

Ballack suffers knee fracture

Germany captain Michael Ballack will miss next month's Euro 2012 qualifiers against Turkey and Kazakhstan after a scan on Sunday revealed he has a left knee fracture. The 33-year-old limped out of Saturday's 2-2 draw with Hanover after just 30 minutes following a heavy tackle and underwent an MRI scan on Sunday morning which revealed the damage. It is the latest injury blow for Ballack, who returned to the club where he established his reputation after not having his contract renewed at English Premier League champions Chelsea at the end of last season.



Nafees in, Ashraful out

Mashrafe retained as captain



SPORTS REPORTER

Left-handed opener Shahriar Nafees has been recalled to the national side when the selectors announced a 14-member team for next month's five-match one-day series against New Zealand yesterday. The absence of injured southpaw opener Tamim Iqbal paved the way for the 24-year-old Nafees, who last played a one-day match against India in June 2008, to be included in the side.

"It's not possible to replace Tamim with any other batsman because he is a heavyweight performer at the moment. We will definitely miss the services of Tamim in the series. But Nafees was the best option for us as a specialist opener. He (Nafees) has been training hard and looked good and he has proven his ability in the past," said chief selector Rafiqul Alam while explaining the reason behind



SHAHRIAR NAFEEES

the inclusion of Nafees.

All-rounders Naeem Islam and Sohrawordi Shuvo have also been recalled as pacers Nazmul Hossain and Syed Rasel were dropped.

Mohammad Ashraful's career has been brought to another halt after he was omitted from the 14-member team because of his recent poor showing with the bat. Veteran middle-order batsman Faisal Hossain was also omitted from the team.

"We brought in a few changes in the squad considering the home conditions. We want to take full advantage of our conditions. We have been playing good cricket for the last one and a half year in our own conditions," said Rafiqul while defending the changes.

"Naeem and Shuvo have been brought into the squad not only because of their spin bowling but also their batting ability in the late order. We had a very poor performance in the middle order and lower order in the last few series and we believe we can overcome it this time," he added.

Rafiqul was confident that Ashraful would regain his place in the national side before next year's World Cup.

"Ashraful was struggling with his batting and that's why we dropped him. But we kept him in the reserve players' list because he should continue his training with the national team. Ashraful is a very important player for us. We hope he will get back his rhythm before the World Cup," said Rafiqul adding that Faisal Hossain failed to find a place because of team combinations.

The chief selector was quite optimistic about his team's chance in the five-match series.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1

SQUAD

Mashrafe Bin Mortaza (captain), Shakib Al Hasan (vice-captain), Shahriar Nafees, Imrul Kayes, Zunaed Siddiqui, Rokibul Hassan, Mushfiqur Rahim, Mahmudullah Riyad, Jahurul Islam, Naeem Islam, Abdur Razzak, Shafiqul Islam, Rubel Hossain and Sohrawordi Shuvo. **STAND BY:** Mohammad Ashraful, Nazimuddin, Nazmul Hossain, Dollar Mahmud and Shuvogoto Hom

ITINERARY

October 1: One-day tour match at BKSP
October 3: One-day tour match at BKSP.
October 5: 1st ODI at Mirpur
October 8: 2nd ODI at Mirpur
October 11: 3rd ODI at Mirpur
October 14: 4th ODI at Mirpur
October 17: 5th ODI at Mirpur.

Tour of Bangladesh Ryder replaces injured Styris

AFP, Wellington

New Zealand cricket bad boy Jesse Ryder, who is on a "last chance" warning about his off-field behaviour, was Sunday included in the Black Caps squad to tour Bangladesh next month.

The hard-hitting batsman returns after an extended injury break while veteran all-rounder Scott Styris has been ruled out of the tour because of injury.

The team includes one new cap, fast bowler Hamish Bennett, while batsman Martin Guptill has been dropped to the New Zealand A side which is to play a Zimbabwe selection.

Ryder makes his comeback after missing last month's tri-nations series with India and Sri Lanka because of an elbow injury.

But while he was supposedly sidelined it emerged he went on a trip with his indoor cricket team and was involved in a drunken incident which resulted in New Zealand Cricket (NZC) threatening to tear up his contract.

Ryder has a history of off-field incidents, mainly involving alcohol, and at the time of the latest trouble said that "luckily, they [NZC] have given me one last chance."

The New Zealand team heading to Bangladesh will play one warm-up game and then five one-day internationals.

Captain Daniel Vettori and Brendon McCullum, who missed the August tri-series for family reasons, are in the squad for Bangladesh which selector Mark Greatbatch said included some picks made with future tours in mind.

SQUAD

Daniel Vettori (captain), Hamish Bennett, Grant Elliott, Brendon McCullum, Nathan McCullum, Andy McKay, Kyle Mills, Jesse Ryder, Aaron Redmond, Tim Southee, Shanan Stewart, Ross Taylor, Daryl Tuffey, BJ Watling, Kane Williamson.

Shakib strikes 7 times



CRICINFO

Shakib Al Hasan took a career-best 7 for 32 to send woe-filled Middlesex spinning to a remarkable 111-run defeat at Lord's on Friday last and keep Worcestershire firmly in the County Championship Division Two promotion race.

