



## Did U Know?

Michael Chang is the youngest French Open singles champion. He achieved this feat at the age of 17 years 3 months in 1989.



## Luiz Felipe Scolari

(Chelsea manager)  
"This is not a problem for me. I have many great players and I am very happy with my team. I am receiving new players from injuries as (Didier) Drogba will be back soon." After his club failed to sign Brazilian star Robinho.



**TEN Sports**  
US Open Tennis  
Women's Singles Final  
Live from 6:00am  
Men's Singles Final  
Live from 11:00pm

## Sachin to play Irani Trophy

CRICINFO, undated

Sachin Tendulkar has declared himself fit for the coming season and will play the Irani Trophy match between Ranji Trophy champions Delhi and Rest of India starting on September 24 in Baroda.

"I have recovered totally and am feeling fine," said Tendulkar. "I will play in the Irani Trophy match against the Ranji Trophy champions Delhi."

Tendulkar has been troubled by injury this year -- first hurting his groin during the Tests against South Africa and then his left elbow, which ruled him out of the ODIs in Sri Lanka last month.

With no international fixtures ahead of the Test series against Australia, starting October 9, several national players will be available for the season-opening Irani Trophy, a match which will feature probable players for the Australia series.

It is expected to be a keen contest, with the Delhi squad including Test regulars Gautam Gambhir, Virender Sehwag and Ishant Sharma, youngsters Virat Kohli

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## Bryan brothers win doubles title

AFP, New York

American brothers Bob and Mike Bryan won their seventh Grand Slam men's doubles crown Friday, defeating India's Leander Paes and Czech Lukas Dlouhy 7-6, 7-6 to take the US Open title.

The Bryans, who ran through the tournament without losing a set, previously won Slam crowns at Roland Garros in 2003, the US Open in 2005, Wimbledon in 2006 and the Australian Open in 2006 and 2007.

The defeat denied Paes a chance at a US Open doubles double, having already claimed the mixed crown with Zimbabwe's Cara Black.

Paes had claimed such doubles in 1999 at Wimbledon and the French Open, partnered with American Lisa Raymond in mixed and compatriot Mahesh Bhupathi in the men's doubles.

The victory enables the Bryans to move back into the world number one ranking from second.

## 'Ashraful close to axe'

Cricket

CRICINFO, Darwin

Jamie Siddons has warned Bangladesh captain Mohammad Ashraful that he could soon face the axe unless he quickly turns around his dismal batting form. In the third ODI in Darwin on Saturday, Ashraful drove in the air to point for 3 when his team needed a platform and he also fell for single figures playing bad strokes in the first two games.

The series has continued a lean run for Ashraful, who has passed fifty just four times in his past 30 one-day international innings, and two of those successes came against non-Test sides Ireland and the United Arab Emirates. Siddons, the team's coach, is running out of patience.

"He's been given a lot of positions in the order and he's still failing," Siddons said. "It's disappointing for him, being the leader of the team. If it were anyone else he wouldn't be in the side. He needs to start making runs. He knows that. We talk to him about that all the time. I'm not giving out any secrets...it's getting close."

When asked how long Ashraful would be given to battle out of his slump, Siddons said: "I don't know, it's not my decision. But he needs to make runs. For himself he needs to make runs and for his leadership he needs to make runs."

For the coaching staff, just as concerning as Ashraful's lack of big

scores is the way he has played. His final dismissal against Australia came from the next ball he faced after being dropped driving lazily to cover. In the first match he was trapped lbw trying an ugly pull and in the second game he flashed at a full, wide Stuart Clark ball and edged behind.

One of Bangladesh's main aims in Darwin has been to bat out their 50 overs and Ashraful's lack of application has rubbed off on several of his team-mates. Siddons was at a loss to why Alok Kapali had

tried to pull a straight ball that was much too full from Mitchell Johnson and lost his offstump.

"I haven't spoken to him yet," Siddons said. "Hard to explain, a bit like Ash's shot. It's hard to explain why they would consider playing those shots to those balls."

