



Chittagong Mohammedan goalkeeper Mamun Khan grips the ball during a corner in their Citycell B. League match against Khulna Abahani at the MA Aziz Stadium in Chittagong yesterday.

ECB-SL tour postponed

CRICINFO, undated
Cricinfo has learnt that the ECB and Sri Lanka Cricket have agreed to postpone Sri Lanka's tour of England in 2009.

Although the official stance of the England board is that the series is going ahead, it is reported that Giles Clarke, the ECB chairman, informed the ICC recently that agreement had been reached with SLC to reschedule the tour.

The likelihood of Sri Lanka touring has been in doubt ever since SLC gave its players the go-ahead to take part in the IPL's second season, even though the dates clash. A number of Sri Lanka's leading players are contracted with the league, and SLC are negotiating a US\$70 million bailout deal with the BCCI - one conditional upon SLC pledging full support for the IPL and the Champions League.

The ICC's top officials - president David Morgan and chief executive Haroon Lorgat - have been keen to promote the primacy of Test cricket, but the scheduling is a matter between the England board and SLC and so not of direct concern to the ICC.

Rather than hosting a second-string Sri Lankan team - which would almost certainly damage ticket sales - it now seems England will instead host West Indies as a more marketable alternative. They too have players in the IPL, but it is expected they will be part of the touring party.

Clarke named CA chairman

AFP, Sydney
Solicitor Jack Clarke has been elected as Cricket Australia chairman following the retirement of Creagh O'Connor, CA said Friday.

O'Connor retired as chairman and from the board on Friday after three years as its chairman and 11 years on the board. Clarke, a CA director since 1999, has been CA deputy chairman for the last year and as chairman will be the organisation's delegate to the International Cricket Council board.

Viqarunnissa

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had failed to organise any regular event for women despite FIFA's instruction to use one fourth of its fund (US dollars 2.5 lakh per year) for the federation.

BFF senior vice-president Abdus Salam Murshed, vice-presidents Badal Roy and Shawkat Ali Khan Jahangir, women's committee chairman and BFF member Sirajul Islam Bachchu, women's committee deputy chairman Mahfuza Akhter and others were present.

All the participating teams took part in a march past during a colourful opening ceremony.

Pitch, Oram

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tough," he added.

At one point New Zealand captain parroted the views of his Bangladesh counterparts as he said that their main target is to improve on their first Test performance. And that was the reason he was hardly concerned about the home side's comeback after a nerve-wrecking three-wicket defeat.

"I suppose it's not really my concern. I am not too worried about how they are going to come back. We have got our games to worry about, we have got to improve on our first Test match performance, so this is where our concentration lies," he said.

The left-arm spinner cum handy batsman also gave his observation on the tricky Mirpur pitch.

"I hope it doesn't dry up too much. You probably presume that the second day can be the best to bat on," he observed.

Money talks!

Cricket

AFP, London

Kevin Pietersen may have been insisting the winner-takes-all Twenty20 clash against the Stanford Super Stars in Antigua next week wasn't about the money but, unlike his extraordinary reverse hits, few would have been fooled by the England captain.

After all, this was a game which Texan billionaire Allen Stanford promoted by flying into Lord's in his personal helicopter and then unveiling a perspex box full of cash to give the assembled media an exact idea of what he meant by "Twenty20 for 20 (million dollars)".

Members of the winning side stand to pocket a million dollars (570,000 pounds) - a staggering sum for a single fixture by cricket standards - with the losers not getting a penny from Stanford.

And if the England players think that is a life-changing sum for them, which it is, imagine what it means for their less well-off Caribbean counterparts.

Anyone still in any doubt in credit-crunch Britain about the significance of this match, which will be played at Stanford's own ground, need only look at the television adverts plugging satellite

broadcaster Sky television's coverage of the game.

There they will see David Lloyd, the former England player and coach turned commentator, talking against a backdrop of disappearing boxes of cash.

While some will think about what they would do with a million dollars, many a club player might well wonder about what it would mean to drop a million dollars, not just for himself but for his team-mates too.

