

Sport

Pakistanis survive a scare

The world Jayasuriya's oyster



SINGAPORE, Apr 7: Never-say-die Pakistan staged a sensational turnaround today to win the Singer Cup after being hammered by Sri Lanka's opener Sanath Jayasuriya for the quickest half-century in one-day cricket, reports AFP.

Chasing a modest 216 on the Padang ground, World Cup champions Sri Lanka collapsed for 172 in 32.5 overs after appearing set for victory when Jayasuriya, who five days ago struck the quickest hundred, was in full flow.

Off-spinner Saqlain Mushtaq and medium-pacer Ataur-Rahman shared six wickets and Waqar Younis and Aaqib Javed grabbed the remaining four to bowl Pakistan to a brilliant victory for the 30,000 US dollar first prize.

Sri Lanka's chances of adding the Singer Cup to the World Cup they won last month disappeared when their top order collapsed after Jayasuriya's dismissal.

"I had the feeling that once we got Jayasuriya, it would not be too difficult," said Pakistan skipper Aamir Sohail. "It was a collective team effort."

Jayasuriya, who had Tuesday taken the quickest hundred in a one-day international against the same team, rewrote the record books again by reaching a half-century off just 17 balls.

His fifty, contained five sixes and four fours.

The balding 27-year-old left-hander, who showed no respect for any bowler, was

Arjuna being discreet

SINGAPORE, Apr 7: Sri Lanka skipper Arjuna Ranatunga praised Pakistan's brilliant fightback Sunday but refused to comment on controversial umpiring decisions after his side lost the Singer Cup final, reports AFP.

"Pakistan played better than us today — it is as simple as that," said Ranatunga, whose side had been hoping to win the final to put the icing on their World Cup cake.

He said the defeat by 43 runs would not result in a loss of morale in his side, which would still carry the tag of world champions until the next World Cup.

The Sri Lankans saw at least three close decisions go against them at crucial junctures in Sunday's match at the Padang ground which was umpired by George Sharp of England and Russell Tiffin of Zimbabwe.

The dismissals of Ranatunga, Hashan Tillekeratne and Kumara Dharmasena all could have gone either way, but the skipper was diplomatic.

"I do not want to comment on the umpiring," he said. "You all saw the game, you watched the TV replays, you all decide," he said.

Pakistan captain Aamir Sohail, skipping the side in a full tournament for the first time, gave all the credit to his bowlers for defending a fighting total of 215.

It was sweet revenge for the Pakistanis, who had been beaten by the Sri Lankans by 34 runs in Tuesday's opening match of the triangular competition.

Sohail picked out off-spinner Saqlain Mushtaq for special praise, saying he was the best bowler of his kind in world cricket.

DPRK lifters' day

YACHIYO, Japan, April 7: North Korean Jon Chol Ho won the gold medal in the men's 76-kilogram event at the Asian Weightlifting Championships Sunday, while a compatriot triumphed in a women's event, reports AFP.

Jon lifted 152.5 kilograms in the snatch and hoisted 187.5 kilograms in the jerk for a winning total of 340 kilograms.

Iran's Shahin Nasiriyeh of Iran finished second, while Uzbekistan's Bakhtier Nurul-vaev was third.

North Korea also triumphed in the women's 76-kilogram event, with Ok Son Kyong placing first with a total of 220 kilograms.

On the previous day, North Korea's Kim Myong Nam smashed three world records to win the gold in the men's 70-kilogram. The number of gold medals for North Koreans thus totaled three on the fourth day of the competition.

After the day's competition, Jon of North Korea, who ranked fourth in the 82.5-kilogram event at the Barcelona Olympics, said that Kim's victory the previous day had "spurred" him on.

But Jon added he regretted the fact that his total lifting had fallen below 350 kilograms.

"I will aim for the gold medal at the Atlanta Games," he said.

As a whole, China continued to dominate the six-day event, grabbing nine golds so far.

China's Tang Weifang took the women's 70-kilogram title with a combined lift of 227.5 kilograms.

In the men's kilogram event, Li Yunnan of China lifted 36 kilograms to take the gold medal.



