

Seasoned 'A' side leave for England

SPORTS REPORTER

A strong Bangladesh A team will leave for England tomorrow morning to play eight one day matches. Five of those matches will take place against England's county teams whereas the remaining three will be played against the England's second string side, called the England Lions.

The 15-member squad, 13 of who have played international cricket before, will play these matches in seven venues over the next three weeks.

"The crucial thing for us would be to adjust ourselves to the foreign conditions over there. We didn't get the opportunity to practice on wickets over here that simulated the conditions in England, so we need to make the most of the practice sessions over there," said Jahurul Islam, the captain of the A team.

"There isn't much of a difference between their county sides and their A team. They are both really good. So we have to take all the matches very seriously," he added.

Shakib propels Tridents to top

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Ace allrounder Shakib Al Hasan's Barbados Tridents went to the top of the league with a 12 run victory over Antigua Hawksbills in the Caribbean Premier League at the Kensington Oval yesterday.

Shakib bowled a miserly spell of 1 for 16 in his four overs and took the crucial wicket of Ricky Ponting. He was also adjudged the player of the match.

With the bat, Shakib continued his poor run as he was caught at slips for just one. Batting first, Barbados were restricted 146 for 8 in. In reply, Antigua finished on 134 for 8.



(From L-R) Bangladesh A team's Ziaur Rahman, Marshall Ayub, Naeem Islam, Jahurul Islam and Rubel Hossain walk past the gallery of the Mirpur Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium after an official photo session yesterday, on the eve of their departure for England today.

PHOTO: STAR

Advance payment mulled for BPL

SPORTS REPORTER



Payment controversies from the first two editions of the Bangladesh Premier League (BPL) may compel the Bangladesh Cricket Board to introduce a system of advance payment for the third edition of the competition.

Speaking to reporters at the BCB's National Cricket Academy following a meeting with the Bangladesh A team, BCB president Nazmul Hassan Papon said, "The best option would be to get the entire money in advance and then ask them to make the team. What we have understood from the first two BPLs is that we can't wait for payments to be made," said Papon.

Papon further stated that the board is planning to host the next BPL before the ICC World Twenty20, scheduled to begin in March, in a bid to prepare its players for the world event. "We are keen on hosting the BPL before the World Cup so that our players can get enough practice in that format of the game," said Papon.

However, whether the owners of the

franchises in the third edition will remain the same is still uncertain. "We have been talking to the franchises for a while now, asking them to clear their dues. I will talk to each of them personally one last time in the coming days. If the dues are still not cleared then we will sell the ownership of these franchises to other groups," he said.

"Profit can't be the franchises' only motive. Some of them don't even have the right trainers for their teams which has a bad impact on our players. In the worst case scenario BCB will run the third BPL on its own," he added.

The only available slot at the moment for the BPL, before the World Cup, is in between mid-December to January end. The Dhaka Premier League is scheduled to begin in September and the super league round of the competition is expected to take place in October. This will be followed by two longer version domestic tournaments—National Cricket League and Bangladesh Cricket League.

The Asia Cup is expected to take place in Bangladesh in February, after which the country will host the ICC T20 World Cup in March.

India eye whitewash

Fifth & final ODI today

PTI, Bulawayo

Four back-to-back victories achieved with consummate ease, India might continue to experiment with their team composition as they aim to complete a clean sweep against Zimbabwe in the fifth and final one-dayer here on Saturday.

Led well by an in-form Virat Kohli, India have outclassed the hapless Zimbabweans in every department of the game and it would take a momentous effort from the hosts to get at least one win.

At the start of the series, Zimbabwe's coach, Andy Waller, had hoped of surprising India at least once in the series but that moment is unlikely to come even tomorrow given the way the visitors have dominated so far.

Aussies tighten grip

REUTERS, Manchester



Australia's remarkable Ashes fightback left England staring at a first innings total of 527 for seven on Friday and the loss of two late wickets on day two of the third Test made the task look even more imposing.

England were 52 for two at stumps after painstaking play.

With his under-pressure side 2-0 down in the five-match series, Australia captain Michael Clarke earlier led from the front and moved on from his overnight 125 to craft a near chanceless 187 - his highest Test score against England.

His bold declaration after tea caught many at Old Trafford on the hop but his statement of intent was heeded by his bowlers, who kept things tight against nervous England batsmen.

England captain Alastair

Cook was unbeaten on 36 and Jonathan Trott on two after Lord's centurion Joe Root edged in-form quick Peter Siddle behind for eight from 57 deliveries and nightwatchman Tim Bresnan (1) seemed to do the same.

