

Muamba to carry Olympic torch

Bolton Wanderers player Fabrice Muamba, who almost died after suffering cardiac arrest in an FA Cup tie this year, will carry the Olympic torch on Saturday, organisers said. Muamba, who moved to the London borough of Waltham Forest from the Democratic Republic of Congo when he was 11, will carry the flame as the torch relay reaches the capital's suburbs. "As an ex-Waltham Forest schoolboy Fabrice Muamba has strong ties with the borough and has seen the area transform in the run up to the Olympic Games," said Chris Robbins, the leader of Waltham Forest council.



Olympic Torch Bearers John Amaechi (L) and Nadia Comaneci, the only gymnast to score a perfect 10 in an Olympic event, pose for pictures on the viewing platform of the North Greenwich Arena in South London yesterday. The Flame began a week-long Tour of London which will culminate in the Games' opening ceremony.

PHOTO: AFP

Sonali Bank keep losing

SPORTS REPORTER

Sonali Bank's losing streak in the Green Delta Premier Division Hockey League was extended when they lost 3-2 against Ajax SC match at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday.

The bankers, who had started the league brilliantly chalking up five wins in a row, have seen since their season unravel as they have now lost four matches on the trot. The rot, allegedly caused by an internal feud, saw them lose against joint leaders Mohammadian, Abahani and Usha before this latest loss against Ajax.

Yesterday's match was a hard-fought encounter and it was Sonali Bank who took the lead in the 13th minute, thanks to a penalty corner converted by Rana Jubayer.

Ajax drew level three minutes later as Pakistani recruit Hasan Aktar Rasul converted a penalty corner. But the bankers regained the lead two minutes before the break, courtesy of another penalty corner, this time turned in by Mohammad Rubel.

SEE PAGE 17 COL 4

KFC WOMEN'S FOOTBALL
Police beat Manikganj

Police beat Manikganj

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Police earned a 2-0 victory over Manikganj in the last match of the Kamalapur venue of the KFC Women's National Football Super League yesterday. Sharmin Akter scored the opening goal on the 21st minute in the match played at the Birsreshtha Shahid Mostafa Kamal Stadium as Police went for the breather with a slender lead. Ruma made it 2-0 twelve minutes into the second half to ensure all three points for Police.

Narsingdi have already emerged winners of this venue winning all four of their matches and made it to the eight-team final stage.

Torch on Tour of London

AFP, London

Olympics legend Nadia Comaneci carried the 2012 torch on the roof of the North Greenwich Arena as the flame began a seven-day Tour of London that will culminate at the Games opening ceremony.

The perfect 10-scoring Romanian gymnast, who won five gold medals over the 1976 and 1980 Olympics, passed the flame on to British ex-NBA basketball star John Amaechi atop the former Millennium Dome, which will host the artistic and trampoline gymnastics as well as the basketball finals.

The Games organisers hope that with the flame now in the British capital, attention will turn towards the sport and the final countdown to the Olympics -- and away from the security and transport fears that dogged the last week.

The flame spent the night safe in the Tower of London, where the British sovereign's ceremonial jewels are kept, following a dramatic arrival in the city a week ahead of the opening ceremony on July 27.

It was flown in on a Royal Navy helicopter and lowered to the ground by a

marine commando carrying it in a Davy lamp attached to his waist.

The final seven days in London are the last legs of an 8,000-mile (12,800-kilometre) journey around Britain that has taken the flame within an hour's travel time of 95 percent of the British population, taking in famous sports venues, historic sites and places of outstanding natural beauty.

Its 36-mile (58-kilometre) tour Saturday around east London, taking in five of the six Olympic host boroughs, started at the Royal Observatory, Greenwich, the location that set the world's prime meridian.

Natasha Sinha, 15, started the relay at 7:20am, or 0620 Greenwich Mean Time.

