

Diego losing friends fast

BUENOS AIRES, Dec 17: The fan club of temperamental soccer superstar Diego Maradona is shrinking rapidly, reports Reuter.

SL to seek apology

ADELAIDE, Australia, Dec 17: Sri Lanka will seek an official apology after pleading innocent to a conviction of ball-tampering during a Test match against Australia, one of the country's leading cricket administrators said on Friday, reports Reuter.

Pirates clinch African Cup

ABIDJAN, Dec 17: Orlando Pirates of South Africa won the African Champions' Cup on Saturday with an unexpected 1-0 second-leg victory over Ivory Coasts' Asec, reports Reuter.

Emma soars to new heights

PERTH, Dec 17: Australian Emma George set a women's pole vault world record when she cleared 4.28 metres at an invitation meeting in Perth today, reports Reuter.

Kiwis win cliff-hanger

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand, Dec 17: New Zealand pulled off a thrilling one-wicket win over Pakistan in their second one-day cricket international at Christchurch today, report agencies.



INZAMAM ... 80

seemed to have the game under control at 204 for four wickets in the 46th over, with Chris Cairns and Adam Parore well set. But they lost five wickets in 18 balls as Wasim Akram and Waqar Younis made late inroads through the New Zealand middle and lower order.

New Zealand needed 10 off the last over, bowled by Akram.

They got a leg-bye off the first ball and two runs off the second—a full toss which went past the batsman and wicket-keeper and was called as a no-ball.

Gavin Larsen cracked a full toss to the extra cover fence for four, but failed to score from the next two balls. He levelled the scores by hitting another no-ball for two through extra cover, and clinched the win with a four to the vacant third man fence.

cricket figures, Morrison restricted Pakistan to 232 when they seemed capable of posting 250. Those figures took him past 100 one-day wickets, the fifth New Zealander to achieve the mark.

New Zealand's middle-order batted with determination and intelligence. Chris Cairns made 54, Adam Parore contributed 45 and Stephen Fleming scored a fluent 48.

Waqar finished with three wickets for 55—all three in the 49th over—while Akram, Aaqib Javed and Amir Sohail collected two apiece.

Pakistan's innings was based around a 114-run fourth wicket stand in 150 balls between man-of-the-match Inzamam-ul-Haq and Salim Malik.

Pakistan, having won the toss, lost openers Amir Sohail and Rameez Raja in the space of five balls early in the innings, but Inzamam-ul-Haq and Salim Malik put the substance into the innings.

Malik was dropped by wicketkeeper and captain Lee Germon on six, while Inzamam should have been run out on 68.

He set off for a second run, his partner sent him back but the throw from the deep went to the wrong end and Inzamam, stranded at the wrong end, was able to recover his ground.

Pakistan picked up 74 runs in the last 10 overs of the innings, largely due to Inzamam and Malik, but with a handy late contribution from Basit Ali, who got 23 from 19 balls before becoming Morrison's fifth wicket on the final ball of the innings.

In the same over, Morrison also had Rashid Latif caught off a skier and bowled Waqar Younis.

The result squares the four-match series at one game all.

The third match in the series will be played at Wellington on Wednesday.

Table with cricket statistics: Batting (Morrison, Patel, Waqar, Mushtaq, Extras, Total), Bowling (Morrison, Patel, Larsen, Cairns, Akram, Astle, Touse).



MORRISON ... 5 for 46

Table with cricket statistics: NEW ZEALAND (Spearman, Astle, Young, Fleming, Parore, Cairns, Touse, Germon, Larsen, Patel, Morrison, Extras, Total), Bowling (Akram, Aaqib, Waqar, Mushtaq, Sohail, Malik).

Result: New Zealand won by one wicket.

Man-of-the-match: Inzamam ul Haq.

All's at Lara's discretion

PORT OF SPAIN, Trinidad, Dec 17: Thankful for the West Indies Cricket Board of Control's decision to reinstate Brian Lara, the Trinidad board will now try to convince the star batsman to re-join the team for the World Cup, reports AP.

"We shall now attempt to persuade Brian that he has a responsibility to the West Indies and international cricket and to put all those matters behind him and be a first-class representative of West Indies cricket," Trinidad board president Alloy Lequay said Saturday.

Attempts to convince Lara to return already have started.

Lara's former school principal, Clive Pantin, in a letter published by the Trinidad Guardian told him to "take up the challenge of returning to the game."

Independent Sen Ken Ramchand also publicly urged Lara "to accept the token fine and move on."

The West Indies Cricket Board of Control on Friday decided against punishing the 26-year-old world record holder for refusing to make himself available for its current Australian tour.