However replays suggested no nick, but he did not review.

Clarke's day was to be remembered for his batting as he further inspired his side before finally falling when tiredness got to him. He was bowled, awkwardly playing on to Stuart Broad.

Australia had not bagged a century in the series but Clarke, who hit Bresnan for three straight fours as he passed 150, began to turn the tables on those who laughed at his prediction of a 3-2 series win after the second Test humbling at Lord's.

His wicket was Broad's 200th in Test cricket but it

SCOREBOARD

AUSTRALIA: First innings (overnight 303-3)

Watson c Cook b Bresnan	19
Rogers lbw b Swann	84
Khawaja c Prior b Swann	1
Clarke b Broad	187
Smith c Bairstow b Swann	89
Warner c Trott b Swann	5
Haddin not out	65
Siddle b Swann	1
Starc not out	66
Extras: (lb-6, w-2, nb-2)	10
Total: (For 7 wks, dec in 146 overs)	527
Fall of wickets: 1-76, 2-82, 3-129, 4-343, 5-365, 6-427, 7-430.	

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Anderson	33	6	116	0
Broad	33	6	108	1
Bresnan	32	6	114	1
Swann	43	2	159	5
Root	4	0	18	0
Trott	1	0	6	0

ENGLAND 1ST INNINGS

A. Cook not out	36
J. Root c Haddin b Siddle	8
T. Bresnan c Haddin b Siddle	1
J. Trott not out	2
Extras (lb-6, nb-1)	5
Total (2 wks, 30 overs)	52
Fall of wickets: 1-47, 2-49	

Bowling	O	M	R	W
Harris	5	1	12	0
Starc	5	2	8	0
Lyon	10	4	21	0

was scant consolation for England, who have laboured under the Old Trafford sun and saw Steve Smith (89), Chris Rogers (84), Haddin (65 not out) and Mitchell Starc (66 not out) rack up handy scores on a largely flat pitch.

Graeme Swann did take five for 159, removing Smith whose dismissal prompted the return of David Warner.

The left-hander punched England's Joe Root in a Birmingham bar during June's Champions Trophy, leading to a ban from the Australia side, but he was drafted back in for this Test with the batsmen previously struggling.

Warner was widely booed and taunted from the packed stands as he walked to the crease. He was initially watchful but got a thick edge on five off Swann, the ball hitting wicketkeeper Matt Prior's knee and bouncing up for slip Jonathan Trott to take the catch.

Warner conferred with Clarke and reviewed, but replays showed a clear nick and there was nothing wrong with the catch.

Warner's review came after controversy on Thursday when Usman Khawaja was given out by the on-field and third umpires despite not appearing to edge Swann behind. Cricket Australia asked the ICC for clarification over the "incorrect" call.

The jubilant crowd waved Warner back to the dressing room with glee, leaving Haddin to come in and steady Australia.



England spinner Graeme Swann celebrates the dismissal of Australia's David Warner during the third Ashes Test at Old Trafford yesterday.

PHOTO: REUTERS

SA edge close clash

AFP, Colombo



JP Duminy starred with bat and ball as South Africa overcame Sri Lanka in an exciting 12-run victory in the first Twenty20 international in Colombo on Friday.

The tourists, restricted to a modest 115-6 after electing to bat, bounced back to stop Sri Lanka at 103-9 in front of a packed house of 30,000 at the Premadasa stadium.

Duminy top-scored with 51 off 52 balls to help the tourists recover from a poor start and then grabbed three wickets for 18 runs, earning himself the man of the match award.

It was a morale-boosting win for South Africa over the world's top-ranked Twenty20 side following an embarrassing 4-1 defeat in the last one-day series.

Kumar Sangakkara put up a fight for the hosts with an unbeaten 59 off 53 balls, but young opener Kusal Perera (11) was the only other batsman to reach double figures.

With 21 runs needed off the last two overs and three wickets in hand, left-arm seamer Wayne Parnell swung the game South Africa's way by removing Sachithra

Senanayake and Lasith Malinga without conceding a run in the penultimate over.

Sangakkara hit two boundaries in Morne Morkel's final over, but it was not enough to carry his team to victory.

Morkel and Parnell finished with two wickets each.

Earlier, David Miller (25) shared a fifth-wicket stand of 56 with Duminy after the Proteas slumped to 50-4 in the 11th over.

Off-spinner Senanayake, who shared the new ball with Malinga, struck in each of his first three overs to reduce South Africa to 23-3 by the sixth over.

