

## Coach positive too

**Cricket**

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh cricket coach Jamie Siddons displayed a similar sort of satisfaction like his ex-captain Mohammad Ashraful on the Tigers' recent performance in the ICC World Twenty20 after he faced the local media for the first time yesterday since returning from Australia at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

After Bangladesh made their exit from the tournament, Siddons flew home from England on personal grounds and was scheduled to join the team directly in the West Indies. But, due to the early completion of his commitments back home he was available in town to present his views.

"We played some very good cricket in England. We scored more than 200 against Netherlands and defeated them and the same Netherlands team beat England in the first match. It's just the match against Ireland, which has overshadowed every positive from the tournament, and it's important to remember that it was a Twenty20 game. In a Twenty20 game the lesser teams have a great opportunity to come closer to the bigger teams and Ireland have some very good players who are playing county and Twenty20 all the time," said a not-so-disappointed Siddons.

He expounded on all the different fine tunings that the team had had and did not hesitate to call them improvements.

"There have been improvements in the side. Tamim (Iqbal) hitting boundaries without going down the

wicket, Zunaed (Siddiqui) playing hook shots which I didn't see him play before, Shakib (Al Hasan) playing pull shots with a better back lift, Ashraful playing the cut shot which he didn't do before and Rubel (Hossain) bowling slow balls which are tricking batters. So these are the little things where have gone better and will help us in the future."

The Tigers' poor interna-

tional schedule for the first-half of 2009 was responsible for their disappointing show at the World Twenty20, according to coach Siddons. He however quickly termed the performance in England as disappointing soon after giving an account of all the "good cricket" that was played there.

"We did not play any international matches prior to the

World Twenty20 and that's what went wrong in England. We had such less international match practice after the Sri Lanka-Zimbabwe series, which now feels like it's been ages. The ICC Future Tours Programme might give us less matches in the future but there will not be such yawning gaps in between tournaments. I believe the situation's not

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HE IS READY: Bangladesh cricket team coach Jamie Siddons (L) shares a light moment with new Bangladesh captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN

## Beximco signs on for Gold Cup

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) in collaboration with Beximco Group will organise the Bangabandhu Gold Cup international football tournament sometimes in October-November this year.

BFF president Kazi Salahuddin disclosed the development to the media yesterday at BFF house after his meeting with the Beximco Group on Saturday.

"The BFF and Beximco will be working together in holding the Bangabandhu Cup," said Salahuddin.

For the eight team competition, the BFF has set a proposed budget of Tk 10 crore and it's confirmed that two top local clubs will take part in the meet along with the other six top-ranked clubs from Asia.

The federation already communicated with their different counterparts in Asia to confirm the participation of quality clubs.

"We will not compromise with the quality because our intention is clear to hold a top quality tournament in Asia," said Salahuddin.

So far BFF has communicated with India, Qatar, UAE, Thailand, Iran, Iraq, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, Malaysia and Myanmar but the federation is likely to announce the club names today.

An important meeting regarding the tournament will take place by the first week of July to take some major decisions.

It was learnt that Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina gave her consent to be chief patron for the tournament.

## Asia Youth Games start

UNB, Dhaka

The first Asian Youth Games get underway today in Singapore.

A large number of youth athletes from 43 Asian countries will compete in nine disciplines of sports for 90 gold medals at stake.

The nine disciplines of sports are -- Athletics, Aquatic, Basketball (3 on 3), Bowling, Shooting, Sailing, Beach Volleyball, Football and Table Tennis.

A 15-member Bangladesh contingent, led by President of Women's Sports Association Rafia Akhter Dolly, now in Singapore, will represent Bangladesh in the first ever Asian Youth meet.

Out of the 10 disciplines of sports, Bangladesh will compete in four disciplines -- athletics, swimming, shooting and basketball (3 on 3).

Shooter Tripti Dutta will carry the national flag in the Asian Youth Games.

BOA secretary general Kutubuddin Ahmed announced special awards for the medal winning Bangladesh athletes. The gold winning athletes will get Tk 100,000 each, silver medalists Tk 50,000 each and the bronze medalists Tk 25,000 each.

