

Champions Trophy
Pakistan v South Africa
Live from 6:30pm
STAR SPORTS SELECT 1HD
French Open
Quarterfinal
Live from 6:00pm

TORRES HEADING TO MEXICO?

Atletico Madrid striker Fernando Torres could be set for a shock move to Mexican club Queretaro, according to reports. A report from ESPN says that the 33-year-old striker – who's contract at the Vicente Calderon expires this summer – could significantly increase his wages at the Liga MX club. The report continues that whilst Mexican sides can not officially sign any new players until September, a deal for the former Liverpool and Chelsea man could be formally concluded and announced as early as next week. Having scored eight goals for Atletico in La Liga last season, it is understood the club would be willing to sanction his departure despite being unsuccessful in their appeal to overturn a transfer ban. Negotiations between the clubs and player are said to have been ongoing for the last three weeks with Queretaro the preferred destination ahead of Cruz Azul, who are managed by Paco Jemez.

—Agencies



Abahani players and officials celebrate with the Walton Federation Cup trophy after their 3-1 win in the final against Chittagong Abahani at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

PHOTO: STAR

Badal Roy in ICU

SPORTS REPORTER

Badal Roy, vice president of both the Bangladesh Football Federation and the Bangladesh Olympic Association, was admitted to the intensive care unit (ICU) of Square Hospitals in Dhaka after he suffered a brain haemorrhage on Monday night.

The legendary footballer, who represented the national team and Mohammedan Sporting Club, is under the observation of neurosurgeon Mahbubul Alam. Roy's left side has been paralysed, according to initial prognosis.

Former footballer Abdul Gaffar Chowdhury told reporters that Roy's MRI report was not good and that doctors advised to take him abroad for better treatment.

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has instructed authorities to take the legendary footballer abroad by Wednesday, Gaffar added.

Abahani in 10th heaven

SPORTS REPORTER



The stage was set for Chittagong Abahani to become the first club from outside the capital to lift the Federation Cup title, but it was Dhaka Abahani who ran their port city namesake ragged in a 3-1 victory during the final at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

Abahani not only retained the title of the season's curtain-raiser, but they also equalled the record for the highest Federation Cup title hauls – 10 alongside archrivals Mohammedan SC – through this victory.

At the pre-match press conference, Abahani coach Drago Mamic had expressed his concern over the players' conditions due to a tight domestic schedule, with AFC Cup engagements squeezed in between. He had said that their performance would depend on how the players could recover with only 15 to 16 hours available before the final. However, the scenario on the pitch was completely different as the Sky Blues turned up at full force and

displayed their best performance of the tournament so far to outclass the port city outfit.

From the outset, Abahani launched attacks through both flanks as left-back Wali Faisal and right-back Mamun Mia overlapped to unsettle the Chittagong Abahani backline while having established control in midfield.

The champions came close to breaking the deadlock in the third minute but Sohel Rana saw his drive

with a big deflection off defender Krishna Pada Roy.

The defending champions Abahani kept pressing for a second goal and midfielder Emon Babu saw his angular shot go wide of the target in the 38th minute. However, the national team midfielder made no mistake during stoppage time when he let loose a powerful left-footer into the back of the net after Raihan Hasan's long throw-in was scrambled clear to his path.

Abahani killed off the contest with a third goal three minutes into the second half as Nigerian striker Emeka Darlington comfortably side-volleyed a low cross from Wali, who had gone deep without facing any challenge from the Chittagong Abahani defenders.

Despite taking the seemingly unassailable 3-0 lead, Abahani pressed hard to further increase the margin but conceded a goal against the run of play in the 82nd minute when Jibon brought down Alison Udoka inside the box. The Nigerian defender converted the spot-kick which only put a slight damper on a rousing title win for Abahani.

aBAHANI 3 - 1 CTG ABAHANI
(JIBON, 36' EMON45+, EMEKA 48') (UDOKA 82')

from inside the box brilliantly parried away by Chittagong Abahani goalkeeper Mohammad Nehal. Chittagong Abahani mustered their first attempt in the 18th minute, with Kaushik Barua trying from distance, but the ball went wide of the near post.

The Dhanmondi giants broke the deadlock in the 36th minute when forward Nabib Newaj Jibon ran down the left flank to enter the box and drove a grounder which left goalkeeper Nehal completely wrong-footed as the ball embraced the net

Pak pride at stake

AFP, Birmingham



Mickey Arthur has no doubt Pakistan will be "up for the fight" when they face his native South Africa in the Champions Trophy after a humiliating defeat by arch-rivals India.

Pakistan's crushing 124-run loss to title-holders India in their tournament opener at Edgbaston on Sunday was labelled the "Mother of all mismatches" by the Indian Express newspaper.

