



SOME BRAZILIAN FLAVOUR: Bangladesh football head coach Dido (C) executes a 'rabona' while displaying his free-kick taking skills during a training session at the BUET ground. Yesterday's training also remarkably marked the first time that the national team players practised set-pieces on mobile dummies.

Women's Club Cup from today

SPORTS REPORTER

The Women's Club Cup Cricket tournament get underway today at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur with Abahani taking on BKSP in the inaugural match.

Eight teams, split into two groups, will compete in the 35-over-a-side affair at three different venues. Gulshan Youth Club and City Club are the other two venues for the tournament.

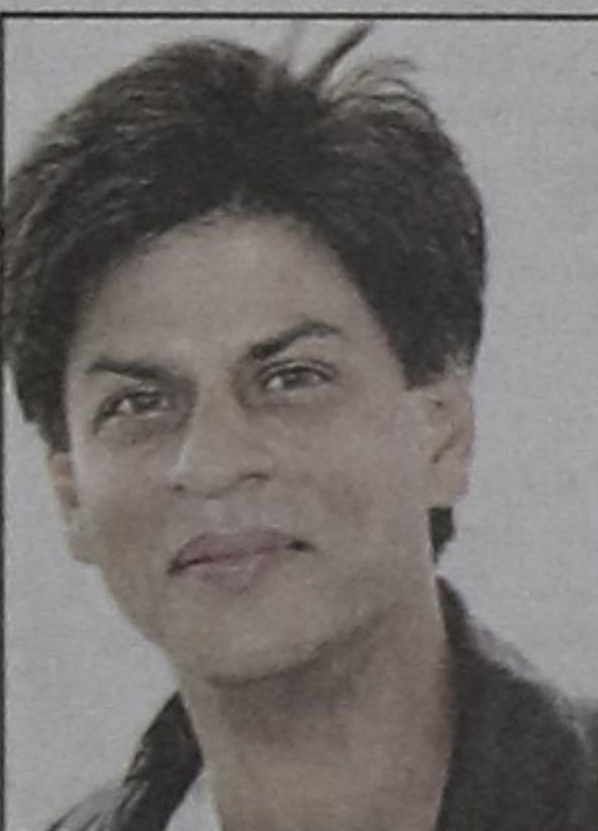
Group A comprises Abahani, Dipali Jubo Sangha, BKSP and Khulna Women's Cricket

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Did U Know?

Corner kick was adopted by the Football Association in 1872.



Shah Rukh Khan

(Kolkata Knight Riders owner) "I get a lot of hate mail which blame me for all the decisions taken within Kolkata Knight Riders. I've saved them and I want to go around to all the houses and say 'Korbo Lorbo Jeetbo'."



What to WATCH

SET Max
Indian Premier League
Deccan Chargers v Mumbai Indians
Live from 4:30pm
Chennai Super Kings v Kolkata Knight Riders
Live from 8:45pm

ESPN
English Premier League
Hull City v Liverpool
Live at 7:55pm
Everton v Manchester City
Live at 10:30pm

STAR Sports
English Premier League
West Ham v Chelsea
Live at 7:55pm
Manchester United v Tottenham
Live at 10:25pm
Spanish Primera Liga
Valencia v Barcelona
Live at 1:55am (Sunday)

Int'l football returns National team merchandise on sale

SPORTS REPORTER



Football Confederation (AFC) Challenge Cup Qualifiers from Sunday three years after staging the final round of AFC Challenge Cup in 2006.

Cambodia, Myanmar, Macao will participate in the meet along with hosts Bangladesh. The competition forms part of the qualifying round for the 2010 edition of the AFC Challenge Cup where the winners of the competition will advance.

Macao and Cambodia have already arrived in the capital yesterday while Myanmar is expected to arrive in the early hours of today.

Myanmar and Macao will play the opening game of the meet at 3.30 pm while hosts Bangladesh launches their campaign against Cambodia later on the opening day.

State run Bangladesh Television (BTV) will broadcast the contest live from the Bangabandhu National Stadium (BNS).

Tickets for the matches have been priced at Tk.20 for the eastern gallery, Tk.30 for the western gallery and Tk.100 for the VIP enclosures.

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) is all set to host the Asian

Students with ID cards will be allowed free entry into the eastern gallery for all matches of the tournament.

BFF local organizing committee chairman Anwarul Huq Helal has expressed delight over hosting a tournament of international stature after almost three years during the launching ceremony yesterday at the BFF headquarters.

