

Absent minded

REUTERS, Bridgetown

West Indies vice-captain Ramnaresh Sarwan, who briefly took charge of the team when Brian Lara fell ill on Saturday, said that his teammates had to remind him to set the field.

"My only experience was captaining the Guyana under-19 team," said Sarwan on Sunday after making an unbeaten 58 to keep the West Indies alive in the fourth series.

"(Teammate) Chris Gayle said to me, 'there are a few gaps in the field'. Then I realised that I am the one who is supposed to actually set the field.

"It was strange because I was looking for my team mates to help me," he said. "I'm used to somebody else setting the field and being told where I have to go."

Asked if he had been groomed for the role by fellow Guyanese and former captain Carl Hooper, Sarwan replied: "Actually, I haven't spoken to Carl for a long time and I don't even know where he is."

Winning start for Scots

AFP, London

Scotland made a dramatic debut in the National League on Sunday when they pulled off a four-wicket win over Durham at the Riverside.

Off-spinner Majid Haq was the man of the moment as he took 4-36 to leave the hosts on 167-7 at the end of their innings before the Scots, who have signed up Indian Test star Rahul Dravid for later in the season, reached their target with four balls to spare.

At The Oval, Graham Thorpe, who wants to return to international cricket, gave the selectors a timely nudge with 58 as Surrey beat Warwickshire by 25 runs.

Opener Nick Knight, who had recently announced his retirement from the international game, hit a six and 13 fours in his 105 as Warwickshire made 256 off 43.1 overs in reply to the home side's 281 for eight.

Ramesh replies

FROM PAGE 13

Tamil Nadu the upper hand against a strong Bombay bowling attack which includes pacemen Ajit Agarkar and Avishkar Salvi, who played in the recent triangular one-day series in Dhaka.

Sridharan Sriram chipped in with a valuable 82-ball 26 and S. Badrinath scored a breezy 42 to get their team within 37 runs of Bombay on course to taking a handy first innings lead.

PCB expects India in Feb next year



AFP, Lahore

Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chief Lieutenant General Tauqir Zia said Monday he hoped India's team would visit Pakistan in February as both countries progressed towards normalised relations.

"We are planning to host India in February 2004 and we have approached the International Cricket Council in this regard," Zia told reporters here on his return from Dubai, where he met his Indian counterpart, Jagmohan Dalmiya, on Saturday.

"(The) Indian cricket board is sincere in resuming the cricketing ties and is more than willing to send its team to Pakistan, but it needs its government's clearance," the PCB chief said.

Officials and observers on both



PHOTO: AFP

New Zealand's Jacob Oram tries to sweep as Romesh Kaluwitharana watches during the second Test in Colombo yesterday.

Even going at Kandy



AFP, Kandy

New Zealand's batsmen softened Sri Lanka's spin bowlers with a valiant display on the third day of the rain-hit second and final cricket Test here on Monday.

Jacob Oram hit a career-best 74 and Mark Richardson and Daniel Vettori contributed 55 apiece as the tourists recovered from a precarious 11-3 late on Sunday to make 305 in their first innings.

Sri Lanka closed the day at 94-2 in reply in a match headed for a draw after the entire first day's play and the first two sessions of the second day were cancelled due to the slushy outfield at the rain-ravaged Asgiriya Stadium.

Former captain Sanath Jayasuriya was unbeaten on an aggressive 53, while his successor Hashan Tillakaratne was on 10.

The third day was marred by a sickening on-field collision between Vettori and Sri Lanka's Marvan Atapattu following a successful run out attempt by the fielder.

Atapattu's face hit Vettori's helmet and both players were sprawled on the field for several minutes before an ambulance came on to the arena and rushed them to hospital.

Vettori injured his left ankle when he slumped to the ground, while Atapattu suffered concussions and bruises on the face, according to the medical staff who attended the players.

"Both players are under observation in hospital," said Sri Lankan team manager Ajit Jayasekera. "I can't say yet how serious the injuries are."

Initial reports suggest the injuries may keep both players out of the limited-overs tri-series between New Zealand, Pakistan and Sri Lanka starting on May 10.

The Kiwis scored 96 runs from 41 overs in the extended 150-minute morning session to crawl from their overnight score of 75-4 to 171-5 by lunch.

Left-handed Richardson batted for almost four hours to make 55 before he was snapped up at short-leg by Kumar Sangakkara off young leg-spinner Kaushalya Lokurachchi.