The 73-run loss was especially disappointing for Siddons, given the terrific effort from Bangladesh's bowlers to restrict Australia to 198. At that point Siddons reiterated to his men what was needed.

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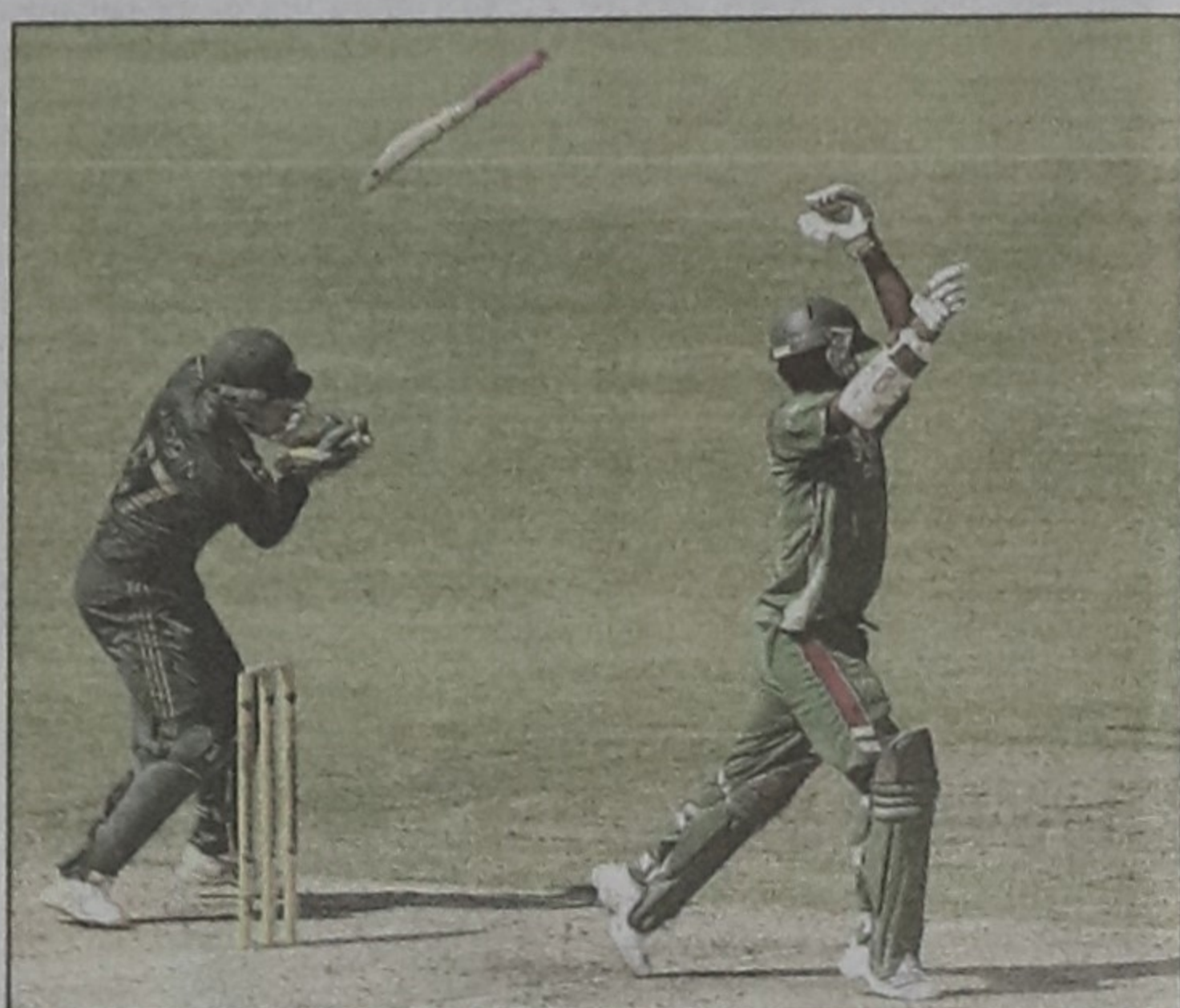


PHOTO: AFP  
Bangladesh opener Tamim Iqbal loses control over his bat as Australian wicketkeeper Brad Haddin is alarmed during the third one-day international at the TIO Stadium in Darwin yesterday.