Organizers have tried to remove similar pressure from the umpires by insisting that, contrary to practice in full internationals, they will be able to make use of television replays for all contentious decisions in the six Stanford Super Series matches - English county Middlesex and Trinidad and Tobago will provide warm-up opposition for the main acts, starting with the island's match against the Super Stars on Saturday.

Some years ago Bobby Robson, the former England football manager who is also a keen cricket fan, commenting upon slipping standards of on-field behaviour in sport, stressed it was important those involved realised the "game is worth more than the prize".

But what happens when the game is the prize, and the associated opportunities it gives Stanford to promote his financial services

organization?

Pietersen said he would come down hard on any player who "carries on like a clown" at a time of global economic strife.

"I have friends who are really struggling, people who have lost their jobs," said the South African-born batsman. "There is no way in the world I want people to carry on like a clown, win or lose next week, because there are a lot more things happening in the world that we want to respect."

"There will be no nonsense out there and I will be really angry if stuff does happen."

"There will be people out there with their noses up but we can't be blamed. As long as we don't mess it up by carrying on like clowns then I don't see it being as big a problem as people make it out to be."

Someone who hopes to keep Pietersen honest is his friend Chris Gayle.

The West Indies batsman will captain the Super Stars and is hoping his side will take heart from the way England upset the odds to beat South Africa in a recent one-day series.

"England won 4-0 and yes we can do it as well," said Gayle, a gifted left-handed batsman who, on his day, can pulverise any attack. "The guys are talented enough to go out there and get the job done."

Fergie not surprised

Football

AFP, Manchester

Sir Alex Ferguson insists he is not surprised by David Beckham's planned move to AC Milan.

The LA Galaxy star is close to striking a short-term deal to join up with the Serie A giants in January during the MLS close-season.

Beckham - who played for Ferguson at Manchester United until his shock departure to Real Madrid in 2003 - is desperate to maintain his match fitness in a bid to remain in Fabio Capello's England plans and become his country's most-capped outfield player.

The midfielder currently has 107 caps, just one short of Bobby Moore's mark of 108 appearances, but knows he will not be considered by Capello during Galaxy's four-month break.

And Ferguson claims the only 'shock' about the move is that it didn't happen sooner.

"It's hardly surprising because going to America was hardly the kind of football he was used to, was it?" Ferguson said here Friday.

"So it's hardly surprising he's got back into the mainstream of football, I think he's been angling for that for quite a while actually."

Ferguson, meanwhile, is ada-

mant his United side's recent upturn in form is not simply down to the goalscoring exploits of strikers Wayne Rooney and Dimitar Berbatov.

The Premier League champions' stuttering start to the campaign has been eclipsed by a run of six straight victories including Tuesday night's Champions League triumph over Celtic.

Berbatov scored twice to take his tally to five goals in four games while Rooney has hit nine in seven games for club and country.

The duo are again expected to line-up together at Everton this weekend when Ferguson's side attempt to close the gap on top two Chelsea and Liverpool by claiming a seventh straight win.

The trip to Goodison Park comes the day after Rooney's 23rd birthday and with the striker hoping to score against his former club and take his career tally to 100 goals.

But Ferguson is keen to point out that the roots of United's revival lie in all areas of his line-up.

"It's his birthday today (Friday), happy birthday Wayne, good luck tomorrow," said Ferguson, on the eve of the Everton game.

"He's playing fantastic, unbelievable performances. I'm seeing great performances and goalscoring. Marvellous goalscoring at the moment."

"But I think the team is playing well, I really do. We're coming together and it's always the same at this football club."

"The players who score the goals are always the ones who are going to get the attention, but if you look at the performance of Johnny Evans the other night, Gary Neville coming back in, John O'Shea who never lets you down, the two central midfield players (Darren Fletcher and Anderson).

Ferguson added: "The form of the team has come together well, we're playing some good football and both ends of the game are good. We are defending well and the attacking emphasis has improved."

The return of club captain Neville at right-back after an 18 months battle against ankle and knee injuries has boosted Ferguson's defensive options.

And the long-serving United manager believes the time is drawing near for Neville's efforts to be rewarded with a call from Capello.