Pakistani paceman Ataur Rehman (2nd from L) becomes the toast of his teammates after dismissing the last Sri Lankan batsman during the final of the Singer Cup in at the Padang ground, Singapore yesterday. Ataur scalped three victims as Pakistan pulled off a seemingly unattainable victory by 43 runs.

— AFP/UNB photo

eventually out for a magnificent 76 off just 28 balls when he looked on course for smashing his Tuesday's record for the quickest ton.

There were five sixes and eight fours, each beautifully timed and powerfully struck, before he skied an easy catch to Saeed Anwar at extra cover off fast-bowler Waqar Younis.

In the company of opening partner Romesh Kaluwitharana, he added 70 runs for the first wicket, beginning with 14 runs off the first over from Waqar.

Kaluwitharana played the rôle of a sleeping partner in the stand, failing to even open his account before he was bowled by Aaqib Javed, demonstrating Jayasuriya's dominance.

"I am in good form but unfortunately we lost the game," said Jayasuriya, who was named man-of-the-series.

Jayasuriya's dismissal with the score at 96 saw a sensational collapse as four wickets fell for the addition of 10 runs.

Asanka Gurusinha, who struck four splendid boundaries, was claimed lbw by

Hashan Tillekeratne and Roshan Mahanama added 40 runs for the sixth wicket before Pakistan struck again.

Mahanama was lbw to Younis for 14. Kumara Dharmasena was caught by Inzamam off Saqlain for five and Tillekeratne fell lbw to Ataur Rehman for a patient 33.

Rehman polished off the last two wickets to finish with three for 27 after being struck for 22 runs in an over by the rampaging Jayasuriya.

Earlier, Pakistan were bowled out for a modest 215 in 48.3 overs after being asked to bat first by Sri Lanka, who lined up the same side that beat Australia in the World Cup final.

None of the batsmen stayed long enough in the middle to play a big innings against a nagging attack that gave nothing away and was backed by splendid fielding that made Pakistan fight for every run.

Jaz Ahmed top-scored with 51 off 75 balls, inclusive of two huge sixes near the end, before becoming the last batsman to fall when he was clean bowled by Sanath Jayasuriya trying a mighty heave.

Rameez Raja contributed 37 and with Salim Malik staged a patient 61-run stand for the third wicket, but wickets fell at regular intervals.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the Singer Cup final match between Pakistan and Sri Lanka in Singapore on Sunday.

PAKISTAN			
Sohail b Vaas	18		
Saeed Anwar c Muralitharan	17		
b Wickremasinghe	17		
Rameez run out	37		
Malik c and b Muralitharan	27		
Inzamam c Tillekeratne b	1		
De Silva	24		
Jaz b Jayasuriya	51		
Latif b Dharmasena	2		
Aaqib c Mahanama b			
Muralitharan	11		
Saqlain c Tillekeratne b Vaas	8		
Waqar run out	0		
Rehman not out	1		
Extras: (b-6, lb-4, w-6, nb-3)	1		
Total: (all out, 48.3 overs)	215		

Fall of wickets: 1-70; 2-96; 3-100; 4-106; 5-106; 6-146; 7-164; 8-172; 9-172.

Bowling O M R W

Younis 7 0 38 2

Aaqib 7 0 32 2

Rehman 3.5 0 27 3

Saqlain 7 0 46 3

Sohail 6 0 21 0

Salim Malik 2 0 3 0

Result: Pakistan won by 43 runs.

Man-of-the-match: Saqlain Mushtaq.

Man-of-the-series: Sanath Jayasuriya.

Sanath smashes fastest fifty

SINGAPORE, Apr 7: Sri Lanka's master blaster Sanath Jayasuriya today broke the world record for the fastest

50 off 56 balls, inclusive of two

huge sixes near the end, before becoming the last batsman to fall when he was clean bowled by Sanath Jayasuriya trying a mighty heave.

Rameez Raja contributed 37 and with Salim Malik staged a patient 61-run stand for the third wicket, but wickets fell at regular intervals.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the Singer Cup final match between Pakistan and Sri Lanka in Singapore on Sunday.

