

## BTV WORLD

Asian Cup Qualifying Playoff  
Bangladesh v Bhutan  
Live from 7:00pm  
**TEN 3**  
Sri Lanka v Australia  
First T20I

## Live from 7:30pm

**TEN 1**  
US Open  
Men's & Women's Singles  
qtrs  
Live from 10:00pm &  
5:00am (Wednesday)

## SONY ESPN

FIFA World Cup Qualifiers  
Belarus v France  
Live from 1:00am  
(Wednesday)  
Venezuela v Argentina  
Live from 5:30am  
(Wednesday)

## Peru v Ecuador

Live from 8:00am  
(Wednesday)  
**SONY SIX**  
FIFA World Cup Qualifiers  
Switzerland v Portugal  
Live from 12:30am  
(Wednesday)

## Brazil v Colombia

Live from 6:30am  
(Wednesday)  
**SONY ESPN HD**  
FIFA World Cup Qualifiers  
Sweden v Netherlands  
Live from 1:00am  
(Wednesday)

## Chile v Bolivia

Live from 5:30am  
(Wednesday)

Asian Cup Qualifying  
Playoff  
Bangladesh v Bhutan  
Time: 7:00pm  
Venue: BNS



Bangladesh Test skipper Mushfiqur Rahim wasn't the only one who had to tilt his head upwards during team briefings at Mirpur yesterday. A chirpy Courtney Walsh, Bangladesh's new bowling coach, seemed to have a good time on his first day at duty.

PHOTO: STAR

## Starstruck Tigers welcome Walsh

SPORTS REPORTER



Bangladesh captain Mashrafe Bin Mortaza guffawed as Courtney Walsh apparently said something funny, with Tamim Iqbal also part of the conversation. Most of the players did not want to miss the chance to take a picture with the legend, even though many were not old enough to appreciate his mastery on the field during his heyday. Apart from the introduction, there had also been some bowling exercises on his first day at the office. The day actually belonged completely to Walsh, who won the hearts of many in his first meeting with the Tigers.

It was not a day for the West Indies legend to provide any serious tips or conduct serious drills; instead he asked the boys to keep focus on today's practice game before the Eid vacation. The bowlers were looking forward to embark upon serious business with their new bowling coach but the impression they got on the first day was that Walsh's presence will not only help them improve their bowling but also add a positive vibe to the atmosphere.

Many, like Rubel Hossain and Shaiful Islam, did not waste any time in confiding that they will have to first overcome one barrier before working with the Jamaican:

they will have to start looking at the sky to communicate with the six-foot-six-inches tall former West Indian skipper.

"He is a legend. Just worked for a day but we felt that he was not too hard. It's a different feeling when he said well done. He didn't say a negative thing when something went wrong; instead he advised to pitch it up. It would be fantastic if he is friendly to us. We are lucky to get a coach like him," said young pacesman Kamrul Islam Rabbi, adding that their new coach loves to call them with shortened versions of their names; for instance calling him 'Rab'. He also informed that only spot bowling had been discussed on the first day.

"As it was the first day, we were introduced to him and he worked on some basics. He advised us to concentrate on tomorrow's practice game and bowl to our strengths, which he will watch closely. Yes, when he will start to work with us in full swing I will try to learn a few things from him. It's a great thing that we have got such a legend beside us," said Rubel Hossain.

Rabbi said that what he understood in the first day was that Walsh loves to stick to the basics.

"Last few days I watched his bowling on Youtube to understand what type of bowling he had. He is a legend but unfortunately I was too little when he was in action. But I understood today that he likes the basics," said Rabbi.

## Pouille outlasts Nadal

### Djokovic steams into quarters

AFP, New York



Lucas Pouille outlasted 14-time Grand Slam champion Rafael Nadal in a five-set classic on Sunday to lead a trio of French men into the quarterfinals of the US Open.

Pouille, 22 and ranked 25th in the world, lived up to the promise of his quarterfinal run at Wimbledon, emerging from a roller-coaster ride with a 6-1, 2-6, 6-4, 3-6, 7-6 (8/6) triumph over the Spanish superstar.

The defeat leaves Nadal -- forced out of the French Open third round with a wrist injury that also saw him miss Wimbledon -- without at least one Grand Slam quarterfinal appearance for the first time since he was a teenaged tour newcomer in 2004.

