

SPORT

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Ganguly wows Salt Lake with his feet

If you saw Sourav Ganguly walking out onto the pitch of the Salt Lake Stadium, you would be forgiven for thinking he had turned up at the wrong ground in Kolkata. But he did in fact play his first professional football match on Friday for Mohammedan Sporting Club against East Bengal in the Mohammedan Sporting Platinum Jubilee Cup. According to the Telegraph, the crowd was expectedly overjoyed when Ganguly nearly scored with a side volley from just outside the penalty area. Ganguly lasted 60 minutes before being substituted in his side's 0-1 loss, proving he's got the fitness levels. Ganguly has never received so much praise for not scoring.

-CRICINFO



Sunny Dhaka

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Underrated all-rounder Elias Sunny played possibly the innings of his life to lift Dhaka as the National Cricket League one-day champions yesterday. Dhaka's hopes were nearly gone but Sunny's effort ensured the three-wicket win against Barisal at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur that happened to be Dhaka's second limited-overs glory in the

competition.

The left-hander carved three consecutive boundaries -- through the covers, taking the aerial route twice and blitzing one along the carpet -- off left-arm spinner Monir Hossain in the 48th over as Dhaka reached 222-7 in reply to Barisal's competitive score of 221.

"I realised that if I play straight and keep it safe, we can get closer to the target," said Sunny, who was adjudged man-of-the-final for his unbeaten 79-ball 87.

"We wanted to take the game to the last over at least and make something out of that but it ended earlier. I have never really played in a team that won a trophy of this stature so it is a great feeling," he added.

Predominantly a left-arm spinner, Sunny played some spectacular shots on both sides of the wicket that took the game out of Barisal's grasp. He opened his array with a square-cut and then drove and swept the ball heartily as he hit nine boundaries in all. His two pulled sixes off Monir in the 42nd over, the start of the batting Powerplay, were decisive as the required run-rate plummeted down rapidly after that. Dhaka peeled off their



Elias Sunny (L) sweeps one of two consecutive sixes in his match-winning unbeaten 87 against Barisal in the National Cricket League final at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium yesterday. The triumphant Dhaka team (below) pose with the trophy.

PHOTOS: ANISUR RAHMAN



ROLL OF HONOUR		BEST PERFORMERS	
Season	Team	Player of the tournament (before final): Mohammad Ashraful (319 runs at 79.75)	
2010-11	Dhaka	Best batsman: Fazole Rabbi (393 runs at 65.50)	
2009-10	Not held	Best bowler: Kamrul Islam (19 wickets at 22.55)	
2008-09	Barisal	Best fielder: Asif Ahmed (7 catches, 1 run out)	
2007-08	Rajshahi	Best wicketkeeper: Anamul Haque (9 catches, 2 stumpings)	
2006-07	Dhaka		
2005-06	Rajshahi		
2004-05	Rajshahi		
2003-04	Chittagong		
2002-03	Khulna		
2001-02	Sylhet		
2000-01	Biman		

last 57 runs from the 5-over restriction.

Sunny found good support from Mahmudullah Riyad, who played the supporting role when it was supposed to be the other way around as the former dominated their crucial 97-run sixth wicket stand after Dhaka slipped to 79 for five in the 24th over.

Openers Anamul Haque and Rony Talukder started well to reach 28 in the eighth over. Once Rony fell to Monir,

Anamul and Shamsur followed shortly, the latter unluckily run out through Mohammad Ashraful's straight drive that hit the bowler's hand by chance.

A few overs later, Ashraful sliced a square-drive towards point where Ariful Haque took a brilliant diving catch to end a stuttering innings.

Riyad though played the true anchor, scoring 53 off 80 balls without any fours or sixes, and playing second fiddle to

Sunny's chanceless knock.

Barisal, for their part, were the team of the tournament despite finishing second best. The defending champions fielded well but had no answer to the Sunny-Riyad stand. "One partnership cost us the trophy but I'm proud of my team. They played the best cricket and it is well reflected in the number of individual honours our boys won today [Sunday]," said skipper Shahrir Nafees.

