

Now Sri Lanka the target of racist taunts

CRICINFO, undated

Racist crowd taunts at Australian grounds this summer have increased to include Sri Lanka, according to the Sydney Morning Herald.

The paper also said John Rhodes, the ICC's regional security chief, was punched by a spectator at Melbourne's Telstra Dome as the behaviour of supporters comes under even heavier scrutiny following derogatory remarks made to South Africa's squad throughout their tour.

The report said up to five spectators were ejected from the Adelaide Oval on Australia Day for calling the Sri Lankans "black...". The same description was yelled by Darren Lehmann, the South Australia captain, in a Brisbane dressing room after he was dismissed in a 2002-03 VB Series match against Sri Lanka, and he received a five-match suspension that ruled him out of the early stages of the World Cup. Indian supporters were also targeted at the Adelaide Oval during the 2003-04 tour.

Media soccer

SPORTS REPORTER

The Meril Cup Fourth Media Football Tournament began yesterday at the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

The Daily Jugantor, Channel i, Aker Kagoj, RTV, Bhorer Kagoj, Janakantha and Samakal won their respective group matches on the day while BDNEWS drew goalless with Daily Sangbad.

In the day's matches, Jugantor beat RTV 1-0, Channel i defeated Independent 3-1, Aker Kagoj beat Sangram 1-0, RTV beat The Daily Star 2-1, Bhorer Kagoj defeated Banglabazar Patrika 2-1, Janakantha outplayed BBC 8-1 and Samakal blanked Manabzamin 3-0.

DOHS can

FROM PAGE 12

But Bashar (17), choosing the wrong ball for his trademark pull against veteran left-arm spinner Enamul Haque, only reached the safe hands of Razzak at fine-leg. Mashud contributed team highest 41 while Enamul was the most successful DOHS bowler with 3-56.

National paceman Shahadat Hossain claimed two for 33 in his first match in the competition while Mahmud conceded 20 for his two wickets.

"Farhad actually snatched the match from us in the first session. It was impossible to chase down such a big total," said Mohammedan skipper Bashar after the match.

SCORES IN BRIEF

DOHS: 319-7 in 50 overs (Golam Rahaman 16, Nazimuddin 55, Farhad 94, Tikolo 43, Akram 24, Manjarul 34 not out, Razzak 20, extras 25; Alamgir 1-63, Monjurul 2-56, Monirul 3-56, Aftab 1-29).

MOHAMMEDAN: 198 all out in 41.1 overs (Hamman 34, Sandeep 22, Bashar 17, Mashud 41, Dhiman 29, Sabir 18, extras 15; Shahadat 2-33, Mahmud 2-20, Enamul 3-56, Manjarul 2-27). Result: DOHS won by 121 runs.

Crucial SA-SL

FROM PAGE 12

"Australia really bargained them last night," Smith said.

Sri Lanka, who went into that match without captain Marvan Atapattu who was suffering from back spasms, will make a final decision on his fitness on Tuesday morning.

TEAMS

SOUTH AFRICA (from): Graeme Smith (captain), Boeta Dippenaar, Jacques Rudolph, Herschelle Gibbs, Ashwell Prince, Justin Kemp, Mark Boucher, Shaun Pollock, Andrew Hall, Johan van der Watch, Charl Langeveldt, Johan Botha, Dale Steyn.

SRI LANKA (from): Marvan Atapattu (captain), Sanath Jayasuriya, Jehan Mubarak, Upul Tharanga, Kumar Sangakkara, Tillekeratne Dilshan, Michael Vandort, Mahela Jayawardene, Chaminda Vaas, Russel Arnold, Muttiah Muralitharan, Akalanka Gamage, Nuwan Kulasekara, Malinda Bandara.

PCB to ask

FROM PAGE 12

under lights and report back to the ICC," he added.

Shaharyar also said former Test pacer Sarfaraz Nawaz had been asked to continue working with banned Shabbir Ahmed to further correct his action.

