Star
DHAKA SUNDAY AUGUST 9, 2026, SRABAN 25, 1433 BS
SPORT

What to WATCH

SONY SPORTS 1
SLC XI vs India
Day 3 of 3-day match
Live from 10:30 am

T SPORTS
Futsal League Bangladesh
Fakir FC VS BKSP FC (Women)
Live from 7:00 pm
Fakir FC VS BKSP FC (Men)
Live from 9:15 pm

TEN CRICKET
The Hundred
Live from 7:30 pm

Darwin warm-up raises alarm

SPORTS REPORTER

It took a little over two days for Bangladesh's batting frailties to be exposed in Australia as the visitors were bowled out for just 54 in their second innings, suffering an innings-and-38-run defeat to the Cricket Australia XI in their lone three-day warm-up fixture at the DXC Arena in Darwin yesterday.

Australian rookie pacer Campbell Thompson, who had played only one first-class match before this game, tore through Bangladesh's batting line-up on the final day, finishing with remarkable figures of 8-25. The visitors lasted only 17 overs after resuming on 19 for two.

The result was hardly surprising given Bangladesh's struggles throughout the match. The Tigers ended the second day 73 runs behind the CA XI's first-innings total of 355, needing a substantial batting effort to avoid defeat.

While No. 7 Mehidy Hasan Miraz's unbeaten 109 helped Bangladesh reach 263 in the first innings, there was no resistance in the second. Shadman Islam (31) and Najmul Hossain Shanto (37) had made useful contributions earlier, but the second innings collapsed like a house of cards, producing only one double-digit score -- opener Tanzid Hasan Tamim's 22.

Bangladesh's inability to handle both pace and spin remained a concern. Off-spinner Corey Rocchiccioli claimed 6-83 in the first innings, while Thompson exploited the conditions in the second. The manner of the dismissals was also concerning and could not be attributed solely to the bowlers. Experienced batters Mushfiqur Rahim, Mominul Haque and Shanto struggled against Thompson's swinging deliveries, while Soumya Sarkar edged behind.

> **I think we let ourselves down with the bat in this practice match. And you look at how we got out and it wasn't nice... Disappointing match, but we move on and we look forward to the Test match.**
>
> Bangladesh head coach **Phil Simmons**

Head coach Phil Simmons acknowledged the batting failures but remained hopeful that the team could address them before the first Test, beginning at Marrara Stadium in Darwin on August 13.

"Yeah, I think the three days that we've had and working on things, I think they've been very good. I think we let ourselves down with the bat in this practice match. And you look at how we got out and it wasn't nice," Simmons said.

Bangladesh also failed to capitalise with the ball after reducing the CA XI to 139 for five on Friday, as Teague Wyllie's 130 and Jake Duran's 76 helped the hosts recover to 355.

The obvious question now is: if Bangladesh struggled this badly against a Cricket Australia XI that did not feature any of Australia's established international bowlers, what awaits them against the likes of Pat Cummins, Mitchell Starc, Josh Hazlewood and Nathan Lyon in the Test series?

"I trust that the guys are going to put in the work over this next three days to get us where we want to be for that Test match. Disappointing match, but we move on and we look forward to the Test match," Simmons added.

After waiting 23 years for a Test series in Australia, Bangladesh now have just three days to address the batting flaws exposed in Darwin. The warning signs could hardly be clearer.



Campbell Thompson celebrates after trapping Najmul Hossain Shanto lbw for an eight-ball duck, as Cricket Australia XI thrashed Bangladesh by an innings and 38 runs in the lone three-day warm-up game in Darwin yesterday. The Tigers were bundled out for just 54 in their second innings early on the final day, raising further concerns over their batting ahead of the two-Test series against Australia, which begins in Darwin on August 13.

PHOTO: CRICKET AUSTRALIA

When does the action begin?

With the FIFA World Cup now behind, Europe's footballing giants are ready to get into regular action. The continent's top five leagues are set to return one after another, with LaLiga leading the way. The Premier League and Ligue 1 follow before Serie A joins the action, while the Bundesliga completes the return of the big five at the end of the month. Before the league campaigns settle into their familiar rhythm, traditional curtain-raisers will offer the first taste of silverware for the new season.

LALIGA
League Starts: August 15, 11:30pm, Alaves vs Getafe
Defending champions: Barcelona
Supercopa de Espana: January 2027

PREMIER LEAGUE
League Starts: August 22, 1:00am, Arsenal vs Coventry City
Defending Champions: Arsenal
Community Shield: August 16, 8:00pm, Arsenal vs Manchester City

LIGUE 1
League Starts: August 22, 12:45am, Marseille vs Strasbourg
Defending champions: Paris Saint-Germain
Trophee des Champions: August 17, 12:45am, PSG vs Lens

SERIE A
League Starts: August 22, 10:30pm, Inter Milan vs Monza; Udinese vs Como
Defending champions: Inter Milan
Supercoppa Italiana: January 2027

BUNDESLIGA
League Starts: August 29, 12:30am, Bayern Munich vs Stuttgart
Defending champions: Bayern Munich
DFL-Supercup: August 23, 12:30am, Bayern vs Dortmund

UEFA SUPER CUP
Match Date: August 13, 1:00am Bangladesh time, PSG vs Aston Villa
** Before the major European league phases get fully underway, the traditional European curtain-raiser will see the continent's heavyweights collide. The match, to be held at the Red Bull Arena in Austria, will see defending Champions League winners PSG take on Europa League holders Aston Villa for the first continental silverware of the season.