Robin Knox-Johnson, the first person to sail solo non-stop around the world, took the torch on a lap of the Cutty Sark, the tea clipper ship which has undergone a £50 million (64 million euro) renovation following a fire in 2007.

Comaneci, who at the Montreal 1976 Games became the first gymnast at the Olympics to get a perfect score of 10, then took the flame at the North Greenwich Arena.

"I'm very happy and honoured to be part of the torch relay," the 50-year-old

told BBC television on top of the 20,000-seater indoor arena.

"Everybody's very excited, just six days to the opening ceremony."

"This is an historic place and the Olympics came here three times and that's unique too."

Thousands of spectators were in the streets to witness the relay.

Later footballer Fabrice Muamba, who suffered a heart attack during an FA Cup match in March, will carry the flame at the end of the 64th day of its 8,000-mile (12,800-kilometre) relay around Britain.

He will take it through the east London borough of Waltham Forest, where he lived as a boy after moving to Britain from the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Also on Saturday's line-up is Britain's oldest marathon runner Fauja Singh, aged 101 years old, who will carry the torch through the east London borough of Newham.

British triple jumper Phillips Idowu, the Beijing 2008 silver medalist, and rapper Dizzee Rascal will also carry the torch.

Royal Marine Martyn Williams had the honour of bringing the Olympic

SEE PAGE 17 COL 1

Robiul in for hurt Kamrul

SPORTS REPORTER

Kazi Kamrul Islam sprained his ankle during Bangladesh A team's training at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

Debashish Roy, the Bangladesh Cricket Board doctor, informed yesterday that it would take three weeks for the left-arm paceman from Chittagong to recover and hence will miss the second string side's tour of India for which they leave tomorrow.

Kamrul has taken 120 wickets in 38 first-class matches for Chittagong and was picked in the Bangladesh A team for his 26 wickets in this season's National Cricket League.

He is set to be replaced by paceman Robiul Islam, who was among the four standbys. Robiul has taken four Test wickets in three games while taking 144 first-class wickets in 47 matches.



New coach Oshadee Weerasinghe oversees training of the women's cricket team at the BCB Academy ground yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Proteas lead thru' Amla, Smith

Cricket

AFP, London

South Africa captain Graeme Smith hit a century in his 100th Test and Hashim Amla played a marathon innings as the Proteas dominated the third day of the first Test against England at the Oval on Saturday.

South Africa were 403 for two at the close, a lead of 18 runs with eight first innings wickets standing.

Smith (131) and Amla (183 not out) put on a record 259 for the second wicket and there was no respite for the bowlers as Jacques Kallis (82 not out) joined Amla in an unbeaten third wicket stand of 143.

On a slow, dry pitch, offering some variable bounce and turn for the spinners, Smith and Amla dug in and played risk-free cricket to grind down England's bowling attack. Their partnership was two runs higher than the previous South African second wicket record against England set by Smith and current coach Gary Kirsten at Lord's in 2003.

It took Smith 160 balls to reach his fifty, which came in the last over before the mid-morning drinks break. But the scoring rate picked up markedly, with Swann conceding 21 runs in two overs either side of drinks. Smith unleashed a flurry of boundaries in the next hour and needed just 41 deliveries to notch his second half-century. He completed his 25th Test century two balls before lunch with a square cut for four off Tim Bresnan, who later went on to take his wicket.

Amla, meanwhile, reached his 15th Test century off 199 balls with 13 fours. Batting with imperturbable calm, he was content to pick off the loose deliveries with sweetly timed drives and wristy flicks to the on side.

By the close he had batted for nine hours and nine minutes, facing 369 balls and hitting 22 fours.

Smith became the seventh player to score a century in his 100th Test, joining Colin Cowdrey, Javed Miandad, Gordon Greenidge, Alec Stewart, Inzamam-ul-Haq

SEE PAGE 17 COL 2



South Africa captain Graeme Smith is delighted after becoming the seventh batsman in history to score a century in his hundredth Test during the third day of the first Test against England at The Oval in London yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP