

PAKISTAN V WINDIES
First ODI
rained off

AFP, Rawalpindi

The first of five one-day internationals between Pakistan and the West Indies was abandoned here on Tuesday due to heavy rain.

Umpires Daryl Harper and Aleem Dar called off the match after finding a waterlogged field here following three days of torrential downpours.

The West Indian captain Brian Lara said his team would now focus on Thursday's second match in Faisalabad on Thursday.

"The weather wasn't great but we have to move on. The focus is now on the second match as the series move on," Lara said.

Pakistan won the three-match Test series 2-0.

Mittal buys

FROM PAGE 20
"Pramod Mittal is the new owner of CSKA."

Pramod Mittal, together with his brother Vinod Mittal, run the steel giant Global Steel Holdings (GSHL), who control 71 per cent of Bulgarian steel mill Kremikovtzi.

The pair are the younger brothers of Lakshmi Mittal, fifth in Forbes.com's list of world's richest people, with a net worth of \$2.5 billion.

The acquisition of the 30-times Bulgarian champions has increased speculation that a new coach will take the helm.

A club official, who wished to remain anonymous, told reporters that talks had been held with former England coaches Sven-Goran Eriksson and Bobby Robson.

CSKA coach Plamen Markov, who replaced Yesic in April, said he was uncertain of his future.

"I have no idea what will happen with me," he said. "It will be clear in the next few days."

CSKA are second in the standings with 37 points from 15 matches, two points behind bitter city rivals Levski. The Bulgarian championship will resume after the winter break.

Shoulder

FROM PAGE 20
last 16 of the Champions League but are struggling in Serie A where they are in 15th place.

Milan coach Carlo Ancelotti, whose team face Lille in their final Group H match on Wednesday, has nine members of his first-team squad out with injuries, including Brazilian keeper Dida and Italy midfielders Gennaro Gattuso and Massimo Ambrosini.

On Monday, Milan's chief executive Adriano Galliani said the club was considering signing a defender during the January transfer window. As well as Nesta, the experienced pair of Alessandro Costacurra and Giuseppe Favalli have both been ruled out for two months.

One Euro

FROM PAGE 20
last 16 of the competition and with nine first-team players on the injury list they will be forced to field a largely reserve side.

The club said in a statement that all fans who hold season tickets for the Italian Serie A season would be able to buy tickets for the Lille match for a euro.

Fans who have purchased special Champions League mini-season tickets would be able to buy an additional ticket for a friend at the token price.

Crowds are down significantly in Italy this season and Milan's Italian Cup tie against Brescia last month drew just 1,800 supporters to the vast venue.

While Carlo Ancelotti's Milan have little to play for on Wednesday, Lille are still fighting for a place in the knockout stage.

The French side will progress only if they win or draw in Milan, providing AEK Athens do not get a similar or better result against Anderlecht in Brussels.

Liverpool

FROM PAGE 20
people behind the scenes did not go down well with life-long Liverpool fan Moores who favoured the more hands-off approach of the Dubai consortium.

Parry appeared to suggest that in that respect, DIC was a more attractive offer.

"Already they (DIC) have demonstrated a full understanding of, and respect for, the club's heritage and values," added Parry.

"We also believe they share our passion for success. In particular, DIC believes in investing in the businesses it acquires. This is very important in terms of the proposed new stadium, which is key to plans for the regeneration of the local community.

"On the pitch, Liverpool remains focused on winning and, here again, this is all about doing a deal that gives us the long-term resources to do that."

The DIC is run by chief executive Al Ansari and owns the Madame Tussaud's Group and the Travelodge hotel chain.

If the deal goes through Liverpool will join the growing list of top English clubs such as Manchester United, Chelsea and Aston Villa passing into foreign ownership.



PHOTO: AFP

Vyacheslav Yersov of Kazakhstan on his way to clinching the gold in the 85kg category of men's weightlifting competition of the Asian Games in Doha yesterday.

More gold for China

AFP, Doha



An invincible China added seven more gold medals to its bulging bag of Asian Games titles Tuesday.

China tops the medals table with more in store when its world class gymnasts and badminton players spring into action.

Japan will be looking to capitalise on its strong showing in the pool, where the spoils have been split 9-7 in China's favour so far.

China tops the medals table with 46 gold midway through day four, from Japan's 12. South Korea has nine after adding two on Tuesday on the shooting ranges.

But it was again China's day, bagging five more gold from its sharp shooters and a gold piece from Li Meifeng in the women's cycling time trial and Cao Lei in the women's 75kg category of the weightlifting while Kazakhstan's Vyacheslav Yershov ambushed favourite Li Yong of China to win gold in the men's 85kg category.

