I am enjoying captaincy and a few good results will stop all negative talk."

"The coach (Jamie Siddons) is a straightforward and honest person and I have taken his views regarding my performance and captaincy very positively. We are working really hard and sooner or later results are bound to come," said Ashraful.

Bangladesh left out Mehrab Hossain who had opened the batting in the first two games. That means Tamim Iqbal will be partnered by Zunaed Siddiqui in the opening stand. Pacers Nazmul Hossain and Dollar Mahmud are

also out and replaced by allrounders Farhad Reza and Mahmudullah Riyad.

Tomorrow's match starts at 9:30am local time (6:00am Bangladesh Standard Time). The Bangladesh team will fly out of Darwin midnight tomorrow for Dhaka with stopovers in Sydney and Hong Kong.

TEAMS

BANGLADESH: Tamim Iqbal, Zunaed Siddiqui, Mohammad Ashraful (captain), Shakib Al Hasan, Alok Kapali, Dhiman Ghosh (wicketkeeper), Mahmudullah Riyad, Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, Forhad Reza, Abdur Razzak, Shahadat Hossain.

AUSTRALIA (likely): Shane Watson, Shaun Marsh, Michael Clarke (captain), Michael Hussey, David Hussey, Brad Haddin (wicketkeeper), Cameron White, James Hopes, Mitchell Johnson, Nathan Bracken, Stuart Clark.

No Roy, no tension

Cricket

AGENCIES, undated

Andrew Symonds' likely absence may leave Australia short on experience when they tour India next month but at the same time, it might ease tension in the high-profile series, reckons India coach Gary Kirsten.

Symonds has had a story relation with both the Indian players and the crowds. Boomed and barracked in India, he also figured prominently with Harbhajan Singh in the Sydney racism row last summer.

Nursing a hurt ego after Cricket Australia downgraded the racism charges against Harbhajan, Symonds, known as Roy, is cooling his heels after he was sent back home for preferring a fishing trip to a compulsory team meeting.

Though the volatile all-rounder is likely to miss the India series,

Kirsten feels it might help in reducing the tension that of late surrounds an Indo-Australian series.

"The Age" quoted Kirsten as saying, "There is a lot of hype around him and the quality of player that he is, and also I gather there is a lot of tension around from what happened in the last series."

"To not have him around... Does that alleviate it? Does it make it better? I don't know the answer. But I don't think it takes the gloss off the Test series," said the South African.

"One thing we must always be aware of is the game is bigger than the individual," Kirsten added.

Should Symonds miss the tour, Kirsten said, Australia would have to draft in inexperienced players and India would do everything to capitalise on that.

Indian spinner Harbhajan Singh is unfazed by the possibility of Andrew Symonds not touring India with the Aussies for their four-Test series.

Harbhajan, who allegedly called

Symonds a 'monkey' at the SCG in January, told the Courier-Mail, "It doesn't bother me whether he is coming or not."

"We are playing against a team. If he features in it, fine, if he doesn't, things don't change much for me. We may have had our squabbles, but that's all part of the game."

In the meantime, Cricket Australia chief executive James Sutherland has lent his unerring support to the beleaguered fisherman/cricketer.

"He has our absolute support and we've already gone to great lengths to ensure appropriate processes are in place for him," enthused Sutherland.

"The feedback I have got from inside the team is that they have dealt with it as a welfare issue. There's some discipline issues related to it, but ultimately it's a welfare issue. We all want Andrew Symonds up and going, playing cricket for Australia."

'Ajantha easier'

Cricket

PTI, Mumbai

Middle-order batsman Rohit Sharma reckons Indian players had become more adept in reading the guiles of mystery spinner Ajantha Mendis in the one-day series after getting the chance to play against him frequently on the recent tour of Sri Lanka.

He also did not foresee the Indian batsmen experiencing any difficulties against the Lankan bowling sensation in the future.

"You might have seen what happened in the one-day series (in Sri Lanka). He did not get as many wickets (as in the Tests). That was because our players had played him more often by then. I don't see any difficulty (in playing Mendis) in the future," Sharma told PTI before leaving for Chennai to represent Mumbai in the Buchi Babu tournament.

