

Windies retain new-look team

CRICINFO, undated

The West Indies selectors have retained their new-look squad for the second Test against Bangladesh starting on Friday. Batsman Ryan Hinds has been added to the team.

Barbadian batsman Kraigg Brathwaite and Jamaican Andre Creary, who did not play the first Test, have been released to play in the domestic three-day tournament.

The left-handed Hinds last played a Test in March in the home series against England, and was dropped for the return tour to England in May.

WICB Vice President Dave Cameron said that any player who wanted to make himself available would be considered for selection. "I cannot say [that] if any of the players changed their minds they would be back into the team for the second Test, but I think that they should be given a look at," Cameron said.

West Indies fielded a second string team at Arnos Vale Sports Complex in the first Test after their regular players

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Daily Star bow out

SPORTS REPORTER

The Daily Star capitulated to a 5-2 loss against Gemcon to bow out of the Ascot 5-a-side corporate indoor soccer cup with their headhanging low.

Fielding a side mostly made up of reserves, the newspaper men held their opponents at bay in the first half as it finished only 1-0. But with wholesale personnel changes in the second half, they lost all rhythm.

Gemcon took full advantage and rubbed salt into their already open wounds by inflicting a massive defeat.

7-2 was the scoreline as United Leasing drubbed Radisson Hotels. But the biggest scorers on the night

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Did U Know?

Of the eight grounds used in the 1966 World Cup, half now don't exist: Wembley, White City, Roker Park and Ayresome Park.



TALK TURKEY

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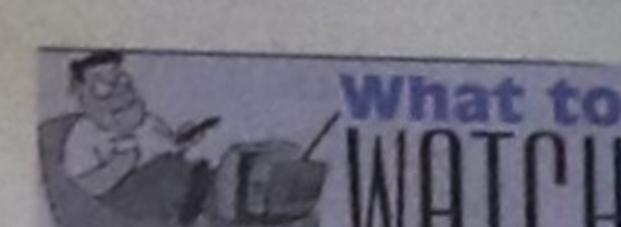


Ricky Ponting

(Australia cricket captain)

"They can play whatever way they want to play. We have come to play by the rules and the spirit of the game, and it is up to them to do what they want to do."

On England's time-wasting tactics in the final session of the first Ashes Test.



What to WATCH

STAR Cricket
England v Australia
2nd Ashes Test, Day 1
Live from 5:00pm

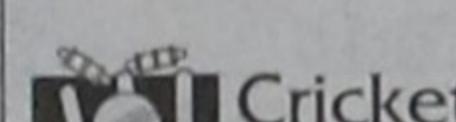
ESPN
Sportscenter India
Sports News
Live at 9:30pm



PHOTO: AFP

England all-rounder Andrew Flintoff speaks at a press conference on Wednesday after announcing that he will retire from Test cricket at the end of the Ashes series against Australia. He is also doubtful for the second Test starting at Lord's today.

Mash unlikely for Test



Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Mashrafe Bin Mortaza is unlikely to lead the team in the second and final Test against West Indies, which will start tomorrow at the National Stadium in Grenada.

Bangladesh captain underwent an MRI exam of his injured right knee on Tuesday afternoon in Grenada.

The initial report suggests he has muscle stress in the knee, not a ligament tear as feared earlier but he has to wait for an expert opinion from Australia as the team management sent the MRI report to orthopedic surgeon Dr. David Young in Melbourne. The final decision on his return to action would be taken after the word from Young who treated the leading paceman on previous occasions.

The 'Narail Express', who took over as captain from Mohammad Ashraful last month, made a memorable debut as captain as under his leadership Bangladesh recorded their first-ever away Test victory with a 95-run win against makeshift West Indies

in St. Vincent.

But unfortunately he had to watch his team's fight-back in the last two days from the dressing room due to injury. The leading paceman, who has been hit by a series of knee and back injuries since his Test debut in 2001, injured his knee while bowling on the third day of the first Test and pace bowler Nazmul Hossain has reached Grenada as back up for Mortaza for the second and final Test against the West Indies.

Vice-captain Shakib Al Hasan handled the team encouragingly for the last two days as a stand-in captain and the world's number one all-rounder is an obvious alternative to lead the team in the second Test if Mashrafe finally fails to make his return.