Japan's best hope to close the gap is in the pool, although China topped five of the seven heats Tuesday morning.

Promising Korean schoolboy Park Tae Hwan is aiming to crash their party with his second gold of the Games. After winning the 200m

freestyle, he now has his sights set on the 400m, and plans to take home four gold in total.

But he will have Chinese rival Zhang Lin and Japan's Takeshi Matsuda to grapple with, both of whom were in blistering form in the relay on Monday.

Other gold in the pool comes in the men's 50m butterfly, where Japan's Takashi Yamamoto is favourite, 100m backstroke and 4x100m relay.

The women race over 100m breaststroke, with China's Ji Liping angling for a second gold of the Games, 50m freestyle and 4x200m freestyle relay.

While the medals should be split in the swimming, there is little doubt that China will dominate at the Aspire indoor arena where the individual gymnastics program gets underway.

China won eight of 14 gold at the world championships in October and has brought its entire winning team here.

In action Tuesday is Xiao Qin, the pommel horse world champion, Chen Yibing, the rings world champion, and women's world vault champion Cheng Fei.

More world records are on the cards in the weightlifting where four world marks have fallen so far these Games, three to China's Chen Yangqing and one to Thailand's Pawina Thongsuk.

Cao Lei, the world champion, completely outclassed the field in the women's 75kg category to hand the Chinese weightlifting team a ninth gold medal from a possible 10 Tuesday.

She missed the world record but set a new Asian Games record, with an aggregate of 272kg, beating the old record by 2kg.

Myanmar's Mya Sanda Oo took silver with a total of 250kg and Kim Soon Hee of South Korea was third.

On the shooting ranges, South Korea and Kazakhstan took three gold to China's five. South Korea's Son Hye-Kyung won the women's Double Trap individual medal and the Koreans won the overall Double Trap.

Kazakhstan took the 10m Running Target title.

The badminton team finals get underway with China, who haven't dropped a game so far, taking on Japan on the women's side and the Chinese men playing South Korea.

Meanwhile, China's world number four snooker player Ding Junhui teams with Tian Pengfei to take on Hong Kong's Marco Fu and Chan Wai Fi in the doubles finals at the Al-Sadd Sports Club.

Other medals Tuesday include the equestrian individual dressage, English billiards singles and the men's and women's bowling trials.

Cricket could be included in Asiad

AFP, Doha

Cricket has a chance of being included in future Asian Games, said the President of the Olympic Council of Asia here on Tuesday.

Sheikh Ahmad Al-Fahad Al-Sabah revealed there had been discussions regarding the introduction of the sport into the Games and he hoped that they would reach an agreement.

"It would be wonderful to have India and Pakistan and all the other Asian countries that play cricket competing at the Asian Games," said Sheikh Ahmad.

"We have started discussions on including it and they are ongoing."

Cricket was last seen at a major Games in the 1998 Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur but has not been included since despite the fact cricketing countries like England and Australia have been the last two hosts.

It made its one and only appearance at the Olympics in Paris in 1900 where in a two day match Great Britain -- represented by a touring team Devon and Somerset Wanderers -- beat France, whose team mainly consisted of members of the British Embassy.

The British received a silver medal while the French received a bronze and both also got statues of the Eiffel Tower.

Mirpur gets

FROM PAGE 17
Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) formally announced it yesterday after receiving an official ICC letter earlier on the day.

The board is expected to hold a brief opening ceremony before Sunday's match.

The fifth and final ODI between Bangladesh and Zimbabwe on Saturday will also be held here, which was not officially included in the itinerary.

ICC's Sri Lankan match referee Ranjan Madugalle had verbally given the BCB green signal to prepare for the last two matches after his inspection on December 1.

After BCB's decision to dispose of the famous Bangabandhu National Stadium -- which still holds its status as an international cricket venue -- for unknown reasons -- Bangladesh now has only one international ground in the capital.

The five other ICC recognised stadiums are: MA Aziz Stadium and Bir Shrestha Shahid Ruhul Amin Stadium in Chittagong, Narayanang Osmani Stadium in Fatullah, Shahid Chandu Stadium in Bogra and Bir Shresththa Shahid Matur Rahman Stadium in Khulna (only for ODIs).

Meanwhile, tickets for the last two ODIs will be available at different branches of City Bank in Dhaka. Hospitality Box tickets will cost Tk 2000, VIP Tk 1,000, Special Enclosure Tk 100 and gallery Tk 80.

Both sides are level on 10 points at the top of group G, with CSKA Moscow two points behind in third.