"It is a privilege indeed to be able to host the AFC Challenge Cup Qualifiers and we will try our utmost to bring the final round here as well. This tournament holds special importance for us as the champions will qualify for the AFC Challenge Cup and winners of that competition also plays in the Asian Cup 2011," said Helal while keying out the importance of the meet.

Meanwhile BFF has also put up national team t-shirts for sale for the first time in two stalls at the Bangabandhu National Stadium (BNS) and an attempt to market the merchandise through retail outlet "Meena Bazar" is also on.

"This is an experimental move by us as it is the first time we are doing this and it is a popular practice in other countries. Hopefully fans will attend the matches with the national team t-shirts and inspire us to win," said Helal.

Helal also informed that BFF has received

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Sachin feels like 16 on 36th birthday

Cricket

PTI, Durban/Mumbai

Arguably cricket's biggest icon, Sachin Tendulkar turned 36 on Friday and said he still feels like a boy of 16.

The right-hander, bracketed in the same league with the legendary Don Bradman, is currently leading the Mumbai Indians in the ongoing Indian Premier League in South Africa.

"I feel like 16. I think it's the good wishes and blessings that count," he said.

"It's not about breaking records. It's about winning matches. It's a terrific feeling to win and that's what matters," Tendulkar said after cutting the birthday cake in company of his Mumbai Indians teammates.

Worshipped in India and equally revered across the world, Tendulkar made his debut at 16 against Pakistan before growing into a batsman who has given nightmares to bowlers across the cricketing globe.

Tendulkar said his career stats, which show more than 12,000 Test and over 16,000 ODI runs don't matter much in comparison to being part of a winning team.

"Stats are merely a reflection of an individual's contribution to the team. Ultimately it's a team sport and though individual perfor-

mances matter, it's more about winning matches," he said.

Tendulkar will be joined by his wife and kids in the birthday celebrations here in Durban.

His childhood coach Ramakant Achrekar on Thursday said nothing has changed in his iconic ward in last over two decades, not even his style of playing.

"He used to attack and still go after the bowlers. He never got terrorised by any bowler in the world. What has changed, nothing. He is still like this," Achrekar told PTI-Bhasha on the eve of Tendulkar's birthday.

"He is the same Sachin for me. He is very busy but never forgets to meet me and talk about cricket, cricket and cricket. Cricket is his passion and I wish him on his birthday that this passion remains the same," he said.

The 78-year-old Achrekar felt Tendulkar, who debuted as 16-year-old in 1989, could play in the 2011 World Cup.

"He can play World Cup 2011. He has one unfulfilled dream to win the World Cup. So is mine," said the coach.

Tendulkar is the world's leading run scorer with 12,773 runs from 159 Tests and 16,684 in 425 ODI, besides holding an umpteen number of cricketing records.

Tendulkar, who was recently immortalised in the Madame Tussaud's wax museum, had said he had three teachers in his life -- his father, brother and coach Achrekar.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY: India superstar Sachin Tendulkar (C), who turned 36 yesterday, is about to cut the cake with his Mumbai Indians and India teammates at a party in Durban early Friday.

PCL auction today

SHAHIDUL ISLAM, Chittagong

The country's domestic cricket makes history this morning at the Chittagong Club auditorium when the likes of Tamim Iqbal, Abdur Razzak, Mehrab Hossain, Mushfiqur Rahim and numerous players will be put on sale.

All eyes of cricket lovers and organisers here will be glued on a beautifully designed stage at the club auditorium for around three hours from 10.00 am (BST) as the names of 48 selected cricketers are displayed for auction of the Bangladesh version of the IPL Twenty20 the Port City Cricket League (PCL).

The selected players will be placed in five categories -- A+, A, A-, B+ and B-. Of them, 25 are drawn from the Bangladesh national team, seven are from the Bangladesh "A" team, two from Bangladesh Under-19 team and one from the Academy team. Thirteen others are chosen from different clubs.

Only dashing opener Tamim Iqbal and left-arm spinner Abdur Razzak topped the list of elite category ("A") for the PCL with a floor price of Tk 30,000.

The Category "A" cricketers (floor price Tk 20,000) are Mehrab Hossain, Mushfiqur Rahim, Imrul Kayes, Rokibul Hassan, Amit Majumder, Shahadat Hossain, Syed Raseel, Nazmul Hossain, Mahbubul Alam, Rubel Hossain, Mahmudullah Riyad and Nayeem Islam.