## Jamie lacks perspective!

**Cricket**

QUAZI ZULQUARNAIN ISLAM

While the whole country was busy ranting over Bangladesh's woeful showing in the ICC World T20 one man noticeable by his absence was head coach Jamie Siddons.

However at the press conference on his (early) return from Australia, Siddons was expected to provide a lot of answers to questions that had been building for a while.

For someone who had been away from the hullabaloo, a certain amount of perspective could have been expected.

Instead, his responses left bewildered fans scratching their heads and raised the question about whether Jamie Siddons is missing the bigger picture.

Primarily, Siddons put the blame for the failure squarely on the shoulder of the Future Tours Programme (FTP) lamenting the lack of match practice prior to the tournament.

However he conveniently chose to forget that it was for this very reason that Bangladesh became the first team to set foot on England. They engaged in a number of extra practice games so as to acclimatise themselves to foreign conditions and gain essential match practice, all of which was geared to winning just one game against Ireland.

Also interestingly, while Siddons stopped short of publicly defending his players he made sure to get the point across that his work was seemingly paying dividends.

The shaven-headed Australian argued, rightly, that it was impossible to tell a player what to do all the time and that some form of intuitive ability was necessary to catch up with the game.

However, his most worrying comments

were directed towards defending his value-addition to the team. As a measure of showcasing his work, Siddons pointed to the fact that Tamim Iqbal's batting was a lot less cavalier, Ashraful was playing a newly acquired cut shot and that Shakib al Hasan's back-lift had improved.

These comments betray Siddons's true standing -- as the head coach of one of a Test playing side. While it may be politically correct to brand this as improvement, the truth of the matter is that it shows a distinctive lack of vision and ability to formulate the bigger picture.

Siddons is the head coach, not a specialist batting or bowling coach. He should be motivated to lead the team and get them playing to the best of their ability. His role is sorting out why Ashraful is still playing suicidal strokes day after day, why Tamim still gets run out in atrocious fashion and why Mashrafe and Rubel continue to bowl length balls at the death.

Siddons' comments paint the picture of a man who is so concerned with micro-management that he has lost sight of the bigger picture. No doubt, as he himself points out, Bangladesh is a very tough side to coach and captain. But come now, the Tigers have been around for a while, and such shambolic showings should be treated with the disdain it deserves, not reassuring pats on the back. After all, Ireland made it to the Super Eight's and they certainly have no more stars than we do.

For Siddons the real trouble seems in not solving the problems but identifying them. His adherence to 'fine-tuning' shows that he is afflicted with tunnel vision and chooses not to focus on the importance of vision and far-sightedness that should be the hallmark of an ambitious coach for an aspirant Test playing nation. But perhaps that is not his fault. Maybe he is just not cut out for it.

## Vaughan about to quit

**Cricket**

CRICINFO, undated

Michael Vaughan, the man who led England to more Test victories than any other captain, is expected to announce his retirement from international cricket this week, according to reports in the English media. His final match could prove to be Yorkshire's Twenty20 Cup fixture against Derbyshire at Headingley on Sunday.

Vaughan has struggled with injuries to his right knee which kept him out of cricket for over a year between November 2005 and May 2007. In January, he withdrew from the IPL auction to concentrate on getting back into the Test side in time for the Ashes, but still lost out on a place in the 16-man pre-Ashes squad.

Vaughan, 34, captained England in 51 of his 82 Tests, and won a record 26 of these, including most famously the two matches that enabled England to regain the Ashes in 2005. But he hasn't played international cricket since stepping down from the captaincy during the home series against South Africa last year, and this season he has made only 159 runs at 19.88 for Yorkshire. The last time he scored a century in a competitive match was for Yorkshire in a 50-over game against Surrey in Abu Dhabi this March.