Even though Barisal fielded and bowled manfully, they had an ordinary time with the bat. Their innings only sprang to life through Arif's 19-ball 35 that had four boundaries and a straight-drive six off paceman Shahadat Hossain, who otherwise had a fine day with the ball in hand. He took four for 39 from nine overs as Barisal made 221 for 9 from 50 overs.

Asif Ahmed and Shahin Hossain

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Bangladesh women's cricket team players celebrate the fall of a Hong Kong wicket during their Asian Games Group B match at the Guanggong International Cricket Stadium in Guangzhou yesterday.

PHOTO: COURTESY

No Zim series matches in Ctg?

SPORTS REPORTER

All five matches of the Tigers' series against Zimbabwe next month could be staged at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium.

The possibility of this is minimal but the issue has come up due to the lack of preparedness of the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chittagong.

The venue that will host two matches of the 2011 World Cup could well be avoided for the Zimbabwe matches, as the deadline for handing over the ground to the International Cricket Council is pending.

The Zimbabweans will play five one-day matches here after arriving on November 27.

The first match of the series will take place on December 1 and the final game will be held on December 12.

Cricket the only cheer

SPORTS REPORTER



Tayef Quader's impressive run in men's 8-ball pool singles of the 16th Asian Games ended when the 21-year old went down 7-1 to Kuo Po Cheng of Chinese Taipei in the quarterfinals in Guangzhou yesterday.

However, there was good news from the cricket field for Bangladesh where the women's team made a winning start with a comprehensive 10-wicket victory against Hong Kong at Guanggong International Cricket Stadium while there was mixed results from the chessboard in the third and fourth round matches.

Performances from the shooting range did not get any better as both men and women's teams failed miserably in 10m

air pistol events after their teammates' failure in the 10m air rifle events the previous day.

Meanwhile Tayef, who moved into the 8-ball pool quarterfinals beating Almutairi Khaled of Kuwait 7-6 in a keenly contested encounter earlier in the day, failed to keep the momentum and was eliminated from the race.

The women cricketers made light work of their Hong Kong counterparts. The Bangladeshi girls skittled their opponents for a meager 25 in 17.1 overs. There was seven run outs in the Hong Kong innings with KK Gill (11) managing the only double-digit score.

Chameli Khatun grabbed two wickets conceding four runs while Tithi Sarker took one for four.

Bangladesh wasted only 22 balls in overhauling the scanty target. The two openers Rumana Ahmed (1) and Farzana

Pinkie (17) remained unbeaten to give Bangladesh a reason to smile.

Sharmin Akter Liza was the highlight in the individual events of chess where all four players won their respective fourth round games.

Liza defeated Adhikari Asmita of Nepal and Boshra Alshaiby of Jordan in third and fourth round games while her teammate Sharmin Sultana Shirin beat Geldyve Mekhri of Turkmenistan in the fourth round after losing her third round game to Tuvshing Tugs Batche of Mongolia.

However, the men were not as bright as their female compatriots as GM Niaz Murshed and FM Minhazuddin Ahmed lost their third round games before returning to winning ways defeating Ahmed Abdul Sattar of Iraq and Lee Kiyul of Korea respectively in the fourth round.

In shooting, Armin Asha and Farhana

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Bhaji isn't out yet

Cricket

AFP, Hyderabad

Indian off-spinner Harbhajan Singh frustrated New Zealand with the bat once again, smashing 85 runs off 82 balls on the third day of the second Test on Sunday.

The feisty tailender hammered five sixes and seven fours to add 69 runs for the unfinished last wicket with Shanthakumar Sreesanth (14 not out), taking India to 436-9 at the close at the Rajiv Gandhi Stadium.

Harbhajan's onslaught followed his maiden Test century that helped India salvage a draw in the opener against the Kiwis in Ahmedabad.

New Zealand bowlers, led by Daniel Vettori (4-123), had reduced India to 367-9 but Harbhajan's defiant knock ensured India finished the day with a handy 86-run lead.

Harbhajan cut, pulled and drove with belligerence to enthrall a 30,000-strong weekend crowd. His efforts helped

India pile up 113 runs in the final session despite losing four wickets.

"It was a fantastic innings by Harbhajan," said India's Rahul Dravid. "He played an attacking knock which has put us slightly ahead in the game."

"Vettori bowled very well, especially in the morning. But he was tired towards the end and Harbhajan dominated him with two sixes in a row."