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE
League Phase: September 8-10
Defending champions: PSG
** The revamped UEFA Champions League returns to action shortly after the first international break of the season.

UEFA EUROPA LEAGUE
League Phase: September 16-17
Defending Champions: Aston Villa
Following the Champions League, the UEFA Europa League will kick off its own league phase the following week.

** All fixtures in Bangladesh Time.

Messi's father Jorge passes away

REUTERS, *Buenos Aires*

Jorge Messi, the father of football star Lionel Messi, died on Friday night at the age of 68 at a medical clinic in the Argentine city of Rosario after a long illness, the Argentine footballer's family confirmed to Reuters.

Jorge spent his final months alternating between a medical centre in Rosario and his home, accompanied by his wife Celia and his children Rodrigo, Matías and María Sol, the family said.



Lionel Messi spent time with his father after the World Cup before rejoining his club, Inter Miami, for whom he returned to action a week ago.

Jorge closely accompanied his son Lionel throughout his career, beginning with his early years at Barcelona. He acted as a crucial pillar of support and, for several years, served as his representative.

"I always needed my dad's approval, ever since I was a kid. After every match, I'd ask him what he thought of how I played," the global star said previously.

During the World Cup, the captain of Argentine experienced mixed emotions after scoring a hattrick in the opening match against Algeria, breaking down in tears while celebrating his first goal. Later, Messi explained that his tears were due to "something unrelated to football" after going through "a few difficult, complicated days."

Days later, the family issued a statement regarding Jorge's "health situation", informing the public that he was undergoing medical treatment.

Maradona's 'Hand of God' ball heads to US auction

AFP, *New York*

The soccer ball that Diego Maradona used to score his infamous "Hand of God" goal during Argentina's win over England in the 1986 World Cup is expected to sell for $10 million at a US auction this month.

Maradona's goal in the quarter-final match at the Estadio Azteca saw him punch the ball past the England goalkeeper, with the South Americans ultimately winning 2-1.

After the game, the Argentine star said his goal was scored "a little with the head of Maradona and a little with the hand of God." His nation went on to win the World Cup.

Heritage Auctions, based in Texas, expects the ball will sell for eight figures when it goes under the hammer from August 21 to 23, with a $2.5 million opening bid.

"I think it's easily the most historic ball in the realm of soccer," Dan Imler, vice president of sports at Heritage Auctions, told AFP.

He noted it is also the ball that Maradona used, in the same match, to score the so-called "Goal of the Century" in which he dribbled past several English defenders before finishing past the goalkeeper.

"Both of the goals scored are just so iconic, so memorable," Imler said.

The jersey that Maradona, who died in November 2020, wore during the Argentina-England clash currently holds the record for the most expensive soccer shirt -- standing at $9.3 million.

'Warrior Bruno eager to make history'

AGENCIES



Bruno Guimaraes has arrived at Arsenal with a simple ambition: to win trophies, make history, and leave a legacy at the Premier League champions.

The Brazil midfielder completed his move from Newcastle United on Saturday for a reported fee of £75 million ($101.2 million), signing a long-term contract with Arsenal ahead of their title defence.

At 28, Guimaraes believes he is at the right stage of his career for a new challenge, and he sees Arsenal as the perfect place to take it on.

"I'm at the point of my life where I need a challenge like this. I want to win trophies, I want to make history and I think I'm in the right place to do it. I'm so excited to start," Guimaraes told Arsenal's media channels.

The Brazilian spent four-and-a-half seasons at Newcastle, becoming captain and helping the club end a 56-year wait for a major trophy by winning the 2025 League Cup. He also played a key role in Newcastle twice qualifying for the Champions League.

But Guimaraes is now looking beyond what he has already achieved.

"It's massive what I have done so far, but I want more. I want to win for Arsenal. I want to win more trophies in my career," he said.

Guimaraes is also relishing the chance to play alongside Declan Rice and a midfield he considers among Europe's best.

"Rice sent me a message: 'Come here and please no more fights, now we're friends!' I was happy he messaged me," he said.

"In my point of view, [the Arsenal midfield] is one of the best in Europe. Everyone is an amazing player."

Arsenal sporting director Andrea Berta believes Guimaraes can strengthen the heart of Mikel Arteta's team, with his ability to operate both as a defensive midfielder and a box-to-box player.

For Guimaraes, however, the task is clear.

"I can pass the ball, run a lot and play like a warrior, I'll never give up," he said. "I will try to help the team ... sometimes I can score some goals and hope to make everyone very, very happy here."

And he has one particular Arsenal great in mind as he begins his new chapter.

"Of course, Gilberto Silva. I love him as a player," Guimaraes said. "I hope I can follow his history here and make myself one of the very good players at Arsenal in history."

His ambition, ultimately, is to ensure his name remains at the club long after he leaves.

Arsenal kick off their season against Manchester City in the Community Shield next Sunday, before starting their title defence against newly-promoted Coventry five days later.



Bangladesh Police FC players and officials pose for a photograph at Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport in Dhaka yesterday before flying to Amman, where they will face Syrian Premier League champions Al-Ittihad Ahli in the preliminary round of the AFC Challenge League, Asia's third-tier club competition, on Tuesday. It will be Police FC's first appearance in a continental competition after they finished fourth in last season's Bangladesh Football League. Fortis FC will also make their continental debut on Tuesday when they host Kyrgyz Premier League runners-up Muras United at Bashundhara Kings Arena.

PHOTO: BANGLADESH POLICE FC