While Arsenal and Porto could play to a draw and both qualify, a victory for either - coupled with a CSKA victory over already eliminated SV Hamburg - could spell disaster for the losing side in the Portuguese city.

In group E Lyon will host Steaua Bucharest without the injured Florent Malouda, who is suspended.

With only bragging rights left in the group, Real Madrid will face Dynamo in Kiev knowing that whatever the score they will still finish second to Lyon.

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'Glad you made it' Inzy serves out Oval ban



CRICINFO, undated

At 10 past eleven on a hot and dry day at Sedgars Park in Potchefstroom, a Mercedes minivan pulls up a few feet away from the outdoor nets. As soon as its doors open, the TV crews make a beeline there from their vantage points. Sourav Ganguly gets out quietly, picks up his kitbag from the boot, and wheels in into the practice area.

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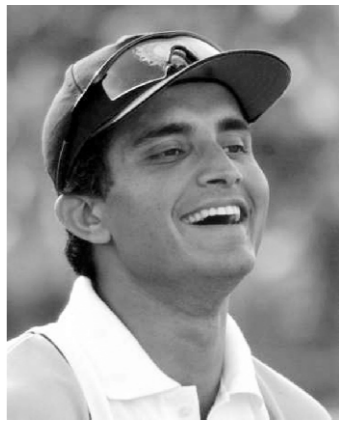
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David has just finished a small session with Frazer and Greg King throwing them down when he wanders across to meet the man he replaced as India's captain. They chat for a couple of minutes, both men gazing in the direction of the batsmen and bowlers engaged in the nets.



SOURAV GANGULY

Soon after, Ganguly breaks away to see to his equipment. The SG thigh pad comes out, and he puts his bat, gloves, pads and helmet on the grass in readiness for what will be his first experience of South African pitches in nearly four years. As he pads up, Irfan Pathan spots him and waves. Ganguly waves back. After nearly a year away from the limelight, he's back. Only time will tell if he still belongs.

"Welcome back, mate," says Chappell. "Glad you made it."

AFP, Karachi

Captain Inzamamul Haq returned to Pakistan's 15-man squad for the second of five one-day internationals against the West Indies after serving out a ban, selectors said Tuesday.

Inzamam was banned for four one-dayers for bringing the game into disrepute at The Oval in August, when he led Pakistan's forfeiture of the fourth Test against England in protest at a ball-tampering penalty.

The first match of the series was washed out in Rawalpindi on Tuesday, but it counted as the fourth game that Inzamam missed.

"We have been told that Inzamam has completed the ban so he is back to lead the team," chief selector Wasim Bari told AFP.

Bari said Shoaib Akhtar and Mohammad Asif would also be considered for the remaining matches after the new-ball pair won their appeals against bans for doping on Tuesday.

Akhtar was banned for two years and Asif for one last month after they tested positive for the banned steroid nandrolone.

SQUAD
Inzamamul Haq (captain), Younis Khan, Mohammad Hafeez, Imran Farhat, Yasir Hameed, Shoaib Malik, Mohammad Yousof, Kamran Akmal, Abdul Razzaq, Iftikhar Anjum, Umar Gul, Mohammad Sami, Navedul Hasan, Danish Kaneria, Abdul Rehman.

Akhtar, Asif win appeal

FROM PAGE 17
new-ball duo's defence that neither was advised on taking vitamin supplements, which may have led to positive tests for the banned steroid nandrolone.

Akhtar, 31, and Asif, 23, were banned from all cricket for two years and one year respectively by an internal Pakistani tribunal in November 1. Both denied taking any illegal substances.

The decision means both will now likely play in next year's World Cup in the Caribbean and ends fears that the career of Akhtar -- known as the Rawalpindi Express -- had reached the end of the line.

"I missed playing cricket for my country and now I hope that I will resume my career. The whole team had supported me and I am thankful to my teammates and every cricket lover who prayed for me," Akhtar told AFP.

"I am breathing again. My life was jolted no end by the ban. I can't describe the feeling.

"I was watching the Ashes on television and was all the time thinking when will I be back at the ground. I have already missed a lot of cricket through injury and now want to play cricket as soon as possible," said Akhtar.

Emerging star Asif said his family had been in turmoil since the dope test results were revealed in October, causing the pair to be sent home from the Champions Trophy.

"I am delighted to hear that I will be playing again. These two months have been the worst of my life and only today I resumed training," said Asif, adding he had lost six pounds through worry.

"I hope the bad days are over now. I badly want to play and it was only through the support of my captain, Inzamamul Haq, and coach Bob Woolmer that I kept myself going."

Inzamam, who has just served a four-match ban himself for bringing the game into disrepute during the fiasco of the abandoned Oval Test in August, congratulated both players and said they would "definitely strengthen Pakistan's bowling attack".