## Aussies 'spot on'

Cricket

CRICINFO, Darwin

Defending 198 in a one-day international is rarely a comfortable position these days but Michael Clarke, Australia's stand-in captain, insists he was never scared that Bangladesh would cause a mammoth upset and dent his leadership credentials. He could have been forgiven for a few nerves when Tamim Iqbal made the slow pitch look a batting paradise as Bangladesh reached 3 for 82.

Clarke was one of only two men in the side who was part of the team that lost to Bangladesh in Cardiff in 2005 and it is a memory he does not like reliving. He is also undefeated as Australia's ODI and Twenty20 captain and on this occasion he

was comforted by the depth of his attack.

"With 200 on the board I was confident if we bowled well we could win the game and once again our bowlers did a great job," Clarke said. "Bangladesh batted well at the start, they were positive, but we all knew if we could just take one or two wickets it would put them on the back foot."

That moment came when Shakib Al Hasan, who had joined with Tamim for a 60-run stand, pulled James Hopes to midwicket. It started a procession of wickets -- the last six fell for 43 runs -- and for the third time in the series made it difficult for Clarke to give all his bowlers lengthy spells as they prepare for the upcoming tour of India.

The batsmen did have the chance to spend longer at the crease, although only Michael

Hussey made full use of that by making an unbeaten and laborious 57. Clarke has struggled to have an impact with the bat in Darwin -- he joked that the team's No. 3 "was horrendous" -- but he is happy the players have simply shaken off any post-winter rust.

"We wanted to leave 3-0 winners and we've done that," Clarke said. "The end result, it was closer than the first two games, but our mindset was to win this game. If it was by one run we weren't really bothered."

"Our performances have been spot on, I think our preparation has been unbelievable, been really good. The guys have been very disciplined trained hard, even days before the games, and that will hold us in good stead either for the next one-dayers in the Australian summer or the Test series in India."

## BCB confirms Ad Touch as sponsor

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) confirmed Ad Touch as title sponsor of the upcoming New Zealand tour of Bangladesh.

BCB's marketing and commercial committee has closed the tender process for the sponsorship rights after they achieved the floor price for the title rights.

New Zealand will arrive in the first week of October to play three one-day internationals and two Tests against the Tigers.

The first two one-day matches will be held at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium on October 9 and 11 and then the teams will travel to Chittagong to play the third one-dayer on October 14 and the first Test match starting from October 17.

The second and final Test will start from October 25 at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

## MSC walk out of tourney

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammedan Sporting Club walked off after two Brothers Union officials allegedly jostled with goalkeeper Nehal yesterday.

The incident took place during the Citycell Futsal tournament match between the two sides at the NSC Woodenfloor Gymnasium.

Four minutes after Matiuur Munnah opened the scoring for Brothers, Nehal was involved in a pushing incident with Brothers's Zahid. Suddenly, the two Brothers officials -- Arif and Humayun -- entered the playing area and attacked Nehal.

Mohammedan walked off immediately and Brothers were declared winners by two goals to nil. They also had both of those officials suspended by Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF).

It is still not sure whether the Motijheel giants are going to turn up against Abahani in today's first semifinal.

Meanwhile, Rahmatganj moved to the semifinal after a 8-2 win over Sheikh Russell, that came through hat-tricks from Zakir and Hirok. Shipon and Morshed added two more for the winners.

In the day's other match, Abahani defeated Arambagh 7-5 with four goals from Siraji. Emily also scored a hat-trick.

Brothers Union are set to meet Rahmatganj in the second semifinal at 4:30 pm at the same venue today.

## Tri-series likely to be called off

INTERNET, undated

The Pakistan Cricket Board's hopes for a three-nation one-day series in compensation for the postponed Champions Trophy have all but ended after South Africa declined a proposal to host the tournament.

