

Ben Arfa suffers broken leg

Newcastle United's French forward Hatem Ben Arfa suffered a broken leg after a challenge from Manchester City midfielder Nigel de Jong four minutes into their Premier League match on Sunday. After receiving oxygen on the pitch Ben Arfa was carried off on a stretcher and X-rays confirmed a broken tibia and fibula in his left leg, Newcastle said in a statement on their website (www.nufc.co.uk). The 23-year-old will undergo surgery on Monday and his return date is not yet known. The France international is on a season-long loan at Newcastle from French champions Olympique Marseille.



FIRST ONE-DAYER TODAY

Tigers seek to right wrongs

BISHWAJIT ROY

Bangladesh will have one eye on World Cup preparation while the other will be firmly fixed on erasing the nightmarish experiences of recent losses when they take on New Zealand in the first one-day of the five-match series at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur today. The Tigers will be looking to avenge shock defeats to Ireland and Netherlands in recent months but it will not be an easy task for Mashrafe Bin Mortaza's men, as they will be missing the services of explosive opener Tamim Iqbal. Added to the fact that their middle-order has been struggling for form in the last couple of series, and the Tigers find themselves up

against it at home against the Kiwis. Shahriar Nafees will be tasked with the unenviable job of replacing Tamim. And the left-hander who returns to one-day cricket after a two and half year hiatus is under no illusions as to the job at hand. "It's very difficult to replace Tamim right at the moment in the team and what I will try to do is play my natural game. My main target is to establish my place in the team," said Nafees. Bangladesh coach Jamie Siddons echoed Nafees' sentiment as the Tigers are now faced with the question of who will give them a flying start in the absence of injury victim Tamim. "We will miss Tamim and it's a big blow. Ash (Mohammad Ashraf) is also out of form. I would have ideally liked to have both of them inform," he said.

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Bangladesh captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza (R) and his deputy Shakib Al Hasan will have to play the pivotal roles if they are to upset the Kiwis in the five-match one-day series. Here the two Tigers flex their muscles yesterday ahead of today's first one-day international at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

PHOTO: ANISUR RAHMAN



Inspirational New Zealand captain Daniel Vettori (L) does some stretching during a practice session at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Vettori upbeat

SPORTS REPORTER



The scorching heat, the lack of match practice and even the advantage of the home side's spin bowlers could not deter the spirit of New Zealand skipper Daniel Vettori as he was confident of winning the five-match one-day series against the Tigers which will start today at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

"It (the heat) is not a problem. I think the guys are used to the sub continent weather," responded Vettori when asked about the present heat wave the country has been experiencing for the last few days. "Obviously we have come here to win the series. It's a really important series for us with the World Cup in mind. Teams need to find out who their best players are for the World Cup, so we will concentrate on every game," he said explaining their target in the series. Like in their previous trip in 2008, the New Zealanders failed to play any practice game before the start of the series as rain ruined the scheduled two warm-up matches at BKSP. And last time they had to start the series with a defeat which was the first-ever and so far only victory for the Tigers against the Kiwis.

"We could not play practice games last time as well. The conditions were not good enough and the outfield was not conducive. It's really disappointing if it happens in two tours in a row. It's not ideal but it is what it is and we are set to get on with it," said the all-rounder, who is a key player in the team.

Bangladesh will definitely be pinning all their hopes on their spinners to repeat their success in New Zealand's last trip but Vettori, whose side got a chance to practice in the central wicket, believes that the pacers will also get help from the surface.

"We played early in the morning the last time we came here and the conditions helped the seamers. I think it will swing around and I think all the bowlers will have their chances in this condition. It's not normally a high scoring ground. So it's going to be difficult for everyone," Vettori observed.

New Zealand will miss the service of players like Jacob Oram, who played a pivotal role last time in his team success but the Kiwi skipper was quite optimistic with the new faces who have come into the team ahead of the World Cup.

"Of course, he (Oram) is very good player. So it's tough without him. I think we have some very good players who can step up into

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DELHI DIARY

SPORTS REPORTER from New Delhi

MOLLAH FINISHES LOW

Bangladesh weightlifter Mollah Sabira Sultana finished second from bottom in the 48kg category in the Commonwealth Games after Australia's Erika Yamasaki, bronze medalist in the Melbourne Commonwealth Games, crashed out after failing three times in the attempt of 88kg in the clean and jerk at the Jawaharlal Nehru Complex yesterday.

Nigerian Augustina Nkem Nwaokolo set up a record to win the gold medal, lifting 175kg while Indian weightlifter Soniya Chanu Ngangbam, who was a pre-game favourite, finished second lifting 175kg and her compatriot Sandhya Rani Devi finished third lifting 165kg.

Sabira, however, improved her performance lifting 141kg -- 66kg snatch and 75kg jerk as her teammate Fahima Akter and Firoza Khatun kept on encouraging her loudly from the gallery, which was almost vacant except for the team officials and media personnel. After the competition, Sabira said that she had tried her best but the others competitors had improved far too much.

STRIKING GOLD

The first gold medal of the XIX Commonwealth Games went to Nigerian weightlifter Augustina Nkem Nwaokolo yesterday.

