



## Did U Know?

Chris Gayle scored 104 not out from 118 balls in the ICC Champions Trophy qualifying match against Bangladesh at the Sawai Mansingh Stadium on October 11, 2006. It was his thirteenth ODI century, first against Bangladesh.



**Michael Ballack**  
(Chelsea's German star)  
"I want to win a big trophy before I retire, and the Champions League is my aim. It is something I am looking to achieve."



**BTV & SET Max**  
ICC Champions Trophy  
Pakistan v Sri Lanka  
Live at 2:45 pm  
**ESPN**  
Sportscenter India  
Live at 8:30 pm

## Tigers return home today

**SPORTS REPORTER**  
Bangladesh national cricket team return home this morning from New Delhi after their campaign in the ICC Champions Trophy in India. The Tigers, who had high hopes to reach the eight-team final round, crashed to Sri Lanka and the West Indies in their first two matches to take an early exit. They, however, ended the qualifiers with a convincing 101-run defeat of Zimbabwe at Jaipur.

## Sad day for cricket: ICC

**AFP, Jaipur**  
It will be a sad day for cricket if Pakistani fast bowlers Shoaib Akhtar and Mohammad Asif are banned for taking drugs, a top cricket official said here on Monday. Akhtar and Asif returned home Monday after failing an initial dope test ahead of their team's Champions Trophy match against Sri Lanka here, but their fate will be decided only when the report of their 'B' sample comes. The duo face suspension if the 'B' sample also tests positive. "I think it will be a disappointing day for cricket if they are suspended. But it is all subject to the 'B' sample," International Cricket Council (ICC) chief executive Malcolm Speed said. "These tests were done at the initiative of the PCB (Pakistan Cricket Board) to ensure their cricket is free of doping and to ensure there are no illegal practices in the game," Speed said, adding the final decision on players would be made by the PCB. "There is a second test, the 'B' sample, which is imminent. If it is

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5

# Akhtar, Asif fail dope test, face 2-yr bans



AFP, Lahore

Pakistan recalled fast bowlers Shoaib Akhtar and Mohammad Asif from the Champions Trophy Monday after they tested positive for the banned steroid nandrolone. In the latest controversy to engulf Pakistani cricket, the team's best new ball pairing face bans of up to two years each for allegedly using the performance-enhancing drug. Akhtar and Asif were flying home on the first flight while Pakistan prepared to face Sri Lanka in their opening Champions Trophy match in Jaipur, India, on Tuesday without them. The 31-year-old Akhtar, who was looking forward to a comeback after a long injury layoff, protested his innocence and said he was "gutted" to miss the tournament. "I cannot say much at this time about what has happened but I just want to assure everyone that I am innocent of doing anything I shouldn't have," he said in his diary on the

Bigstarcricket.com website. Akhtar said Pakistan President Pervez Musharraf, the patron of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), had asked him not to make any detailed comments on the matter and he wanted to respect his wishes. "All I can say is that I have not knowingly taken any performance enhancing drugs and would never cheat my teammates or opponents in this way," said Akhtar in the diary. "I have always played the game fair and I give 100 per cent and do not feel that I need to take drugs to help my bowling. "I am gutted to be missing the Champions Trophy and I will return to Pakistan to see what has happened and what needs to be done. That's all I have to say for now." Akhtar's personal doctor also said the fast bowler was innocent of doping and added that he likely tested positive because of medicine he took to recover from injury. Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Nasim Ashraf told a news conference that the board carried out tests on 25 players and that the two positive results had now been reconfirmed by World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA)-accredited laboratory in Malaysia.

Pakistan had suspended the two players with immediate effect and withdrawn them from the Champions Trophy, Ashraf added. "The players will return home on the first available flight," he said. "What was my initial reaction? Disappointment," coach Bob Woolmer told a televised press conference in Jaipur. "We asked the (PCB) medical panel to give the players drug tests which they did at the end of September, so I take responsibility for that certainly," the English-born coach added. "I have never come across anything like this in my life.... The timing is not great, but if it's going to happen it happens." Captain Younis Khan added: "Sometimes people take something and it comes out in the test." Fellow pacer Navedul Hasan's test for banned substances also raised questions but no action

SEE PAGE 18 COL 2

# Kiwis fly on Flemo



AFP, Mumbai

New Zealand captain Stephen Fleming led from the front as the Black Caps snatched a dramatic 87-

run victory over South Africa in the Champions Trophy here on Monday. New Zealand, bowled out for 195 after being given first strike in the day-night international, fought back to dismiss the powerful Proteas for 108 in the most absorbing match of the tournament so far. Man-of-the-match Fleming held New Zealand's crumbling innings

together with a defiant 89, inspiring his teammates to make a spectacular comeback in the second session on a dusty wicket at the Brabourne Stadium. Seamer Kyle Mills, who opened the bowling in the absence of injured pace spearhead Shane Bond, grabbed three wickets with his first 19 deliveries to reduce South Africa to 25-3 by the eighth over. The lanky Jacob Oram then ripped through the middle-order as the Proteas plunged to 71-6, 42 of those runs coming from captain Graeme Smith. Off-spinner Jeetan Patel provided the finishing touches with 3-11 from 3.1 overs as New Zealand made a perfect start in Group B that also includes Pakistan and Sri Lanka. Left-handed Fleming, who opened the innings, remained rock-solid even as wickets tumbled around him, before he was ninth out in the 44th over close to his 10th one-day century. Brendon McCullum was the next highest scorer with 21 as New Zealand, playing their first one-day since March, struggled to come to grips with the dry wicket that restricted stroke-making. Fleming, who kept himself busy in the off-season leading Nottinghamshire in English county cricket, defied the South Africans for three hours under the sweltering heat and humidity. South African all-rounder Jacques Kallis marked his 31st birthday with 3-28 off seven overs. Left-arm spinner Robin Peterson picked up 2-34. Veteran seamer Shaun Pollock became the fifth bowler to claim 350 one-day wickets when he

SEE PAGE 18 COL 2



PHOTO: AFP

**GUIDING SINGLEHANDEDLY:** New Zealand captain Stephen Fleming plays a sweep shot as South Africa 'keeper Mark Boucher looks on during their Champions Trophy clash in Mumbai on Monday.

