



Did U Know?

In a wartime international football match between England and Wales in 1943, England substitute Stan Mortensen came on and played for Wales.



Talk Turkey



Michael Atherton
(Former England captain)
"During this summer, he has touched greatness and been occasionally inspirational; it has been so throughout his career."
While not buying into suggestions that Andrew Flintoff is one of the game's greats.



What to Watch

STAR Cricket

England v Australia
Fifth Ashes Test, Day 4
Live from 5:00pm

ESPN

English Premier League
West Ham v Tottenham
Live from 7:25pm
Fulham v Chelsea
Live from 9:55pm

STAR Sports

English Premier League
Burnley v Everton
Live from 8:55pm

Aminul could be out for a month

SPORTS REPORTER

Aminul Haq, the goalkeeper of Mohammedan Sporting Club, is likely to miss the early stage matches of the Federation Cup as he underwent a minor surgery in his back in India yesterday.

"I have been asked to rest for 10 days by the doctors and I am expecting to return to action in a month's time," Aminul was quoted as saying by Shafiqul Islam Manik.

The Federation Cup, season's curtain-raising tournament, is scheduled to get underway on September 10 and will remain suspended for a few days for the Eid-ul-Fitr before the final takes place on October 7.

The country's number one goalkeeper, Aminul, felt his old back pain during last month's residential camp of the national football league at Bangladesh Krira Shikkha Protishthan.

AFC U-16 QUALIFIERS Bangladesh may not participate

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Football Federation is seemingly in hesitation to send their Under-16 squad to the AFC U-16 Championship Qualifiers in the Philippines after failing to earn the right of hosting the Group E qualifiers in Chittagong.

Bangladesh have been placed along with Japan, Mongolia, Indonesia, Chinese Taipei and hosts Philippines and the matches will be held from October 3 to 13.

"We bid for hosting the qualifiers in Chittagong and

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PM calls cricketers 'victorious tigers'

SPORTS REPORTER

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday hailed the triumphant Bangladesh cricket team as 'victorious tigers' and declared a cash award of Tk 3 lakh for its members for creating history by winning the Test and one-day series in West Indies last month.

The prime minister announced the cash award to each of the winning cricketers, who whitewashed the West Indies in the two-match Test and three-match one-day series that was followed by their 4-1 one-day series victory in Zimbabwe, when the national team players met her at her official residence Jamuna Saturday.

More bounties came on the same day when State Minister for Youth and Sports Ahad Ali Sarker declared Tk 50,000 for each of the victors at a reception party he accorded to the Tigers.

Congratulating the players, the premier gave a pat on their back, decorated them with garlanding and said, "The whole nation is proud of you. You are our golden boys."

Hasina also said that the winning team would be given a grand reception after the end of this mourning month of

August, which commemorates the brutal killing of the country's founding father Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujibur Rahman and most of his family members.

Stand-in Bangladesh captain Shakib Al Hasan thanked the prime minister for extending all-out support to the cricket team and sought her blessings to keep up the winning trend. He also presented a cricket bat signed by them to the prime minister and handed over the series winning trophy to her amid repeated applause.

"Huge responsibilities have been vested in you after winning the Test series in West Indies and one-day series in Zimbabwe. Now you have to get prepared to continue the winning trend in future," Hasina was quoted by BSS as saying.

"Just carry on the hard work with integrity. The government and the people will be with you," she was quoted by the UNB.

A smiling Hasina told them that Bangladesh had been able to attain the Test status when Awami League government was in power in the previous tenure.

"If a government does not

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Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina (C) poses for photographs with the members of the Bangladesh cricket team and Bangladesh Cricket Board officials at her Jamuna residence yesterday.

PHOTO COURTESY

Maruful gets his wishes

Football

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammedan Sporting Club finally decided to launch their pre-season preparation on Sunday, burying a hatchet with coach Maruful Haq and verbally confirming that they would compete in the Federation Cup when it gets underway on September 10.

The Black and Whites high ups had a successful meeting with their coach Maruful at the club's Motijheel tent yesterday.

MA Salam, the chairman of the football committee, said that they happily accepted things the coach had raised in the meeting and the face-lift of the players' tent would take place immediately.

Although Mohammedan reappointed Maruful on Thursday, the coach wanted an assurance from the club officials regarding a few things like uninterrupted training facility, improved accommodation and proper food for the players before putting pen to paper.