Now, in the space of just a few days, Pakistan must somehow raise their game to beat a South Africa side who defeated Sri Lanka by 96 runs at the Oval on Saturday in their opening Group B fixture if they are to have any chance of reaching the semi-finals.

Arthur suggested too many Pakistan players had suffered 'stage fright' against India in front of a capacity crowd of more than 24,000.

"My issue is fear," he said. "My issue is getting out there and really looking to take the game on."

"The worrying thing for me...is we just do the basics wrong."

"We drop simple catches. We don't run well enough between wickets. We don't understand when to bowl our



variations."

But Arthur, a former coach of both South Africa and Australia, was adamant all was far from lost.

"We'll be thinking firmly of coming back and beating South Africa," he said. "Because that's what I think our players can do."

"So, we're going to be up for the fight."

Pakistan will be without Wahab Riaz after he was ruled out of the rest of the tournament on Monday with an ankle injury sustained when falling in his delivery stride against India.

But given by that stage the left-arm paceman had conceded a whopping 87 runs in 8.4 wicketless overs, his absence may not be that big a blow.

AFC U-23 Championship Qualifiers

54 in preliminary squad

SPORTS REPORTER



The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) yesterday announced a 54-member preliminary squad for the upcoming AFC U-23 Championship Qualifiers with the inclusion of six national footballers.

The new coach Andrew Ord, who is supposed to sign a contract with the federation this afternoon, will conduct a three-day camp starting in the morning. The Australian coach is expected to trim down the number of players after the three-day camp is completed.

All of the six national footballers -- Hemanta Vincent Biswas, Sohel Rana, Jewel Rana, Mohammad Abdullah, Rubel Mia and Meheub Hasan Nayan -- are midfielders and were members of the national team that lost

1-3 against Bhutan in the Asian Cup Qualifying Playoff in October last year.

Apart from them, some promising players like Masuk Mia Jonny, Mannaf Rabbi, Kausik Barua, Khalekurzaman, Tutuh Hossain Badsha, Saad Uddin, Matin Mia, Rohit Sarkar, Abdul Malek, Nurul Nayeem Faisal and Mansur Amin have been included. However, players like Jafar Iqbal, Sajidur Rahman Sajid and Sarwar Zaman Nipu were not considered.

Of the 54 players, 22 had earlier participated in a conditioning camp in February under the supervision of trainer John Whittle, who was assisted by local coach Golam Jilani and goalkeeping coach Ryan Sandford.

Considering the players' performance in the ongoing Federation Cup and past records, Gonzalo Sanchez Moreno, Sandford and Whittle picked the preliminary squad, informed a BFF official.

Turan quits on Turkey

AFP, Istanbul

Turkey captain Arda Turan announced his retirement from international football yesterday, hours after being kicked out of a training camp by coach Fatih Terim for allegedly verbally and physically abusing a journalist.

"I think the time has come...I am ending my career with the national team," said the 30-year-old Barcelona midfielder, capped 96 times, at a brief press conference in Slovenia.

Turan had been told to leave the Turkey team's camp in Slovenia where they are preparing for a 2018 World Cup qualifier against Kosovo on Sunday.

Tributes for Tiote

AFP, Beijing



Cheick Tiote's Chinese club said the cause of his death was still under investigation on Tuesday after the Ivory Coast international collapsed in training and died.

Tributes poured in for the former Newcastle United midfielder, who moved to China's second-tier Beijing Enterprises in February after seven years in England's north-east.

The club's general manager Yang Junsheng told reporters that authorities were still trying to determine the cause of death.

As fellow players paid tribute to the popular, hard-tackling midfielder, a group of fans laid a bouquet of white flowers on the pitch at Beijing's National Olympic Sports Centre stadium.

Ivory Coast teammate Gervinho, who plays for China's Hebei China Fortune, described Tiote as a "warrior" and a "champion".

"May your soul rest in peace," he said on Twitter.

Brazil's Oscar, now at Shanghai SIPG after moving from Chelsea, tweeted: "Rest in peace, Cheick Tiote. My family prays for your family."

Birthday battle in semis

Wozniacki stunned; Men's qtrs postponed

AFP, Paris



Swiss 30th seed Tímea Babcsinszky reached the French Open semifinals for the second time on Tuesday and will meet Latvian teenager Jelena Ostapenko for a shot at the title.

Babcsinszky downed French hope Kristina Mladenovic 6-4, 6-4 on a rain-hit day at Roland Garros, while 19-year-old Ostapenko stunned Caroline Wozniacki 4-6, 6-2, 6-2.

Babcsinszky or Ostapenko can make it a double celebration when they meet on Thursday as both women celebrate their birthdays. Babcsinszky will be 28; Ostapenko will turn 20.