# TROPHY TREATS

**BISHWAJIT ROY** from Jaipur

The Pakistan team management had been skirting the doping issue for most of the day. In the morning the management shut their doors to avoid the media and they even skipped their scheduled morning training session. In the press conference, the host venue media-in-charge announced that the Pakistan authority had requested that no questions be asked about the issue. However that served only to create chaos in the room and understandably the first question Bob Woolmer was asked was about his reaction to the incident.

"Disappointed," was the Englishman's curt reply. And although he was repeatedly enquired about numerous issues regarding the players he refused to comment.

**A CONSPIRACY?** Members of the Pakistan press were quite vocal about the doping issue and many widely alleged that there had been a conspiracy against Pakistan in this case. They questioned Younis about whether this was 'sabotage' to his controversial appointment as captain for the tournament.

The main point that irked the journalists was why the PCB had waited until the eve of such an important match to disclose the findings, when internal tests had been carried out some three weeks ago.

**TIGERS SMELL AN OLD RAT**

The Bangladesh cricket team was shocked by the incident of positive doping tests of two Pakistani fast bowlers.

And interestingly the incident brought back the memory of their close contest in the Peshwar Test in 2003 where Pakistan pacer Shoaib Akhtar destroyed Bangladesh's hope, picking up three quick wickets after a break. "They way he was fired up after

the break seemed dubious to us. We had talked about it inside the team," said a player on condition of anonymity.

On the other hand Bangladesh team manager Khaled Mahmud informed that Bangladesh players were not in selection for the ICC's random drug testing during the preliminary round matches of the ICC Champions Trophy.

"It's really disappointing for cricket lovers. There is a big role for the team physio in this area as he has to use some special medicine to heal the injuries," said Mahmud over telephone from Delhi where the Tigers were enjoying shopping for the coming Eid.

Bangladesh team will fly for Dhaka today.

**RUMOURS AROUND**

There was a whispering all day long about whether the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) are going to call-up new players to replace Shoaib Akhtar and Mohammad Asif both of who tested positive for doping.

There is also a rumour brewing about pacer Navedul-Hasan, as many thought that he also tested positive but the PCB steered clear of mentioning his name possibly for the sake of the first game today.

ICC Chief Executive Malcolm

SEE PAGE 18 COL 8

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PHOTO: AFP

**FALL FROM GRACE:** A file photo dated October 12 shows Pakistan fast bowlers Shoaib Akhtar (L) and Mohammad Asif walking together during a break in a practice match in Jaipur. The duo tested positive for performance-enhancing drugs and have been sent home.

# SL taking Pakistan seriously



AFP, Jaipur

Sri Lanka captain Mahela Jayawardene said Monday that Pakistan would not be easy to beat even in the absence of key pacemen Shoaib Akhtar and Mohammad Asif in a Champions Trophy match here. "I do not think their absence will make any difference and we are not taking them lightly. When teams have such problems they come hard at you," Jayawardene said on the eve of his team's Group B clash with Pakistan.

Asif and Akhtar were scheduled to return home Monday night after testing positive for drugs.

Akhtar is his country's premier fast bowler, having taken 165 wickets in 42 Tests and 208 in 133 one-day internationals.

"It is disappointing, but that is something the Pakistani cricket team and officials have to deal with. We are looking forward to the challenge," said the Sri Lankan captain.

"When teams have these kinds of problems they come hard at you. We have played Pakistan quite a few times to realise that. The match is as important for us as any other game."

Sri Lanka, joint winners in 2002 with India at home, qualified for the main draw in style as they won three

matches in a row, beating Bangladesh, Zimbabwe and the West Indies in the preliminary round.

"The guys worked hard in the first-round games and we are building up nicely," said Jayawardene.

"Out batting is okay. The bowling has been disciplined but still we have to improve in certain areas. The intensity is good and as a captain you cannot ask for more. We also have the advantage of playing in these conditions."

Left-handed Sri Lankan opener Upul Tharanga has been in good form, having slammed two centuries in three matches. Veteran Sanath Jayasuriya, Kumar Sangakkara and Jayawardene are

SEE PAGE 18 COL 6

# B samples also test positive

PTI, Islamabad

The second samples of fast bowlers Shoaib Akhtar and Mohammad Asif have also tested positive for banned drug nandrolone, Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) said later Monday.

PCB chairman Nasim Ashraf said the WADA-accredited laboratory in Kuala Lumpur, to which the samples were sent, had confirmed that the 'B' samples of the two cricketers also showed presence of the banned performance-enhancing drug.

"We had asked for a second test and unfortunately we have got the reconfirmation just a while back

SEE PAGE 18 COL 8

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