Three-dayer ends in stalemate

SPORTS REPORTER

Amit Majumder hogged the spotlight on the final day with a stroke-filled hundred as the batsmen-dominated three-day match between Bangladesh Under-19 and the visiting Sri Lanka Under-19 ended in a draw at the Fatullah Cricket Stadium yesterday.

The opening batsman struck unbeaten 129 off 179 balls that contained 17 fours and a six while Asif Ahmed smashed an unbeaten 50 off 89 balls with the help of four boundaries as the home side declared their second innings for 236 for 2.

Bangladesh Under-19 threw a challenge by declaring their innings with a lead of 261 runs but their Sri Lankan counterparts held their nerves to score 113 without loss in 28 overs before time was called.

Dinesh Chandimal followed up his big hundred (184) with an unbeaten 55 in the second innings which saw seven boundaries while his opening partner Udara Jayasundara, who hit eight fours and two sixes, remained not out on 58.

Earlier Sri Lanka Under-19 could manage only five runs before being bundled out for 291 after resuming the day on 286-8.

Noor Hossain picked up one more wicket to finish with a figure of 5-70.

Bangladesh Under-19 made 316 in their first innings.

The teams will now travel to Khulna today to play the second 3-day match where they also play the first limited-over game of the five-match series at the Birsheshtira Shahid Motiur Rahman Stadium.

Under-15's in control

SPORTS REPORTER

A 94-run opening partnership between Mohammad Javed and Anik helped BCB Under-15s to put up a decent total on the opening day of the two-day match against visiting CAB Under-15s at the Mymensingh Stadium yesterday.

Javed smashed ten boundaries to make 59 off 55 balls while Anik added 33 off 55 balls as local side scored 251 before being bundled out in 74.2 overs.

One down Bayazid contributed 47 off 103 balls with the help of seven fours.

Jiban Chowdhury and Sajid Akhter took one wicket each as CAB Under-15s scored 32 for 2 in 18 overs before the stumps were drawn for the day.

Pakistan restricted

Cricket

AFP, Dubai

Australian bowlers unleashed tight line and length to fold Pakistan's innings at 207 in 46.2 overs in the second day-night one-day international here at the Dubai cricket Stadium on Friday.

Off-spinner Nathan Hauritz took 3-41, while pacemen James Hopes and Andrew Symonds chipped in with two wickets apiece as

Pakistan's batsmen struggled on a slow paced pitch after captain Younis Khan won the toss and decided to bat.

Pakistan leads the five-match one-day series 1-0 following their four-wicket win in the first match on Wednesday.

Opener Salman Butt topped with a resolute 57 while Shahid Afridi hit a 40-ball 41 to anchor the innings after Hauritz removed the middle order with some accurate off-spin.

Butt held one end intact

after Pakistan lost debutant opener Ahmed Shahzad (four) in the third over. Younis (28) helped Butt add 53 for the second wicket before edging paceman Ben Laughlin to wicketkeeper Brad Haddin.

Hauritz further derailed the Pakistan innings by dismissing Shoaib Malik (seven) and Misbahul Haq (12) in quick succession before removing a dangerous looking Butt in the 34th over.

Butt hit six boundaries during his snail-paced 112-ball knock.

Hauritz could have had a fourth wicket and blown away Pakistan for a much lower total had Ben Laughlin held on to a high catch from Afridi when the batsman was on only three.

Afridi, who was man-of-the-match for his career-best 6-38 on Wednesday, fully capitalised on the chance and hit five boundaries and a six to help Pakistan score 39 in the batting power play.

Shoaib Akhtar used the long handle effectively, hitting four boundaries and a six off to make a fiery 14-ball 25.

Australia made three changes from their Wednesday line-up, leaving out pacemen Stuart Clark and Ben Hilfenhaus, and opener Shaun Marsh. They brought in David Hussey, Doug Bollinger and Ben Laughlin.

Pakistan included Shahzad in place of injured Nasir Jamshed.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard after Pakistan's innings in the second day-night one-day international against Australia at the Dubai Cricket Stadium on Friday:

PAKISTAN
Butt c Symonds b Hauritz 57
Shahzad run out 4

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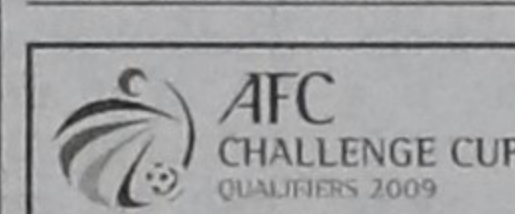


Pakistan opener Salman Butt, who hit team highest 57, goes on the front foot to play defensively during the second one-day international against Australia at the Dubai Cricket Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Bangladesh name hurting trio

SPORTS REPORTER



yesterday for the AFC Challenge Cup qualifiers that included the injured trio of Zahid Hasan, Emily, Mohammad Robin and Zahid Hossain.