Aside from the growing acceptance that he will never play international cricket again, not least since Ravi Bopara burst onto the scene at the beginning of the season to nail down the No. 3 slot, Vaughan is believed to be wary of hampering the opportunities of young talent at Yorkshire -- among them Jonathan Bairstow, the 19-year-old son of the former England wicketkeeper, David, who made his debut this season.

"If Vaughan really is packing it in I can understand his decision, though it's a sad day for all of us who played in 2005," Steve Harmison told The Mail on Sunday. "He was a great leader on the field. He knew how to get the best out of me, by telling me I was the best bowler in the world. Maybe he was lying, maybe it was kidology but he knew

how to press the buttons and we all wanted to play for him."

Vaughan scored three centuries out of a tally of 633 runs in the 2002-03 Ashes that preceded his 2005 triumph, and was one of the few English cricketers whom Australia hold in the highest regard. "I was slightly shocked about Vaughan not getting the inclusion [in the current Ashes squad]," said Brett Lee last week, "more so from what he's done against us in the past, he's got the utmost respect from all our players."

If, as expected, he does call it quits this week,



MICHAEL VAUGHAN

the timing of Vaughan's retirement will serve to spare the current Ashes team endless speculation about his chances of a recall, should early results against Australia go against them. One of his finest achievements as captain was to shield the side against panic in 2005, after a heavy defeat in the first Test at Lord's. The same side was retained for each of the first four matches of the series.

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## Teletalk Cricket

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Khagrachari

Victoria Club posted an eight-wicket victory over Bhaibonchhara Jubo Sangha in the first Teletalk cricket tournament at the Khagrachari Government High School ground yesterday. Bhaibonchhara Jubo Sangha were bundled out 112 in 28.1 overs with Sahab Uddin making 43 runs in 36 balls.

Mohammad Faruq was the most successful bowler with 4-16.

Victoria Club reached the target of 113 in 18 overs by losing two wickets.

Tipu hit 59 while Urfal added 35 runs.

Rubel and Jasim took one wicket each.



Franz Beckenbauer

(German football legend) "Everyone is wondering about the poor performance of Italy, it was really disappointing for Italy and Europe."

On Italy's loss in the Confederations Cup group stage.



**STAR Sports**  
Wimbledon Championships  
Round 16  
Live from 6:00pm  
**ESPN**  
Sportscentre India  
Sports News  
Live at 9:30pm

## Draw satisfies Nielsen

**Cricket**

AFP, London

Australia coach Tim Nielsen said he was satisfied with his side's workout after seeing the tourists held to a draw by Sussex on Saturday at Hove.

Carl Hopkinson top-scored for Sussex with 115 but they could only manage 373 for seven after being set a target of 418 when Australia declared their second innings on 379-7.

Australia had declared at 349-7 in their first innings, after which Sussex were bowled out for 311.

"We haven't played a four or five-day game since March and this game was all about getting back into the swing of things," Nielsen said.

"We got two lots of 80 overs under our belt and apart from Marcus North our batsmen spent some decent time in the middle. It has been a positive week for us.

"We can certainly improve but I'd rather be looking to do that with another tour game to go rather than heading into the first Test."

Having opened their tour, the Australians now head up to Worcester to face England Lions starting on Wednesday.

Hopkinson stole the show on Saturday as the 27-year-old made the most of his chance, having come into the Sussex team on the back of a pair of second-team centuries, before he finally fell to Ben Hilfenhaus after making the only ton of the match.

Hilfenhaus then snared Robin Martin-

Jenkins with a yorker as the hosts gave their victory bid everything on the back of an impressive start by openers Mike Yardy and Chris Nash, who made 87 in 24 overs.

Yardy raced to his 50 off just 55 balls, hitting ten fours, but home momentum faded when Nash sliced a drive to backward point off Peter Siddall.

Come lunch and Australian skipper Ricky Ponting brought in off-spinners Nathan Hauritz and North, who made the second breakthrough in having Yardy push forward to allow Michael Clarke to take the catch at slip.

Ed Joyce, the last England player to score a hundred against the Australians in a one-day international in Sydney in 2007, made a swift 34 but pushed forward as North claimed a second wicket in the 50th over.

