

Anand, Short go ahead

GRONINGEN, Netherlands. Dec 21: Viswanathan Anand of India and Nigel Short of Britain took major strides Saturday towards the semifinals of the FIDE World Chess Championships...

Shirov (2700) resigned on move 42 with Anand about to win a crucial pawn on the h-file and threatening to promote his own h-pawn.

And Pole Michal Karsenkov (2645), conceded defeat on move 45 playing black against Short (2660), with the Englishman having won a central pawn and about to win a bishop.

The remaining two quarter-final confrontations remained dedlocked. Belarusian Boris Gelfand (2695) played a Queen's Gambit with white against Russian Alexey Dreev (2640)...

And Englishman Michael Adams (2680) had to settle for a 52-move draw with Dutchman Loek van Wely (2655), despite finding himself with a queen and pawn to Van Wely's rook and bishop in the endgame.

Van Wely's fighting spirit helped him out of what many watching Grand Masters thought an apparently lost position, and Adams agreed to share the point with repetition of moves an inevitability.

If any of the matches remain tied after the second game Sunday, the Grand Masters involved will return to the Martinihal for rapid-chess tiebreakers Monday.

TODAY'S MATCHES

Janakantha Premier Division Cricket League: Brothers Union vs Surjo Tarun Club (BKSFC) Agra Bank vs Ajax SC (Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium) First Division Cricket League: Gulshan Youth Club vs Gopibahar FA (City Club ground) Premier Division Football League: Mohammedan SC vs Farashganj SC (Mirpur Stadium, 4 pm) First Division Football League: Banashree Boys Club vs BRTC SC (Mirpur Stadium, 2 pm) East End Club vs Dhanmondi Club (Army Stadium, 2:30 pm)

SL-India 1st ODI today

Sports Reporter



RANATUNGA

A new look Indian cricket team face a daunting task of revival when they take on world champion Sri Lanka in the first of the three-match limited-overs series at Guwahati today.

Sachin Tendulkar's side, seemingly with their back against the wall, is looking forward to some solid and inspiring performances while Sri Lanka, undisputed super powers in the abridged form of the game, are well set to ignite the passion of exciting cricket.

Hosts India are going through a rough phase in their cricket after some terrible performances both home and away and were particularly unimpressive in their recent debacle in the Champions' Trophy in Sharjah where they lost all three matches.

Mohammed Azharuddin, India's former captain, was reprimanded for "not giving his best" as sweeping changes were made for the one-day series against Sri Lanka.

Azharuddin was admonished by the selectors when he dropped six players from the squad who took part in the Champions' Trophy tournament.

Those left out are batsmen Rahul Dravid and Vinod Kambli, pacemen Venkatesh Prasad and Abey Kuruvilla, leg-spinner Anil Kumble and wicketkeeper Saba Karim.

They have been replaced by batsman Vangipurapu Laxman, all-rounders Sairaj Bahutule and Hrishikesh Kanitkar, medium-pacers Debashish Mohanty and Harvinder Singh and wicketkeeper Nayan Mongia.

Meanwhile, the omission of the six players has come under severe criticism from former Indian stars.

"I just cannot understand the wavelength of the selectors," said Erappali Prasanna while reacting to the selection of India team for the first two one-day internationals against Sri Lanka.

The great off-spinner of yesterday agreed that a stage had reached in Indian cricket where the selectors should try various combinations. "But why should such experiments be ventured at the cost of young and talented start like Rahul Dravid. His omission is really stunning," he added.

Prasanna was of the opinion that such experiments might have been realistic by "resting" seniors like Mohammed Azharuddin and N S Siddhu. "These two are brilliant players but are in mid-30s. There is nothing wrong in giving them a 'break'. In modern Indian cricket we must use the word 'resting' when it comes to established but ageing players," he said.

B S Chandrasekhar, the legendary leg-spinner, felt that Rahul Dravid and Saba Karim should not have got the axe. "Rahul has established himself at the international arena in a very short span and it is very difficult to digest the decision of omitting him. Saba Karim did not do any wrong to be ignored. Venkatesh Prasad has not done anything disastrous to lose his place. In fact, he was showing appreciable degree of enthusiasm to attain his peak."

Otherwise I think that the selectors' keenness to experiment is worth venturing keeping the coming series against Australia in mind.

Brijesh Patel, former Test cricketer, condemned the musical-chair sort of approach being adopted by the selectors. He said, "The selectors are a confused lot."

Brijesh was furious at the manner in which Rahul Dravid was treated. He said our future lies in men like Rahul Dravid. Most of us even firmly believe that he is the future captain of India. How can they drop a classic player like Rahul? He has been doing exceptionally well in both Tests and one-dayers.

This type of treatment would only kill the confidence of a young sportsman. I wonder how could any young champion gulp this? Anyway we all know that he possesses the ideal mental-make up to take this in his stride and bounce back into his appointed spot in the national team.

G R Viswanath, the former chairman of the National Selection Committee said, "something is wrong somewhere." He felt that desired re-

sults could never be achieved by being erratic in trying various combinations. "You do not get allrounders, for that matter any specialist, overnight. Replacements during a rebuilding process should be done one-by-one and certainly not in one stroke. Above all, enough chances must be given to prospective talent. Such talent should not be coming in and go-

ing out of the combination at such a dangerous frequency," he added.

