

SPORT

Bangladesh A
start well

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh A made a good start in the second and final four-day match against West Indies High Performance Centre at Bridgetown yesterday.

After deciding to bat first, the home side reached 207 for 5 after 55 overs of play.

Left-arm spinner Taijul Islam gave the early breakthrough in the sixth over and the second success came through Shuvagoto Hom as the home side were reduced to 20 for two in nine overs.

The home side, which outclassed the visitors in the first four-day match with a thumping 351-run victory, recovered the early damage through Blackwood (34 not out) and Johnshon (16 not out). However, Muktar Ali struck just before the break, getting rid of Blackwood.

Meanwhile, Forhad Reza, Soumya Sarker, Arafat Sunny, Shafiqul Islam, Mosaddek Hossain and Shabbir Rahman are likely to join the A team for the one-day and T20 series as Nasir Hossain, Shamsur Rahman, Mominul Haque, Shuvavish Roy and either one of Elias Sunny or Mustafizur Rahman are likely to return home for the three-match ODI series against India, starting on June 15.

Senanayake's
bowling action
reported

AFP, London

Sri Lanka off-spinner Sachithra Senanayake has been reported for a suspected illegal bowling action, the International Cricket Council (ICC) confirmed on Monday.

Senanayake, who has twice recorded career-best figures in the ongoing Royal London series against England, was reported by umpires Ian Gould and Marais Erasmus at the end of his team's victory at Lord's on Saturday.

He will be free to bowl again in the series decider at Edgbaston on Tuesday, but will face further scrutiny under ICC regulations.



Former Zimbabwe fast bowler and new Bangladesh bowling coach Heath Streak gives a weary smile after surprising the media contingent by greeting them with 'Assalamu Alaikum' upon his arrival at the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport yesterday.

PHOTO: FIROZ AHMED

Streak in
town

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh's newly appointed bowling coach Heath Streak reached Dhaka last night in a bid to join the Bangladesh camp ahead of their India series. Upon reaching the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport, a visibly weary Streak broke into a wry smile after he saw a huge media contingent waiting for him outside the airport.

With an official press conference scheduled at the Bangladesh Cricket Board's (BCB's) headquarters at Mirpur today afternoon, Streak was not willing to say much. The former Zimbabwe pacer, however, greeted the reporters in the local way and said that he was happy to arrive in a place he considers to be his 'second home'.

"Assalamu Alaikum to all. I am happy to be here. My first match was played in Dhaka, so this is kind of like my second home. I have seen lots of their bowling side as a coach and also played against some of them. I am looking forward to this role," said Streak.

Streak played for Zimbabwe between 1993 and 2005, scoring 4933 runs and taking 455 wickets in international cricket. He has signed a two-year deal with the BCB, over which time he will work with the Bangladesh team for 450 days.

Nadal storms into last 8

AFP, Paris



Eight-time champion Rafael Nadal brushed aside outclassed Dusan Lajovic 6-1, 6-2, 6-1 on Monday to storm into the French Open quarterfinals.

British seventh seed Andy Murray followed Nadal's footsteps to defeat Spain's Fernando Verdasco 6-4, 7-5, 7-6 (7/3) on Monday to reach the quarters.

World number one Nadal, was at his ruthless best.

Watched by US rock star Prince, who played a concert in the French capital on Sunday night, Nadal, seeking to become the first man to win five French Opens in a row, needed just 93 minutes to go through to a last-eight showdown with compatriot David Ferrer.

The two men met in last year's final where Nadal allowed Ferrer just eight games.

Despite his Philippe Chatrier court mauling, Lajovic at least had the consolation of avoiding the worst Roland Garros rout handed out by Nadal.

That unwanted record belongs to Juan Monaco who won just two games in a fourth round loss in 2012.

Spanish fifth seed David Ferrer reached his 10th successive Grand Slam quarterfinal with a 6-3, 6-3, 6-7 (5/7), 6-1 win over South Africa's Kevin Anderson in the fourth round.

Ferrer, last year's runner-up, will face either defending champion Rafael Nadal or Serbia's Dusan Lajovic for a place in the semi-finals.

Ferrer had beaten Anderson, who was hoping to be the first South African man in the last eight since Cliff Drysdale in 1967, at the same stage of the tournament last year.

In the women's matches Andrea Petkovic reached her fourth career Grand Slam quarterfinal when she outlasted Dutch qualifier Kiki Bertens 1-6, 6-2, 7-5 in the fourth round.

The German, 26, will now meet Italian Sara Errani, ranked 10th, for a place in the semifinals.

