

Nesta undergoes arm surgery

AC Milan defender Alessandro Nesta has had surgery for a fractured arm and should recover for their opening Serie A home game against Lecce on Aug. 29, the club said on its website (www.acmilan.com). "Nesta has had surgery on his right arm after fracturing the fourth metacarpal in a friendly match against Juventus in the Tim Trophy, it was a complete success and he should be available for the opening day of the championship," it said.

- REUTERS



Siddons opts for tried & tested ones

A big cricket season is upon the Bangladesh national team, and it is no different for Tigers coach Jamie Siddons, who returned on Monday from a short vacation. The 46-year-old Australian will have his hands full for the next six months, culminating in the 2011 World Cup, his first as a head coach. Siddons talked to The Daily Star Sport yesterday about his plans for the grand event, his biggest test since taking over as the Tigers coach in October 2007.

Daily Star Sport (DSS): How was your holiday? Has it been a refreshing change after two years of non-stop cricket?

Jamie Siddons (JS): Our holiday was great. We got the chance to visit our families and also spent time on the beach relaxing. Yes it has been a very hectic schedule recently and all of the players and staff were exhausted by the time we got back from England.

DSS: Are you geared up for the World Cup, it being your first ever as a head coach?

JS: I have had the World Cup in the back of my mind now for two years but I am always true to my philosophy that the best skilled players win games and that is why I always coach with the plan to improve each individual in their skills and game plans on a daily basis.

You must remain focused on the present but the World Cup is always a good tournament to aim your sights on and to judge your team and its progress on.

DSS: Is six months good enough time to prepare for a tournament like the World Cup? What is the ideal number of players that you would like to work with ahead of the tournament?

JS: You don't just plan for the World Cup in six months -- it is ongoing. Most teams will spend the majority of their planning on how they will cope in the conditions be it the weather or the wickets, we are playing this World Cup at home so do not have to worry about those things as we know and are used to them.

There are any number of things that can happen in the lead up so you need some back up players that you know have done the work required to contribute in the World Cup if they are required. I think there is no magic number but if you have too many then the important players get less time with their skills and the

coaches so this is not ideal. DSS: Do you have a potential 15-man squad in mind?

JS: The squad that I have worked with for the last 12 months would give us our best chance for success without a doubt, I would be reluctant to put faith in players who have not been with us through all

the experiences we have had. DSS: Would you focus on skills or individuals?

JS: I always focus on the individual and his skill requirements. They go hand in hand to give a player the confidence he requires to perform in a big game.

DSS: You have potentially 10 ODIs ahead of the World Cup.

Do you prefer a long training camp or one-day matches ahead of such a tournament?

JS: We have a busy schedule of domestic and international games this summer so we must be careful to have a balance between camps and quality matches and also be careful not to injure or burn out our players

before the World Cup begins.

We will combine our practice with domestic matches and also have camps of intense preparation.

DSS: You will be provided a new coaching staff that includes Lance Klusener (bowling coach) and Julian Fountain (fielding coach). Has the BCB discussed these recent changes with you?

JS: I have been involved in the discussions but not in negotiations with the possible new coaches and am looking forward to the possibilities of working with them.

DSS: Would you still prefer Salahuddin as part of the support staff?

JS: Salahuddin has developed into a very good coach through his experience with the national team and is perfectly placed in the Academy programme. I would not pigeonhole him and say he was or is just a fielding coach though.

He is also our best batting coach and should be working as batting mentor with our juniors and Academy (players).

DSS: Where do you want to see the Bangladesh team ahead of the World Cup?

JS: Look, the team has made massive inroads with their batting and also have had some good bowling efforts, but we know we need to do all things better if we wish to go far in this World Cup.

Let's just say I want us playing consistent, aggressive intelligent cricket that gives us a chance to win every game we play between now and then.

BCB appoints Fountain as fielding coach



SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) yesterday officially announced Julian Fountain as the national team's fielding coach.

The game's governing body has however yet to confirm the appointment of former South African all-rounder Lance Klusener as the specialist bowling coach for the national team.

"The formalities with Klusener will be done very soon. And he is likely to join the team by mid September. There are certain terms and conditions we are sorting out with him," said Jalal Yunus, BCB's media committee chairman.