"We're trying to manage Gary's fitness," Ferguson said. "But I think it would be a great boost to the lad (to be called up by England) and I think he deserves it."

"It's a long time out but he is such a determined lad he would cope with the rigours of playing club football and international football, I'm sure of that."

Pakistan sack

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operating officer Shafiqat Naghmi and given his powers to Salim Altaf, the current director special operations, Rashid said.

"Altaf has been made the director general of the board with powers of the chief operating officer," the spokesman added.

Lawson took 180 wickets in 46 Tests and 88 in 79 one-day internationals for Australia between 1980-89. He had no experience as an international coach but had coached the New South Wales team in Australia.

Pakistan have had 11 different coaches in the past 10 years, with three stints each for Miandad and Richard Pybus, Pakistan's first foreign coach.

Lawson succeeded former England batsman Bob Woolmer, who was found dead in his hotel room in Jamaica in March 2007 just a day after Pakistan's upset defeat at the hands of Ireland in the cricket World Cup.

Hosts' last-gasp win

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got another chance to double the lead when Ashiqueel set Ripon. But this time, Ripon headed the ball just wide of the post.

Towhidul then put the local Black and Whites level in the second minute of stoppage time with an overhead shot from the right flank after rival goalkeeper Foyez rushed out of his line to stop the lone striker.

Mohammedan, inspired by the equaliser, enjoyed superior ball possession after the break but when it looked like that they were settling for a draw, the match winner came just one minute from time.

After a combined attack between Chowmin -- who replaced Towhidul -- and Doulat, Guinean forward Raphael got behind the Khulna defence but his effort came off Foyez who failed to recover and stop Ridon scoring on the rebound.

Home coach Nazrul Islam Ledu confessed that his side did not play well in the first half.

"Our defenders were lacking concentration, I don't know why. I would try to find out the causes," he said.

Khulna Abahani coach Sheikh Hemayet Ullah rued missed chances for their defeat.

"My boys have played four matches in a span of only ten days. They are tired over non-stop travels and playing. These things have affected our performances too much," he observed.

TEAMS
CHITTAGONG MOHAMMEDAN: Mamun, Pradip, Shawkat, Dhiman, Sharif, Doulat, Anthony (Asad), Jitu (Lincoln), Towhid (Chowmin), Raphael and Ridon.

KHULNA ABAHANI: Foyez, Khalid, Shahinur, Nazir, Ranjit (Hadi), Ashique (Faruk), Selim, Ripon (Faisal), Hamid, Milton and Mehdi.

Southern T20 league?

AFP, Wellington

New Zealand, Australia and South Africa are exploring the possibility of setting up a regional Twenty20 cricket league from 2011, New Zealand's cricket chief said Friday.

New Zealand Cricket chief executive Justin Vaughan said the league would revolve around city-based franchise teams, similar to the Indian Premier League (IPL).

Although planning was still at a conceptual stage, the league would be centred on an African eastern conference and a western conference based in Australia and New Zealand. The top teams from the two conferences would play in a final, he said.

The league would be timed to complement the IPL competition, giving the chance for Indian players to play in the new competition.

The regional-level Twenty20 competition would need international stars but it would also give domestic level cricketers a chance to develop their skills and earning power.

Vaughan said regional Twenty20 competitions could help cement cricket as the world's second biggest sport and develop a bigger pool of elite players.

New Zealand Cricket Players Association executive manager Heath Mills said his organisation supported the concept.

Headingley to be Pak 'home'?

AFP, Leeds

Yorkshire have said they are keen to stage Pakistan 'home' matches at their Headingley headquarters ground.

The security situation in Pakistan, which led to the postponement of both a tour by Australia and this year's Champions Trophy one-day tournament, has left the Asian nation struggling for international fixtures.

England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) officials and their Pakistan counterparts are due to hold talks about the possibility of Pakistan Tests, one-day and Twenty20 fixtures being played during the 2010 and 2011 English seasons.

Recent matches between England and Pakistan at Headingley have often seemed like 'home' games for the tourists such as the noisy and large support they draw from local Asian communities at the Leeds venue in northern England.

