



Did U Know?

Table tennis was banned in the Soviet Union from 1930 to 1950. The sport was believed to be harmful to the eyes.



Sir Vivian Richards

(West Indies cricket legend)
"This is not shooting me in the foot. This is shooting me straight through the heart." After the abandonment of the second Test against England on Saturday at the ground that bears his name.



TEN Sports

West Indies v England
Third Test, Day 2
Live from 8:00pm
ESPN
Sportscentre India
Sports News
Live at 8:30pm



Citycell B. League
Rahmatganj v Abahani
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium
Time: 4:30pm
Khulna Abahani v Muktijoddha
Venue: Khulna Divisional Stadium
Time: 2:45pm
Ctg Abahani v Mohammedan
Venue: MA Aziz Stadium, Chittagong
Time: 2:45pm

It started in India, Ponting

PTI, Melbourne

Australia skipper Ricky Ponting has admitted that one of the most challenging summers of his career which he had just completed, started with the tour of India in October last year.

"It's been a challenging year, there is no doubt about that, going back to the start of the Indian tour. Things went pretty well for us in the West Indies, although we probably had to work a bit harder over there than we have in the past.

"We knew India was going to be challenging and it probably ended up being exactly what we thought it was going to be," Ponting said in an interview to the Daily Telegraph.

However, Ponting insisted it was quite satisfactory to see new talents emerging and handling responsibilities during the summer which also saw the end of Australia's domination in world cricket.

"The whole year, there have been some challenges, but it has been an exciting one for me as well. To see the new fresh faces makes it an exciting time," Ponting said.

The cricketer, who is among the few in the country successfully playing in all forms of the game -- Test, ODI and Twenty20, do not consider the shortest version as a threat to the one-dayers.

Gazi Butt-ed out

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Cricket Coaching School (CCS) rode on Shabbaz Butt's sparkling hundred to bring Gazi Tank down to earth with a 53-run victory in the battle of Premier Division Cricket League newcomers at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium yesterday.

The Pakistani right-hander slammed an unbeaten 156 as CCS posted an imposing total of 286 runs that proved too tough to chase for Mohammad Ashraf-led Gazi Tank, who eventually managed only 232-9.

It was the second defeat in three games for Twenty20 runners-up Gazi, who outshone defending champions Abahani in the previous round.

Old DOHS however maintained their winning run when they handed a 27-run defeat on BKSP at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur. After the third round Old DOHS and Biman are jointly leading the table with maximum six points.

Away at the BKSP a 70-run knock by discarded national opener Hannan Sarker guided Surjo Torun to their second win with an emphatic 91-run victory over winless City Club.

CCS-GAZI

When Gazi's last match hero Robiul Islam struck in the very first over after his captain Ashraf won the toss and choose to field first the impact was deceiving to say the least because what followed after that scripted a completely different story.

The dismissal of opener Elias Sunny brought Shabbaz into the crease and the well-built Pakistani took no time to send opponents bowlers on a leather hunt during his imperious knock of 162 deliveries that contained 17 fours and two sixes. It was the third hundred in the league after Rony Talukdar and Arman Hossain.

Shuvagotom Hom contributed 39 off 48 balls while Nizamuddin Ripon hit a cameo 23-ball 33 that featured four boundaries and a six

as CCS put up 285-4 in their share of 50 overs.

In reply, Gazi lost their first wicket in the second over when Imrul Kayes was bowled by Monwar Hossain for one run. Three top-order batsmen Mithun (45), Anwar Hossain (41) and Indian Pravanjan Mullick (55) showed some resistance but perished while chasing an increasing run rate.

Captain Ashraf could have made a difference but the right-hander played 36 balls to make 21 runs without any boundary before being bowled by Bishwanath Halder.

Left-arm spinner Elias Sunny was the most successful CCS bowler with three for 37 in 10 overs.

