

## Confederations Cup Brazil blank hosts

RIYADH, Dec 12: Romario scored twice and Cesar Sampaio once in the second half, to give Brazil a 3-0 victory over Asian champions Saudi Arabia on Friday in the opening match of the FIFA Confederations Cup.

Brazil took advantage as the Saudis were a man short for the final 26 minutes. They scored on the ensuring free kick after Abdullah Suleiman was sent off for a second yellow card in the 64th minute when Sampaio headed in a free kick and silenced the crowd of 50,000.

The Brazilian midfield then took command, supplying the attack with numerous balls from which Romario tapped in the second goal in the 73rd minute after receiving a flick on from Cafu.

The nine-day, eight-team event pits the champions or runners-up from the six continental federations. World Cup champion Brazil and hosts Saudi Arabia.

Mexico faced Australia later on Friday.

## Windies clip Pak wings

Sports Reporter



West Indies put the Pakistan nightmare behind them when the Caribbean beat the crowd favourite by 43 runs in the second match of the four-nation Akai-Singer Champions' Trophy in Sharjah yesterday.

Set to score 276 runs in 50 overs, the Pakistanis were all out for 232 in 46 overs. Dashing opener Shahid Afridi hit a quickfire 67 and Inzamamul Haq made a patient 33. West Indian batting maestro Brian Lara was adjudged man-of-the-match for his polished 80-ball 88.

AFP adds: Lara finally showed top form with his brilliant knock to lift his side to 275 for seven in 50 overs.

The left-hander, who managed just 129 runs in six Test innings during his team's 3-0 rout in Pakistan earlier this month broke free with a scintillating knock.

He smashed seven boundaries and three sixes before

falling in the 46th over, pulling a short ball from skipper Wasim Akram down Azhar Mahmood's throat on the square leg fence.

Openers Philo Wallace and Stuart Williams gave the Caribbean a rousing start after skipper Courtney Walsh won the toss and elected to bat.

The pair put on 81 by the 16th over before Wallace was caught by Inzamamul Haq at mid-on off Saqlain Mushtaq for a strokeful 32 off 52 balls.

Williams stayed till the 32nd over, adding 79 for the second wicket with Lara before he fell to Shahid Afridi for 77.

Carl Hooper joined Lara to add momentum to the innings with a brisk stand of 57 in nine overs for the third wicket.

Seamer Mahmood went for 61 in his 10 overs, while leg-spinner Afridi gave 57 in as many overs.

Saqlain was the pick of the bowlers with three for 35 in 10 overs of steady off-spin.

Akram also grabbed three

wickets, including two off successive balls in the final over when he bowled Franklin Rose and took a simple return catch from David Williams.

### SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the first innings in the Champions' Trophy one-day international between Pakistan and the West

West Indies	Pakistan
Wallace c Inzamam b Saqlain 32	Shahid Afridi 77
Stuart Williams 77	Lara c Mahmood b Akram 88
Lara c Mahmood b Akram 88	Hooper st Moin b Saqlain 17
Hooper st Moin b Saqlain 17	Simmons c Sohail b Saqlain 22
Simmons c Sohail b Saqlain 22	Chanderpaul not out 16
Chanderpaul not out 16	Rose b Akram 2
Rose b Akram 2	D Williams c and b Akram 0
D Williams c and b Akram 0	Lewis not out 1
Lewis not out 1	Extras (b-1, lb-6, w-12, nb-1) 20
Extras (b-1, lb-6, w-12, nb-1) 20	Total: (for 7 wickets) 275
Total: (for 7 wickets) 275	Fall of wickets: 1-81; 2-160; 3-217; 4-243; 5-266; 6-271; 7-271.

West Indies	Pakistan
Akram 10 0 62 3	Waqar 10 0 35 0
Waqar 10 0 35 0	Saqlain 10 0 61 0
Saqlain 10 0 61 0	Mahmood 10 0 57 1
Mahmood 10 0 57 1	Afridi 10 0 57 1
Afridi 10 0 57 1	(Incomplete)

Indies on Friday:

West Indies	Pakistan
Wallace c Inzamam b Saqlain 32	Shahid Afridi 77
Stuart Williams 77	Lara c Mahmood b Akram 88
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Bowling:

West Indies	Pakistan
Akram 10 0 62 3	Waqar 10 0 35 0
Waqar 10 0 35 0	Saqlain 10 0 61 0
Saqlain 10 0 61 0	Mahmood 10 0 57 1
Mahmood 10 0 57 1	Afridi 10 0 57 1
Afridi 10 0 57 1	(Incomplete)

Man-of-the-match: Alec Stewart

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## Intrabattle down under tomorrow

Beleaguered Australian captain Steve Waugh will be looking for return to form when he men take Australia A in an exhibition limited-overs match at the Sydney Cricket Ground tomorrow.

National selectors have appointed Stuart Law as the A-team skipper for the day-night affair.

### TEAMS

AUSTRALIA: Mark Waugh, Michael di Venuto, Ricky Ponting, Steve Waugh (captain), Michael Bevan, Adam Gilchrist, Ian Healy, Paul Reifel, Shane Warne, Andy Bichel, Simon Cook, Adam Dale.