It was learnt that Klusener had been demanding more vacations during his tenure to fulfill some of his family commitments and the board was likely to accept his demand.

40-year-old Fountain, who has been in cricket coaching for nearly two decades, will be arriving in Dhaka on Thursday morning to start his stint with the Tigers.

The preparation camp is scheduled to start from August 22 with a preliminary squad that was yet to be named by the Rafiqul Islam-led selection committee. Head coach Jamie Siddons returned to business yesterday after long holidays.

Fountain, who has previously worked as a fielding coach for the West Indies, Pakistan and England, was excited at the prospect of coaching a talented and youthful side like Bangladesh.

"I am really looking forward to joining Bangladesh in their search for World Cup 2011 success. Bangladesh are a young side who have proved that they are capable of beating the best sides in the world on their day. I honestly believe that as one of the host nations, Bangladesh are a really strong contender, and with the right preparation, who knows what they are capable of achieving," said Fountain, who is the first baseball player to coach a senior international cricket team, when he was appointed as specialist fielding coach to the West Indies team in South Africa in 1998 again against Australia in 1999.

His contract with the BCB runs through the 2011 ICC World Cup.



JULIAN FOUNTAIN



PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh coach Jamie Siddons (2nd from L) speaks to national discards Mehrab Hossain (R) and Alok Kapali (2nd from R) as Jahurul Islam, Ilyas Sunny (L) and Sohrawardi Shuvo (C) listen at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

MSC ad-hoc meeting today

SPORTS REPORTER

A ad-hoc committee meeting of Mohammedan Sporting Club will be held today following the resignation of its convener Mosaddek Ali Falu, who tendered his resignation on August 12 cutting his long 17-year tie with the club.

The meeting is likely to select an acting convener in a bid to turn Mohammedan into a limited company through the Motijheel-based outfit took that initiative to form a 48-member ad-hoc committee in April 2008.

In other news, Lokman Hossain Bhuiyan, member secretary of the ad-hoc committee and his wife and child were given a life threat by an unidentified caller yesterday afternoon.

"I was threatened with my life and asked not to go against Kutubuddin Ahmed and to appoint (Shafiqul Islam) Manik as a coach," said Lokman adding that he lodged a general diary to the Motijheel Police Station regarding this matter.

BFF resolves clubs' demands



SPORTS REPORTER

The professional football clubs demanding the deferment of the upcoming players transfer and a delay to the start of the season are likely to retreat from their stance as the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) promised to provide them more financial benefits than last season.

BFF president Kazi Salahuddin had a meeting with the club representatives yesterday to try to convince them and hope to roll out football on time in line with the schedule that they have declared last month.

"After hearing the problems, I have promised to provide them more financial support and I expect the season will get underway in line with the calendar that the federation has already declared," said Salahuddin.

The game's governing body last season disbursed about Tk 10 lakh to the participating 13 clubs, some Tk 3.5 lakh more than in the previous season.

Sheikh Russel president Nurul Alam Chowdhury, Brothers Union manager Amer

Khan and the Rahmatganj MFS general secretary met with the BFF president on behalf of the clubs, who had earlier placed a 12-point demand asking the game's governing body among other things to defer the players' transfers, start the league in December, dissolve the league committee, disburse advanced participation money, make playable grounds outside the capital.

"The BFF president was positive in the discussions and told us the federation is not against the clubs. I think we have come close to solving the statement between the federation and the clubs after the meeting," said Nurul Alam Chowdhury.

He said that they informed the president that the clubs would suffer financially due to the payment of the foreign players as well as continuing the camp if there is no football in November because of the national team's campaign in the Asian Games in China.

Amer Khan informed that the BFF president told them that the federation has to follow the guidelines provided by the Asian Football Confederation and are determined to start the season in October.

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NSC refutes weightlifters' allegation

SPORTS REPORTER

Commonwealth Games-bound weightlifters, who were thrown out of the National Sports Council conference room on Monday, were yesterday given a temporary place to practice at the NSC Gymnasium until their own venue adjacent to the Swimming Pool is fully prepared.