Italian Sara Errani reached the quarterfinals as the 10th seed defeated Serbia's Jelena Jankovic 7-6 (7/5), 6-2.

Errani, the 2012 runner-up to Maria Sharapova, won a bitterly contested first set that lasted 1hr 21min and saw eight breaks of serve, four from each player.

Romanian fourth seed Simona Halep reached the quarterfinals as she defeated American Sloane Stephens 6-4, 6-3.

The highest ranked player left in the women's draw equalled her best showing at a Grand Slam, as she racked up a perfect six breaks from six opportunities in a match lasting 1hr 18min.

She now faces either Russian 2009 French champion Svetlana Kuznetsova or Czech Republic's 24th seed Lucie Safarova for a place in the semi-finals.

Agrani allege
fixed match

SPORTS REPORTER

Agrani Bank, a side of the ongoing Premier Bank Bangladesh Championship League, demanded punishment to Farashganj SC and Wari Club alleging them of playing a fixed match as the club officials and supporters demonstrated in front of the Bangladesh Football Federation yesterday.

The officials of Agrani Bank claimed that Farashganj beat Wari Club 3-2 in a 'fixed match' and with the win, Farashganj have gone to an advantageous position to finish behind champions Rahmatganj MFS. Agrani Bank have same points as Farashganj but they have played two matches more than Farashganj's 15.

Later, the officials of Agrani Bank placed a memorandum to the chairman of the professional football league committee.

Tiviakov urges for
long-term training

SPORTS REPORTER



Dutch Grandmaster Sergey Tiviakov urged the authority concerned to take initiatives for a long-term training programme for the Bangladeshi chess players as he felt only one month of training is not enough ahead of the World Chess Olympiad which will be held in Norway from August 1-15.

The 2656-rated Dutch Grandmaster, who is a current member of Netherlands national chess team, made this appeal to deputy sports minister Arif Khan Joy at the BOA auditorium when the 41-year old was introduced before the media ahead of the start of the Bangladesh national team's training camp.

"Appointing me is the first step in the right direction and I think my advices will help improve the local players," said Tiviakov. "The ministry should realise that one month's training is not enough for them, as they need several months of training whether I am in charge or not."

GM Abdullah Al Rakib felt they would be benefited immensely through the appointment of Tiviakov.

"I will try to learn everything I can from him (Tiviakov) and I will try to take it as a life-time education," said Rakib, who however is a bit disappointed with the fact that no steps has been taken from the federation following Bangladesh's best-ever 33rd-place finish in the Olympiad two years ago.

Shakib 6th
MVP in IPL

SPORTS REPORTER

Ace Bangladesh and Kolkata Knight Riders all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan was ranked sixth on the list of most valuable players in the just-concluded Indian Premier League 2014. Shakib, given 238.5 ranking points, was one of three Kolkata players on the list with Robin Uthappa taking second spot and spinner Suni Narine placed seventh. Leading the list is Kings XI Punjab batsman Glenn Maxwell.

Shakib, who featured in Kolkata's final victory over Kings XI Punjab on Sunday, scored 227 runs and took 11 wickets in 13 games of the lucrative Twenty20 league. Adding to his value is that he operated at an economy rate of 6.68 per over in a format which sees most bowlers go for 7.5 runs an over or higher. His 227 runs were also scored at an impressive strike rate of 149.34. He is placed 35th and 21st on the runs and wickets charts respectively.

The champions will be received in ceremonial grandeur at the Eden Gardens today where they will be felicitated by the West Bengal government and the Cricket Association of Bengal.

DCC PIONEER LEAGUE
Narinda
crowned
champions

SPORTS REPORTER

Narinda Junior Lions Club emerged champions in the Dhaka City Corporation Pioneer Football League with a 1-0 win over Araf Sporting Club in the final at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Sohag Mia struck the all-important goal in the keenly contested final for Narinda, who dramatically emerged champions despite being eliminated from the quarterfinal stage. Having lost against Akku Football Academy 3-0 in the quarterfinal, Narinda lodged a complaint against their opponents of fielding over-aged players. Their complaint was found legitimate and they were adjudged the winners of that match.

The champions, the runners-up and yet-to-be-decided third-place finishers will qualify for the 3rd division football league for the next season.

Ash played in USA

CRICINFO

Former Bangladesh captain Mohammad Ashraful, currently serving an indefinite suspension by the BCB after confessing to spot fixing during the second season of the BPL was recently allowed to participate in a tournament that was formally sanctioned by the USA Cricket Association (USACA). The event took place in Los Angeles from May 23-26.