Only Ariful and Pranotosh were left out of the 25-member squad that was named on March 25.

Coach Shafiqul Islam Manik informed that the decision to retain the injured trio comes as part of the team's weaknesses in the striking department.

"We have a big squad and we have taken them as part of it because their reports are good and it's likely that they would be able to serve us for a game or two," said Manik explaining the reasons behind the inclusion of the three.

Doctor Prashanto Agarwal would let the team management know the final decision on Emily and Zahid today ahead of Bangladesh's opening encounter against Cambodia on Sunday at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

Promising striker Emily and speedy winger Zahid were seen stretching under the supervision of physio Dalilur Rahman yesterday while Robin spent a full practice

session with the team.

The two players however have no chance to play a full 90 minutes rather the duo might be considered as late substitutes if needed.

Bangladesh play their second game in the Group A qualifiers against a strong Myanmar on April 28 and the third and last match against Macao on April 30 at the same venue.

"The inclusion of the injured trio means we have kept our options open," team manager Imtiaz Sultan Johnny told reporters during the practice session at the BUET ground yesterday.

"Emily and Zahid have already been cleared for the competition though they have recovered 70 to 75 percent from their injuries and Robin has been training with the team for a couple of days," he added.

Under the guidance of Brazilian coach Edson Silva Dido, the players have been training for last four weeks and played a practice match in Nepal which they won by 1-0 goal against Nepal Police team.

SQUAD

Aminul (captain), Biplob, Himel, Nasir, Rajani, Saikat, Arman Aziz, Sharif, Robin, Wali Faisal, Sujat, Zahid Pervez, Mamun, Emily, Mishu, Zahid Hossain, Munna, Mamun Mia, Emon Babu, Enamul, Rashed, Manik and Mithun.

Two overs too many

CRICINFO, undated



So what's wrong with a tie? Arguably, the Super Over is far less unsatisfactory than the farce of a Bowlout. It is at least a contest between bat and ball. But do we really need it?

The tie is the rarest result in cricket and, in many ways, the most beautiful. And just. Often it is the true measure of how close the game had been, and how equal -- good and bad -- the teams were.

I am not a fan of tie-breakers in football either. It reduces the game to a skill of sharp-shooting. But often they happen to the most exciting part of a dreary match, as drawn football games are, with defensive teams playing for the tie-breaker.

The tie is different from a draw. A drawn cricket match can be exciting too, but a tie is invariably thrilling. And the finish often leaves the spectator emotionally spent. Fulfilled but spent. It's a unique combination of regret, relief and exhilaration. For a while you replay that moment that could have won your team the match, and then realise that it could have been lost too. And then you come to the realisation that you have seen the perfect finish, and the rest of the evening, or night, can be spent in that warm glow.

The tie-breaker feels like a charade, a contrived climax after the grand climax. It can

produce a high for fans of the winning team but it's a temporary one.

I watched India and Pakistan play out a tie-breaker in the World Twenty20 in 2007 and it left me cold. It had been a dramatic match with plenty of twists and turns. Batting first, India had managed only 141 but reduced Pakistan to 103 for 6 in the 18th over. Misbah ul-Haq and Yasir Arafat then belted 27 off the next eight balls to leave Pakistan needing 12 off the last six. The match ended with a dramatic run-out in the last ball with the scores level.

Or so I would have liked it to end. But then a Bowlout ensued, and Robin Uthappa, Harbhajan Singh and Virender Sehwag proceeded to earn India a win by hitting the stumps after all three Pakistani bowlers -- Umar Gul, Arafat, and Shahid Afridi -- failed to find the target.

Thursday's match between Rajasthan Royals and Kolkata Knight Riders was the best of the tournament so far. It had all the elements that make a great Twenty20 match: dramatic fluctuations, outstanding individual performances, excellent tactical manoeuvres, a couple of stirring human stories and a great finish.

Rajasthan stumbled at the start, recovered through an adventurous innings by one of their heroes of last season, were pegged back again by a mystery spinner playing his first match of the season and finished the innings with a flourish with an IPL debutant thrashing two

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