"We will look to score as much runs as possible tomorrow (Monday) as it is still a good wicket to bat on."

The Kiwis, who scored a first-innings 350, had started strongly after tea, removing the dangerous Venkatsai Laxman (75) and captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni in successive overs.

Laxman was caught plumb in front of the wicket as he tried to whip paceman Chris Martin (1-87) off his pads and Dhoni (14) offered a tame catch at short cover off Vettori.

The wristy right-hander hit 11 boundaries in his 160-ball knock and shared 75 runs for the fourth wicket with Dravid (45).

Paceman Tim Southee (3-95) trapped Dravid leg before wicket to bring his patient 202-minute innings to an end. Dravid faced 144 balls, four of which were dispatched to the fence.

Laxman, playing the first Test at his home ground in a 14-year career, capped his second successive half-century of the series with a flicked four to the fine-leg boundary off Southee.

He also added 52 runs for the fifth wicket with Suresh Raina, who was caught by Martin Guptill off Vettori.

"It was disappointing to lose it all in the last hour after doing so well throughout the day," said New Zealand batsman Ross Taylor. "It was difficult to stop Harbhajan."

"None of our plans worked against him and he hit us all over the park."

The tourists claimed the prized wicket of Sachin Tendulkar early into the first session when Vettori lured him into playing an ambitious shot on the on-side.

Tendulkar, who was eyeing his 50th Test ton, failed to connect with the ball properly and edged to Taylor who leapt into the air to take a fine one-handed catch at first slip.

The third and the final Test will be played in Nagpur from Nov 20-24.

SCORES IN BRIEF

NEW ZEALAND: First innings 350 (McIntosh 102, Guptill 85, Ryder 70; Zaheer 4-69, Harbhajan 4-76)

INDIA: First innings 436 for 9 (Sehwag 96, Gambhir 54, Dravid 45, Tendulkar 13, Laxman 74, Raina 20, Dhoni 14, Harbhajan 85 not out; Southee 3-95, Vettori 4-123)

Formula One Vettel youngest world champ

INTERNET

Sebastian Vettel became the youngest ever Formula One world champion after winning the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix at Yas Marina from pole position.

Sebastian Vettel needed to win the race and hope that Fernando Alonso finished fifth or lower, or failing that finish second with Alonso outside the top eight and Red Bull team-mate Mark Webber no higher than fifth.

Ferrari's Alonso pitted after only 16 laps of the 55, mirroring

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ICC Cricket World Cup History

As it was the inaugural edition and international limited overs cricket was just beginning, a lot of records were set in this 1975 World Cup.

England opener John Jameson faced the first ball in World Cup history, bowled by India's medium-pacer Madan Lal.

The score in the first match, 334 by England was the highest international score, and also the highest in England at the time.

Jameson's opening partner Dennis Amiss struck the first hundred in the tournament's history, scoring 137 not out against India in the opening match.

India recorded the first-ever 10-wicket victory in the World Cup when they handed East Africa a thrashing at Leeds.

Glen Turner of New Zealand was the highest run-scorer of the World Cup, piling on 333 runs in four matches, 171 of them coming in one innings against East Africa. He scored another hundred against India.

Australian swing bowler Gary Gilmour's 6 for 14 against

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Siddikur's brilliant rebound

SPORTS REPORTER

Siddikur Rahman bounced back from a disastrous third round to move to joint 21st position in the fourth round yesterday in the Barclays Open at the Sentosa Course in Singapore yesterday.

Siddik had bogeyed twice in the last 4 holes of 2nd round and played 5 over par in the 3rd round to drop to 64th positions and barely made the cut. But yesterday he scored 7 birdies in 11 holes before the

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India's Harbhajan Singh blasts a six over long-off during the third day of the second Test at the Rajiv Gandhi International Cricket Stadium in Hyderabad yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

What to Watch

TEN Sports

Asian Games Day Three
Live from 8:00am
Sri Lanka v West Indies
First Test, Day One
Live from 10:30am

NEO Cricket

India v New Zealand
Second Test, Day 4
Live from 10:00am

TEN Cricket

Pakistan v South Africa
First Test, Day 4
Live from 12:00pm