



**Did U Know?**

Soccer goalies didn't have to wear different coloured shirts from their teammates until 1913.



**STAR Sports**

Australian Open  
Live from 6:00am

**TEN Sports**

Pakistan v Sri Lanka  
First ODI (D/N)  
Live from 1:00pm

**ESPN**

Sportscentre India  
Sports News  
Live at 8:30pm



**Glenn McGrath**  
(Former Australia fast bowler)  
"It's probably best to give him a chance to find out what first-class cricket is like. Give him a handful of games to provide him a bit of experience."  
On wonder boy David Warner.



Citycell B. League  
Sheikh Russel v Mohammedan  
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium  
Time: 4:00pm

**Champions win first match**

SPORTS REPORTER

Sheikh Russel KC recovered from a shock opening round defeat to newcomers Palolic when the defending champions blanked Engineers Club 3-0 in the second round of the KDS Dhaka Metropolitan Senior Division Table Tennis League at the Woodenfloor Gymnasium yesterday.

Palolic had to rest as Mohammadur Boys pulled out and scratched from the competition.

In other matches, Biman routed Dhaka Mariners 3-0, Ajax beat Brothers Union 3-0 and Wari defeated Armanitola by the same margin.

**Siam closer to title**

SPORTS REPORTER

All-win Ikramul Haque Siam will need a draw in today's final round to win the 29th National Sub-junior Chess Championships title.

Siam, who defeated Tanzina Akter Tani in yesterday's eighth round at the BCF hall-room, led the table with maximum eight points.

Holder Abdullah Al Saif shared the second place with 8-year-old prodigy Fahad Rahman of Faridpur on seven points.

In other penultimate round games, Saif beat Ahely Sarkar and Fahad beat Papel.

**Ashrafal defenceless**

BISHWAIT ROY

Bangladesh lost another close contest and this time against Zimbabwe when they went down in the first match of the three-match series by two wickets at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

It was however not heartbreaking like against Sri Lanka in the tri-nation final rather it was shocking the way Mohammad Ashrafal's men played the game against the bottom-side opponents. Above all it was a poor and boring low-scoring game to watch.

The Tigers could win the match despite putting up a fragile total of 124 on the board after yet another imposing effort from the bowlers as Zimbabwe had to wait for the last over to see match hero Ray Price smashing two consecutive boundaries against Nazmul Hossain to confirm the 1-0 lead in the series.

But definitely Bangladesh didn't deserve to win the match after such a poor batting show.

The rot began from the word go when Bangladesh captain Mohammad Ashrafal surprised everybody by deciding to bat first. He might have been brave enough to take such a decision to give the opponent medium pacers some advantage of moving the ball around but his brittle batting were nowhere to take the challenge.

It was surprising because definitely there is always help for the bowlers in the morning in foggy condition and no way can a captain dare to adventure with a batting line-up which has been struggling for long.

Was it a combined decision? The team sources however confirmed that it's Ashrafal's individual decision and that there was serious dissatisfaction over his decision in the team and amongst the officials.

Ashrafal had however no clear answer regarding the issue while defending himself during the post-match briefing.

"I had told the players and the coach before going out to toss that we would bat first if I call correctly. The wicket looked hard and I thought if we survive the first ten overs then we would be able to post something like 220 which can be defended on this track," he said defending his decision and reminding everyone of their failure to chase in the last match against the same opponents.

"But we soon realized that this was probably a 160-170 pitch and we wanted to get there. Unfortunately the top-order failed again and we had the impossible task of defending 124. The pitch remained difficult longer than we had anticipated," he added.

But whatever the fact was none could accept such toothless batting if there were even some help for the seamers in the morning session. Interestingly the two openers survived the initial few overs when the ball was moving but still they were bundled out for 124 in 48.1 overs.

"We have to work hard," was the answer from Bangladesh skipper, who also showed courage coming in number three but failed to deliver, when asked why the batting continuously failed to deliver.

There were also questions raised about

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PARSVNATH OPEN CHESS

**No luck for Bangladesh**

SPORTS REPORTER

Indian Grandmaster Surya Shekhar Ganguly lifted the 7th Parsvsnath International Open Chess Tournament in Delhi yesterday.

The Indian finished level with GM Mikhail Ulubin on 8.5 points after the tenth and final round but won due to superior tie-breaking points.

For Bangladesh, the tournament was not much good as GM Niaz Murshed became 56th with 6.5 points, followed by compatriots Mohammad Ali (77th) with 6.5 points, FM Mohammad Javed (112th) with six points and Debaraj Chatterjee (140th) with 5.5 points.

In the final round against all Indian opponents, Niaz lost to R Premnath, Ali beat Niraj Saripalli, Javed beat Hemant Kumar Singh and Debaraj lost to IM Ponnuswamy Konguvel.

A total of 426 players including 20 GMs participated in the event.



Bangladesh strike-bowler Mashrafe Bin Mortaza celebrates after scalping one of his three victims during his fiery 10-over spell against Zimbabwe in the first ODI of the three-match series at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

**A 'knockout' bout  
Russel-Mohammedan clash today**

SPORTS REPORTER



Mohammedan go into today's crucial B. League match against Sheikh Russel with a depleted right flank as they will miss the best emerging player of the season Nasir Hossain through suspension.

Both the coaches have already tagged the match as a 'knockout affair' as any side losing today would be left behind in the three-way title race with defending champions Abahani, who lead the table with 35 points from 15 games. Russel has 30 points from 14 matches and Mohammedan 28 from 13.

"It would be the turning point for the winners who will remain in contention with Abahani. So it's an acid test for us because if we lose like the first leg, we will go on the back-foot," said Russel's veteran coach Wajed Gazi on the eve of the game.

"The good thing for us is that we are not dependent only on Alfaz for scoring after the arrival of Samir Omari," opined Gazi, whose side have changed the entire foreign line-up in

the mid-season transfers window.

"Omari has already scored three goals in two matches and the remaining foreigners are attentive to what I say," he added.

Gazi said that he was not happy with the past Moroccan trio Youness-Igir-Bourdip who had little respect for the coach.

"The new ones are skilful and I believe that (Al) Moujahid and Serbian (Marco) Maric have made our midfield stronger.

The Russel mentor, however, was worried about the backline and was pondering over including Moroccan defender Hicham Admi. He will have to sacrifice one foreign import in the midfield to make way for Hicham and strengthen the defence against a team who have already showed lethal firepower with Nigerian striker Bukola scoring ten and his partner Robin finding the mark seven times.

"Mohammedan are a good side from their goal to the frontline. But the plus-point for them is that all of their regular midfielders have scored to back up the strikers. But if the day is good for us and the players use the chances, we can win this match."

Nasir, who started the season as a rightback,

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**Mahela eases Ajantha  
Pak-Lankan first ODI today**

Cricket

AFP, Karachi

Sri Lankan skipper Mahela Jayawardene Sunday refused to single out spin sensation Ajantha Mendis as the major threat for Pakistan in the one-day series.

The 23-year-old Mendis and his more illustrious partner Muttiah Muralidaran are tipped to hold the aces against the home team in the three-match series which starts here from Tuesday.

But Jayawardene said Mendis doesn't carry extra burden of expectations.

"Mendis hasn't had added pressure and has gone through all the batting line-ups he has come across and is enjoying his challenges," Jayawardene said of his spinner during his arrival press conference.

"Pressure does not effect Mendis. He is a very simple guy he doesn't have to go through such interviews because his knowledge of the

English is not that great so he is resting in his room watching movies," said Jayawardene.

Mendis, who made his debut in the West Indies in May last year, became the fastest bowler to get 50 wickets, achieving the total in 19 matches, breaking Indian Ajit Agarkar's record of 23 matches.

Jayawardene said he would not like to put extra pressure on the newcomer.

"He knows what his role is, at the same time there are some really good guys around him giving him advice, especially Murali who is a brilliant role model for Ajantha.

"Murali is somebody who has worked 18 years and come through very well. As long as Ajantha realises that if he can go at the same path as Murali I'm sure we will have a big match winner for us in the next ten years."

Jayawardene refused to agree Sri Lanka are struggling with their overall form after losing to Bangladesh in the last league match and scrapping to a narrow two-wicket win in the final of

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Zimbabwe all-rounder Ray Price (L) and Tawanda Mupariwa are ecstatic after the former hit the winning runs in the final over to steer his side to a two-wicket win over Bangladesh in the first match of the three-match ODI series at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

**Barisal exact revenge**

SPORTS REPORTER



Barisal had an eye for an eye when they won their maiden National Cricket League one-day title yesterday by virtue of a better head-to-head record against Rajshahi.

On the final day of the six-team competition, Barisal suffered a 21-run defeat

to Dhaka but finished level in the points table with Rajshahi, who recorded a four-wicket victory against Khulna.

Both Barisal and Rajshahi finished on 14 points but Barisal had won both their ties against the men from the north.

The roles have been reversed in the limited-overs competition after Rajshahi clinched the first-class crown also by virtue of a better head-to-head record against Barisal after both ended level on points.

The final round, however, only had academic interests as Barisal's title was

ensured after their previous round victory.

The southerners just failed to put the icing on the cake when they skittled out for 130 in reply to Dhaka's paltry 151-9 at the Fatullah Stadium.

The victory helped Dhaka avoid a bottom-table finish due to superior head-to-head record against Sylhet as both teams finished on six points.