Speaking to ESPNcricinfo, USACA executive secretary Mascelles Bailey said he was unaware of any banned player participating in the tournament. He acknowledged that event organisers had applied for and received sanctioning approval from USACA. However, Bailey says unless there are people employed on the ground to monitor specifically who is playing, it is difficult for USACA to police.

Bailey said the sanctioning process laid out by USACA includes submitting a list of international players who may be appearing at the event. This list is then forwarded on to the ICC for approval. However, IA T20 Championship organiser Mehul Dave said he was instructed that only players currently under a national contract needed approval. Since Ashraful is currently not under contract with the BCB, his name was not submitted.

Ashraful played at the 12-team tournament for Pegasus CC who lost in the semi-finals to eventual champion LA Cavaliers.

AB, Amla for Test reins

AFP, Johannesburg



Star batsmen AB de Villiers and Hashim Amla are the leading candidates to succeed Graeme Smith as South Africa's Test captain for the series in Sri Lanka set for July.

Cricket South Africa's board meets in Johannesburg today to make what is seen as a crucial decision after a decade of Smith at the helm.

De Villiers, 30, was vice-captain under Smith and is the one-day international (ODI) skipper. He has led the side in 40 ODI games. He had no prior captaincy experience.

Amla, 31, captained the South African team at the Under-19 World Cup in New Zealand in 2002 and was appointed captain of the Dolphins franchise early in his first-class career.

He resigned as captain after one season to concentrate on his batting.

Faf du Plessis, 29, who captains the national Twenty20 team, is a third candidate and has displayed the most natural flair for captaincy. But his relative lack of experience -- he has played in only 14 Tests -- could count against him.

FRANCE 1998

France join the Ivy League

This was a World Cup that ended with the hosts' finest footballing hour and left everyone guessing about the mystery of Ronaldo's missing minutes -- but there was far more to France '98 than just a one-sided final where the Brazilians failed to turn up.

The Dutch gave more moments to savour but again fell short, while new-boys Croatia announced their arrival with a dazzling run to the semifinals. England left early, but with a new hero offering hope for the future -- and a villain to pin all the blame on for their exit.

Brazil scraped past Scotland in the opening goal with a 2-1 win, thanks to a late Tom Boyd own-goal. England stumbled through to set up what would be the match of the tournament against Argentina in the last 16. This game packed a heck of a lot into 120 pulsating minutes of open play; including 18-year-old Michael Owen's wonder goal, a delightfully-worked Argentina free-kick and, of course, David Beckham's petulant kick at Diego Simeone that saw him sent off after half-time. In the end, England were out on penalties for the third time in eight years.

Of the other big-guns, only Spain had failed to reach the second round, where France needed the World Cup's first extra-time golden goal to edge past Paraguay. The French were lacking a quality striker -- and they needed penalties to get past Italy side in the quarterfinals.

Elsewhere, the goals were flying in but none were better than Dennis Bergkamp's glorious last-gasp winner against Argentina -- Bergkamp bringing down Frank de Boer's perfect 50-yard pass, stepping inside Roberto Ayala and effortlessly volleying past Roa -- which put the Dutch in the semifinals.

Rivaldo's cracker saw Brazil edge Denmark in last-eight and Croatia's Davor Suker -- who scored six goals in total to take home the Golden Boot -- rounded off a shock rout of European champions Germany to win with a fine solo effort.

The hosts beat the Croats 2-1, thanks to a brace from defender Lilian Thuram, who played 142 times for France between 1994 and 2008 but only scored those two goals.

Brazil, who beat the Netherlands in their semifinal on penalties, were their opponents in a hotly-anticipated final but that turned out to be a game that saw more drama before it began than it did during the 90 minutes of action.

Ronaldo, Brazil's talisman and top scorer, was left out by coach Mario Zagallo when he issued his first team-sheet 72 minutes ahead of kick-off, but was back in the starting line-up half-an-hour later. There were reports he had been in hospital earlier after having a fit, and rumours -- later denied -- that he was ill or injured and only reinstated following pressure from the team's sponsors.



PHOTO: DAILY STAR ARCHIVE

The 1998 World Cup triumph united a multiracial French nation like never before.

Whatever the truth -- and only he really knows it -- Ronaldo had a stinker of a game, as did his teammates, and Les Bleus, for whom Zinedine Zidane was majestic, ended up runaway winners.

The victory, for a French team that reflected the multi-racial mix of their country, united a nation that was far from football-mad and sparked weeks of celebration

across the land.

Facts & Figure

Winners: France
Runners-up: Brazil
Leading Scorer: Davor Suker (CRO)--6
Teams: 32
Matches: 64
Goals: 171
Attendance: 2,785,100