AUSTRALIA A: Michael Slater, R Campbell, Matthew Elliott, Greg Blewett, Stuart Law (captain), Darren Lehmann, Damien Martyn, Tom Moody, Ian Healy, Michael Kasprowitz, P Wilson, B Young.

Source: Internet.

## England-India scoreboard

Scoreboard of the opening Champions' Trophy limited-overs match between India and England played at the Sharjah Stadium on Thursday:

ENGLAND: 250 all out in 49.5 overs (Stewart 116, Knight 42, Hick 32; Srinath 3/37, Kuruvilla 3/50)

### INDIA

Karim c Croft b Headley 29

Ganguly b Ealham 29

Sidhu c A Hollis b Ealham 3

Tendulkar st Stewart b Fleming 91

Azharuddin c Headley b A Hollis 3

Jadeja c Thorpe b Fleming 50

Robin Singh lbw b Fleming 12

Kumble run out 2

Chauhan b Fleming 12

Srinath b Headley 3

Kuruvilla not out 1

Extras (lb-3, w-3, nb-2) 8

Total: (all out in 49.5 overs) 243

Fall of wickets: 1-60; 2-64; 3-65; 4-74; 5-182; 6-207; 7-221; 8-232; 9-237.

### Bowling:

Brown 7 0 44 0

Headley 9 0 38 2

Ealham 10 0 43 1

A Hollis 9 1 38 0

Croft 5 0 32 0

Fleming 9.3 0 45 4

Result: England won by seven runs

Man-of-the-match: Alec Stewart

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## Atherton nets £307,000 from benefit season

Christopher Martin-Jenkins

Mike Atherton had an appointment with his accountant recently after the announcement that he had made a Lancashire record 307,000 pounds from his benefit year.

The contrast was stark between the chipper, relaxed character who spoke with quiet confidence about both the short and longer-term prospects of his England team and the gloomy figure who wanted to resign from the captaincy after the Ashes had once again been conceded to Australia at Trent Bridge last summer.

The subsequent victory at the Oval, a change of heart and mind after much persuasion from his advisers; the chance to work diligently on his batting technique and now the assurance of financial security have all contributed to his present peace of mind, but so too has the long autumn break which has enabled all the England players to prepare so thoroughly for the winter's activities.

"I think this will be the fittest and best prepared England team to go on tour, although the gap we always get before a West Indies tour does give us the extra time," he said as he discussed the series after Christmas shortly before taking a holiday in a place believed to be not a million miles from the Caribbean.

Atherton was initially talked out of resigning the captaincy before the sixth Test in August by Lord MacLaurin, chairman of the England

Cricket Board, but it was David Lloyd, the coach, who persuaded him to carry on for a longer term after England had won at the Oval and there is no doubt



MIKE ATHERTON

that Lloyd's enthusiasm and organisational skills have made life easier for his fellow Lancastrian.

"I don't think David has got the credit he deserves for the job he's done and especially the back-up he's put in place within the team," said Atherton.

The Test captain has opted out of the one-day tournament in Sharjah, but he believes he still has a place in England's one-day team.

He is pleased with his personal net sessions this autumn with Graham Gooch, working on his technique with an attention to detail which perhaps only Gooch himself and Geoff

Boycott have equalled among England's post-war opening batsmen.

"I would have done it," Atherton said. "Even if I'd scored 800 Test runs last season because the West Indies tour is the only one which gives you a long enough winter break to take stock."

After more than four years and a record-breaking 46 Tests in charge, he said he was looking forward to the tour, which starts on Jan 3, although touring the West Indies is still "the biggest challenge of all for an opening batsman." For obvious reasons he cautions against writing off the opposition, whether they are led by Courtney Walsh or Brian Lara.

Atherton's record Lancashire benefit beats the £209,000 declared by the country's then captain, Mike Watkinson in 1996, and he said that he was more than delighted with the sum especially as he had not gone flat out to make the most of his testimonial season.

The chairman of his committee, businessman Bob Wilson, confirmed as much: "Mike said from Day One that any functions we arranged must not interfere with his cricket. It underlines just how popular he is." The amount is the more remarkable for the fact that for the last two seasons his country form has slumped badly. He scored 519 championship runs from eight games in 1996, and 596 from 10 matches last season.

Source: The Electronic Telegraph

## Fingers crossed for McGrath

SYDNEY, Dec 12: Australia's hopes for the Boxing Day cricket Test against South Africa were lifted today with signs that

strike bowler Glenn McGrath could be fit to play after undergoing treatment for a stomach problem, reports AFP.

McGrath will know the result this weekend and is planning to play for New South Wales in a Sheffield Shield match next week to prove his fitness for the December 26 Test at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

Australian team physiotherapist Errol Alcott said McGrath has undergone a medical procedure under anaesthesia.

"It's hoped the procedure will relieve Glenn's discomfort. We should know how successful it is in the next 36 hours," he said.

McGrath missed the final two Tests against New Zealand and was in pain in the one-day game against South Africa last Sunday when he strained stomach muscles.

Australian seamer Paul Reifel has been battling to overcome chronic hamstring problems. But Alcott said he should be fit to play for Victoria in a Shield match next week.

