

## Troy insures hair for \$1 million

Troy Polamalu, a defender with the Pittsburgh Steelers, has just had his distinctive 3ft-long curly mane insured for \$1 million by a shampoo firm. The insurance policy was taken out with Lloyds of London by Procter & Gamble for its Head & Shoulders range which Polamalu, 29, promotes. "They've created the first ever insurance policy to protect his iconic mane for the entire NFL season," Procter & Gamble said. Polamalu, who is Samoan by descent and says he has not cut his hair since 2000, is not the only NFL player to sport flowing locks. Neither Procter & Gamble nor Lloyds gave details of exactly what damage to Polamalu's hair would trigger a claim on the insurance policy - although it's safe to say a few split ends probably won't count.



Mahmudullah Riyad steers the ball towards point during a practice match at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

## Betting of a different kind

### Cricket

MOHAMMAD ISAM

From a distance, you could just spot a huddle, with probably cards in front of them or, for an easier presumption of the vagabond, they are snorting the wrong stuff. As you go closer, or vice versa, they would seem like the regular hangers-on around the cricket fields of Dhaka, those who make silly enough comments on the play to make you walk away.

But the ones present at this particular ground move together, sometimes in groups of twos and more, and it is wise to point out at this stage that they do not make those mad comments, or sit lazily. This is a different bunch; always having an eye on the scoreboard, frequenting the main scorers' hut as if they really cared about the outcome of this cricket match and screaming and laughing at certain times. You, as a newbie in the barren outfield of the Dhaka University cricket ground (just behind the swimming pool) start to wonder, who are these people?

They are the world's most isolated and rudimentary spread bettors.

Spread betting, for those still not in the know, is the reason why the bad guys do

spot-fixing. Confused?

Spread betting is, according to an Internet definition, "any of various types of betting on the outcome of an event, where the pay-off is based on the accuracy of the wager, rather than a simple 'win or lose' outcome". It is legal, until you manipulate the event (through bribes, mainly) and that manipulation is called spot-fixing. Both betting and spot-fixing are obviously illegal in this country.

These men, clad in white lungis mostly, do not necessarily do the fixing. They bet all day, without even knowing what sort or magnitude of a cricket match this is, whether first, second or third division matches. Even if the match is of no consequence to any of the teams, it is an amusing sight when one in that group would erupt in joy at the end of an over or at the end of the match. Sometimes they are happier than the winning team (that's because there are no win bonuses in Dhaka cricket, only a speech by a merry team official).

They just have a basic idea of cricket and bet on, for example, the outcome of each over or the number of runs the side batting first would score in the allotted overs, and eventually on the outcome of the match, when it becomes a proper bet. And they do it everyday, and without any

inclination to stick to a certain set of players or perhaps even judging which team is better. They put amounts from ten to a thousand takas on parts of an innings and the eventual outcome of the match.

Some of the adventurous ones would sneak behind an unsuspecting fielder and ask him to misfield or if they can locate a bowler, tell him to concede a certain number of runs in his next over. The fielders and bowlers are flummoxed by the request, thinking it is coming from the opposition camp.

Without a doubt, league matches have been fixed in Dhaka for a long time and it has normally been done with the blessing of the clubs involved, for crucial points to save a team from relegation or help a team win a championship.

Over the last week, the cricket world has been gripped by the Pakistani spot-fixing scandal, uncovered by the British tabloid newspaper News Of The World.

But at this wildly unexpected setting in the middle of Dhaka, these bettors make a spectacle of themselves.

Ever since proper cricket made its debut at the DU ground in 2006, these men from the neighbouring areas, mostly south of Dhaka Medical College, scale the walls to enter the ground and do their

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1

## ICC appoints Rabeed as media manager

SPORTS REPORTER

Rabeed Imam has been appointed as the ICC media manager for the Bangladesh part of the 2011 Cricket World Cup.

He will be in charge from October 1 to March 31. Rabeed was the media manager of the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB).

Bangladesh will host eight matches of the World Cup that will be co-hosted by India and Sri Lanka.

## Open Chess

SPORTS REPORTER

GM Niaz Murshed shared the lead in the Seventh IGB Dato Atherton Malaysia Open Chess Championship along with 20 players at the close of second round at CitiTel MidVally, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia yesterday.

Niaz beat his compatriot GM Ziaur Rahman to earn a maximum two points from as many matches. Zia and national junior champion Abdullah Al Saif have one point each.

A total of 133 players from 18 countries including 16 Grandmasters, three Women Grandmasters, 18 International Masters and 10 FIDE Masters have been taking part in the tournament.

## Trio pleads not guilty

### Cricket

AFP, Taunton

Three Pakistan cricketers accused of involvement in an illegal betting scam maintained their innocence Thursday after withdrawing from their team's scandal-tainted tour of England.