Shabbir was banned by the ICC in December for 12 months for having an illegal bowling action. An appeal was turned down earlier this month by a bowling review group set up by the ICC.

Shaharyar said if Pakistan found more improvement in Shabbir's action it would submit another appeal.



Cameroon striker Samuel Eto'o jumps in the air after his strike against Congo in the African Nations Cup in Cairo on Sunday.

Contrasting fortunes for minnows

AFP, Cairo



Cameroon wrapped up their African Nations Cup Group B campaign with a perfect three wins from three here on Sunday beating 10-man Democratic Republic of Congo 2-0.

However the sourness of defeat turned to joy for the Congolese as they edged out Angola, whose 3-2 victory over 10-man Togo left them worse off on goal difference by just one.

Cameroon face Ivory Coast - who they beat twice in the qualifiers - in the quarterfinals while DR Congo must try and contain Group A winners and hosts Egypt in matches scheduled for the Egyptian capital next weekend.

The Angolans - for whom Flavio scored two - can only blame themselves as they failed to beat DRC when their opponents were reduced to 10 men for 70 minutes of their previous match.

Togo finished a sorry campaign with no points and just two goals to their name, with star striker Emmanuel Adebayor having had a blinding row with coach Stephen Keshi and not even in the side on Sunday - though he was it was claimed injured.

For Keshi the glory of guiding Togo to their first ever World Cup finals is now a distant memory and the Nigerian will be extremely fortunate to survive in the post and indeed several Frenchmen have been linked with it already.

"My future is up to the federation," said Keshi.

"Life goes on in any case. It's only football."

Cameroon won at a canter with coach Artur Jorge having made sweeping changes from the side that beat Togo 2-0 and leaving just four from that starting line-up in place.

Two of those unfortunately for DRC were to score in two minutes of defensive lapses in the second-half as first Geremi unleashed a rasping shot from outside the area and then Samuel Eto'o - who else - grabbed his fifth of the campaign in the 33rd minute.

There were other chances which failed to find the back of the net with both Eto'o and Pierre Webo hitting the bar - the latter having been the victim of a vicious kick in the chest by the inappropriately named Gladys Bokese in the 65th minute which rightly earned him a red card.

DRC coach Claude Le Roy having taken his hat off to his side when they held out against Angola with 10-men for 70 minutes this time doffed it to his opponents, who he guided to the 1988 African Nations title.

"I take my hat off to Cameroon," said the 58-year-old Frenchman.

However he was none too happy at his team and especially Bokese for his sending off for kicking Pierre Webo in the chest.

"I am not proud of tonight. We have qualified through the back door."

"I am ashamed of what Bokese did. There is no room for that in football."

His Cameroon counterpart denied that his side had taken their foot off the pedal so as to ensure Angola did not make it.

"It is true that we did not finish the match well," said Jorge, who like Le Roy had a spell coaching French giants PSG and delivered the 1994 title.

"However if children have spent 80 minutes at full speed it is understandable they get tired."

"We were perhaps a bit fortunate with the two goals but we were determined to win this match."

Jorge refused to admit that the group had been a weak one.

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Angola may count themselves unfortunate not to be in the last eight as they had a legitimate first-half goal by captain Fabrice Akwa Maieco disallowed with television replays showing he was well outside when the ball was played through.

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with his chest before burying an angled drive past Ferdinando Coppola.

The Ascoli goalkeeper was picking the ball out of the net five minutes later as Juventus sliced open the home defence with a slick three-man move.

Camoranesi overlapped down the right to collect Alessandro Del Piero's lofted pass before crossing low to give Trezeguet an easy tap-in.

Trezeguet ensured he would take home the match ball when he converted Del Piero's left-wing cross.

Marco Ferrante reduced the deficit in the 31st minute with a right-footed half-volley.

At Lecce, Luis Figo broke the deadlock for Inter in the 72nd minute with a clinical strike after linking up with Esteban Cambiasso.