Tuesday's matches both lasted just under two hours in duration but took the best part of six hours to complete after two rain delays -- one lasting three hours.

The weather interruptions forced Rafael

Nadal and Novak Djokovic's quarterfinals to be pushed back until Wednesday, drawing in a deafening chorus of boos from the Paris crowd.

"I feel extremely privileged to be in a second semi-final at Roland Garros," said Babcsinszky, whose run to the last four two years ago was ended by Serena Williams in three sets.

"It was extremely difficult today. There was fine weather, then rain, wind and a sandstorm."

"I had to stay concentrated. I am sorry for the crowd but happy for me."

Ostapenko became the first Latvian woman to reach the last four of a Grand Slam after toppling former world number one Wozniacki.

"I'm really happy, I cannot believe it still," said Ostapenko.

"I had to stay aggressive. I was missing sometimes but in the end it worked out. It will be really great to play here when it will be my birthday. I hope I can enjoy it."



Denmark's Caroline Wozniacki cuts a frustrated figure during her quarterfinal defeat against Latvia's Jelena Ostapenko in the French Open in Paris on Tuesday. PHOTO: REUTERS

'Taskin can be express'

West Indies fast bowling legend and current Bangladesh bowling coach Courtney Walsh had a chat with the International Cricket Council (ICC) and spoke about the youngsters in the current Bangladesh set-up, the culture shock when he first arrived and about how he deals with the youngsters. Here are some excerpts from that interview.

On the reception he received after being appointed Bangladesh's bowling coach:

They [the youngsters] have been very good. The players and the coaching staff welcomed me with open arms. Everyone has been very helpful; I'm just trying to pass on the knowledge that I have. I want to help them wherever I can, and to have a chance to work with the Bangladesh team that's full of talent and has been tremendous. I'm enjoying it, because at the end it's the game that I will love till I'm alive.

On whether the players were overawed to see a legend like him:

I wouldn't say overawed is the right word. Everyone was just happy that I was a part of their set-up. Every now and then, some of the young cricketers would try and pick my brain, which was very good. For me, I just want to work with them to make sure they develop their cricket and we get better as a squad and as a unit.

I help everybody as much as I can but obviously I try and play a part in terms of fast bowling. I'm hoping we can find some fast bowlers -- we have some very talented ones and we want them to get them to where we want them to be in a couple of months.

On whether he jokes around or is a strict disciplinarian with the youngsters:

I'm strict, I joke around, I relax. I try to get as relaxed as I can because I think that's the best way of getting the best out of them. But if things are not going the way they're supposed to be going, then I will let them know. I do as much as I can to ensure they have got a disciplined approach to what needs to be done and stay focused on the job.

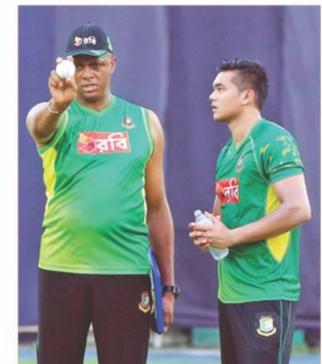
His biggest challenge after coming in: My biggest challenge, I think, has so far been the cultural stuff. In terms of making sure they understand what I'm saying. It's good that I identified the language barrier quickly. I get help from some of the guys who translate or speak to the young guys to let them know what's happening, so that there is a common understanding on what we're trying to do.

On bowling in pairs, like he did with Curtly Ambrose:

Yes, that's the stand that I keep telling everybody -- that fast bowlers hunt in pairs. All good bowlers hunt in pairs. If you look at the history of cricket, there's Warne-McGrath, Holding-Roberts, Marshall-Garner, Lillee-Thomson, Akram-Younis... This is just to name a few. Every team had those types of bowlers who hunted in pairs.

It's something I speak to them about and we're working towards it. It doesn't have to be two fast bowlers -- two spinners would do too.

On whether he has identified a 'hunting pair' in Bangladesh:



There's a lot of talented cricketers around. Young Taskin [Ahmed] and Mehedi [Hasan] are there. Shafiq [Islam] and Rubel [Hossain] are still around. The captain [Mashrafe Mortaza] has obviously just retired from T20s but he's still a very good bowler. And young Mustafizur [Rahman].

If he and Taskin can build up a relationship in 10 years, work together in pairs as two seamers, and if Mehedi can come along and join them, it will be great. They know what they have to do and are working towards it and also building their own personal game.

On whether the next task for Bangladesh is to find an express fast bowler:

It is tough. It's not a small task but I think we have the ability -- Taskin is one such guy who has the potential and the possibility of doing that. It's just work in progress with him, we have to see how we can best develop him and his skills.