Test captain Salman Butt and bowlers Mohammad Aamer and Mohammad Asif vowed to clear their names in a meeting in London with Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Ijaz Butt and Wajid Shamsul Hasan, Pakistan's ambassador to Britain.

Speaking after meeting the players at his London office, Hasan said in a statement the players had insisted they were innocent of wrongdoing but were pulling out of the tour because of the "mental torture" of the scandal.

"The three players have said that they are extremely disturbed by what has happened in the past week, especially in regard of their alleged involvement in the crime," Hasan told reporters.

"They mentioned that they are entirely innocent in the whole episode and shall defend their innocence as such.

"They maintain that on account of the mental torture which has deeply affected them, they are not in the right frame of mind to play the remaining matches," Hasan said. "Therefore, they have requested that the Pakistan Cricket Board not consider them for the remaining matches."

Asked later if he believed the trio was innocent, Hasan replied: "Yes, I believe in their innocence."

He also denied suggestions the players were "running away" from the crisis by withdrawing from the tour.

"They are innocent. They are defending their innocence. They are not running away," he said. Butt, Aamer and Asif were all named in a News of the World report which alleged they were involved in a "spot-fixing" scam by bowling deliberate no-balls in last week's Test match with England in exchange for cash.

The revelations have shocked the cricket world and led to calls from figures within the game that the players involved should be banned for life.

Pakistan officials had earlier confirmed the trio would play no further part in the tour -- two upcoming Twenty20 games and five one-day internationals against England.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1



CAUSING CHAOS: Mohammad Aamer tries to squeeze past a swarm of photographers as he leaves the Pakistan High Commission in London yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

## The threesome released

### Cricket

AFP, Taunton

The three Pakistan cricketers at the centre of a betting scandal have been released from the squad for the remainder of the tour of England, team manager Yawar Saeed said Thursday.

Speaking to reporters ahead of Pakistan's one-day game against Somerset Saeed said Test captain Salman Butt and bowlers Mohammad Aamer and Mohammad Asif had been dropped from the two upcoming Twenty20 games.

Pakistan would also seek replacements for the five one-day limited overs games against England, Saeed added, denying the trio had been suspended.

"The T20 squad will remain what it is here this morning, ie 13 people," Saeed said. "When we play the one-day internationals we will be asking for replacements to make the squad up to 16."

"The (three) players have not been suspended."

Butt, Aamer and Asif were named in a report by Britain's News of the World tabloid, which alleged the players conspired to arrange for deliberate no-balls to be bowled at precise points in last week's Test match against England.

Saeed added he could not comment about the trio's state of mind, saying: "They are still here. I cannot answer anything on their behalf because investigations are being made by Scotland Yard and the ICC (International Cricket Council) and others."

"The game must go on, cricket will be played at its best."

England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) chairman Giles Clarke told reporters at the ground: "The England and Wales Cricket Board welcomes the announcement of the Pakistan Cricket Board's squad for the Natwest T20 and NatWest ODI series."

Presently, Pakistan are unable to play home matches after an armed attack on Sri Lanka's team bus in Lahore in March last year.

Clarke, chairman of the ICC's Pakistan task

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5

## Veena hands over proof to ICC

PTI, Lahore

Pakistan cricketer Mohammad Asif's ex-girlfriend, actress-model Veena Malik, has handed over "proof" of his alleged links with Indian bookies to an official of the ICC's Anti-Corruption Unit.

Hasan Raza, who is a top official of the ICC's Anti-Corruption Unit for South Asia, met Malik at her residence here last evening after she alleged that Asif was involved in match-fixing and she had "ample" proof of this.

"I handed over Asif's voice recordings with the bookie and some other related information to the ICC official," Malik told a TV news channel.

"From head to toe, Pakistani players and officials are involved in match-fixing. I had gone with Asif to Bangkok before Pakistan's tour of Australia. Asif told me he was offered 40,000 dollars by an Indian bookie to underperform in Australia but he demanded 200,000 dollars.

## MCC thrashes Dautia Bulbul

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Manikganj City Club defeated Dautia Bulbul Club 3-1 in the Hafizul Islam Khan Uttu Smriti First Division Football League at the Shaheed Miraz-Tapan Stadium yesterday.

Gafur scored two goals and Idris scored one for Manikganj City Club while Mainul scored for Dautia Bulbul Club.

Manikganj City Club have 13 points from five matches while Dautia Bulbul Club remained on 10 points from six outings.

Dragon Sporting Club will face Nabajagaran Sabgsad today.

## Sania crashes out of US Open

AFP, New York

India's Sania Mirza saw her US Open hopes come crashing down on Tuesday when she lost a second-round tie 6-2, 6-4 to Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova of Russia.