Euro, Basabo win in Div II

SPORTS REPORTER

Basabo Tarun Sangha and Euro Famous won their respective matches in the Second Division Football League at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

Shushanto scored in the 15th minute to steer Euro Famous to a solitary goal win against Kadamtala Sangsad while Sagor and Karif found the either side of the break in Basabo's 2-0 defeat of Dhanmondi Club.

Vietnam face

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recent good form in the semifinals on Thursday when they hammered ASEAN rivals Myanmar 4-0 to set up a title decider with Vietnam's Olympic side (Under-23s) who edge Sierra Leone on penalties in the other semifinal.

Indra Putra set Malaysia on course to the final when he opened the scoring in the 25th minute but the home fans at a lively Bukit Jalil Stadium had to wait until just after the hour mark for the second.

Mohammed Safee, tournament top-scorer with five goals, doubled the advantage in the 62nd minute and after Indra had bagged his second and Malaysia's third with 15 minutes remaining, Mohammed Amirul Hadi Zainal made it 4-0 in the 82nd minute, completing a hat-trick of Selangor players to find the net.

It was the 18th goal in four matches for B. Sathianathan's home side, who have yet to concede a single goal.

Vietnam U-23s defeated Sierra Leone 3-2 on penalties after coming from two goals down to force extra-time.

Sierra Leone, who were fielding their under 20s, took a 39th minute lead through Mohamed Kabia before Dwight Foray extended the Africans' advantage 13 minutes into the second-half.

But the South East Asians fought back with Trinh Quang Vinh reducing the deficit in the 72nd minute before Nguyen Duc Thien levelled the match ten minutes later, forcing extra-time which ultimately finished goalless.

Narsingdi

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while Sadikul took two wickets for Narsingdi.

Our Correspondent added from Gaibandha: Rangpur defeated Lalmonirhat by six wickets at the Gaibandha Government College ground yesterday.

Batting first, Lalmonirhat were all out for 96 runs in 39 overs. Sohan top scored with 38 runs. In reply, Rangpur scored 97 runs losing 4 wickets in 20.4 overs. Abir was the top scorer with 30 runs.

Mushi is Eng spin coach

Cricket

AFP, London

Mushtaq Ahmed was named as the new England spin bowling coach by the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) here on Thursday.

The 38-year-old former Pakistan leg-spinner, a key figure in Sussex's three County Championship winning teams, will work on a consultancy basis with the spinners in England's Test and One-Day squads as well as promising up-and-coming slow bowlers.

An ECB statement said Mushtaq, who recently announced his retirement from the first-class game because of a persistent knee injury, would be severing all ties with the 'rebel' Indian Cricket League.

"It's critical we nurture and develop the next generation of England spin bowlers using the expertise and knowledge of former players such as Mushtaq," said ECB managing director Hugh Morris, himself a former England batsman.

"Spin has been integral to the success of the world's best cricket teams and we are keen to ensure that there is a constant flow of spin-bowling talent into the England set-up."

Legendary England spin bowler Derek Underwood, who recently began his term of office as President of Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC), the owners of London's Lord's Cricket Ground, has been among those voicing concerns about the depth of English spin bowling.

And there are others who argue that left-arm Monty Panesar owes his place as the sole specialist spin-

has no doubt that the new addition to England's coaching staff can help make spin an increasingly important part of Kevin Pietersen's attack.

"We are very excited that a bowler of Mushtaq's standing within the game has decided to join our team of specialist coaches based at the National Cricket Performance Centre at Loughborough (central England)," said Parsons, now the ECB's performance director.

"He will have a role to play at all levels of the game. His primary task will be to mentor our leading spin bowlers in the Test, One-Day and Performance squads but we also believe he can help encourage youngsters at the grass roots of the game to take up and learn the art of spin-bowling."

Mushtaq played 52 Tests, taking 185 wickets at just over 32 apiece, and 144 One-Day Internationals for Pakistan and was a member of Pakistan's World Cup winning team in 1992.

In the course of a 21-year career, he took 1,407 first-class wickets.