Senanayake claimed both openers, Quinton de Kock and Henry Davids, leg-before, and then bowled South Africa's Twenty20 skipper Fafdu Plessis for eight.

Star batsman AB de Villiers was on 15 when he skied Angelo Mathews to the cover region and Kusal Perera rushed in to take a good catch.

Duminy hit three boundaries and a six before he was dismissed in the penultimate over, caught in the deep off Ajantha Mendis.

The second and third matches will be played in Hambantota on Sunday and Tuesday.

Salahuddin wants to stay at SAFF helm

SPORTS REPORTER



South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) president Kazi Salahuddin yesterday expressed his desire to stay at the helm of the regional football body for another term so that he can make his dream of introducing the SAFF Clubs Championship come true.

The SAFF president's four-year stint will come to an end on October 2 and the next president is supposed to be decided at the SAFF annual general meeting on September 10 in Kathmandu, the day before the final of the SAFF Championship.

"I have made up my mind, in principle, to stay at the SAFF office for another term so that I can make my dream of introducing the SAFF Clubs Championship come true," Salahuddin told Daily Star yesterday.

The activities of the South Asian football body was mainly confined to holding the SAFF men's championship before Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) president Kazi Salahuddin was elected unopposed as the SAFF president in 2009.

Since taking office, Salahuddin introduced SAFF Women's Championship and SAFF U-16 Championship, two biennial competitions apart from holding the flagship event of SAFF Championship twice, which is going to be held for the third time in September.

"We had a plan of holding the SAFF club championship but we could not do so due to lack of sponsors as well as not being able to manage a uniform schedule from all eight countries," said Salahuddin. "If I am elected again, I will be trying to introduce uniformity in the SAFF members' calendars, which is most the important thing for holding the Club Championship."

Salahuddin also informed that he has a plan to turn the U-16 championship into U-18 Championship so that the member nations can take enough preparation and nurse their respective squads ahead of the AFC U-19 Championship.

Mahfizur clocks his best time

SPORTS REPORTER

Country's top swimmer Mahfizur Rahman Sagor clocked his career best time in the 50m freestyle event of the World Swimming Championships in Barcelona, Spain yesterday yet failed to make past the heats.

The London Olympian took 24.39 seconds to eclipse his previous best of 24.41 seconds and finished 59th among 105 swimmers. The SA Games gold medalist kept his word of improving on his personal record that he had said before leaving for Spain.

Mahfuza Akhter Shila is scheduled to compete in the 50m breaststroke event today.

Bradman bat up for auction

AFP, Sydney

A cricket bat used by Australian great Donald Bradman and signed by his 1948 "Invincible" team is expected to fetch up to Aus\$20,000 (US\$17,900) at auction this month, an auctioneer said Friday.

Charles Leski, whose company is selling the item, said Bradman used the Sykes bat to score 115 in his final first-class innings at home before the team travelled to England in 1948.

Booters take on Thai U-19s today

SPORTS REPORTER



After going 2-1 down against Thai club Osotspa Saraburi in their first practice match outside the country, the Bangladesh national football team will be hoping to turn things around when they take on the Thailand U-19 national team in their second practice match at the Osotspa Stadium today.

Bangladesh are on a tour of Thailand, as part of their preparation for September's SAFF Championship, and these two matches are being played apart from the intensive camp, to test the graph of improvement of the booters. But the first test did not go well as they suffered the defeat against the fifth-place finishers of the Thai Premier League despite having control of the midfield in some phases. The strikers lost a few scoring chances, that led them to concede two goals before they pulled one back. The blame fell on the defenders, who believe they have learnt from their mistakes.

"To be honest, the opponents were very organised and stronger than us. We tried to execute our plans but they proved their maturity to take the game away from us. The match could have been different had our strikers availed the early chances. However, we have learnt a lot from the match and we will be trying to rectify those in the next match," stopper Ariful Islam was quoted as saying after the practice session at the National Football Centre in Nangchok, Bangkok yesterday.

Left-back Yeamin Munna said that the cohesion among the players is gradually improving following one-month's preparation and that they have also been trying to build the game from the backline in line with the instructions of Dutch coach Lodewijk de Kruijff.

De Kruijff however is not too much concerned about the results of the practice matches; rather he is intent on injecting technical and tactical aspects into the team.

The 43-year old coach is also determined to watch how quickly his boys can adopt the techniques and tactics through the match against Thailand U-19 side today.

Meanwhile, first-choice wingers Zahid Hossain and Mobarak Hossain are both likely to miss the match due to injuries. Zahid missed the first match too due to the injury.