DOHS-BKSP

Anhoor Newaz and skipper Mehrab Hossain slammed half centuries as DOHS recovered from an early hiccup to put up a decent 205 after being sent into bat first.

DOHS lost two wickets for 15 runs but Mehrab joined Newaz to share a 91-run partnership for the third wicket. Newaz made 51 off 73 balls that saw seven fours and a six while man-of-the-match Mehrab contributed 50 off 88 deliveries with the help of three fours.

Number-eight batsman Monir Hossain was the other notable scorer with a 39-ball 31 that included four boundaries.

Niyamul Hasan, Rifatuzzaman and Mominul Haque took two wickets each.

In reply, most of the BKSP batsmen got start well but failed to carry on and were bundled out for 178 runs.

Mominul Haque top scored with 37 off 57 balls.

Abul Hossain and Monir Hossain equally shared six wickets to wrap up the BKSP innings.

SURJOTORUN-CITY

Surjo Torun got off to a good start when veteran Indian Sandeep Sharma and Zunaed Siddiqui added 53 runs after being sent into bat. It was then left on out-of-favour Hannan who build on the solid platform with a fine fifty as Surjo Torun scored 241 for nine in 50 overs.

Hannan hit 70 off 95 balls that featured four

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Cricket Coaching School's dashing Pakistani batsman Shabbaz Butt returns to the pavilion after scoring an unbeaten 156 against Gazi Tank at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

England 47/0

AFP, St John's

West Indies won the toss and chose to field on the opening day of the third Test against England on Sunday at the Antigua Recreation Ground (ARG).

West Indies made no changes to the 11 that took the field for the abandoned second Test at the Vivian Richards Cricket Ground, but England have brought Steve Harmison in to replace Ryan Sidebottom.

England got off to a good start as openers Alastair Cook (20) and captain Andrew Strauss (27) took the score to 47 for no loss in 13 overs.

Earlier, overnight and early morning rain affected parts of the parched outfield with an area straight behind the wicket at the northern end being the most troublesome, and so play will start 45 minutes late.

The ARG was cleared to stage the match late on Saturday, following an inspection from ICC match referee Allan Hurst.

"I'm very happy with the ground," he told reporters. "I think in the 24 hours they've had to prepare the ground they've done a fantastic job."

"There are a few problems with the (outfield) and it is not perfect, but they've done as good a job as they could have and the pitch looks great."

The ARG is hosting a Test for the first time in three years, after the second Test scheduled for the Vivian Richards Cricket Ground was abandoned on Friday because of an unsuitable outfield.

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Aussies under pressure

Smith begins the mental game

Cricket

AFP, Johannesburg

Australia will be a touring team under pressure when they arrive in South Africa Monday, according to South African captain Graeme Smith.

Australia will play three Test matches, five one-day internationals and two Twenty20 internationals on their two-month tour.

South Africa will be favourites after winning both the Test and one-day series in Australia recently.

It is a position with which the host nation will be comfortable, Smith said in the South African Sunday Times, although he warned that he expected an Australian backlash.

"It's going to be an unusual place to be for a South African team," said Smith.

"It's a great feeling and a reward for all the sacrifices everyone has made. But we know that

Australians are very competitive people and they don't like to be on the back foot. The only way we can keep them there is by playing better cricket again."

The side that Ricky Ponting will lead is one of the most inexperienced Australian touring parties in recent history and Smith said they

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Date	Opponents	Venue
Feb 20-22	SAA	Potchefstroom
Feb 26-Mar 2	1st Test	Johannesburg
Mar 6-10	2nd Test	Durban
Mar 19-23	3rd Test	Cape Town
Mar 27	1st T20I	Johannesburg
Mar 29	2nd T20I	Centurion
Apr 3	1st ODI	Durban
Apr 5	2nd ODI	Centurion
Apr 9	3rd ODI	Cape Town
Apr 13	4th ODI	Port Elizabeth
Apr 17	5th ODI	Johannesburg

Div 1 Cricket

Prime, Orient post wins

UNB, Dhaka

Prime Doleshwar and Orient SC registered identical four-wicket victories while Jatrabari serrated a 61-run win in the Dhaka First Division Cricket League.