In a statement issued after a special board meeting, secretary Andrew Sealy said that "as no contractual arrangements were in force between Brian Lara and the WICBC for this (Australian) tour, there was no breach of contract and subsequently no disciplinary action is relevant."

Sealy added that the fine of 10 per cent of Lara's fee for abandoning the team during last summer's tour of England, imposed by a disciplinary committee last month, would not be rescinded.

The WICBC decided at the meeting it was up to Lara to say when he wanted to return to the international game.

Lara, who holds the world record individual scores for both Test and first-class cricket, last month withdrew his name for consideration for the Australia tour.

The action came after he was fined 10 per cent of his tour fee for taking an unexcused absence during a summer tour of England following a heated argument with team captain Richie Richardson. The Australia tour began Dec 5.

The World Cup is scheduled for February and March in India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

Mathis makes Mike sweat

PHILADELPHIA, Dec 17: Mike Tyson, often missing wildly with roundhouse rights and left hooks, finally caught up to Buster Mathis Jr knocking him out at two minutes and 32 seconds of the third round on Saturday, reports Reuter.

Mathis had been smothering Tyson's punches and bullying him into the ropes, preferring to fight inside on



Ring's bison former heavyweight champion Mike Tyson watches a duff Buster Mathis after knocking him down in the third round of their bout at the Spectrum in Philadelphia on Dec 16.

knock him out or hurt him severely because he didn't see those punches.

Mathis may have seen his target but for nearly three rounds he allowed Mathis to tie him up or confuse his rhythm by adroit bobbing and weaving.

But it appeared to be Tyson's rust, or worse, perhaps diminished skills, that contributed as much to his wildness as Mathis' evasive manoeuvres.

Mathis, now 20-1, was expected by many ringiders to fold after the first Tyson onslaught. But the pudgy 224 pounds (101.6 kg) displayed great determination in constantly charging Tyson and throwing punches.

Two of the three judges gave Tyson the first two rounds, and the third judge gave Mathis the second round.

The sparse crowd of only about 8,000 in the 18,000-

landed several punches. It was clear that they would not do any damage.

"Yes, I could have continued," said Mathis, the son of the late heavyweigh contender, Buster Mathis.

"It was very close, but I thought I was up. I felt very good. I made him miss ... I was prepared. I saw the uppercut but I slipped into it instead of backing away."

"I knew every move he was making," Tyson said. "I knew those punches would

seat Spectrum gave Mathis polite applause when he entered the ring.

They roared with delight as Tyson, 43-1, made his way through the crowd and climbed the steps into the ring for only his second bout since leaving prison last March after serving three years on a rape conviction.

Tyson had stopped a very inexperienced Peter McNeeley in 89 seconds in August after McNeeley's trainer stepped into the ring to end the bout.

Tyson, a very fit-looking 219 pounds (99.3 kg) wore his trademark black trunks, black shoes without socks and a towel, with a cutout for his head, draped down his chest and back.

Tyson came out quickly in the first round, but missed with a haymaker left hook that Mathis ducked beneath. Mathis immediately tied up Tyson and stayed right on top of him.

Toward the end of the first round, Tyson landed a left hook but not cleanly, and at the end of the round the two men were slugging it out for a few moments after the bell, with Mathis smothering Tyson's punches.

The crowd gave Mathis a big cheer as he walked back to his corner.

Tyson came out jabbing in the second round, landing several times. But Mathis bullied Tyson into the ropes and got off a quick right to Tyson's body and a left to his head.

With his corner yelling, "Stay low, Buster, stay low, you're doing great," Mathis continued to put his head in Tyson's chest.

Tyson then landed a hard right to Mathis' side and he turned to the referee, as if to complain the blow was unfair.

Mathis landed a right uppercut on Tyson's chin near the end of the round.

After the bell rang Tyson glared at Mathis, as if to say: "How dare you challenge me like this."

It was more of the same in the third round with Mathis bullying Tyson into the ropes and the former champion still missing with wide punches and allowing himself to be held by Mathis.

Tyson then unloaded his barrage, sending Mathis Crumbling to the canvas.

But Tyson, scheduled to fight Briton Frank Bruno in March for the World Boxing Council's heavyweight title, appears to be a long way from the man who terrorised the heavyweight division in the late 1980s, before losing his undisputed title to James "Buster" Douglas in February, 1990, in Tokyo.

"I'm looking forward to fighting for the title," Tyson said. "I'm not afraid of anyone."

Rain plays foul in Durban

DURBAN, Dec 17: Officials called off the fourth day of play between South Africa and England Sunday as rain continued to fall at Kings-

mead, report agencies.

Prospects of a result in the third South Africa-England cricket Test all but disappeared.

Earlier on Saturday, play was restricted to just 7.3 overs on the third day of the Test.