The gold of the weightlifting was officially declared the first although Australian swimmer Kylie Palmer came close as she won the first Commonwealth Games swimming gold at the SPM Swimming Complex.

The 17-year old school-going weightlifter marked her gold medal celebration with a

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Tickets for first ODI all sold out

SPORTS REPORTER

The tickets for today's first one-day match between Bangladesh and New Zealand have all been sold out.

Hence tickets will not be available at the booths of the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur.

The official capacity of the stadium - which will host six World Cup matches including two quarterfinals - is 26,000-plus but the BCB have issued only 14,000 tickets for each match as the capacity has been slashed due to ongoing renovation work for the World Cup.

Grameenphone is selling the tickets of the five-match series from their different outlets and fans can now buy ticket through their mobile.

The second, third, fourth and fifth matches are scheduled for October 8, October 11, October 14 and October 17.

The price is fixed for gallery at Tk 25 while the price for VIP is Tk 1000, International Gallery Tk 200 and Club House (North and South) Tk 100.

Archers' good start

Shooters begin campaign today

ANISUR RAHMAN from New Delhi



Bangladeshi shooters take to the shooting range today after the archers made a good start on the first day of the XIX Commonwealth Games in New Delhi yesterday. Bangladesh's gold hope archer Emdadul Haque Milon finished 10th out of 38 participants in the standings of the individual recurve bow. The promising archer scored 651 out of 720 points to move into the head-to-head elimination round. But he could not even perform up to his practice standard where he recorded an average scores 660.

Milon will take on his elder brother Ziaul Haque Zia in today's elimination round.

In the two-phase qualifications, Milon first scored 325 out of 360 and then improved one point in the second half that helped him to finish among the top 10 archers.

Sajib Sheikh with 641 points and Zia with 627 stood behind Milon and finished 16th and 23rd respectively to follow their compatriot.

Indian archers Rahul Banerjee and Jayanta Talukdar topped the qualification round with scores of 679 and 676 respectively.

In the qualifying standings of individual compound event, Bangladesh's Abul

Kashem finished 27th in a field of 48 competitors with a score of 681 while Sajjad Hossain, who shifted to the compound event from recurve bow, scored 653 to finish 40th and Shamsuddin finished last making 504 out of 720. All archers resume their elimination campaign today.

Bangladesh's other gold hope is shooting and the 2002 gold medalist Asif Hossain Khan pairing with Abdullah Hel Baki will compete in the 10m air rifle pair event where India, Australia, England, Singapore and Malaysia are the opponents.

Nevertheless Indian pair Abhinav Bindra and Gagan Narayan will be the main contender in the event and

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Women's nat'l cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Rajshahi and Khulna kept their winning streak on as they won comfortably against their respective rivals Barisal and Dhaka in the Women's National Cricket League at the Sylhet Divisional Stadium yesterday.

Rajshahi posted a ten-wicket victory over Barisal, courtesy of an all-round performance from Lota Mandal. Lota took four wickets for 10 runs as Barisal were skittled out for 39 in 19.2 overs. None in the innings managed a double digit score for the southern divisional team. Later Lota remained unbeaten on 17 to guide her side to a 10-wicket victory.

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Advantage Australia

Cricket

AFP, Mohali

Fast bowler Ben Hilfenhaus grabbed three key wickets in the final session to boost Australia's hopes of winning the opening Test against India on Monday.

India, needing 216 to win in their second innings, were wobbling at 55 for 4 at stumps on the penultimate day, with Hilfenhaus finishing with 3-22 off seven sharp overs. With middle-order batsman Venkatsai Laxman suffering from a stiff back, India's hopes largely depended on Sachin Tendulkar who was unbeaten with 10. Nightwatchman Zaheer Khan was batting on five.

Opener Gautam Gambhir was unlucky to be given out leg-before in Hilfenhaus's opening over as TV replays suggested he had inside-edged the delivery on to his pads. Rahul Dravid (13) was caught behind off

paceman Doug Bollinger, while Virender Sehwag (17) and Suresh Raina (0) fell to short rising deliveries from Hilfenhaus.

Sehwag was caught by Michael Hussey at gully, while Raina was caught by Marcus North in the slips.

Indian paceman Ishant Sharma earlier grabbed three big wickets in two sensational overs as Australia were bowled out for 192 in their second innings.

He removed Shane Watson (56), skipper Ricky Ponting (four) and Michael Clarke (four) in the opening two overs of his second spell in the morning.

There was no hint of a collapse when Australia reached 87 without loss following an attractive half-century from Watson, but Sharma jolted the tourists with three wickets for just eight runs.

Spinners Harbhajan Singh (2-40) and Pragyan Ojha (2-59) kept pressure on the middle order on a wearing track, before left-arm

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Australia fast bowler Ben Hilfenhaus exults after taking the wicket of India opener Virender Sehwag in their second innings of the first Test in Mohali yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

SPORTS POLL
TODAY'S QUESTION
 What do you think is Bangladesh's advantage against New Zealand?
 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
BTV
 Bangladesh v New Zealand
 First ODI
 Live from 9:00am
NEO Cricket
 India v Australia
 First Test, Day 5
 Live from 10:00am