And Serbian midfielder Dejan Stankovic grabbed the visitors' second goal in stoppage time with a right-footed shot from the edge of the box.

10th over without further damage, thanks to Mahbub Alam's explosive 42 off just 26 balls. But they slumped to 75-4, losing three wickets in the span of 17 deliveries before Farhad Hossain came out as the rescuer.

The number seven, adjudged man-of-the-match, hammered seven fours and one six in his unconquered 74 off 94 balls. Farhad and Washkurni Palash (12), who shared 30 runs for the last wicket, needed five runs from the last over bowled by Mohammad Sharif and fittingly, the winning boundary came from Farhad when they were just two runs away from target.

SONARGAON: 253-7 in 49.5 overs (Shahriar 63, Ezaz 15, Manvinder 35, Ashraf 43, Sanchay 22, Sazzad 31, Rafique 11, extras 6; Arafat 1-28, Hanif 1-30, Rafiul 1-64, Sunny 3-53) Result: Sonargaon won by three wickets.

BIMAN: 257-9 in 50 overs (Sadat 106, Shahriar 12, Sanwar 233, Mushfiq 38, Sajjad 13, Mosharrif 30, extras 17; Shuvro 1-39, Palash 1-40, Kamrul 1-55, Kuraishi 4-41, Farhad 1-30)

VICTORIA: 260-9 in 50 overs (Mahud 26, Mahbub 42, Faruque 44, Kuraishi 18, Farhad 74 not out, Kamrul 15, Palash 12 not out, extras 20; Mushfiq 1-54, Mosharrif 4-40, Sharif 1-54, Sanwar 1-30) Result: Victoria won by one wicket.

SCORES IN BRIEF BROTHERS: 249 all out in 49.4 overs (Salahuddin 64, Hanif 89, Ayub 15, Arafat 21, Enamul 14,

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No money, no play

REUTERS, Giza

Democratic Republic of Congo will not play their African Nations Cup quarterfinal against Egypt if bonuses are not paid in time, coach Claude Leroy said on Monday.

DR Congo nearly boycotted their opening Group B game against Togo over unpaid bonuses for reaching these finals. A fresh row has now broken over cash for reaching the last eight against the host nation on Friday.

"If they are not paid, they will not play the quarterfinal," LeRoy told reporters at the team hotel near Cairo.

"That's absolutely sure, absolutely certain. There will be no quarterfinal, not even if you applied all the pressure in the world on them" said the Frenchman.

"But it's not blackmail. I've managed to keep them going this far but they won't go any further. But I think all of this will be sorted out today - or tomorrow at the latest."

L'pool, Man U handed FA Cup tie

AFP, London

Bitter Premiership rivals Liverpool and Manchester United were drawn together in the tie of the FA Cup fifth round made on Monday at the English FA headquarters here.

European champions Liverpool will host their north west rivals on either February 18 or 19 just a month after a fractious English Premiership encounter at Old Trafford, won 1-0 by the Red Devils thanks to Rio Ferdinand's last minute header.

USA blank Norway

AFP, Los Angeles

Taylor Twellman recorded a hat trick as the United States cruised to a 5-0 victory Sunday over Norway in an international friendly at the Home Depot Center.

Despite being the 2005 Major League Soccer MVP, Twellman is one of several youngsters trying to earn a place on the final roster that will take part in the upcoming World Cup in Germany.

After a lacklustre scoreless draw against Canada a week ago, Team USA looked sharp from the outset and jumped ahead in the fifth minute.

Twellman hauled in a floating pass from New England Revolution teammate Clint Dempsey and fired the ball past goalkeeper Espen Johnsen.

The 25-year-old Twellman struck again 16 minutes later when he headed in free kick by Todd Dunivant, who also assisted on defender Eddie Pope's goal in the 68th minute.

Twellman capped his stellar day with another header past Johnsen in the 78th minute.