Shakib's courageous decision to bring former skipper and part-time spinner Mohammad Ashraful in the crucial stage of the match paid off brilliantly as he got the vital breakthrough and he was praised because of the way he put pressure on the opponent batsmen in their defense of a 277-run target.

On the other hand he kept his cool as the number one

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BNS ground renovation likely

UNB, Dhaka

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) is soon going to renovate the ground of Bangabandhu National Stadium (BNS) ahead of this season's football likely to start mid-September.

A two-member team of BUET, led by Dr Hasib Mohammad Ahsan, Professor of Civil Engineering Department, visited the BNS today (Wednesday) to take the measurement of the ground, BFF general secretary Al Musabir Sadi told reporters at his BFF office in the afternoon.

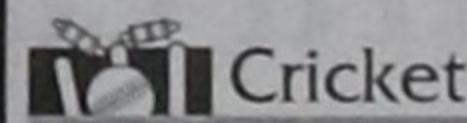
He said the BUET team would again visit the BNS next week to prepare a complete diagram showing the problems of the ground and submit the same to the BFF for action.

Sadi said that after receiving the diagram from the BUET team, they would approach the National Sports Council (NSC) for steps to renovate the ground.

He, however, said it would depend on BUET's report whether BFF would go for long-term or short-term renovation as they have little time in hand to prepare the ground.

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Flintoff's bye to Tests



Cricket

AFP, London

Andrew Flintoff will retire from Test cricket at the end of the ongoing Ashes series against Australia, the injury-prone England all-rounder announced here on Wednesday.

The 31-year-old, who has so far played 75 Tests for his country since his debut in 1998, will though continue to make himself available for selection for one-day internationals and Twenty20 International fixtures, a statement issued by the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) said.

Flintoff was the star of England's 2005 Test series win over Australia as the team regained the Ashes for the first time in 18 years.

But injuries have blighted his career and he now has to overcome a knee problem, sustained in last week's drawn first Test against Australia, if he is to play in the second match of the current Ashes series starting at Lord's here on Thursday.

"My body has told me it's time to stop," Flintoff, who had to have an operation of his right knee after injury in April cut short his stint in the lucrative Twenty20 Indian Premier League (IPL), said in an ECB statement.

"Since 2005 I've had two years when I've done nothing but rehab from one injury or another," added Flintoff, who until last week's Test had not played for England this season because of injury.

"It's been something I've been thinking about for a while and I think this last problem I've had with my knee has confirmed to me that the time is now right."

England captain Andrew Strauss, still waiting on Flintoff's fitness before he knows his team for the second Test, said he'd been expecting the Lancashire star's decision.

"From a players' point of view, this is not

that surprising -- it has been coming for a while, with the injuries he has had," he said.

"We are obviously very disappointed and feel for him, because he is still a pretty young guy. But he knows his own body better than anyone."

"We respect his decision and hope he can go out with a bang."

Former England captain Michael Atherton praised Flintoff's contribution to his country's team but questioned the timing of his decision.

"It's curious timing because obviously if Flintoff didn't play in this game (the second Ashes Test) and England did well and won, what do they do?

"Do they go back to Flintoff with the end of the series approaching when he's not going to be playing beyond that? It's not yet certain he'll get a grand finale or farewell."

Even so, Atherton said Flintoff will feel "absolutely fulfilled" when he looks back on his career.

"He has been a very good Test match cricketer, not a great one but a very good one who had a great series in 2005. His career's not over because he'll want to play some more one-day international cricket. I suspect he'll feel absolutely fulfilled."

Another former England skipper, Graham Gooch, said Flintoff's retirement from Test cricket would be a "big loss" but said the modern workload of Tests, one-day and Twenty20 cricket was a big burden.

"It is a big loss for English cricket, because he has a presence about him. He's not been the biggest influence on all the Test matches he's played. But he does have a presence, and that brings others along with him," Gooch told BBC Radio.

"He has the ability to be able to get big players out. Certainly that was shown at the height of his career when England won the Ashes in 2005."

Dido's disgust at facilities

SPORTS REPORTER

National football coach Edson Silva Dido once again showed his disappointment over the facilities provided by the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF).

The Brazilian coach left the national team camp at BKSP in disgust yesterday to meet with the BFF officials.

It was learnt that Dido was disturbed by a few problems in the sports institute like unprepared ground and lack of facilities in the gymnasium.

"Yes, he has talked about some minor problems and we already took the initiative to solve these problems. There is nothing serious," informed BFF general secretary Al Musabir Sadi.