Replying to a query, Maruful said that the officials had accepted his 'fair' propos-

als. He was particularly happy after getting a positive response from the club officials that he would get a ready venue after having a short training at Mymensingh.

Maruful, who led Mohammedan to two title glories save the prestigious B League last year, said that his team would train at the BUET ground for two days before heading to Mymensingh on Tuesday for a two-week conditioning camp.

He will, however, get little time to get his star-studded team before launching the title defence in the Federation Cup.

"The time we will get is not enough to prepare the boys. But I will try my level best," said Maruful, who guided Mohammedan to Federation Cup and one-crore-Taka Super Cup titles and runners-up behind two-times champions Abahani in the B. League last season.

Maruful, however, had to endure a lot of adversities last season when he had to fight with the other club officials to establish his style of coaching. Besides, the players often threatened to boycott camp to press home their demand for

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Eng build big lead

Cricket

AFP, London

Jonathan Trott was closing in on a century on his Test debut as England continued to press for an Ashes-clinching win in the fifth and final Test against Australia at the Oval on Saturday.

England, at tea on the third day, were 290 for seven in their second innings -- a lead of 462 runs -- in a match where victory would see them win the series 2-1.

Trott was 83 not out and Graeme Swann 34 not out, with part-time Australia spinner Marcus North taking Test-best figures of four for 98.

But the way Swann struck North for two successive fours immediately before the break said much about the state of the game.

South Africa-born Trott shared a fourth-wicket stand of 118 with England captain Andrew Strauss (75) after coming to the crease when the hosts were in trouble at 39 for three.

England at lunch were 157 for a four -- a lead

of 329 -- after Strauss, whose fifty was his second of the match, was out shortly beforehand.

Trott, who made 41 in the first innings, was 50 not out.

Wicket-keeper Matt Prior got off the mark with a cover-driven boundary off fast bowler Peter Siddle but then, attempting a needlessly risky single, was run-out by Simon Katich's direct hit from cover.

Prior's exit brought in Andrew Flintoff, cheered to the wicket by a capacity crowd for what was the all-rounder's final Test innings before his injury-induced retirement from the five-day format.

The 31-year-old lofted North over mid-wicket for four, getting rid of a close-in fielder in the process.

There were three more boundaries before, on 22, Flintoff skied North to Siddle at long-on.

Stuart Broad, the first-innings bowling star, got off the mark with a superbly timed four off left-arm quick Mitchell Johnson, which reinforced his credentials as Flintoff's natural successor.

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PHOTO: AFP

England captain Andrew Strauss drives the ball on the off side during his solid knock of 75 on the third day of the fifth and final Ashes Test at The Oval in London yesterday.

Kenyan one-two in men's marathon

AFP, Berlin



on Saturday.

Kirui clocked a championship record of 2hr 06min 54sec around the picturesque course in central Berlin, ahead of Mutai (2:07:48) with Ethiopia's Olympic bronze medallist Tsegay Kebede finishing in third (2:08:35).

It was only the second marathon victory after Vienna last year for the 27-year-old Kirui who finished second behind Haile Gebrselassie during the Ethiopian's then-world record run

in the 2007 Berlin Marathon.

Kirui, brother of fellow marathoner Mike Rotich, was also appearing in a Kenyan singlet for the first-ever time, having chosen to compete over an appearance in the Chicago Marathon.

He said that he was now targeting Gebrselassie's world record time of 2:03:59. "I'm very happy," Kirui said. "I've had some great races in Berlin."

"I was determined to be champion at one time in my life. It's a lesson, it's not easy but everyone can make it."

"Now I will prepare for the world record, total commitment in training. My aim is to run 2:03:30 in the near future, between now and next year."

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Ayub shines in vain

SPORTS REPORTER

Marshal Ayub continued his good form with the bat but the captain's effort was not good enough as the visiting GP-BCB National Cricket Academy (NCA) went down to Standard Bank National Cricket Academy of South Africa (SBNCA) by four-wickets in the second one-dayer at Lauderium, Pretoria on Friday.

The home side bounced back to level the series 1-1 after NCA pulled off a 16-run victory in the first game riding on Ayub's 99. Two teams meet again today in the series-decider in Dobsonville, Johannesburg.

Ayub hit 86 off 133 balls including five boundaries while Rony Talukdar contributed 48 off 74 balls that featured four boundaries but still NCA managed only 193 runs for nine wickets in 50 overs as four batsmen fell victim of run outs.

In reply, SBNCA rode on Agathegelou's 67 to reach the target of 194 for the loss of six wickets with one over to spare. Agathegelou, who clobbered three fours and two sixes during his 116-ball knock, was adjudged man of the match.

BRIEF SCORES

NCA: 193-9 in 50 overs (Ayub 86, Rony 48, Shuvagoto Hom 14, extras 11; YVallie 2-20)
SBNCA: 194-6 in 49 overs (A Agathegelou 67, D Miller 33, S Adair 25 not out, extras 11; Nasir 3-32, Mukter 2-33, Farhad 1-25)

Reefat takes solo lead

SPORTS REPORTER

Grand Master Reefat Bin Sattar took solo lead with maximum three points at the end of the third round of the 9th United Insurance & United Leasing Grandmasters Chess tournament at the National Sports Council conference-room yesterday.

Reefat beat Indian FM Sahaj Grover and Indian IM Atanu Lahiri in the second and third round respectively.

Five players -- Georgian GM Mikheil Mchedlishvili, Igors Rausis, GM Neelotpal Das, GM Dibyendu Barua and Indian IM Atanu Lahiri -- are in joint second position with 2.5 points each.

The first GM clash in the tournament saw top rated GM Mikheil Mchedlishvili drew with GM Dibyendu Barua in the third round.

Bangladeshi GM Abdullah Al Rakib lost his second round game to Atanu Lahiri while GM Enamul Hossain Razib beat Nepalese Tandukar Naveen. FM Taibur Rahman,

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SL post easy win

Cricket

AFP, Galle

An illness-ravaged New Zealand were bamboozled in the face of pace and spin as Sri Lanka cruised to a 202-run victory in the first Test on Saturday to lead the two-match series.

The Kiwis, set an improbable target of 413 runs, collapsed to 210 all out in their second innings before tea on the fifth and final day at the Galle International Stadium.

Despite some fine bowling, Sri Lanka captain Kumar Sangakkara singled out for praise Tillakaratne Dilshan, who was named man of the match for his 92 and 123 not out while opening the batting for the first time in Tests.

"Dilshan has matured as a cricketer and taken on a lot of responsibility and his two knocks helped us gain the advantage," said Sangakkara.

"I would not call this an easy win, but if New Zealand had showed the character that Vettori did -- and they had a few partnerships going -- this game could have been

stretched a bit. "I am glad the way we are going. It is important to win, but more important to win consistently and I think we have been able to achieve that in the last few years."

Sri Lanka, who beat Pakistan 2-0 last month, will climb to number two behind South Africa in the world rankings if they sweep this

series and Australia lose the ongoing Oval Test against England.

Off-spinner Muttiah Muralidaran was again a thorn in the tourists' side, claiming 3-88 to take his world record tally to 777 wickets, while left-arm seamer Thilan Thushara and spinner Ajantha Mendis picked up two scalps each.

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PHOTO: AFP

Sri Lanka paceman Thilan Thushara (L) sends New Zealand opener Martin Guptill (R) back to the dressing room on the fifth and final day of the first Test at Galle yesterday. The Lankans won the match by a massive 202 runs.

'Scrap Champs Trophy'

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Matthew Hayden, the former Australia opener, has suggested scrapping the Champions Trophy and creating a two-month window for the IPL in order to revive spectator interest in the game.

"Playing the World Twenty20 every other year is too much," Hayden wrote in his column in the Independent. "And why have the Champions Trophy when you've already got a 50-over World Cup?"

The Champions Trophy was postponed to September 2009 and shifted to South Africa

after teams expressed security concerns about playing in Pakistan last year. The ICC has been trying to rebrand the tournament as a short two-week elite tournament played at just two venues -- Wanderers and Johannesburg.

Hayden, who was appointed a board director by Cricket Australia earlier this month, listed down his suggestions after being challenged on air during Test Match Special by cricket writer Christopher Martin-Jenkins to come up with solutions to re-jig a jam-packed international calendar full of "meaningless matches".

England will be playing seven ODIs against Australia at the end of the Ashes and Hayden said five matches were enough for any

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PHOTO: STAR

Indian Grand Master Dibyendu Barua (R) and his Georgian counterpart Mikheil Mchedlishvili are deeply engrossed during their clash in the third round of the United Insurance Ninth Grand Masters Chess tournament at the NSC Conference room yesterday.