Pouille came out firing, pushing Nadal back with an array of deep groundstrokes and angled shots.

Fifty-two winners from Nadal -- whose attacking response saw him come out a winner on 35 of 48 forays to the net -- weren't enough.

The taut battle came down to the fifth-set tiebreaker and Nadal, trailing 3-6, showed his mettle by saving three match points -- the third on Pouille's serve.

Then he smacked a forehand into the net to give Pouille one more chance and the French player pounced on it with a blazing forehand that kissed the sideline.

The four-hour, seven-minute contest entranced the crowd in Arthur Ashe stadium.

Pouille next tackles 10th-seeded compatriot Gael Monfils, a 6-3, 6-2, 6-3 winner over Cypriot Marcos Baghdatis.

Novak Djokovic steamed into the quarterfinals of the US Open with a 6-2, 6-1, 6-4 victory against 84th-ranked Briton Kyle Edmund.

Edmund, playing in a Grand Slam fourth round for the first time, barely got a look-in during the first two sets against the world number one and defending champion, who

booked a last-eight meeting with ninth-seeded Frenchman Jo-Wilfried Tsonga, a 6-3, 6-3, 6-7 (7/9), 6-2 winner over American Jack Sock.

Having raced through the first two sets in just over an hour, Djokovic sought treatment after surrendering his first service break of the night -- starting a run of three straight games for Edmund that gave the Briton a 3-2 lead.

Djokovic put the set back on serve with a break for 3-3, and broke Edmund at love to close out the match.

Caroline Wozniacki, derailed this year by an ankle injury which sent her career into a tailspin, and Anastasija Sevastova, who quit the sport three years ago, set up a US Open quarterfinal duel.

Former world number one Wozniacki, the runner-up in 2009 and 2014, downed American eighth seed Madison Keys 6-3, 6-4 to make the last-eight in New York for a fifth time.

Sevastova became the first Latvian woman in 22 years to reach a Grand Slam quarterfinal when she beat British 13th seed Johanna Konta 6-4, 7-5.

The other quarterfinal in the bottom half of the draw sees German second seed Angelique Kerber face Roberta Vinci, the Italian seventh seed.

Kerber defeated Petra Kvitova 6-3, 7-5 while Vinci enjoyed a 7-6 (7/5), 6-2 win over Lesia Tsurenko of Ukraine.

Monday's action  
Juan Martin del Potro became the lowest ranked man since 1991 to reach the US Open quarter-finals when opponent Dominic Thiem retired from their last-16 tie through injury on Monday.

The 142nd-ranked Argentine was leading 6-3, 3-2 when the eighth-seeded Austrian quit with a knee injury.

Jimmy Connors was ranked 174 when he went on to the US Open semi-finals in 1991. At the Women's singles, Fifth-seeded Romanian Simona Halep advanced to the quarter-finals for the second straight year with a 6-2, 7-5 victory over Spain's Carla Suarez Navarro.



Lucas Pouille of France pumps his fist after winning a point against Rafael Nadal of Spain during their US Open men's singles fourth round match at Flushing Meadows on Sunday.

PHOTO: AFP

## Duo departs for crucial test

SPORTS REPORTER



"I would request everyone to pray for us." This is one line that both Arafat Sunny and Taskin Ahmed repeatedly used during their interaction with the media at Mirpur yesterday, prior to their departure for Australia.

The bowlers left for Brisbane last night in order to have their bowling actions tested in an ICC-accredited centre. They were both suspended from bowling midway through the ICC World Twenty20 earlier this year. Six months on, with the Afghanistan and England series around the corner, both bowlers hope that they can make a comeback.

Taskin and Sunny's statements did depict plenty of confidence. However, at the same time, they did admit that they were under a bit of pressure. One cannot blame them. After all, any player would be tense if they knew that the fate of their entire career would depend on a single test. And in situations like these, one does need a bit of luck. Taskin perhaps described it the best.

"Honestly speaking, it's not about whether I have made a minor or major change in my bowling action. The fact remains that even if one ball goes wrong, it will be a problem. An exam, after all, is an exam. So there is obviously a little bit of pressure.

"I will try my best and give my hundred per cent, the rest depends upon God. I will return after having overcome all the obstacles inshallah," he said.