It was Richardson's second half-century of the series, having made 85 in the drawn first Test at Colombo last week.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the third day of the second and final cricket Test between Sri Lanka and New Zealand at the Asgiriya Stadium on Monday:

NEW ZEALAND: First innings (over-

night 75-4)

Richardson c S'kara b L'rachchi	55
Horne c Kaluwitharana b Vaas	1
Fleming lbw b Nissanka	0
Sinclair lbw b Vaas	3
Strycs Tillakaratne b M'tharan	32

Oram c Kaluwitharana b L'rachchi	74
Hart lbw b M'tharan	31
Vettori run out	55
Wiseman b M'tharan	7
Tuffey c Jayawardena b Nissanka	15
Bond not out	10
Extras: (b-3, lb-7, nb-7, w-5)	22
Total: (All out in 111.5 overs)	305

Fall of wickets: 1-6, 2-7, 3-11, 4-71, 5-

109, 6-189, 7-222, 8-237, 9-271

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Vaas	22	8	48	2
Nissanka	16.5	5	41	2
M'tharan	34	10	90	3
Jayasuriya	8	0	24	0
Dharmasena	15	5	40	0
L'rachchi	16	5	52	2

SRI LANKA: First innings

Sangakkara c Hart b Tuffey	10
Jayasuriya not out	53
Jayawardena c Hart b Oram	15
Tillakaratne not out	10
Extras: (lb-5, nb-1)	6
Total: (For 2 wickets in 28 overs)	94

Fall of wickets: 1-30, 2-69

To bat: Atapattu, Kaluwitharana,

Murali Tharan, Dharmasena,

Lokuarachchi, Vaas, Nissanka

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Tuffey	8	4	16	1
Bond	9	2	32	0
Oram	5	0	11	1
Wiseman	6	0	30	0

Venus does it again

AFP, Berlin

Venus Williams' future looks more uncertain than ever after her decision to withdraw from this week's 1,262,000-dollar German Open with a pulled stomach muscle.

It is the second time within a few days that the elder Williams sister has pulled out of a big money tournament, because during last week's tournament in Warsaw she decided to withdraw from the Italia Masters in Rome which starts next Monday.

It means that the former world number one has played in only four WTA Tour events all year, and still has not won a title in more than eight months.

The 22-year-old American may now go into the French Open in Paris in three weeks time less well prepared for a Grand Slam tournament than ever before - if, that is, she has recovered at all.

"It is not good when it is an abdominal strain," said Venus, meaning that such ailments can take a long time to get right. "It needs more time but it's not my job to sit at a desk."

This reference may well be an attempt to answer gossip that she is now more interested in her interior design business than in her tennis.

After suffering one of the worst defeats of her career, to compatriot Meghann Shaughnessy at the Nasdaq-100 Open in Miami in March, Venus immediately announced she was taking a month off.

Lara, Sarwan

FROM PAGE 13

The plucky fast bowler batted for 66 minutes for an unbeaten 20, but lost his batting partners, Vashret Drakes for 11 and Jermaine Lawson for one.

MacGill claimed both wickets to finish with 4-107 off 39.5 overs while Jason Gillespie, bowling with immaculate control, captured 3-31 off 21 overs.

Australia have already retained the Frank Worrell Trophy after wins in the opening two Tests and a victory here will ensure they take over from South Africa at the top of the ICC Test Championship.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard after the fourth day of the third Test between the West Indies and Australia at Kensington Oval on Sunday:

AUSTRALIA: First innings 605 for 9 declared (S Waugh 115, R Ponting 113, D Lehmann 96, J Lawson 3-131, O Banks 3-204)

WEST INDIES: First innings 328 all out (Gayle 71, Smith 59, Sarwan 40, MacGill 4-107, Gillespie 3-31)

WEST INDIES: Second innings

Gayle st Gilchrist b MacGill 56

Smith lbw b Lee 5

Ganglbw b Lee 6

Sarwan not out 58

Lara not out 41

Extras: (b-6, lb-13, nb-2) 21

Total: (For 3 wickets in 72 overs) 187

Fall of wickets: 1-14, 2-31, 3-94

Bowler	O	M	R	W
McGrath	16	4	30	0
Gillespie	15	5	23	0
MacGill	17	4	39	1
Lee	11	4	38	2
Bichel	6	1	22	0
Ponting	2	0	6	0
Waugh	4	1	6	0
Lehmann	1	0	4	0

MSC stay afloat

FROM PAGE 13

The tweaker scored a fine 63 batting at number ten in the first innings. He also captured four wickets for 79 runs.

SCOREBOARD

Final scorecards of the two GrameenPhone Premier Cricket League matches played at different venues yesterday:

Mohammedan vs Brothers Union

Venue: FCS

MOHAMMEDAN SC: First innings 294-8

dec (Nafees 70, Sandeep 70, Tushar 50,

Mustadrir 4-42).