Mikel prefers Chelsea move

INTERNET, undated

Nigeria striker John Obi Mikel insists he would rather join Chelsea than Manchester United, according to a BBC Radio Five Live report.

It was also announced that FIFA are to investigate claims that Mikel has received death threats. The Nigeria international is at the centre of a contract dispute between the two Premiership clubs, with United claiming to have signed the player and Chelsea insisting he wants to join them.

United announced the signing of Mikel, 18, who is currently playing in the African Nations Cup, from Norwegian club Lyn Oslo last April but the player later said he had been forced into the agreement.

It was alleged that he had received death threats after United announced the deal and the player appeared to go missing. He has since claimed he only wishes to join Chelsea and there have been claims that his contract with Lyn, which allowed the United, was forged.

United insist they have rights to the player and have counter-claimed that he has been forced into saying he wants to join Chelsea.

According to the report, FIFA will now decide what happens to Mikel. It also suggests United and Lyn could push for a transfer ban to be imposed on Chelsea.

But Mikel is still adamant he wants to join the current Premiership champions.

He said: "I think Chelsea is going to be the best place for me."

And he has already met Chelsea boss Jose Mourinho.

"Yeah, of course I met him - he is a nice man, a brilliant coach and a brilliant man."

Asked if he was finding the publicity surrounding the contract dispute between the two Premiership clubs stressful, he said: "It is difficult to be away from my family, but I just have to be strong and not lose my focus."

PRIMERA LIGA

Barcelona closer to league record

Football

AFP, undated

Barcelona ran out comfortable 3-0 winners at Real Mallorca to extend their lead at the top of the Spanish first division to 12 points and notch up their 14th straight league victory.

"It wasn't the best football we have played this season but there are sometimes nights like this. Mallorca didn't give us many chances but we didn't lose the ball very often and that was good enough," said Barca coach Frank Rijkaard.

The Spanish giants' latest triumph, with two goals from Argentine teenage wonder Lionel Messi after an opener by Ludovic Giuly, moved them to within one win of equalling the league record of 15 consecutive victories.

Giuly put Barca in front after 40 minutes, his shot from just inside the area coming after a long ball from Deco.

Mallorca were then reduced to

10 men when Eduardo Tuzzio got his second yellow card after 72 minutes and then Messi made the most of the advantage with two goals in the last 15 minutes.

The Catalan club added to their league lead after Valencia had to settle for a point with a 2-2 draw with Real Zaragoza.

Valencia left it late but two goals in the last eight minutes kept them in second place and extended their unbeaten streak to 10 games.

The 2004 champions were under pressure from the start and Zaragoza got a deserved goal two minutes into injury time at the end of the first half.

Sergio Garcia nipped between two defenders and picked up a Diego Milito pass before becoming the first person to get the ball past Valencia goalkeeper Santiago Canizares in six league games.

Ewerthon then got Zaragoza's second goal, his eighth of the season, the Brazilian finding the net from close range after 63 minutes.

Zaragoza were reduced to 10 men for the final nine minutes after David Generelo received his sec-

ond yellow card and Valencia managed to get back on level terms.

A stunning right foot strike by second half substitute Patrick Kluivert, who had only been on the pitch five minutes, was followed by Pablo Aimar heading an equaliser two minutes from time.

Real Madrid moved up to third by beating Celta Vigo 2-1 after Osasuna lost for the first time at home this season, going down 2-0 to Real Betis.

Robinho opened the scoring for Real after just 16 minutes but Mattias Lequi headed Celta back level five minutes before half-time.

Right back Cicinho then put Real ahead after 57 minutes, finding the net from close range.

Celta threw everything at the visitors in the final half hour.

They looked to have got an equaliser when a David Silva shot was fluffed by Real keeper Iker Casillas and appeared to cross the line but the referee Fernando Teixeira Vitienes didn't give a goal.

The win preserved Real's unbeaten record since the start of 2006.