Middlesex, set 178 to win when Worcestershire were bowled out after an hour's play on the final morning for 256 in their second innings, crumbled to 66 all out in 31.1 overs.

Shakib took three wickets in an over at one stage, and the turn he got from the wearing surface was just too much for the Middlesex batsmen. Only the first-innings centurion Owais Shah, with 25 in his final innings for the county, seemed to have any idea of how to flourish against Shakib's left-arm spin -- until, that is, he holed out to mid-on.

Gareth Berg was then caught at slip two balls later, pushing forward, and the last ball of

Shakib's sixth over saw Tim Murtagh slice a wildly optimistic drive to point. That burst left Middlesex reeling at 54 for 7, but they had already been in deep trouble. Alan Richardson, playing against the county he left at the end of last season, had struck twice with the new ball while Shakib had removed Dawid Malan just before lunch and Dan Housego just after the interval.

Richardson had John Simpson lbw for a first-ball duck during his opening over, before angling one across Scott Newman to have the left-hander caught low down at second slip by Daryl Mitchell in his fifth over. Malan, having scored the single which completed his 1,000 first-class runs for the season, fell for 2 when he moved across his crease and had his leg stump clipped as he missed an attempted flick off his pads.

Housego was lbw on the back foot as he tried to defend against Shakib, and Shah's rush of blood -- which produced a simple catch to Jack Shanry -- merely hastened the end as the Middlesex lower order surrendered with barely a whimper.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 6



SHAKIB AL HASAN



Bangladesh women's under-19 booters practise at the Sultana Kamal Women's Sports Complex in Dhanmondi yesterday. They will participate in the AFC U-19 Women's Championship qualifiers over September 20-24 at the Birshreshtha Mostafa Kamal Stadium. PHOTO: STAR

Indian teams hit form

AFP, Centurion



Indian Premier League teams flexed their muscles during the first weekend of the Champions League Twenty20 tournament in South Africa with Chennai Super Kings and Royal Challengers Bangalore recording emphatic wins.

Chennai defeated New Zealand's Central Stags by 57 runs in Durban Saturday while Bangalore crushed West Indian champions Guyana by nine wickets in Centurion Sunday.

The tournament features teams from six countries but after the first five matches it seemed the major challenges for the lucrative title would come from India, South Africa or Australia.

South Africa's Highveld Lions and Warriors recorded the first two wins but the Lions suffered a loss in their second match when they went down by 11 runs against South Australia

Redbacks in the first game of a SuperSport Park double-header Sunday.

A second Australian team, Victoria Bushrangers, are the only side not to have been in action. They open their campaign against the Warriors in Port Elizabeth Monday.

South African all-rounder Jacques Kallis was the star of Bangalore's comprehensive win. He took three for 16 and made an unbeaten 43 as Bangalore chased down a disappointing Guyana total of 103 all out.

Bangalore coach Ray Jennings said his team came into the tournament in confident mood on the back of six days of match practice against local players at Pretoria University.

"We had fantastic preparation," said Kallis, who benefited from a two-month break from cricket.

"It's nice to recharge the batteries and I'm looking forward to a nice long season, obviously an important season ending with the World Cup."

SEE PAGE 18 COL 8

Tamim out of NZ ODIs

SPORTS REPORTER

Tamim Iqbal will miss next month's home series against New Zealand after the opener underwent surgery on his left wrist in Australia yesterday.

According to hand and wrist specialist Dr. Greg Hoy, who performed the surgery, the procedure went very well and he was hopeful that Tamim should be fit to return to play again in six to eight weeks.

But that will come too late for Bangladesh who will play five one-day internationals against New Zealand between October 5 and 17.

"The recovery takes around two months in such cases. However, we will have a clearer idea once we get a detailed update from Dr. Hoy. Tamim is definitely out of the ODI series against New Zealand next month as he will be going through a rehabilitation program," said national team physio Michael Henry.

The dashing opener underwent surgery to remove bone fragments from the base of his third metacarpal on his left hand at the Glenferrie Private Hospital in Melbourne, Australia. The operation took around an hour and a half to complete.

It was learnt that the stitches will be removed on Thursday and after that Tamim will have his first physiotherapy session.

He will be released from the hospital today.

Tamim traveled to Australia in the beginning of the month for a specialist medical review of his injury. He consulted Dr. Douglas Whelan in Sydney on September 7 and Dr. Hoy in Melbourne on September 9 before opting for the surgery. The decision was taken following consultation between the player, BCB sports physician Dr. Debashish Chowdhury, the national team physio and Dr. Hoy.

Tamim injured his hand during an ODI in Chittagong against India on November 5 last year.

The board took the decision to send him Down Under as the dashing left-hander had been experiencing lingering pain on the injury.

Abahani reach Bordoloi final

SPORTS REPORTER

Abahani reached the final of the 58th Bordoloi Trophy beating Shilong Lajong FC 1-0 in the semifinal at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in Guwahati, Assam yesterday. Veteran striker Alfaz Ahmed, who moved from Arambagh this year, scored the all important goal in the 7th minute of 2nd half of extra time to take the sky blues to the final.