Mendis mesmerised the strong Indian batting line-up in the Test series, in which the 21-year-old Sharma could not get a look-in

though he was part of the squad, by grabbing 26 wickets with his mixture that included what's known as the "carrom ball", the one flicked with his middle finger.

Mendis, who formed a deadly combination with the world's highest Test wicket-taker, off-spin ace Muttiah Muralidaran, in the three-Test rubber that his team won 2-1, was slightly less successful in the five-match one-day series that followed and which was won by India.

The 23-year-old Lankan, India's bugbear from the Asia Cup final in Pakistan, still managed to take 13 wickets in the ODI series at just under 12 per victim, but could not prevent the Indian team from clinching the ODI series for the first time in Lanka.

Sharma, who played for Deccan Chargers in the Indian Premier League, was candid in saying he was not very successful with the bat in the ODI series in Lanka, without assigning any reason for his poor display that fetched him just 72 runs in five innings.

His scores were 19 and 0 in Dambulla followed by 32, 18 and 3

in the last three day-night ODIs held at Colombo.

"I did not perform well, but am very happy with the way the (ODI) team performed. It was more a team effort than an individual one," said the Nagpur-born player who is seen as the next big hope from Mumbai.

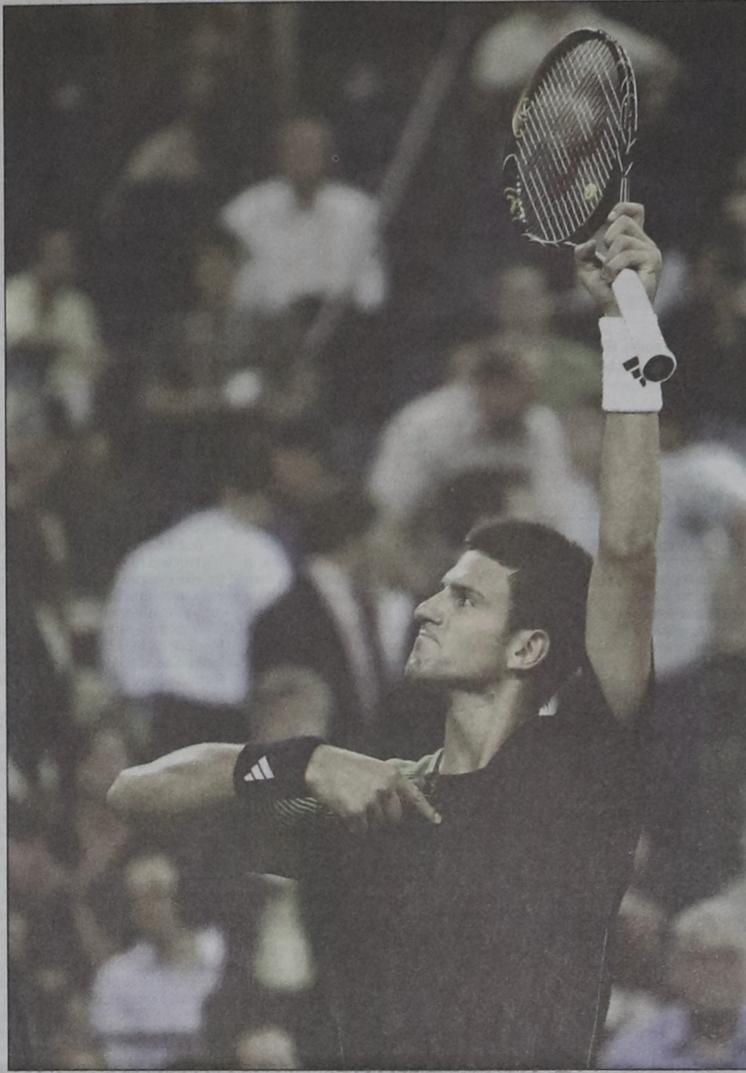
Asked how soon he expected to force his way into the Test squad after being at its doorstep for some time now, the youngster said he did not worry about such things and wanted to concentrate on scoring runs whenever given a chance.

"It's not up to me. My aim will be to go and perform, do my job well by scoring runs whenever I get a chance," said the batsman who has four half-centuries to his credit from 28 ODIs.