Rajshahi survived a scare from 5-wicket spinner Murad Khan to beat Khulna in a low scoring match at BKSP when the runners-ups reached 75-6 after booking Khulna for just 71 with Sohrwardi Shuvo bagging five for six runs in a 7.1-over spell.

Chittagong, meanwhile, finished third when Mukter Ali and Mahmudul Hasan shared seven wickets to give them a 50-run win over Sylhet at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium.

Mukter took 4-23 and Hasan 3-15 to shape Chittagong's sixth win as they

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**ROLL OF HONOUR**

Year	Champions	Runners-up
2001-02	Sylhet	Chittagong
2002-03	Dhaka	Khulna
2003-04	Chittagong	Rajshahi
2004-05	Rajshahi	Sylhet
2005-06	Rajshahi	Dhaka
2006-07	Dhaka	Rajshahi
2007-08	Rajshahi	Dhaka
2008-09	Barisal	Rajshahi

**POINTS TABLE**

Team	M	W	L	Pts
Barisal	10	7	3	14
Rajshahi	10	7	3	14
Chittagong	10	6	4	12
Khulna	10	4	6	8
Dhaka	10	3	7	6
Sylhet	10	3	7	6

**Rajshahi, Dhaka march on**

SPORTS REPORTER

Dhaka and Rajshahi won their respective matches in the Women's National Cricket League yesterday.

Shamima Akhter grabbed three wickets for 16 to help Dhaka (129) beat Chittagong (91) by 38 runs at the Dhanmondi Women's Complex ground while Lota Mondol (64) and Farzana Haque (66) shaped Rajshahi's (247) massive 167-run victory against Sylhet (80) at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium.

**Clubs for removal of MFLC head**

SPORTS REPORTER

A number of Dhaka clubs yesterday demanded the abolishment of the Metropolitan Football League Committee (MFLC) on the ground of its head's partiality.

The 30 clubs, who made the demand, submitted a memorandum to Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) president Kazi Salahuddin.

The memorandum condemned the decision to make BFF vice-president Manzoor Hossain Malu the chairman of the MFLC.

"The 9-member committee is headed by fixed-match godfather and a controversial person who has included his close ones in the committee. The committee is not a true reflection of the different clubs of Dhaka," the memorandum says.

Around 100 protesters were present at the BFF Bhaban for submission of the memo.

"We heard at first that federation representatives will be part of the MFLC. But its

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**FEDERER OFF TO A SLOW START  
Ana struggles thru'**

AFP, Melbourne



Monday before joining Jelena Jankovic and Novak Djokovic in the second round.

The Swiss great, who is one Grand Slam shy of Pete Sampras's record of 14, looked to be cruising after taking the first set 6-1 before his Italian opponent took the second to a tense tie-breaker, only to lose it 7-4.

Federer gritted his teeth to get through the third set 7-5 but it was a less than convincing victory.

"He was a very tough customer," Federer said. "But I think I played well, I had to as he's a quality player."

He added that playing night sessions was difficult, but felt his game was where it should be.

"This year my preparations have been much better than last year and I feel I know more where my game is," he said. Djokovic, the third seed, saw off a late revival by Italian qualifier Andrea Stoppini to win 6-2, 6-3, 7-5.

The Serb, who won his maiden Grand Slam here last year, was relieved to get off to a winning start after an indifferent month, with two defeats already.

He admitted he was feeling the pressure of being the defending champion.

"Look, there is pressure. But it didn't affect me today," he said. "I'm still trying to find the rhythm and slowly getting there."

Rafael Nadal and Andy Murray are in action Tuesday.

Earlier, under blazing sun, world number one Jankovic brushed aside Yvonne

Meusburger 6-1, 6-3 in impressive fashion as she looks for a maiden Grand Slam title to silence the critics who question her ranking.

A key rival here, Russia's Dinara Safina, wasted little time in disposing of compatriot Alla Kudryavtseva in straight sets, but French Open champion Ana Ivanovic struggled before

downing Germany's Julia Goerges 7-5, 6-3.

Jankovic said her feet were burning as temperatures soared at Melbourne Park, but managed to keep her cool as

she benefited from a brutal off-season training regime.

"It's exciting to begin this tournament and to start with a win is always nice," she said.

"It was so hot and my feet were really burning," she added. "If I'm going to go very far I have to deal with it."

Ivanovic, the fifth seed who lost last year's final to Maria Sharapova, failed to dominate against a player ranked 107, reinforcing fears that she may not be ready for another Major title.

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Serbia star Ana Ivanovic makes a forehand return against Julia Goerges of Germany during their Australian Open match in Melbourne on Monday. Ana won 7-5, 6-3.

PHOTO: AFP