In the day's other matches, Prime Doleshwar (220-6) beat Uttara (219) by four wickets at the Dhanmoudi Cricket Stadium.

Orient SC (158-6) defeated Sadharan Bima (155) also by four wickets, at the Dhaka University ground and Jatrabari (231/7) outclassed Bangladesh Boys (170/10) by 61 runs at the City Club Ground.

Mahela seeks a winning bye

AFP, Karachi

Mahela Jayawardene said he was looking forward to the challenge of facing Pakistan in a tough two-Test series starting next week, after which he will step down as Sri Lankan captain.

"I have always said that Pakistan is a quality team and it is going to be a good challenge facing them. We look forward to the challenge," said Jayawardene after the Sri Lanka squad arrived here on Sunday.

Sri Lanka agreed to replace India after New Delhi refused to allow its national team to tour Pakistan amid heightened political tension between the two countries following terrorist attacks in Mumbai in November last year.

Jayawardene-led Sri Lanka came from behind to win the one-day series 2-1 against Pakistan here last month. They then returned home to lose a five-match one-day series 4-1 to India.

Sri Lanka will start their current tour with a two-day warm-up match here from Tuesday. The first Test starts here on February 21, while the second is scheduled to begin in Lahore from March 1.

Jayawardene said Pakistan would be a formidable opponent despite Shoaib Malik sacked as captain after the Sri Lanka defeat and Younis Khan taking over last month.

also dispelled the impression that Pakistan would be rusty, having not played Test cricket for 14 months.

"We know that they have not played Test cricket for quite some time, so we have to wait to (see) what their approach is going to be but they have experienced players," said Jayawardene.

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Aus clinch a thriller

Cricket

BBC ONLINE, Sydney

Australia earned a thrilling one-run win over New Zealand in the one-off Twenty20 international at the Sydney Cricket Ground on Sunday.

Set 151 for victory, New Zealand fell just short of their target when Nathan McCullum smashed a four and a six from the final two deliveries of the match.

Brendon McCullum (61) top-scored for the tourists, while Nathan Bracken finished with 1-16 from four overs.

David Hussey (41) was the pick of the Australia batsmen, with Daniel Vettori (1-23) outstanding for New Zealand.

The Black Caps had looked on course for victory with the destructive Brendon McCullum at the crease in the penultimate over.

The wicketkeeper put on 71 runs with Neil Broom in an enterprising third-wicket stand before his partner fell for 36 top-edging a James Hopes

delivery to Callum Ferguson with the score at 73-3.

However, the complexion of the match changed courtesy a moment of inspiration from Adam Voges when McCullum launched a Ben Hilfenhaus length ball down the ground in the 19th over.

With the ball set to fly for six, long-on fielder Voges made the catch on the boundary, but his body's momentum took him over the rope.

However, just before he crossed the boundary, the Western Australian threw the ball back into play, regaining his composure before sprinting on to the field to complete a quite outstanding catch, a dismissal confirmed by the third umpire Rod Tucker.

Needing 14 from the final over, bowled by Bracken, New Zealand's hopes of victory looked to have ended when Grant Elliott (23) was run out off the first delivery.

The next three went for just two runs, leaving the tourists needing 12 runs to win from the final two balls.

Nathan McCullum

promptly slapped them for a four and a six, leaving New Zealand agonisingly short of their winning target.

With Ricky Ponting, Michael Clarke or Mike Hussey all absent, Australia stand-in captain Brad Haddin won the toss and elected to bat at the Sydney Cricket Ground.

The wicketkeeper made a flying start alongside David Warner at the top of the innings, racing to 34 inside four overs before he was caught and bowled by Tim Southee.