The Champions Trophy, which was to be held in Pakistan over September 12-28, was postponed by 13 months by the International Cricket Council due to security fears.

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), whose players have not played a Test match this year, had hoped to fill the hole in the calendar by playing a one-day series in South Africa.

But those efforts have failed with Cricket South Africa (CSA) stating their players would be on holiday for the rest of September.

"National players will officially be on holidays for the rest of September," a CSA release stated.

CSA, who were entrusted with the task of staging the competition which was also set to feature Sri Lanka, have been unable to contract either a sponsor or a broadcaster for the tournament.

The PCB, however, are still hopeful of the tournament going ahead.

"Only a couple of days ago, a CSA official asked us for details on the proposal," PCB's chief operating officer Shafiqat Naghmi said in The News.

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## Div II football

SPORTS REPORTER

Matuail Udayan Sangsad and Uro Famous Club earned identical 3-0 wins in the Second Division Football League at the Bir Shreshtha Shaheed Sepoy Mohammad Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamapur yesterday.

In the day's first match, Matuail blanked Gazichot with Ismail and Chung Mazma being among the scorers.

In the day's second match, Uro Famous drubbed Dhanmudi Club also by the same margin.

Rubel, Shamol and Bazlu netted one goal apiece.



## Who is to blame?

Cricket

AL-AMIN

Shocker, inexplicable were the cries from millions of betrayed hearts moments after Bangladesh captain Mr. Ashraful played that expansive drive straight to his Australian counterpart Michael Clarke at point in the third and final one-day international at Darwin yesterday.

The shot was indeed a prelude to the same old story -- another match, another defeat -- after the effort of the less illustrious bowlers set a platform from where the visitors could realistically dream of conquering the mighty Australians at their own den for the first time.

Keeping Australia below two hundred (198-5) for the full length of 50 overs is an achievement in its own for any team in the world. And to chase down that total on a wicket where the faster bowlers have little to extract from, it did not require a

Sachin Tendulkar or a Brian Lara. What was the need of the hour was the resolve to play out your share of 50 overs.

And it was certainly the pep talk during the break. But then there are a few who seem mentally retarded to do what they are supposed to do. And no doubt Ashraful was the chief devil of them all.

He strode to the ground after left-handed opener Zunaid Siddiqui had fended off a sharp bouncer from Stuart Clark to first slip. He was off the mark with a couple -- an uppish shot between cover and point. Although to choose the aerial route was a risky venture at that time, Ashraful continued to be audacious despite receiving a warning that it would lead him and his team nowhere.

He was dropped at short cover off the second last ball he faced. But he was not ready to learn and his adventurism ended with a romantic flash outside the off-stump. If his dismissal was painful, his reaction after that stupid shot was more

disturbing. He looked around and then stared at his non-striking partner in a way as if he played a very good shot but only to be undone by a piece of misfortune.

This attitude or the kind of shot Ashraful played is nothing new in Bangladesh ranks. Rather it is increasingly becoming more dominant with every defeat. Otherwise who else would have thought Alok Kapali playing that rash pull shot, something that he never played in his entire career.

May be this infamous shot will cost Ashraful his captaincy sooner than later. But this is certainly not going to solve the problem in a team where something is wrong somewhere else.

It is about time to dig deep to find out why our batters cannot do the simple things they are being paid to do. Why are they constantly trying to do what they are not capable of? Are the students bad learners or is the teacher a misfit for them?

## Bolt closes out in style

Athletics

AFP, Brussels

Triple Olympic champion Usain Bolt won the 100m at the Golden League meet here on Friday, beating compatriot Asafa Powell in a time of 9.77sec to bring the curtain down on his record-shattering season.

The Jamaican flyer's winning time was well outside his world record of 9.69sec set in Beijing last month, but was enough to see off the challenge of Powell, who on a wet and windy night, could only clock 9.83.

Nesta Carter made it a Jamaican clean sweep, placing third in 10.07sec.

"Asafa is a great guy and I warmed down with him after the race," said Bolt of his rival who sprang out of the blocks to take an

early lead, which the fastest man in the world only wiped out in the last 10m.