Abahani will take on Nepal Three Star Club in the final on Wednesday.

Earlier, Abahani drew 0-0 with Assam Regimental Centre in their first match and beat State Electric Sports 2-1 in their second match in the group phase. Pranotosh Roy scored one while Ghanaian recruit Thuam Frank scored the other for the sky blues outfit in that win.



TEN Sports
UEFA Champions League
Barcelona v Panathinaikos
Live from 12:00am (Wednesday)
FC Twente v Inter Milan
Delayed from 2:45am (Wednesday)

ZEE Sports
UEFA Champions League
Man United v Rangers
Live from 12:00am (Wednesday)

STAR Cricket
Champions League T20
Mumbai Indians v South Australian Redbacks
Live from 9:20pm



Reigning champion Kim Clijsters of Belgium holds the US Open trophy with one hand while her daughter Jada with the other during the presentation ceremony at Flushing Meadows in New York on Saturday. PHOTO: AFP

Queen Kim keeps crown

AFP, New York



Kim Clijsters defended her US Open title on Saturday by crushing the challenge of a shell-shocked Vera Zvonareva 6-2, 6-1 in just 59 minutes, the fastest final since timing records were first kept.

It was a blowout of a championship match with Clijsters clamping a stranglehold on the game from the first exchanges and never allowing the less-experienced Russian a chance to claw her way back into it.

The popular Belgian second seed clinched her third Grand Slam title in style when she whacked another forehand winner past a bewildered Zvonareva.

It was the 15th straight-set US Open women's singles final in a row dating back to Steffi Graf's three-set win over Monica Seles in 1995 and at 59 minutes the quickest since timings were first kept in 1980.

There has not been a more lop-sided US Open final since Maria Bueno of Brazil defeated Carole Caldwell Graebner of the United States 6-1, 6-0 in 1964.

"A little bit of experience definitely helps," she said. "It's tough [for Zvonareva], but it took me six or seven finals until I finally got one."

A distraught-looking Zvonareva said simply:

"Kim just played tremendously well and she deserved to win."

In a repeat showing of last year, Clijsters was joined on the Arthur Ashe Stadium court after the prize-award ceremony by two-and-a-half year-old daughter Jada and basketball-playing husband Brian Lynch.

The 27-year-old Clijsters was playing in her third US Open final, having won the title in 2005 and last year when she stepped out of a two-year retirement, during which she gave birth to Jada, to become the first wildcard to win a Grand Slam title.

Her tough three-sets win over Venus Williams in the second of Friday's semifinals was her 20th straight win at Flushing Meadows spread over five years.

Zvonareva, a year younger at 26, reached her first Grand Slam final at Wimbledon in July, losing in straight sets to Serena Williams, after proving that she could control her volatile temperament over the course of a Grand Slam tournament fortnight.

She reached Saturday's final without losing a set and with a huge straight-set win over top seed and last year's runner-up Caroline Wozniacki of Denmark in the semifinals.

The two finalists had played each other seven times, with Clijsters leading the series 5-2, but it

SEE PAGE 18 COL 10

Strauss seals Eng win



AFP, Leeds

England almost failed to make the most of captain Andrew Strauss's hundred before sealing a four-wicket win over Pakistan in the second one-day international at Headingley on Sunday.

England, chasing 295 for victory, were cruising at 220 for two but slumped to 260 for five with Strauss out for 126 -- his fifth century in 110 matches at this level and second hundred in three.

They eventually got home with three balls to spare to go 2-0 up in the five-match series after a 24-run win at The Riverside on Friday.

Man-of-the-match Strauss, who put on 146 with Jonathan Trott, said: "When you're chasing 290-odd you need one guy to bat the majority of the innings."

"The partnership with Trott set it up pretty well, and thankfully we got over the line. We're used to winning and we need to continue to do that."

But the result might have been different had not Strauss been dropped on 23 and reprieved on 38 when Pakistan were convinced he'd been caught behind.

However, the umpire review system, now in use in Test cricket, doesn't apply in one-dayers.

Afridi, asked if he wanted to see the system brought into 50-over international cricket, replied: "It will be good in matches like this and big series like this."

Nevertheless Afridi was heartened by Pakistan's display, saying: "I'm quite happy with the performance and with the way the bowlers are coming back."

"Maybe in the next few games we can play some good

cricket." Ravi Bopara and Michael Yardy got England's target down to 13 off 12 balls before Bopara lofted off-spinner Saeed Ajamal to Mohammad Hafeez at long-off.

However, new batsman Tim Bresnan cut Ajamal first ball for four and England needed six off the last over, from seamer Umar Gul.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 2



England captain Andrew Strauss sweeps one fine on way to hammering a match-winning 126 in the second one-day international against Pakistan at Headingley in Leeds on Sunday. PHOTO: AFP

SPORTS POLL

TODAY'S QUESTION

Do you think the Tigers can win matches in the 5 ODIs against New Zealand?

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