He was also one of the driving forces behind Sussex's success during his six years with the south coast side - taking 598 wickets in all competitions and playing a major role in the team's only three County Championship title-winning teams of 2003, 2006 and 2007.



MUSHTAQ AHMED

ner in England's current Test side as much because of the lack of alternatives as the Northamptonshire bowler's own quality. But David Parsons, the man whom Mushtaq in effect replaces,

Teetotal kick works for Watson

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Shane Watson is unique for an Australian cricketer: he doesn't drink or lift weights. Since injuring his hamstring for the umpteenth time during the World Twenty20 last year he has restructured his training and cut out alcohol in an effort to get the most out of his body.

So far it is working and he has contributed with bat and ball in the opening two Tests, which took his career tally to five games. "I'm off drinking while I'm playing and training to give myself every chance I possibly can to be right throughout this big workload," Watson said. "It's important to look after the body."

Only at the end of the Indian Premier League, when his Rajasthan Royals team won the competition, did Watson break his ban and have a couple of glasses of champagne. "I've saved money and a few headaches as well," he said, smiling. He still joins the celebrations but his new tippie is diet Pepsi or soda water.

Until the change in regime he was hurt a couple of times a season, but with the new approach he was able to string enough state and one-day international games together to prove to Australia's national selectors he was the man to replace Andrew Symonds. He picked up 3 for 45 and scored 41 in the first Test in Bangalore and added a fine 78 in the first innings in Mohali.

"To me it's not a sacrifice," he said. "The things I've been able to achieve over the past six months are not things I thought I could do 13 months ago."

He has been working with

Brisbane health expert Victor Popov and now does pilates, running, cycling and swimming instead of lifting weights. His old programme had him training like a rugby league player.

"I haven't touched a weight for 13 months," he said. "The things I've been doing are pilates, hamstring strength, calf strength, which is just body weight stuff. I don't know the inside of a gym. Bowling is the thing I need to do, running and bowling. I feel my body shape is changing, it's a lot lighter, but I feel I haven't lost strength."

The old aches don't return so frequently, and if he notices any changes he can adjust quickly to limit the pain. "My inner core strength wasn't great and my pelvis was moving around quite a

bit," he said. "When it's out of line, my hamstring gets tighter and so do my glutes."

"Also, because of the stress fractures early in my career, I've had nerve issues through my back into hamstrings and lower legs because of the healing I've had since I was a young kid. I have to make sure my nerves are not irritated, which is another piece of the puzzle."

"Other things are maintenance every day, making sure I'm warm, and swimming. It's quite a big puzzle to make sure everything is in alignment, but I love doing it. I've learned so much about my body. It's also exciting to know where I'm at. If something is slightly off I understand how to get it fixed or under control."

Gilchirst, Tendulkar

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great batsman and widely respected all over the cricketing world," the board's media committee chairman Rajiv Shukla said.

"If there is any person who will lose respect after this incident it is Gilchirst himself."

Gilchirst's autobiography, extracts of which will be printed in this week's press, centres on the hostilities between the two teams in Australia last summer, which saw India threaten to boycott the tour.

The book is bound to ruffle a few feathers with the teams seeking supremacy in the ongoing four-Test series which the Australians currently trail 1-0.

The series has been peppered with verbal sparring, culminating in Indian pacer Zaheer Khan being fined 80 percent of his match

fee for his reaction to Matthew Hayden's dismissal in the second Test in Mohali earlier this week.

Hayden said it was intense competition between the two sides that sparked the tension. "We always have some tension," he told reporters Thursday.

"That is exactly why we want to see our athletes playing the game. That tension is mounted over five days, mounted over a window of 13 days, in so far as what we have seen in these two Test matches."

"That is why I also, as a spectator, want to see that ability to gnash teeth. I want to see that competitive edge. Two hungry dogs, if you can use the metaphor, that circle each other in a ring."

The third Test begins here on October 29 followed by the fourth and final in Nagpur from November 6-10.

Advertisement for Atlas Bangladesh Limited (এটলাস বাংলাদেশ লিমিটেড) featuring a table of prizes for a lottery. The table lists prize amounts, dates, and winners. Below the table are instructions and terms of the lottery.