Meanwhile in Devonport, South Africa get down to serious Test preparation to prove critics of their batting wrong in a four-day match against David Boon's Tasmania starting Saturday.

South Africa have won three of their four one-day internationals down under despite a run of low scores. With their formidable bowling and impenetrable fielding.

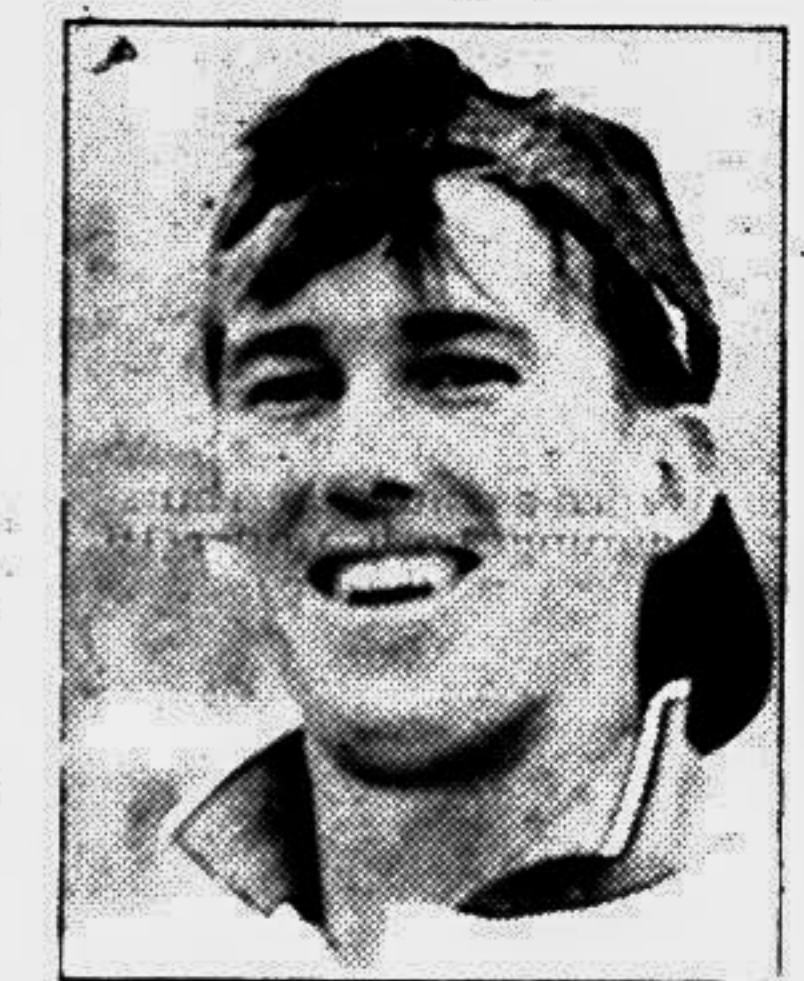
But apart from an early high-scoring game against Western Australia, the South Africans have not played an extended match since arriving here.

They have the Tasmanian game, followed by a four-day match against Australia A in

Brisbane, to prepare for the first Test in Melbourne.

While the South African team for Saturday has not been finalised, captain Hansie Cronje is expected to field his probable Test batting lineup.

Adam Bacher and Daryll Cullinan, who missed Thursday's one-run limited-overs win against New Zealand with a knee injury, will play.



GLENN MCGRATH

But the full Test bowling attack will not play.

Cronje said he was very keen for his batsmen to get as much practice as possible.

"If we don't get many runs, we'll be working very hard in the nets."

"As long as we get eight days good practice before we go to Melbourne for the Test, that's all we're worried about."

Cronje was quick to defend his batsmen.

"We have been criticised on this trip for our batting and we probably haven't batted as well as we can, but I'm not too worried about it," he said.

"Three weeks ago we chased 297 against the West Indies and got it. We got 314 against Sri Lanka and twice in Tests we got 400 against Pakistan."

"So we know we can step it up

and it's a case of doing it in the next eight days and I'm sure that every single individual will do that."

Cronje, who is looking for a return to form, said he would play in both lead-up games.

### Eves' WC cricket

### Aussies abase

### S Africans

NEW DELHI, Dec 12: Openers Belinda Clark with 95 and Joanne Broadbent with 59 led three-time champions Australia to an easy 10-wicket win over South Africa Friday in the women's cricket World Cup, reports AP.

Australia bowled first, and kept South Africa to 163 for nine in 50 overs. Then it took the Australians just 28.5 overs to reach the target. Clark and Broadbent remained unbeaten.

On Thursday, New Zealand opened their campaign whipping Netherlands by eight wickets in a truncated Group B match, played on a slushy ground and reduced to 20 overs-a side.

### Bomb scare

### VOLGOGRAND, Russia, Dec

12: An unexploded bomb thought to date back to World War II was dug up by Russian football club Rotor Volgograd on Thursday, reports AFP.

The shell, weighing 50 kilograms, was found by workers excavating the Rotor training ground.

Volgograd officials said they believed the bomb was 55 years