BROTHERS UNION: First innings 204

all out in 57.2 overs (Halim 68, Sanjay 37;

Naimur 7-64, Arif 3-41)

MOHAMMEDAN SC: Second innings

200 for 4 dec. in 48 overs (Nafis 46, Aftab

41, Tushar 56 not out; Sohail 2-29)

BROTHERS UNION: Second innings

Salahuddin b Ashiq 15

Shahriar c Aftab b Arif 44

Sanjay c Jashim b Arif 7

Halim b Hasibul 24

Mosaddek c Arif b Ashiq 22

Mostakim b Hasibul 0

Shahnewaz b Hasibul 4

Emon lbw b Hasibul 0

Sohail c Arif b Jashim 1

Mustadrir c Anwar b Hasibul 8

Mehdi not out 0

Extras: (b-1, lb-1, nb-2, w-1) 5

Total: (All out in 44.3 overs) 130

Fall of wickets: 1-35, 2-62, 3-73, 4-112, 5-

113, 6-120, 7-120, 8-121, 9-130

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Hasibul	11	2	40	5
Ashiq	9	2	19	2
Minhazul	5	1	23	0
Naimur	11	2	24	0
Arif	8	2	22	2
Jashim	0.3	0	0	1

Result: Mohammedan SC won by 160 runs.

Man-of-the-match: Naimur Rahman (Mohammedan)

Abahani KC vs Uttara SC

Venue: DCS

ABAHANI: First innings 361 all out in

Emma sails into history

INTERNET, London

British yachtswoman Emma Richards has become the first woman and youngest person to complete a 29,000-mile round-the-world race.

The 28-year-old helmed the 60-foot racing yacht Pindar across the line in perfect conditions at 4.15 p.m. (9:15 p.m. British time), completing the eight-month round the world race.

She was welcomed by her parents Margaret and Bryan and hundreds of well wishers on the quayside.

The yachtswoman, from the Isle of Wight, said: "I cannot believe this is actually over. I have literally lived, eaten, breathed and slept this race."

"It only seems yesterday I set off and yet I have done 30,000 miles."

She said it was "probably the biggest challenge I will ever face in my life".

And after a celebratory meal with friends, family and other skippers, she added: "I did get too lonely and I have sworn never to do any more single-handed around the world races since I've finished this one."

Ms Richards admitted there had been "lots of bad moments" about the challenge.

"One of the worst would have to have been when I had to climb the main mast to replace the halyard that was broken (the rope that holds the biggest sail up).

"That was a pretty hair-raising moment."

She also survived a battering by what she described as "the perfect storm" just 250 miles from the end



PHOTO: INTERNET

Britain's Emma Richards aboard her yacht Pindar.

of the race..

Her vessel was hammered for 10 hours by a storm off the East Coast of the US in same area where the book and film The Perfect Storm were based.

"We had a pretty horrible low pressure system come through and it was right above the Gulf Stream where it intensifies the weather and the waves," she told BBC Radio 4's Today programme.

"It was a pretty hideous storm."

At the time, she called her shore team to say how Pindar had been "crashing from wave to wave", flinging her around the cabin and leaving her battered and bruised.

She told her team: "The waves have been picking me up and spitting me out."

That storm meant losing the third place she had held in the race's last leg.

But she remained philosophical about the outcome.

"It kept everything right on tenterhooks until the last moment, which was pretty cool," she said.

Back on dry land, Ms Richards - who originally hails from Helensburgh in Scotland - said: "I am looking forward to having a few beers with my family and friends and sleeping in a bed that does not move."

"Then I would love to come back to sailing as long as I have people with me next time."

Her next project is a two-person race from France to Brazil in November.

Athens passes test

REUTERS, Athens

They were not sports events. They were not Olympic events. They were not even Olympic test events.

But organisers of next year's Athens Olympics are holding their heads high after a series of high-profile European Union meetings in Greece, including a summit, went off without a hitch.

A two-day gathering of more than 40 European leaders in mid-April was the biggest event Athens has ever hosted and the verdict of most delegates and observers was that the Greek capital rose to the occasion.

"On the day before we were a bit worried, there was still a lot of work going on but then everything went quite smoothly," one Brussels-based delegate said after the EU summit.

Athens vice-mayor Theodore Skylakakis, in charge of the city's preparations for next year's Games, conceded that in Greece most work tended to get done when deadlines got tight.

"This is our disadvantage and advantage, we are very good towards the finish, we can do a lot when time is pressing," he said.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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CRYPTOQUIP

E J K S B W E Z C O W K C E C
R S Y H S X H I W R H ' R I N P
N X N P Z B Y H X O Y E Z C C

R O N P O J P S Y R I P N O I C .
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: INVESTORS IN
COMPUTER COMPANY GET VERY UNHAPPY
TRADING NEWS: "THE CHIPS ARE DOWN."

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: R equals S

The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals