

Return of the conquerors

Sports Reporter

The victorious Bangladesh cricket team returned home yesterday after winning the seven-nation youth cricket tournament in Malaysia.

Foreign Minister A S M Mostafizur Rahman who is also the president of Bangladesh Cricket Control Board (BCCB) received the conquering cricketers along with the State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadeque Hossain and other Board officials at the ZIA last night.

Bangladesh team comprising lesser known and young cricketers beat a young Sri Lankan selection by 53 runs in the final of the meet on August 7.

It was a sweet revenge for Bangladesh who had earlier lost to the eventual runners-up in a league match, their only blemish in an impressive record of five big wins.

Skippers Naimur Rahman Durjoy was adjudged 'man of the tournament' while Javed Omar Belim Golla was declared man-of-the match in the finale.

Apart from Bangladesh and hosts Malaysia five other nations — Papua New Guinea, East and Central Africa, Sri Lanka, Denmark and Hong Kong took part in the nine-day meet.

Cricketers will have hardly any time to cool their heels as they will leave shortly for the Indian city of Hyderabad to take part in the Motin Uddovla Gold Cup cricket tournament.

Azhar in charge

NEW DELHI, Aug 8: Mohammed Azharuddin was on Monday named captain of the Indian cricket team for a four-nation one-day tournament in Sri Lanka next month, reports Reuter.

A real new offer for Maradona

BUENOS AIRES, Aug 8: Disgraced World Cup star Diego Maradona was on Sunday invited to take part in a motor-sport event here, reports AFP.

The 33-year-old Argentine international, who failed a drugs test at the World Cup, has been asked to co-pilot in a Tourist Class Race on September 11.

Driver Jorge Oyhanart made a second request for Maradona to compete in a race — this time at the Oscar Galvez track.

Should Maradona agree to race, he would act as one of two co-pilots in a car, which also has two drivers.

Oyhanart asked Maradona to compete several months ago, and though he agreed in principle, Maradona did not take up the challenge.

Of Colombian catastrophe

BOGOTA, Aug 8: Alcohol abuse by star player Faustino Asprilla was the root cause of Colombia's poor showing at the World Cup in the United States, Sunday's El Tiempo newspaper said here, reports AFP.

The newspaper, citing a source inside the Colombian World Cup delegation, also blamed coach Francisco Maturana for turning a blind eye to serious indiscipline in the squad.

One of the pre-tournament favourites, Colombia failed to reach the second round of the tournament.

Maturana, who joined Atletico Madrid as coach after the World Cup, submitted his official report on the side's US performance to the Colombian Football Federation three days ago.

El Tiempo, Colombia's most influential daily, said the report was "superficial and evasive".

The newspaper said on the day Colombia arrived in Los Angeles to prepare for the World Cup, Asprilla drank late into the night and arrived at the hotel in the early hours.

The paper said prior to and during the World Cup, alcohol was freely available to players, there were brawls between players, and women were allowed into players' hotel rooms.

Asprilla, who plays in the Italian league, was billed as one of the stars of the World Cup, but never matched his reputation.

Napoli director arrested

NAPLES, Italy, Aug 8: Italian club Napoli suffered a serious blow on Sunday when director Vincenzo Pinzzone was arrested on charges of possessing forged Italian Treasury certificates worth some 2.3 million dollars, judicial sources said, reports Reuter.

Pinzzone recently bought a 25 per cent stake in Napoli, a club which has been fighting to stave off bankruptcy for the last few months.



Action from yesterday's Star Premier Division football league match between Muktiyoddha Sangsad KC and Agrani Bank at the Dhaka Stadium. Muktiyoddha won 4-2. —Star photo

Muktijoddha, BU canter

Sports Reporter

Muktijoddha Sangsad retained while Brothers Union regained the winning touch notching victories in their respective Star Premier Division football league matches in emphatic style at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

The Federation Cup champions Muktijoddha Sangsad, who conceded an early goal bounced back with a 4-2 win over Agrani Bank to maintain their sole lead in the table with full six points from three matches.

In the rain-hit first half Muktijoddha came from behind to consolidate a 2-1 lead after conceding a 13th minute goal.

Ataur Rahman, the tall Muktijoddha defender, who was responsible for his side's early set-back, made amends when he restored parity by a spectacular header from a Mamun Joarder corner in the 26th minute.

The central defender earlier made a poor clearance and the ball went to Bank skipper Bachchu, who made no mistake to nod it home leaving the star-studded Mukti's stunned.

Rumi Rizvi Karim, the gifted midfielder, who came as a substitute of an off colour Arman, marked his appearance with a first time left-footer that rocketed into the net past a frozen Agrani Bank custodian Milan.

Mamun Joarder, who had a superb match, was irresistible down the right flank and engineered almost all the Muktijoddha goals with his measured crosses.

The nippy winger unleashed a powerful right-footer in the 60th minute which was brilliantly flisted away by Milan.

Ten minutes later Mizan scored his first goal in the league when he deflected a Masud Rana floater into the net by a spectacular header to double the lead.

Agrani Bank reduced the margin from a penalty awarded to them in the 75th minute when an looking tackle from Jewel Rana promoted the referee Ram Krishna innocuous to point, to the dreaded spot. Badal converted the spot-kick coolly placing the ball wide of Mohsin, the Muktijoddha goalkeeper.

Mizan spoiled an opportunity when his header came to play hitting the cross bar in the 81st minute but Rakib made no mistake to nod the ball home seven minutes later diving full stretch to connect a Mamun Joarder cross.

With this win Muktijoddha maintain their slender half a point lead ahead of defending champions Mohammedan SC, Abahani KC and Brothers Union who have collected five points each.

Brothers Union who will meet Muktijoddha in their next match on August 12, bounced back to winning ways

when they recorded a morale boosting 3-0 victory over lowly PWD in the other match of the day at the same venue.

After a goalless first half, Bakhtiar and two substitutes Ripon and Mushtaq notched one apiece for the winners.

Thanks to a 58th minute penalty which souped up a disorganised Gopibagh outfit after their disappointing 1-1 draw against Arambagh in the previous encounter.

Referee Monirul Islam had little option but to point to the dreaded spot when a PWD defender handled the ball in the forbidden zone to thwart a Brothers attack. Bakhtiar converted the spot-kick.

Ripon doubled the margin by a powerful shot after receiving a measured through pass from diminutive Bakhtiar in the 79th minute.

Four minutes later Mushtaq sealed the fate of the match when he headed the ball home from a Ranjan cross.

Farashganj SC and Sadharan Bima KS shared points in a goalless draw in the lone encounter of the Star First Division football league at the Mirpur Stadium yesterday.

TODAY'S MATCHES

Shantinagar Club vs Muslim Institute 4:30 pm (Dhaka Stadium)
Rahmatganj MFS vs Dhanmondi Club 6:30 pm (Dhaka Stadium)

Graf gets back into groove

CARLSBAD, Calif., Aug 8: Steffi Graf, playing her best tennis in months, routed Arantxa Sanchez Vicario 6-2, 6-1 Sunday to win the \$1.4 million Toshiba Classic, her first tournament victory since May, reports AP.

Graf, who failed to play up to her standards all week, finally had all elements of her game working in beating the WTA Tour's No 2-ranked player in 67 minutes.

"I think I was in control of the points," said Graf, the top-ranked woman. "I felt I was playing all the right shots when I needed to. I felt she couldn't hurt me."

The victory broke a three-month drought for Graf, who last won at the German Open in May. Since then, Graf lost in the semifinals of the French Open to Mary Pierce, and was beaten in the first round by Lori McNeill at Wimbledon.

"I think it helps me very much to have won this tournament," said Graf, who won \$180,000. "The whole week gave me a lot to be ready for the US Open. I think I'm on the right track."

Sanchez Vicario, who took home \$132,000, fell behind early in the match and could never recover under Graf's relentless pressure. The 22-year-old Spaniard committed 26 forced errors to only seven for Graf.

"She didn't make many mistakes," Sanchez Vicario said. "I didn't have many chances."

Bruguera's third

PRAGUE, Aug 8: Top-seeded Sergi Bruguera beat number two seed Andrei Medvedev, 6-3, 6-4 on Sunday to capture his third straight Czech Open tennis title, reports Reuter.

The world number three broke Medvedev early in both sets of the final, capitalising on several unforced errors by the usually steady Ukrainian on his way to the 49,000 dollars first prize.

to do very much."

The win was Graf's third over Sanchez Vicario in four meetings this year — including the finals of the Australian Open, and ran her career record to 24-6 over Sanchez Vicario. Sunday's victory was also the second straight year that Graf beat Sanchez in the final here, winning last year, 6-4, 4-6, 6-1.

Graf wasted little time taking control. She hit a perfectly placed drop shot to close the first game at love. Graf then broke Sanchez on her first service game to go up, 2-0.

Sanchez, the French Open champion, broke back in the third game, but Graf wasn't worried.

"Even though she broke me back," Graf said. "I was playing good. After 3-1, 4-1, that's when I had the feeling that this would be my match."

Graf converted break points in the fourth and eighth games to close out the set, 6-2.

Bremen clinch German Super Cup

MUNICH, Germany, Aug 8: Werder Bremen beat Bundesliga champions Bayern Munich 3-1 after extra-time in Germany's traditional pre-season Super Cup on Sunday, reports Reuter.

In a match riddled with fouls, Bremen led 1-0 at half-time thanks to a second minute goal by newcomer Vladimir Bestahstnich.

Bayern, now managed by Italian Giovanni Trapattoni after the departure of Franz Beckenbauer, equalised in the 55th minute through Christian Nerlinger.

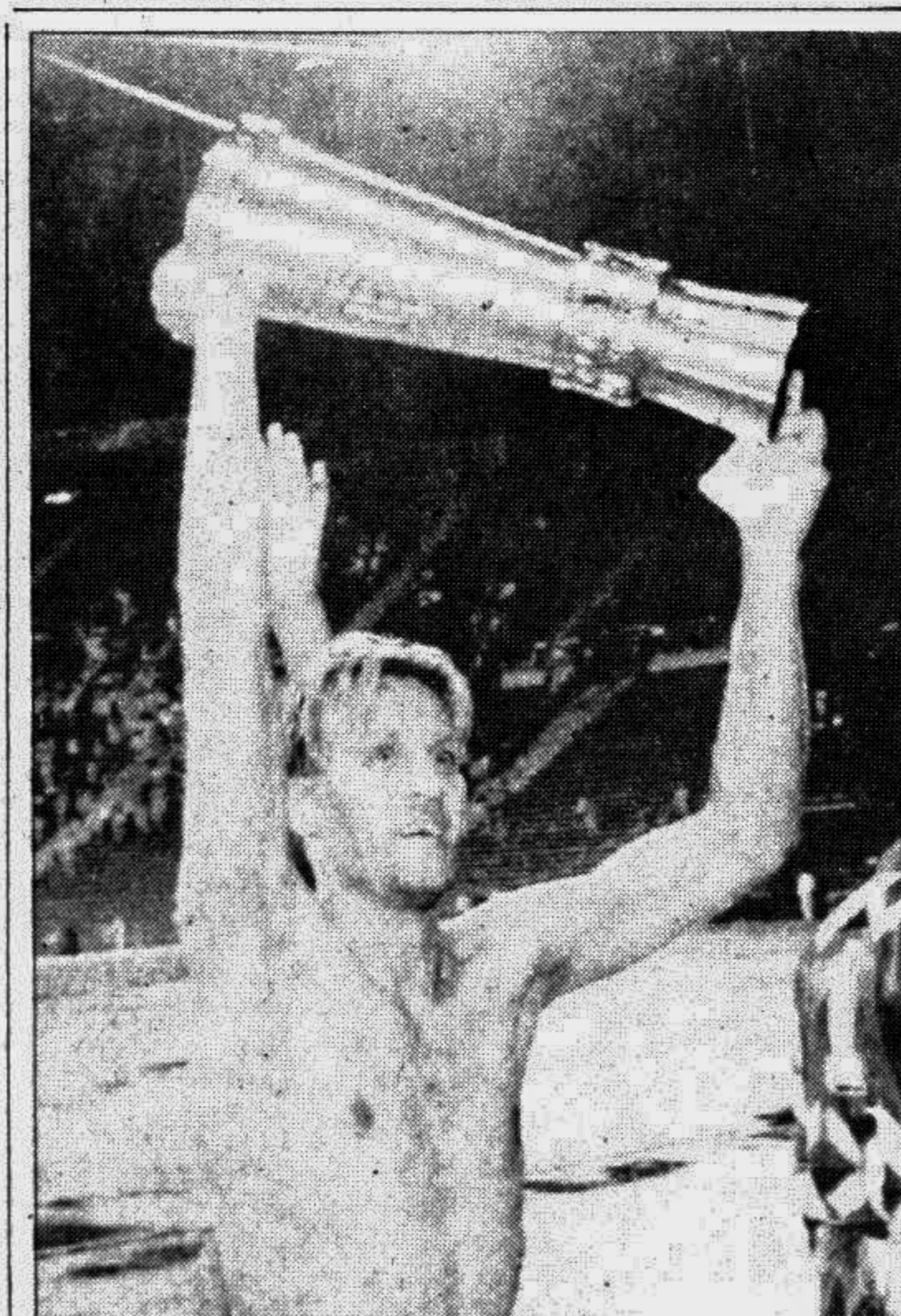
Bayern had Oliver Kreuzer sent off for a deliberate foul as the teams went into extra-time.

Bremen's Michael Schulz, another newcomer, and veteran New Zealander Wynton Rufer sealed the match with goals in the 104th and 116th minutes.

In the second set, Graf rolled to a 5-0 lead, and sealed the win when Sanchez hit a forehand long.

"She wasn't up to her level that she can play," Graf said.

Sanchez Vicario said: "Sometimes it's hard because she's playing so well. It makes it hard because you're having to try different things that you're not used to."



Werder Bremen captain Diemar Beiersdorfer lifts the DFB (German Football Federation) Super Cup after his side beat Bayern Munich in the final on August 7. Werder won 3-1. —AFP photo

Caniggia to join Benfica

ROME, Aug 8: Argentine attacker Claudio Caniggia, who recently returned to soccer after a 13-month drug ban, is set to join Portugal's Benfica from A S Roma, Italy's ANSA news agency reported on Sunday, reports Reuter.

The two clubs have agreed on a transfer fee of 6-7 billion lire (3.8-4.4 million dollars), the report said.

Roma officials telephoned Caniggia at his home in Miami to inform him of the negotiations and he has agreed to the move on the condition that he does not have to take a cut in an estimated annual salary of some 630,000 dollars.

The player is expected to travel to Europe in the next few days to finalise the move. Italian newspapers had reported that English Premier league club Everton had made initial inquiries about the player's availability.

A member of Argentina's World Cup squad, Caniggia has not played for Roma since testing positive for cocaine after a match near the end of the 1992-93 season.

Roma have bought a virtually new team for this season as they attempt to win the Italian Championship for the first time since 1983.

They have four other foreign players on their books — Brazilian defender Aldair, Swedish midfielder Jonas Thern and strikers Daniel Fonseca of Uruguay and Abel Balbo. Only three foreigners can appear in Italian domestic matches.

Coventry lure Cobi Jones

COVENTRY, England, Aug 8: American World Cup star Cobi Jones has signed for English Premiership club Coventry City, reports AFP.

The 24-year-old winger has agreed a 12-month contract with an option for another two years.

Coventry, who failed to tempt Jones' American teammate, Alexi Lalas, to Highfield Road last week, have still to agree a fee with the United States Soccer Federation, but the settlement is likely to be around 300,000 pounds.

Coventry chairman Bryan Richardson said: "I think he will do well over here. He is certainly box office and we hope he will bring a spark to the place. He is quick and can operate on either wing."

Romario, Bebeto still play truant

VITORIA, Brazil, Aug 8: World Cup stars Romario and Bebeto have put back the dates they will start training with their Spanish clubs, reports AFP.

Romario, named player of the tournament after Brazil won their fourth world title on July 17, said: "There is not the slightest chance I will leave before August 20."

The 28-year-old controversial striker was playing an exhibition here for 50,000 dollars for the foundation of a football school. He had originally been scheduled to arrive at Spanish champions Barcelona on August 2.

Meanwhile, 30-year-old Bebeto, more disciplined and dedicated than Romario's wayward genius, announced here needed a few more days rest before arriving back at Deportivo La Coruna. But he did not announce an exact arrival date.



Graham Gooch starts the trudge back to pavilion after nicking a Matthews delivery behind the wicket to Richardson during England's second innings in the second Test against South Africa on August 7 at Headingley, Leeds. —AFP photo

Headingley Test drawn

LEEDS, Aug 8: Graeme Hick's second Test century was the highlight of the final day of the second Test between England and South Africa which ended in a draw as the tourists were set a target of 298 to win in two sessions, reports AP.

Hick's innings of 110 enabled England captain Mike Atherton to declare at lunch with the score at 267 for five.

South Africa showed no intention of chasing the runs in the minimum of 60 overs it was given. After crawling to 116 for three, Atherton and rival captain Kepler Wessels agreed to finish the match 30 minutes before scheduled stumps.

After a first innings of 477, England only took a 30-run lead into the second innings and a draw had looked the likely outcome since early on the fourth day.

Resuming at 144 for two on Monday, England started slowly until Hick and Graham Thorpe lifted the run rate, with Thorpe moving from his overnight 51 to 73 before he was run out going for a quick single with the score on 190.

Thorpe completed a fine return to Test cricket with his 73 following his 72 in the first innings.

Hick was joined by Alec Stewart who forced the pace with four boundaries as England tried to set up a score at which they could safely declare.

Zimbabwe-born Hick lofted two sixes and reached his century with a single off Hansie Cronje. Although it was his 76th in first class cricket, it was only his second in 48 Test innings, and saved his place in the team after months of poor form.

He hit his third six to race

to 107 but three runs later, swung at a Brian McMillan delivery across the line and was adjudged leg-before by New Zealand umpire Steve Dunne.

That made it 267 for four and John Crawley lasted two balls before he lobbed a catch to Cronje at deep mid-wicket off McMillan for nought.

South Africa were hindered by the absence of main strike

run win in the first Test at Lord's.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard on the fifth day of the second Test between England and South Africa at Headingley Monday:

ENGLAND: First innings 477-9 dec (M A Atherton 99, A J Stewart 89, G P Thorpe 72, S J Rhodes 65 not out).

SOUTH AFRICA: 1st innings 447 (P N Kirsten 104, McMillan 78, C R Matthews 62 not out).

ENGLAND: Second innings Gooch c Richardson b Matthews 27 Atherton c sub b De Villiers 17 Hick lbw b McMillan 110 Thorpe run out 73 Stewart not out 36 Crawley c Cronje b McMillan 0 Extras: (lb-1, nb-3) 4 Total: (5 wks, dec) 267

Fall of wickets: 1-39, 2-57, 3-190, 4-267, 5-267.

To bat: S J Rhodes, P A J DeFreitas, D Gough, A R C Fraser, P C R Tuffnell.

Bowling: O M R W De Villiers 25 3 98 1 McMillan 15.3 0 66 2 Matthews 24 8 53 1 G Kirsten 2 1 10 0 Cronje 12 3 39 0

Over: 78.3

SOUTH AFRICA: Second innings G Kirsten c Rhodes b DeFreitas 65 Hudson c and b Tuffnell 12 Cronje not out 13 Wessels b Tuffnell 7 P Kirsten not out 8 Extras: (b-2, lb-2, nb-7) 11 Total: (for three wickets) 116

Fall of wickets: 1-43, 2-93, 3-104

Bowling: O M R W DeFreitas 14 3 41 1 Gough 10 0 15 0 Tuffnell 23 8 31 2 Fraser 7 2 19 0 Hick 6 3 6 0

Result: Match drawn

First Test: South Africa won by 356 runs

Third Test: The Oval, August 18-22.

Pak-SL first Test from today

Malik in marauding mood

COLOMBO, Aug 8: Sri Lanka will be aiming to contain the explosive scoring of Pakistan skipper Salim Malik when the first Test starts here Tuesday, reports AFP.

Malik punished the home attack again with an unbeaten 93 off 94 balls that helped Pakistan clinch the final one-day international by 19 runs and the three-match one-day series Sunday.

The right-handed run-machine has clearly warned Sri Lanka that he will be the biggest threat in the Test series, not Pakistan's princes of pace, Wasim Akram and Waqar Younis.

Pakistan manager Intikhab Alam described Malik's latest batting effort as "a very sensible innings."

"I am really glad for him in that we have won the one-day series. The way he did it you know, he's been bowling well and he's been batting well. I hope that he will repeat the same performance in the Test matches."

Pakistan skipper Arjuna Ranatunga, who will be celebrating his 50th Test, has more than Malik on his mind.

"Yes, we have to watch him but others are also in form. There is no question that they have a powerful batting line-up. Certainly, the Test series is going to be tough for us but we will make it interesting," said Ranatunga.

Malik, who scored a century on his debut against Sri Lanka, has run up scores of 77 not out, 62, 62, 61 and 93 not out in his last five innings. His cur-

rent statistics have already turned the tide in Pakistan's favour.

Pakistan's discomfiture has come mainly from the hot and humid weather and the slow tracks in Sri Lanka. The Pakistan manager acknowledged that his batsmen will struggle on the wicket in the

initial sessions as the ball hardly comes onto bat.

"The pitches we have played so far, they have all been quite damp to start with. We don't expect green pitches here. It will be absolutely grassless pitches, the first half an hour or so, it is going to be difficult," said Intikhab.

However, he was confident the side would perform well in the opening Test after winning the important one-day series.

"I think psychologically it (the win) does make a lot of difference. Alam told reporters after the Pakistan victory.

Malik (capt), Asif Mujtaba, Aamir Sohail, Saeed Anwar, Basit Ali, Inzamam-ul-Haq, Zahid Fazal, Rashid Latif (wkt), Mushtaq Ahmed, Akram Raza, Waqar Younis, Wasim Akram, Ashfaq Ahmed, Kabir Khan, Rameez Raja.

TEAMS

SRI LANKA: A Ranatunga (capt), P A de Silva, S T Jayasuriya, R S Mahanama, S Ranatunga, D Samaraweera, A P Gurusinha, H P Tillekeratne, R S Kalpage, P B Dassanayake (wkt), G P Wickramasinghe, M Muralidharan, Pushpakumara, C Vaas, K Dharmasena, K P J Warnawera.

PAKISTAN: Salim Malik (capt), Asif Mujtaba, Aamir Sohail, Saeed Anwar, Basit Ali, Inzamam-ul-Haq, Zahid Fazal, Rashid Latif (wkt), Mushtaq Ahmed, Akram Raza, Waqar Younis, Wasim Akram, Ashfaq Ahmed, Kabir Khan, Rameez Raja.

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