When umpires Steve Bucknor and Dave Orchard finally called off play for the day, England had moved from their overnight position of 123 for five to 152 for five with Graeme Hick (31 not out) and Dominic Cork (23 not out) extending their sixth wicket partnership to 43.

England were still 73 runs short of South Africa's 225 and if they are to match that total much will depend on Hick and Cork although John Crawley is due to bat next with the aid of a runner.

Crawley tore a hamstring while fielding on Friday and will remain on the sidelines for the next two weeks at least after this match.

He will stay with the tour party, though England have called up Lancashire opener Jason Gallian from Peshawar in Pakistan where he is currently touring with England A.

The 24-year-old Gallian played for Australia at junior levels but qualified for England through his parents. He captained Oxford University and played two Tests against the West Indies in the recent home series.

get out briefly on two occasions before sweeping gusts of rain drove them off.

Hick got his score moving with a flashing edge off Allan Donald which flew at catchable height through the vacant third slip area, but then began to slip with growing confidence.

At the other end Cork was beaten a couple of times by Shaun Pollock and top-edged Donald over the slips for four but survived to add 15 runs to his overnight tally.

Heavy overnight rain delayed the start of play until 20 minutes after lunch. After that the players were able to

Scoreboard on the third day of the third Test between South Africa and England at Kingsmead on Saturday:

Table with cricket statistics: SOUTH AFRICA: First innings (225 (P Martin 4-60)), ENGLAND: First innings (overnight 123-5), Atherton, Hudson, Stewart, Smith, Hick, Russell, D Cork, Extras, Total.

Table with cricket statistics: Bowling (Donald, Pollock, Matthews, McMillan).

Vasquez reclaims WBC crown

PHILADELPHIA, Dec 17: Argentina's Julio Cesar Vasquez regained his World Boxing Council (WBC) junior middleweight championship, coming from far behind to stop American Carl Daniels in the 11th round on Saturday, reports Reuter.

In a battle of left handers, Vasquez was consistently beaten to the punch by Daniels and struggling when he landed a straight left hand to the American's head, dropping him to the canvas.

Daniels got up early in the count, but fell back down. He then got up again and was staggering around the ring and into the ropes, forcing referee Charlie Sgrillo to stop the scheduled 12-round fight at 34 seconds of the 11th round.

Vasquez, 30, was so overwhelmed by regaining the title he successfully defended 10 times before losing to Pernell Whitaker last March that he broke down crying in the ring. Whitaker gave up the title to move up in weight.

"My brother died in March," said Vasquez, who improved his record to 56-2. "I dedicated this fight to my brother. I was determined to get the belt back for him."

Daniels, 25, saw his record drop to 35-2.

Thailand rules the roost

CHIANG MAI, Dec 17: Thai boxers won the lion's share of medals today and helped their country dance rings around the nine other nations in the Southeast Asian Games by winning a record 157 gold medals, reports Reuter.

Thai Prime Minister Ban-harn Silpa-Archa was on hand to watch his country's athletes box, kick and ride their way to victory in the northern city of Chiang Mai on the final day of the nine-day biennial competition.

Thailand finished the 18th SEA Games with an overwhelming victory in the overall medals count, winning 346 of the 1,085 awarded.

The Thai successes ranged from the swimming pool to the track and the gymnastics arena to the boxing ring. Indonesia, who won the most medals in the last SEA Games in 1993, had been expected to put up a tough fight but instead ended a distant second with 77 golds and 221 medals.

Thai boxers, who were in 11 of the 12 final bouts today, monopolised the medals ceremonies today to win golds in each of the 11 fights. Filipino Arlo Chaves won the welterweight gold in the only final without a Thai boxer.

All but one of the fights went five rounds. Thailand's heavyweight Narong Kahan winning his bout after the

referee stopped the fight in the first round following two warnings to Filipino Ernesto Coronet.

Thai Premier Banharn, who sat in the arena for most of the fights, handed out the medals to light flyweight winners and spoke with other victorious Thai boxers after their fights.

Thailand's Torsak Tip-Paireto won gold in the individual three-day equestrian event, while Singapore took the team gold medal.

More than 3,000 athletes from Brunei, Burma, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam competed in 28 sports during the nine-day event.

Advertisement for 'Invitation of International Bids for SUPPLY ONLY OF 33KV METER PT & CT FOR DESA SYSTEM'. Includes details about the project, bidding process, and contact information for the Project Director.



Noted sportswriter and commentator Tawfiq Aziz Khan distributing prizes among the winners of Victory Day indoor games competitions of Dhaka Deaf Association Saturday. Rtn M Ali Hossain, president of the association, is on extreme left. — Star photo

A large advertisement in Bengali for a contest or promotion. It features a stylized logo and a list of prizes and rules in Bengali script.