As many as 12 weightlifters (six of them men and six women) had been gearing up at the NSC conference room for the last 40 days for the upcoming Commonwealth Games, but their venue was vacated by the sports' regulatory body for arranging a meeting on national mourning day that forced the weightlifters to practice on the corridor.

"A part of the NSC gymnasium has been allocated for

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THIRD TEST AGAINST ENGLAND Pakistan or Punjab?



AFP, London

Pakistan could, for the first time in their history, field a side comprised solely of players from the one province when they play England in the third Test at The Oval here on Wednesday.

The Pakistan squad is dominated by players from the country's most populous province, Punjab (14 in all), and it's capital Lahore (which has eight representatives) in particular.

Batsman Yasir Hameed and seamer Umar Gul are both from the north-west frontier province, now known as Khyber-Pakhtunkwa.

But Gul is out with a hamstring injury and Hameed hasn't played in either of the two preceding Tests.

If Pakistan do not include Hameed or pace bowler Tanveer Ahmed, born in Kuwait but who now represents Karachi, Pakistan's other traditional major cricket centre along with Lahore, it will be an all Punjab XI that takes the field at The Oval.

None of this would matter much if Pakistan were winning, but they are 2-0 down in a four Test series after defeats by 354 runs in the series

opener at Trent Bridge and by nine wickets at Edgbaston and there have already been protests in Karachi against "Lahore bias".

Former captain and senior batsman Mohammad Yousuf is set to return. He was recalled ahead of the Edgbaston Test but was not selected after only arriving in England the day before the match.

Third in Pakistan's all-time list of Test run-scorers, Yousuf was initially omitted from the squad having been handed an indefinite ban by the Pakistan Cricket Board after captaining the side on their winless tour of Australia concluded earlier this year.

Pakistan badly need more runs after being bowled out for record low scores against England of 80 and 72 at Trent Bridge and Edgbaston respectively.

But they suffered a setback when wicketkeeper Zulqarnain Haider, who made 80 on debut at Edgbaston, was ruled out of both The Oval match and next week's fourth Test at Lord's with a fractured finger.

Zulqarnain's injury will lead to a recall for Kamran Akmal, dropped after bagging a pair at Trent Bridge and missing several chances.

Meanwhile Gul's place is likely to be taken

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THE SHAMED BUNCH (FROM L-R): Patrice Evra, Eric Abidal, Jeremy Toulalan, Franck Ribery and Nicolas Anelka.

PHOTO: INTERNET

Anelka banned for 18 matches



AFP, Paris

France international striker Nicolas Anelka's international career all but officially came to an end Tuesday as he received an 18-match ban for his foul-mouthed outburst at then coach Raymond Domenech at the World Cup, a French Football Federation disciplinary commission decided.

The commission also handed out a five-match ban to World Cup captain Patrice Evra, three matches to vice-captain Franck Ribery and one match to Lyon midfielder Jeremy Toulalan.

Eric Abidal, the fifth player called before the commission - Ribery was not present as his club Bayern Munich refused to release him and Anelka, as expected, did not show up - convinced the commission that he was an innocent party and was absolved.

The five players had been called to appear before the disciplinary commission over the strike that shamed the World Cup finals squad

as they went on strike in protest at the expulsion from the squad of Anelka over his outburst at then coach Raymond Domenech.

Evra and Ribery were summoned for not performing their duties properly as captain and vice-captain, Toulalan for being responsible for wording the statement which was humiliatingly read out by Domenech, Abidal for refusing to play in the final group match against South Africa.

Anelka, who is suing L'Equipe newspaper for defamation for misquoting what he said, had also been asked to turn up to explain his behaviour but the 31-year-old will more than likely not be too discomforted by the ban as he had already intimated that he would not play for France again.

The FFF had preferred not to summon all the squad members and had pinpointed the quintet as the players most responsible for the shambles which made France a laughing stock.

Former deputy managing director of the team Jean-Louis Valentin was one of those called to give evidence and the only one to speak publicly immediately after doing so.

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SPORTS POLL

TODAY'S QUESTION

Do you think English Premier League has lost its glory?

Visit the sports page of www.thedailystar.net to cast vote

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England v Pakistan Third Test, Day One Live from 4:00pm