"When you play at your full strength your chances of winning increase and we look forward to their return," he said.

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) said it would not rush the pacemen into the five-match one-day series against the West Indies and would instead allow them to play domestic matches to gain match fitness.

The first match, in Rawalpindi, was washed out on Tuesday.

Appeals committee chairman Fakhruddin Ibrahim told reporters the team's management was to blame for failing to inform the two bowlers about vitamin supplements, which both had been taking to recover from injury.

"This appeal committee... holds that Shoaib Akhtar and Mohammad Asif will not be deemed to have committed a doping offence," said Ibrahim, a retired judge.

"The ban and punishment imposed by the earlier tribunal is hereby set aside as being contrary to the provision of laws."

The committee, also including former Test cricketer Haseeb Ahsan and doping expert Dr. Danish Zaheer, made its decision by a 2-1 majority, with Zaheer the dissenting voice because he wanted more tests on both players, Ibrahim said.

But the committee found it was "clearly, plainly evident that (neither) Shoaib Akhtar nor Mohammad Asif were ever warned or cautioned against taking supplements".

Asif was only told to stop taking the supplements when he told team physio Darryn Lifson about them in August 2006, Ibrahim said, and neither player was provided with any publication warning about their use.

PCB chairman Nasim Ashraf defended the handling of the doping episode, saying he did not expect any intervention from the International Cricket Council (ICC) or the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA).

The ICC had previously praised the board and the initial drugs tribunal for imposing the stiff penalties.

Aussies rise from ashes

FROM PAGE 17
attempted pull shot off Andrew Flintoff and Paul Collingwood took an outstanding catch running backwards, leaving the home team 33 for two but bang on the run rate.

Mike Hussey was promoted to No 4 ahead of the threatened Damien Martyn to join Ricky Ponting and the pair rattled along at five an over, putting on 83 runs in 76 minutes before Ponting fell to Ashley Giles for 49.

Martyn's Test future is in jeopardy after another cheap dismissal for five, but a sign of England's frustrations came when Michael Clarke got four overthrows from an overcooked throw by Pietersen to give him seven runs.

Hussey guided his team to victory with a hustling 61 not out off 66 balls and hit the winning runs as Australia reached 168 for four off 32.5 overs, with Clarke not out 21.

The Australians set up their run chase after skittling England for a meagre 129 in 73 overs, just five more than their lowest-ever total at the Adelaide Oval.

First innings double-century Collingwood fought a rearguard to remain unbeaten on 22 as England unravelled under the brilliant leg-spin bowling of Shane Warne, and poor shot-making.

Test cricket's greatest wicket taker claimed 4-49 off 32 overs -- 4-29 off 27 overs unchanged Tuesday -- to spark the English slide, with the tourists losing their last nine wickets for 60.

"The lads are bitterly disappointed because we gave it everything for four days but they played some fantastic cricket, but it just shows you that in Test cricket if you have one bad hour it can cost you the game," Flintoff said.

"It's going to hurt, this game, but we've got just over a week before the next one and personally, feeling like this and the way the lads are feeling -- I don't want to feel like this again so there's a big incentive for us."

Collingwood batted for 198 minutes and faced 119 balls for his stonewall innings and held out with James Anderson in a last-wicket partnership of 41 minutes and 54 balls.

After four days of just 17 wickets and 1,123 runs on a lifeless pitch, the match sprung to life with two compelling sessions as Warne ran the show, finally enjoying some assistance from the wearing wicket to take his Test career tally to 894 wickets.

"I bowled 85 overs in the game and I'm knackered to be honest, so the fingers are pretty sore," Warne said.

"But when you get that momentum going, the adrenalin starts going and I love being in those situations. I perform better in those situations than in others. I find something inside of me that keeps me going," Warne said.

Scoreboard
Scoreboard on the fifth and final day of the second Ashes Test between Australia and England at Adelaide Oval on Tuesday:

ENGLAND: First innings 551 for 6 dced (Collingwood 206, Pietersen 158, Bell 60; Clark 3-75)

AUSTRALIA: First innings 513 (Ponting 142, Clarke 124, Hussey 91; Hoggard 7-109)

ENGLAND: Second innings (59 for 1 overnight)
Strauss c Hussey b
Traar n e

34 Cook c Gilchrist b
Clark r k

9 Bell run out
(Clark e Warner e)

Collingwood not
o u t

22 Pietersen b
W a r n e

2 Flintoff c Gilchrist b
Lee

10 Jones c Hayden b
L e e

10 Giles c Hayden b
W a r n e