Sharma said he looked forward to staying in the middle and scoring a lot of runs in the Buchi Babu tournament ahead of the forthcoming lengthy international season which commences with the four-Test rubber for the Border-Gavaskar Trophy against Australia.



Bangladesh fast bowler Shahadat Hossain runs in to bowl yesterday during a training session ahead of the third and final one-day international against Australia in Darwin. Shahadat has so far taken three wickets from two outings.



HE'S THE MAN: Serbian star Novak Djokovic celebrates after defeating Andy Roddick of the United States during their US Open quarterfinal at Flushing Meadows on Thursday.

BU, MSC IN SEMIS Mamun slams 2nd hattrick

SPORTS REPORTER

Brothers Union and Mohammedan entered the semifinals of the Citycell Futsal competition from Group B while Abahani all but confirmed their place in the last four yesterday.

Mamunul Islam Mamun slotted his second hattrick in as many games as Abahani thrashed Sheikh Russel 6-1 in Group A at the Woodenfloor Gymnasium on the second day of the eight-team meet.

Abahani, who lead the group with maximum six points and also have an edge in goal difference, need to avoid a big defeat in today's last group match against Arambagh today to make it to the semis.

Arambagh and Rahmatganj are level on three points and have a chance to catch Abahani atop if both win today, Rahmatganj play bottom-table Sheikh Russel.

The other match today will be the Group B decider between Mohammedan and Brothers, both on three points.

After Muktiyoddha's withdrawal, the group has only three teams. In the day's matches, Mamun scored three goals, Sony struck a brace and Siraji the other for Abahani while Morshed reduced the arrears for Rahmatganj.

Rahmatganj rode on Hanif Pradhan's hattrick on way to beat Arambagh 4-2. Jahangir added the other for the winners while Imrul and Turjo hit the mark for Arambagh.

Farshganj, who lost their first match to Mohammedan 4-3, produced another thriller before going down 3-2 to Brothers.

Matiur Munna netted twice and Parvez to help Brothers come back from 2-1 down and win. Swapan and Emon Babu scored for Farshganj.

Today's matches: Abahani v Arambagh (1pm), Sheikh Russel v Rahmatganj (2pm), Mohammedan v Brothers (3pm).

Open chess from Sept 13

SPORTS REPORTER

The Destiny 2000 3rd Open FIDE Rating Chess tournament will start from September 13 at the federation hall-room.

The interested players have been asked to enrol their names by September 11 at the Bangladesh Chess Federation office for the 9-round Swiss League competition.

Novak downs Andy, crowd

AP, New York



That litany of health issues Novak Djokovic dealt with earlier in the week hip, ankle, stomach and more seemed a tad humorous to Andy Roddick.

So Roddick joked about it, first by saying in an on-court interview it sounded as though Djokovic had "about 16 injuries," then by wondering aloud whether the problems might not also include bird flu, anthrax, SARS and a common cold.

Djokovic heard about the comments. He wasn't amused.

So when he finished beating Roddick 6-2, 6-3, 3-6, 7-6 (5) in the U.S. Open quarterfinals Thursday night, Djokovic said so.

"That's not nice, anyhow, to say in front of this crowd that I have 16 injuries and that I'm faking," Djokovic said after match, eliciting hearty boos from spectators in Arthur Ashe Stadium.

"They're already against me," he said of the fans, "because they think I'm faking everything."

Still, as much motivation as

Djokovic might have derived, and as well as he played in the match, 2003 U.S. Open champion Roddick's own serving miscues had a lot to do with the outcome.

After working his way back from a huge deficit, Roddick was two points from forcing a fifth set at 5-4, 30-love in the fourth. But he double-faulted twice in a row and was broken for the fifth time more than he lost serve in his first four matches combined.

"You know what? I honestly don't feel like they were super-tight doubles," Roddick said. "I had been playing pretty high-risk, high-reward tennis to get back and I probably wasn't about to stop."

In Djokovic's prior match, a five-set ordeal Tuesday against No. 15 Tommy Robredo, the reigning Australian Open champion called for the trainer more than once. Later that day, Roddick made light of the matter and also said: "He's either quick to call a trainer or he's the most courageous guy of all time."