During his first training at the Bangabandhu National Stadium and the conditioning camp in Cox's Bazar, Dido had same kind of problem and complained the BFF.

Bangladesh national team are in pre-season training ahead of some international events.

LOCAL SNIPS

SPORTS REPORTER

Mahfuz Akther Kiron has been made executive member of the Asian Football Confederation (AFC).

It was for the first time any member of the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) are represented in the executive committee of AFC.

Kiron is deputy chairman of BFF's women's Committee.

BFF's executive committee member Harunur Rashid was elected member in the AFC organizing committee for Asian Cup 2011.

TELETALK CRICKET

Khabongpuriya Samobai Samity became champions in the Teletalk cricket tournament when they beat Victoria club by 14 runs in the final at the Khagrachari government high school ground.

Khabongpuriya Samobai Samity posted 176 for 9 in 35 overs. Jibon Dewan hit 54 runs.

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Second Ashes Test starts today



Cricket

AFP, London

England head into the second Test against Australia as yet uncertain over whether all-rounder Andrew Flintoff will feature in their bid for a first Ashes win here at Lord's in 75 years.

The 31-year-old injured his right knee while fielding in last week's drawn first Test in Cardiff, having had an operation on after tearing the meniscus in April while playing in the Indian Premier League.

"Yes, he has talked about some minor problems and we already took the initiative to solve these problems. There is nothing serious," informed BFF general secretary Al Musabir Sadi.

During his first training at the Bangabandhu National Stadium and the conditioning camp in Cox's Bazar, Dido had same kind of problem and complained the BFF.

It was somewhat overshadowed by a 'time-wasting' row revolving around the home team's questionable use of the 12th man late on the final day.

England have called up in-form fast bowler Stephen Harmison, who in 2005 at Lord's struck Australia captain Ricky Ponting a fearful blow on the cheek, ostensibly as cover for

Flintoff.

But Harmison, who could be competing with fellow Durham paceman Graham Onions for a place in a re-shaped attack, may yet find himself playing alongside Flintoff if his friend proves his bowling fitness on Wednesday and suffers no ill-effects before Thursday's start.

England coach Andy Flower was cautiously upbeat about Flintoff's chances, saying Tuesday: "He saw the surgeon that operated on his knee recently and he was quite optimistic about him playing in this game."

"The suggestion is that he should be okay but I think with Fred and his injury record we're always concerned, to be honest," said Flower of Flintoff, who has had a cortisone injection.

"His body's in that sort of state at this time of his career when he seems vulnerable a lot of the time and we can't get away from that but he's a hell of a player and we want him in our side when he's fit."

Harmison took six wickets for England Lions during their tour match against Australia and twice dismissed fledgling opener Phillip Hughes with short balls in the process.

An inconsistent performer, Harmison was dropped during this year's tour of the West Indies and has not played for England since.

However, Flower stressed: "I never drew any line under Steve, that was never the case at all."

"Steve was always in the frame, he's a very

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Pakistan still wants WC matches

AFP, Karachi

Pakistan's cricket chief on Wednesday denied boycotting a meeting in India that handed the country's World Cup 2011 matches to co-hosts and called again for talks on winning back the fixtures.

The Central Organising Committee (COC) of the World Cup 2011 met in Mumbai on Tuesday and redistributed the 14 matches originally given to Pakistan. Eight went to India, four to Sri Lanka and two to Bangladesh.

Pakistan, which was stripped of its matches by the International Cricket Council (ICC) in April over security fears, was invited to the meeting as the fourth co-host but no Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) representative attended.

PCB chairman Ijaz Butt denied Pakistan had refused to go to the event.

"No, we did not boycott the meeting," Butt told AFP. "Since it is a legal matter we do not want to make comment on that, but I can tell you that we are still trying to solve the matter through talks."

Butt said he was due to meet ICC chairman David Morgan on July 27 or 28.

"We are definitely trying to solve the matter out of court and I am going to meet the ICC president soon," said Butt, who last month threatened to sue the ICC, the COC and the IDI

[ICC Development International].

Pakistan initiated legal proceedings after the ICC decided to strip it of its World Cup 2011 matches following the attack on the Sri Lankan team bus in Lahore last March.

The attack, which left seven players and their assistant coach injured and eight people dead, ended any immediate chance of Pakistan's hosting international cricket, with teams already refusing to tour over security fears.