"We are adversaries on the track but also the best of friends."

"It's great to finish the season with a victory. I had a bad start (his reaction time of 0.223sec was the worst of the nine runners) so I have to be satisfied with 9.77 especially in these wet conditions."

"Without doubt, I would have had the legs to have run faster had the conditions been better."

"Now I will go back to Jamaica. I'll rest and think about next season. I'm going to keep working harder and harder and improve my start, that's the most important thing."

Powell, who beat Bolt in Stockholm in July, added: "I had an excellent start, but Usain gives up nothing."

The former world record holder, who ran the second-fastest 100m of

all time in Lausanne on Tuesday, said he was already planning ahead to 2009 where winning gold at the world championships in Berlin would be a priority.

"I was close to Usain but he beat me. I'm not that far off but now I will have to work hard," said Powell.

"It'll be important not to get injured over the winter and to start 2009 in the best condition. Next year, the objective will be to take gold in Berlin."

"Reclaiming the world record would be great but once you have a medal you can't lose it."

Bolt, who lit up the Beijing Games last month winning three gold (100m, 200m and 4x100m relay) and notching up a hat-trick of new world records, will now head home for a well-earned rest.

Friday's race should also have featured world champion Tyson Gay but the American pulled out on Thursday, opting to concentrate on his recovery from a hamstring injury.

Meanwhile, Kenya's Pamela Jelimo scooped the Golden League million dollar jackpot, after winning the 800m to record her sixth win out of six this season.

The 18-year-old Olympic champion recorded a time of 1min 55.16sec in the wet conditions at the Brussels meeting to take the prize, awarded to the athlete who wins all of their six Golden League outings.

Earlier it looked as if former world junior champion would have to share the pot with high-jumper Blanka Vlasic, but the Croatian failed to win Friday's event.

Jelimo became the first ever Kenyan woman to win a track and field Olympic gold when she clinched the 800m final in Beijing in a world junior record of 1min 54.87secs on August 18.



PHOTO: AFP  
Jamaica's Usain Bolt (L) finishes ahead of compatriot Asafa Powell (R) in the men's 100m at the Golden League in Brussels on Friday.

## Serena sets up Jelena date

AP, New York



Her place in the final secure, Serena Williams briskly walked off center court and headed toward the locker room. In a hallway, she was intercepted by three of her fans who wanted a picture.

"Is that allowed?" she said, striking a pose. "Make this really quick."

Want a snapshot of her 6-3, 6-2 win over Dinara Safina in the U.S. Open semifinals Friday? Probably that wicked backhand Williams zinging off the Russian's shoulder in the second set.

"Overall, she's, I think, the strongest player on the tour, together with her sister," Jelena

Jankovic said. "Nobody has the power that they have. We cannot compare."

Jankovic must figure something. A day after beating Olympic champion Elena Dementieva 6-4, 6-4, the Serbian star plays her first Grand Slam final Saturday night against Williams.

That is, if the weather permits. With Tropical Storm Hanna getting closer and rain in the forecast, tournament organizers made contingency made that could mean postponing the match until Sunday.

"I'm going to try my best and that's all I care about," Jankovic said, "even if it's tomorrow or next day or in a week."

In an early bow to the weather, the men's semifinal between No. 2 Roger Federer and No. 3 Novak Djokovic was moved up an hour

and will start at 11 a.m. Top-seeded Rafael Nadal and No. 6 Andy Murray will follow.

Williams ensured that at least one member of her family will play for the title. In her previous match, she beat sister Venus in a pairing of two-time U.S. Open champions.

"I feel like Venus was playing the best in this tournament," fourth-seeded Serena said. "She had a chance to win. Maybe she would've even won."

Venus was in the stands cheering for her sister, as was their dad. So was mom Oracene Price, who did not attend the all-Williams match or watch on television.

"I was thinking to myself, 'OK, if you're going to beat your sister, you have to go all the way,'" Price said.

Williams returned to the final at Flushing Meadows for the first time

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