PAKISTAN			
Sohail b Vaas	18		
Saeed Anwar c Muralitharan	17		
b Wickremasinghe	17		
Rameez run out	37		
Malik c and b Muralitharan	27		
Inzamam c Tillekeratne b	1		
De Silva	24		
Jaz b Jayasuriya	51		
Latif b Dharmasena	2		
Aaqib c Mahanama b			
Muralitharan	11		
Saqlain c Tillekeratne b Vaas	8		
Waqar run out	0		
Rehman not out	1		
Extras: (b-6, lb-4, w-6, nb-3)	1		
Total: (all out, 48.3 overs)	215		

Fall of wickets: 1-29; 2-41; 3-102; 4-106; 5-140; 6-143; 7-175; 8-199; 9-199.

Bowling O M R W

Wickremasinghe 8 1 30 1

Vaas 8 0 35 2

Muralitharan 10 0 42 2

Dharmasena 10 1 39 1

Jayasuriya 8.3 0 39 1

De Silva 4 0 20 1

SRI LANKA

Jayasuriya c Saeed b Younis

Kaluwitharana b Aaqib

Gurusinha lbw Aaqib

De Silva c Latif b Saqlain

Latif c Saqlain

Mahanama lbw Waqar

SAQLAIN — m-o-m

Javed for 20 and World Cup final hero Aravinda de Silva

scored just four before being snappled up by wicket keeper Rashid Latif off spinner Saqlain.

Skippers Arjuna Ranatunga fell in the same fashion as De Silva for a duck to reduce Sri Lanka to 106 for five.

Jansher, Eyles enter British Open final

CARDIFF, Apr 7: Jansher Khan reached his fifth successive British Open final on Saturday when he defeated unseeded French champion Julien Bonnetat 12-15, 15-9, 15-9 and 15-6, reports Reuter.

Bonnetat refused to be overawed by the winner of four British and seven World Open titles and attacked the Pakistani from the start of the semi-final.

His audacious play earned him an opening game he clinched spectacularly by wrong-footing the undisputed world number one with a short forehand boast.

But Jansher adopted his sternest face, lectured the referee about failing to warn the fleet-footed Frenchman for pushing, and set about establishing the real boundaries of his superiority.

He closed the second game with a clinical backhand drop shot, wrapped up the next with a run from 2-2 to 9-4, then took the fourth in just six minutes after an opening burst to 9-0.

Victory put Jansher in today's final against second-seeded Australian Rodney Eyles.

Eyles beat his third-seeded compatriot Brett Martin 13-15, 15-12, 15-3 and 15-9. The match started in scintillating fashion but Martin's lack of mobility because of a weak ankle was gradually exposed.

It was the first time Eyles had made the final. "It has been a long time coming," admitted the Brisbane player, who lost the 1986 world junior final to Jansher when the Pakistani first erupted on to the international scene.

Since then Jansher had won 71 major crowns at senior level.

— AFP/UNB photo

Nat'l eves' chess results

Six players are jointly leading in the qualifying round of the 17th national women's chess championship securing three points each after the fourth round matches at the chess room of the National Sports Council, reports UNB.

The players are Syeda Af-sana Parveen Nira, Zakia Sul-tana, Jahanara Hoq Runu, Masuda Begum, Falunnessa Poly and Nazrana Khan Eva.

In the day's round: Poly beat Jabunnessa and Eva defeated Farhana Fatema Tanu. The matches between Nira and Runu; and Zakia and Masuda ended in draws.

Ferdousi Sultan Munni beat Farhana Sharmeen to move into second place with two and a half points. Roksana Gulshan Nikkan bagged two points beating Suria Khan Khatun Badhani.

Ruhan Amireen Tumpa drew with Nasreen Shamim in the other fixture.

The fifth and last round will be held today. Six players will qualify to play in the final phase.

The final phase, which is scheduled to begin on Tuesday, will start a day later with the participation of 10 players.

The number drawing ceremony of the final phase will be held on Tuesday instead of Monday.