Warner and Ferguson fell soon after before Hussey steadied the innings with a composed 41 off 39 deliveries, ably assisted by Voges (23), Cameron White and James Hopes (both 16).

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the only Twenty20 International match between Australia and New Zealand at the Sydney Cricket Ground on Sunday:

AUSTRALIA
Warner c Vettori b O'Brien 23
Haddin c & b Southee 15
Ferguson b Butler 8

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Vettori devastated

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

The optimism of a fortnight ago was all but absent in the New Zealand camp, with Daniel Vettori chastising his batsmen for a poorly planned run-chase and describing Sunday night's Twenty20 defeat as "devastating."

The Black Caps began their one-day tour of Australia with two victories, but closed out with disappointing losses in the final two completed 50-over matches and a tight one-run loss in the Twenty20 international.

Asked to provide his thoughts on the tour on Sunday night, Vettori was blunt.

"After tonight I'm devastated with that performance, so I'm not in a great space, to be honest," he said. "We should've won the game easily, it's as simple as that. It was one of the poorer run chases I've seen. I'm devastated with that loss... (and) the recognition of the situation, only chasing 150 on a pretty good deck. We got off to a poor start, with (Bracken) bowling a maiden and not being able to turn over the strike at some pretty crucial stages."

Nathan Bracken proved Australia's most effective bowler, despite going wicketless, and credited part of his success to modern

technology. The left-arm paceman was wired up to Channel Nine as part of the network's coverage, and listened closely to the commentators' assessment of the final over.

"Having the commentators in my ear telling me exactly how many they needed and

trying to work out what I was bowling was a real help," he said. "I was alright until I was half-way in and I could hear the commentators saying I'd better not bowl a no-ball or a wide. It probably wasn't where I wanted the last ball, but I knew we had enough."

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China's Sen Li plays forehand against India's Mohammed Ashraf in the Dhaka Bank International Junior Tennis Tournament at the Ramna National Tennis Complex yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Victorious BIS players showing the V-sings along with their trophy after winning the 6th Mini Handball Tournament at the outer stadium handball ground yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

LOCAL SNIPPETS

SPORTS REPORTER

Jahangirnagar University made a good start in the Inter-University Cricket Championship beating Bangladesh Agricultural University (BAU) by nine wickets in the opening match at the Jagannath Hall ground in Dhaka University yesterday.

Batting first, Bangladesh Agricultural University were restricted to 70 for 7 in their quota of 20 overs.

In reply, Jahangirnagar University trotted to their target scoring 72 runs in eight overs for the loss of one wicket.

Other participating teams in the tournament are Dhaka University, Chittagong University, Rajshahi University, Islamic University, Khulna University, Noakhali Science & Technology University, Sher-e-Bangla Agriculture University and Moulana Bhasani Science & Technology University.

Pro-Vice Chancellor of Dhaka University Harun-ur-Rashid inaugurated the 10-team meet in the morning.

GAIBANDHA SCHOOL CRICKET

Mohimganj High School defeated Islamia High

School by 130 runs in the Standard Chartered Young Tigers National Cricket Competition at the Gaibandha Stadium.

Mahimganj batted first and posted 206 runs losing all their wickets in 33.2 overs and in reply, Islamia were bundled out for 76.

KERANIGANJ CRICKET

Chorail Tarunik Sangha beat Green House Sporting by eight wickets in the Keraniganj Cricket League. Green House batted first and were all out for 190 which the winners successfully chased in the 35th over losing six wickets.

Kalindi Youth defeated Kolatia by 80 runs in another match.

DU SPORTS

Dhaka University Sir Salimullah Muslim Hall held their annual sports competition at the University central playground.

Rakib Doza of Economics department and Humayun Kabir of Social Welfare Institute became joint champions in the annual event and Tauhidul Islam from Social Sciences finished runners up.

DUVice Chancellor Arefin Siddiq was present

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