Romario still going strong

Football

AFP, Rio de Janeiro

Former World Cup winner Romario on Sunday celebrated his 40th birthday by scoring his 950th career goal and insisted that his driving ambition remains to score 50 more times to reach his career goal of 1,000 marks.

Already in 2006 he has scored nine times in seven matches with Vasco da Gama, mostly in friendlies against smaller clubs set up by Vasco to help the striker reach the milestone.

Brazil's top scorer in 2005 with 22 goals in 31 games, Romario insists that it is his hunger to close in on the legendary Pele, who scored 1281 goals in 1363 matches, that drives him forward.

"My ambition is no longer to be the best on the pitch or to put on a

show but just to continue to put the ball in the back of the net," said the former PSV Eindhoven and Barcelona player.

Many still question how the

footballer known as "O Baixinho" ("the small one") has achieved such longevity considering his celebrated partying lifestyle which led to controversy clashes with Barcelona coach Johan Cruyff.

But his trophy cabinet tells it all. World champion in 1994, South American champion in 1989 and 1997, league winner in the Netherlands in 1989, 1991, 1992 and Spain 1994.

Romario first came to prominence with Vasco in 1985, and he returned to the team in 2000, after having played in Europe. He also played for Flamengo and Fluminense.

Despite speculation he was going to retire, Romario renewed his contract with Vasco earlier this month until the end of the year.

"I don't fear not finishing at the top," the 1994 FIFA World player of the Year replies when asked why he does not quit while he's winning.



ROMARIO

Pakistan edge ahead

FROM PAGE 12

morning session to go to lunch on a shaky 169-7.

The overnight pair of Sourav Ganguly and Yuvraj Singh put on 81 for the fifth wicket until Razaq finally broke through an hour and 20 minutes after the start.

Former skipper Ganguly, now fighting to keep his place in the Indian team, hit six boundaries in his 34 but then top-edged a hook off Razaq to Asif on the fine-leg fence.

Asif himself was rewarded for a steady opening spell when he trapped Yuvraj leg-before for a fluent 45 that included eight fours.

Three balls later, Razaq had second Test centurion Mahendra Dhoni edging a catch to the wicket-keeper as India slipped from a promising 137-4 to 165-7.

India's Irfan Pathan, who took a hat-trick in the opening over of the match on Sunday, followed his five-wicket haul with an aggressive 40 with the bat.

India were reduced to 181-8 before Pathan and Zaheer Khan helped the tourists close the gap by adding 56 for the ninth wicket.

Pathan, who hit six boundaries and a six, fell with the total on 237 when he skied Shahid Afridi to

Mohammad Yousuf at long-off.

Two runs later, Zaheer was caught behind off Asif for 21 to terminate the innings.

There was no indication of the problems to come when Ganguly and Yuvraj coolly negotiated the seaming ball in the first hour, which produced 62 runs off 12 overs.

Ganguly contributed 24 of those runs and Yuvraj's share was 20 as the two batsmen played each ball on merit and did not hesitate to punish wayward deliveries.

Ganguly crashed Akhtar past point and drove Asif twice through the covers. At the other end Yuvraj cut and drove Akhtar for two boundaries.

The first two Tests in Lahore and Faisalabad ended in high-scoring draws.

SCOREBOARD Scoreboard at stumps on the second day of the third and final cricket Test between Pakistan and India at the National Stadium in Karachi on Monday:

PAKISTAN: First innings 245 (Akmal 113, Razaq 45, Akhtar 45, Pathan 5-61, Rudra Pratap 3-66, Zaheer 2-75) INDIA: First innings (overnight 74-4)

Laxman b Asif 19

David Akmal b Asif 3

Schwabe c Akmal b Akhtar 5

Gendulkar b Razaq 23

Tendulkar c Asif b Razaq 34

Yuvraj lbw b Asif 45

Dhoni c Akmal b Razaq 13

Pathan c Yousuf b Afridi 40

Kumble lbw b Akhtar 7