## BD women lose tour opener

STAR SPORTS DESK

The Bangladesh national women's cricket team got off to a bad start in their tour of Ireland yesterday as they lost to the hosts by six runs in the first T20I at the Bready Cricket Club.

The match was reduced to 10 overs per side due to rain. After winning the toss, Bangladesh's Jahanara Alam elected to field first, going by the gloomy conditions.

Ireland though put up a good fight in the form of Clare Shillington, who smacked four fours during her 18-ball 26 and paved the way for Ireland's 54. She was the only batter who reached double figures for the hosts as they finished on 54 for eight. Khadija tul Kubra was the key wicket-taker with figures of three for five in two overs.

Bangladesh's batters struggled during the chase. They only hit one boundary in the entire innings and that came off the bat of Ayasha Rahman. A run-a-ball 24 from Fargana Haque helped them stay in the chase for quite some time. However, with 10 runs required off the last over, the visitors crumbled under pressure. They were restricted to 48 for 6. Bangladesh will play one more T20I and two ODIs on their tour.

## Allardyce praises Rooney

AFP, Trnava



Sam Allardyce vowed to defer to captain Wayne Rooney over his positioning after starting life as England manager with a last-gasp 1-0 win over Slovakia in World Cup qualifying.

Adam Lallana snatched a 95th-minute winner against 10-man Slovakia in Trnava on Sunday to prevent Allardyce from becoming the first England manager since Bobby Robson in 1982 not to win his first game.

Rooney, making a record 116th appearance for an England outfield player, adopted a deep-lying midfield role for much of the game despite Allardyce having said he would play in a number 10 position.

But Allardyce said: "This is the most decorated outfield player in England. He's won

everything at Man United, more or less, and at Champions League and domestic level.

"He holds a lot more experience at international football than me as an international manager.

"So using his experience with a team, and playing as a team member, it's not for me to say where he's going to play.

"It's up to me to (ask): 'Are you playing well in that position? And if you are playing well and contributing, that's great.'

"Yes, I'd like him to get forward a bit more. He's been a goalscorer all his life and I want him still to score goals, but he reads a game as he reads it.

"I must admit, he did play a little deeper than I thought he'd play. But I was pleased with his performance."

Rooney, 30, started the game in midfield alongside Jordan Henderson in a 4-1-4-1 system.

## Fans tackle Neymar to the ground

INTERNET

The fans were attending an open practice session for the Brazilian national soccer team on Sunday, an event attended by a whopping 15,000 people.

The players were preparing for a huge World Cup qualifying match against Colombia on Wednesday when two fans invaded the pitch in search of Brazil's star player, Neymar.

The scene was both humorous and a bit scary, as a second invader evaded several members of security before running to hug Neymar with his cohort, simultaneously group tackling the 24-year-old to the ground in the process.

Upon closer review, you can even see several fans already being escorted off the pitch when the two "successful" ones finally reach their idol.

On the bright side, we guess it's a good thing the fans only wanted to give the superstar a hug and that everyone seemingly was OK.

## 'To start from zero'

AGENCIES, Barcelona

Anyone who thought Lionel Messi dyed his hair blond just for fun or for no good reason was wrong. Emphatically wrong.

The Barcelona superstar caused quite the furore -- well, a fairly ridiculous one, at least -- back in July when his partner Antonella Rocuzzo posted an Instagram photo of his radical new style.

Now the burning issue of the summer has finally been resolved: why did Messi ditch his brown hair for the Aaron Ramsey look?

And now Messi has revealed the reason:

"I made a change to start from zero," he said on Argentine TV.

"I was emerging from a lot of controversies, of things that had happened to me, and I said to myself: 'You've got to break this and start again.'"

What controversies? Well, the 29-year-old quit international football after Copa America heartbreak -- his third major final defeat in three years.

And there was the small matter of being found guilty in his tax fraud case in Spain.



Champions Gemcon's Hasan Imam (C) poses with his most valuable player trophy along with Iminder Singh Khurana from Rangs Industries Ltd and Kazi Samiur Rahman, CEO of Rancan Electronics Ltd, during the prize distribution ceremony of the 11th Ascent Corporate Soccer Cup at Scholastica's STM Hall on Saturday.

PHOTO: COLLECTED