Brett Lee then removed Rory Hamilton-Brown for the second time in the match for just a single, leg before wicket.

Sussex began the final session needing 181 as Hopkinson and Luke Wright made a stand of 81 in 13 overs, a new fifth-wicket Sussex record for this fixture, bettering Tony Greig and Peter Kirsten's 72 in 1975.

Hauritz saw Hopkinson reprieved on 69 when Ponting dropped him but then took out Wright.

Hopkinson completed his century by driving North through the leg side for a 12th boundary but then fell caught behind by Brad Haddin off Hilfenhaus to depart after facing 138 balls in just under three hours, his knock including 14 fours and three sixes.

## Veterans on course

AFP, London



boys club.

Murray, bidding to end Britain's agonising 73-year wait for a home men's champion brushed past Serbia's Viktor Troicki 6-2, 6-3, 6-4 and will now face Switzerland's Stanislav Wawrinka for a place in the quarterfinals.

The 22-year-old third seed served up 17 aces against the outclassed Serb who has now lost all three meetings against the Scotsman.

With rain threatening at the end of a day when temperatures had smashed through 30 degrees, Murray hurried through his match, wrapping up victory after just 96 minutes.

"It was a very good performance," said Murray. "I felt a little uncomfortable at the start and the conditions were difficult with the rain and clouds."

"I was more comfortable after the first set and I'm happy with my first week here. But I have to play better if I want to win the title."

Hewitt, the 2002 champion, reached the fourth round for the sixth year in

succession with a 7-5, 7-6 (7/3), 6-3 win over Germany's Philipp Petzschner and will tackle Czech Radek Stepanek for a place in the quarterfinals.

The 28-year-old Australian, steadily rebuilding his career after a lengthy lay-off following hip surgery, has yet to drop a set and showed why he is such a danger by putting out Argentine fifth seed Juan Martin Del Potro in the second round.

"It's not easy to reach the fourth round for a sixth year in a row, but a Grand Slam isn't won in the first three rounds," said Hewitt.

"It's all about finding a way through the first week. The draw opens up and you never know what might happen."

Two-time runner-up Andy Roddick of the United States, the sixth seed, also made it through with a gritty 7-6 (7/2), 7-6 (7/2), 4-6, 6-3 win over close friend, Jurgen Melzer.

It was Roddick's ninth win in nine matches against the Austrian and he will now tackle Tomas Berdych of the Czech Republic for a place in the quarterfinals.

"Jurgen served really well. He's such a good player on grass, he comes forward, uses tricky slices so I'm lucky to be in the fourth round," said Roddick who sent down 33 aces.

German veteran Haas demanded Wimbledon install floodlights and introduce final set tiebreakers after winning a marathon five-set third round clash over

Marin Cilic.

The 31-year-old German beat the 11th seeded Croatian 7-5, 7-5, 1-6, 6-7 (3/7), 10-8 in a four and a half hour tie which had started on Friday afternoon but had been held over for bad light.

"I don't know why they don't have lights here. I have never stopped a match a 6-6 before in the final set. It's tough to come back but I'm happy to get through," said Haas.

"I think they should be like the US Open and have a tie-break in the final set. I could hardly get out of bed today, but the adrenaline took over."

Haas, who won the Halle grasscourt tournament on the eve of Wimbledon, will now face Russian 29th seed Igor Andreev who saw off Andreas Seppi of Italy 6-1, 7-6 (7/5), 4-6, 7-6 (7/5) in another match held over.

Haas did have two match points in the fourth set tie-break on Friday before 20-year-old Cilic had two match points of his own in the 12th game of the decider before play was halted.

After eight defeats in eight outings, Berdych, the Czech 20th seed, pulled off his first win over Russian 12th seed Nikolay Davydenko, strolling to a comfortable 6-2, 6-3, 6-2 triumph.

Spain's former world number one

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Germany's Tommy Haas celebrates after beating Marin Cilic of Croatia in the Wimbledon third round match at the All England Club in London on Saturday.

PHOTO: AFP