Roddick sought to smooth things over with Djokovic on Thursday.

"It was completely meant in jest," Roddick said, pausing to choose the right words. "I should know better. But listen, I joke all the

Paes wins mixed doubles title

AFP, New York

India's Leander Paes and Zimbabwe's Cara Black won the US Open mixed doubles title on Thursday, defeating Britain's Jamie Murray and American Lieke Martens 7-6 (8/6), 6-4 in the final.

The victory completes a career mixed doubles Grand Slam for Paes, who won the French Open and Wimbledon alongside American Lisa Raymond in 1999 and the Wimbledon and Australian Open crowns in 2003 with US star Martina Navratilova.

Paes finished the victory after 97 minutes with a serve and volley winner.

Both Black, 29, and Paes, 35, have a chance for more titles this week at Flushing Meadows.

Paes and Czech Lukas Dlouhy have advanced to Friday's US Open men's doubles final, where they will face US brothers Mike and Bob Bryan.

Black and Huber are top-seeded partners in women's doubles, where they have advanced to the semifinals as they hope for a chance to play 2005 US Open winners Raymond and Samantha Stosur of Australia in Sunday's final.

Siddikur lifts maiden pro title

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladeshi golfer Siddikur Rahman bagged his first professional title when he won the Professional Golf Tour of India (PGTI) Players Championship at Poona Golf Club yesterday.

Siddikur qualified for the event last year when he finished fifth in PGTI's 2007-08 Qualifying-School event.

Siddikur also won the 118th Sri Lanka Amateur Golf Competition, Bangladesh Amateur Golf Competition, 104th All India Amateur Golf, 2nd Nepal Championship and 20th Partex Bangladesh Amateur Golf Championship.

Grameenphone has been sponsoring the golfer for the last two years.

Arthur targets Kolpaks

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

South Africa's one-day nightmare against England has at least crystallised two things in coach Mickey Arthur's mind: the need for inaction on one front and action on another. With so many South Africans opting to sign in England as Kolpaks, Arthur is increasingly determined to lure them back to home soil.

The search for new talent has led Arthur to Ryan McLaren, who South Africa are now trying to hook away from a recently-extended Kolpak deal with Kent.

"I have had discussions over the phone with Ryan McLaren's agent," Arthur said. "But Ryan is on an unbelievable deal with Kent, so we will need something extra. But he would provide the all-round depth we need, he's a top-class player and he's had another big season with Kent."

While McLaren is the big fish South Africa are trying to land, the likes of Johan van der Wath, Andrew Hall and Justin Kemp can

hardly be regarded as anchovies and they would all provide the power-hitting option down the order that South Africa are seeking.

The sudden urgency over all-rounders is ironic when considering the likes of Lance Klusener, Nicky Boje, Dale Benkenstein and Zander de Bruyn -- all South African products and capped at international level -- have also fled to England.

Moreover, Arthur is concerned that fatigue is beginning to hamper South Africa's progress. Pakistan may be promising the moon in terms of a tri-series they want away from a recently-extended Kolpak deal with Kent.

"I'm sure the tri-series is not going to take place and, in retrospect, it's a relief the Champions Trophy was called off because we would have been back on a plane flying to Pakistan on Sunday," Arthur said. "I'd like the administrators to remember the team is our product and because they've done so marvelously well it has led to commercial

opportunities. But I don't think we should be flogging a dead horse."

"I can't think of one player who was involved in both the Test and one-day series in England who has not picked up a niggles. Graeme Smith's tennis elbow is just through over-use; Mark Boucher has a fractured finger from over-use; Morne Morkel a side strain and Dale Steyn has not recovered properly from the shoulder injury he picked up in the IPL (Indian Premier League)."

So, resting his core players will certainly lead to a better showing later in the year, but Arthur admitted there were doubts over the selection of the limited-overs team going forward.

"We knew the one-dayers would be tough and I don't think a really good England side has got the credit they deserve. But I am concerned about our depth in all departments, but in particular in terms of all-rounders," Arthur said. "In the past we've had teams where we basically have fielded 12 players because of the all-rounders; we've batted down to nine. But in the England series I felt it was 12 against 10 at times."