The 23-year-old from Hyderabad, who is battling back after dropping out of the world top 100 due to a serious wrist injury, had raised hopes with a fine run of four wins in a row in New York coming through the qualifiers and a first-round tie against Michelle Larcher de Brito of Portugal.

But in the 20th-seeded Pavlyuchenkova, who has two title wins this year and who

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5

## Rubcic new coach

### Football

SPORTS REPORTER

Robert Rubcic has been named as the new head coach of the national football team after the Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) yesterday confirmed the appointment of the Croatian.

Rubcic is set to arrive in the country within the next ten days to put pen to paper on a one-year deal worth nearly US\$50,000. Aside from his salary, the BFF will also be in charge of providing accommodation, transport, food and other facilities to the coach. The 46-year-old coach, who has been capped once by Croatia, will be Bangladesh's 14th foreign coach.

He follows in the footsteps of fellow Balkan, the Serbian Zoran Djordjevic who left in February in acrimonious circumstances after failing to agree a contract extension with the BFF, despite guiding Bangladesh to victory in the South Asian Games at home.

After the departure of Djordjevic, Saiful Bari Titu temporarily took charge of the national

side and guided them through the AFC Challenge Cup finals.

Following the bitter experience with Djordjevic, the game's governing body this time appointed a barrister to look into the clauses of the contract before signing the deal with the Croatian coach.

Rubcic's first assignment with the national squad is set to be the Asian Games in November. Besides, he is expected to lead the side in the Olympic pre-qualifiers, the AFC Challenge Cup and the FIFA World Cup pre-qualifiers.

The BFF stated that they also have plans to utilize his expertise in football development, by involving him with the football academy. Rubcic is contracted to work in line with all the BFF's assignments.

According to the contract, Rubcic will be paid three-months remuneration as a signing on fee when he signs the contract. The coach will also enjoy a one-month vacation during the period of the deal also includes a clause of compensation worth three months salary if he is fired before the end of the contract.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 8



ROBERT RUBCIC

## Murray marches on

AFP, New York



Britain's Andy Murray breezed into the second round of the US Open on Wednesday while ninth seed Andy Roddick and Wimbledon runner-up Tomas Berdych made early exits from the year's last Grand Slam event.

Fourth seed Murray fired

eight aces and 37 winners to overwhelm Slovakia's 71st-ranked Lukas Lacko 6-3, 6-2, 6-2, in one hour and 51 minutes in the afternoon heat to book a second-round matchup against Jamaican Dustin Brown.

"I feel like I'm playing well," Murray said. "But I need to try and keep that level up if I want to win the tournament."

Serbia's 44th-ranked Janko Tipsarevic reached the third

round of the US Open for the first time in seven tries, firing 66 winners in upsetting 2003 US Open champion Roddick 3-6, 7-5, 6-3, 7-6.

"He played very high risk and executed for four sets," Roddick said. "I kept telling myself, 'This has to have an expiration date on it.' I think I needed another set for that."

"I did what I could. He played well. He deserved to win. Too good."

Czech seventh seed Berdych, whose Wimbledon run and a French Open semifinal appearance had him among the favorites, went 0-for-3 in break points in being humbled by France's 35th-ranked Michael Llodra 7-6, 6-4, 6-4.

"I felt confident. I felt good," Berdych said. "I just didn't get a chance to play my tennis. I don't even know if I played well or not. I didn't even see what to do differently or better. There was no chance to get a rhythm."

Berdych's removal took out the highest-ranked obstacle to the semifinals for Murray, who reached his first Grand Slam final at the 2008 US Open, losing to Roger Federer after upsetting world number one Rafael Nadal in a semifinal.

The 23-year-old Scotsman won his first title of 2010 last month at Toronto, beating top-ranked Rafael Nadal in a semifinal and 16-time Grand Slam winner Federer in the final, showing he has the skill to win a Grand Slam title.

"Toronto was a big boost for me, to win against Roger and Rafa. I feel good," Murray said. "I need to keep that up. I

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1



American ninth seed Andy Roddick reacts after losing a point against Serbia's Janko Tipsarevic during his US Open second round match in Flushing Meadows on Wednesday. Roddick bowed out with a 3-6, 7-5, 6-3, 7-6 loss to Tipsarevic. PHOTO: AFP

**SPORTS POLL**  
Do you think Tamim Iqbal's behaviour was justified?  
No 69.3%  
Yes 30.7%  
TOTAL VOTES: 788  
**TODAY'S QUESTION**  
Is dropping Asif, Amir and Butt for the ODI series enough to punish them?  
Visit the sports page of www.thedailystar.net to cast vote  
Follow The Daily Star Sport on  
**twitter**  
www.twitter.com/dssport

**What to WATCH**  
**TEN Sports**  
US Open Tennis  
Men's 2nd & Women's 3rd Round  
Live from 9:00pm  
**ESPN**  
Sportscentre India  
Sports News  
Live at 8:30pm