S M H Kirmani, the famous wicket-keeper, said: "This is not a good sign for stability. Frequent changes would only upset the rhythm of the combination as there would be very few in the playing eleven who had gained the much-needed self-confidence. Rahul and Prasad are the worst victims. It is really disappointing to note that the combination has suffered frequent shifting of spots, chopping and crucifying of talent. This would naturally destroy the performance-graph of the team."

TEAMS

INDIA (from): Sachin Tendulkar (captain), Saurav Ganguly, Navot Sidhu, Mohammed Azharuddin, Ajay Jadeja (vice-captain), Hrishikesh Kanitkar, V V Laxman, Nayan Mongia, Sairaj Bahutule, Javagal Srinath, Rajesh Chauhan, Harvinder Singh, Debashish Mohanty and Robin Singh.

SRI LANKA (from): Arjuna Ranatunga (captain), Sanath Jayasuriya, Roshan Mahanama, Aravinda de Silva, Marvan Atapattu, Hashan Tillekeratne, Romesh Kaluwitharana, Kumara Dharmasena, Muthia Muralitharan, Sanjeeva de Silva, Chaminda Vaas, Mahela Jayawardena, Promodwa Wickremasinghe and Upul Chandana.

(Compiled from Indian newspapers reports)

Women's WC cricket England abase Sri Lanka

MOHALI, India, Dec 21: In a one-sided match Sunday, defending women's World Cup champions England whipped Sri Lanka in the second quarterfinal in this northern town, reports AP.

Charlotte Edwards steered England to victory, scoring 57 runs off 65 balls (7 boundaries). She also took three wickets in seven overs.

English bowlers Clare Connor and Melissa Reynard shattered the Lankans in 43.2 overs, restricting them to 104 runs.

The game began a little later due to cloudy weather and was reduced to 46 overs.

Sri Lanka won the toss and elected to bat. Only skipper Venessa Bowen (38) and Ruka Fernando (14) reached the double figure in the game, which lasted 158 minutes.

The Sri Lankan wickets fell quickly and only the sixth-wicket partnership yielded 20 runs.

BRIEF SCORES SRI LANKA: 104 all out in 43.2 overs (Bowen 38, Extras 29; Charlotte 3/21). ENGLAND: 105 for one wicket in 22.1 overs (Charlotte 57, Britain 24; Extras 17). Result: England won by nine wickets. Player-of-the-match: Charlotte Edwards (England).

SAMSONOV deprives China HONG KONG, Dec 21: Vladimir Samsonov of Belarus beat teenage sensation Wang Linqin in the men's final to stop China sweeping the International Table Tennis Federation Pro Tour titles, reports AFP.

The 19-year-old Wang, who swept aside world champion Jan Ove Waldner of Sweden in the quarterfinal and experienced Belgian Jean-Michel Salvie in the semis, could not keep up his stunning form in the final.

The robust Samsonov scored a 21-16, 21-14, 14-21, 21-17 win.

"I have beaten him three times before and had been keeping a close eye on him after he beat Waldner. But Wang certainly is going to be good," said the Belarus sporting hero.

China could not be stopped in the other finals of the year-ending championship however.

Azhar hits back at Sunil

Mohammad Azharuddin is an angry and bitter man. He was called in his own words, "for a friendly chat" and pointedly asked about the run out against West Indies and told to get involved fully with the Indian team.

But Ramakant Desai, chairman of the selection panel of the Board of Control for Cricket in India, said Azharuddin was reprimanded by the selectors for "not giving his best."

"He was not in as many words to be more involved with the team in future or else....." Desai added.

Desai said India had dropped six players for the series, starting in Guwahati on Monday, because "the way the Indian team performed (in Sharjah) we find that these changes were badly needed."

"Why always me," asked Azharuddin. "Every time they..... a section of the media try to get me."

"I can say for certain that they... the media is going to ruin Indian cricket one day. Cricket will go to dogs. Only insane people will write such things. If I am not involved

Lara returns to Warwickshire as captain LONDON, Dec 21: English county championship side Warwickshire said on Saturday that Brian Lara had signed as captain for next season, succeeding Tim Munton, reports Reuters.

The West Indies batsman, who played for Warwickshire in 1994 when they won the championship, Benson and Hedges Cup and the Sunday league, made a brief stopover in London after the Champions' Cup final in Sharjah.

Lara, scorer of a world record 501 not out against Durham for Warwickshire in 1994, was offered the captaincy and a one-year contract last month.

Pace bowler Munton missed last season with a back injury and the club have said they could not be certain about his fitness until he was playing again.

Munton, captain during Lara's first season at the club, said on Saturday he was disappointed that he had been told that Lara would be taking over as captain only four hours before the official announcement.

with the game, why should I run and field, why should I dive and take catches and why should I be always the target of attack. I think some of the writers, not the cricketers, should be axed. This will do a great service to Indian cricket," said an extremely annoyed former Indian captain, naming an agency reporter from New Delhi.

"Cricket is a team game. One should try to help another. I can say for sure that there is no dis-

criticism. "The intelligent people of the country are not going to be carried away or believe such prejudiced reporting. I have received several calls after what has been appearing in the newspapers since yesterday. It is very prejudiced. But no body can put me down. I am a clean man and when I talk I always talk sense. Am I stupid enough to deliberately get run out? I can say for sure that after all this I will be the winner not the loser."

"I have played long enough for the country with distinction and the day I feel I have to go, I will quit. I don't want to be a burden on anyone. Why should he (Gavaskar) say that there is no tomorrow for me? Why is he so prejudiced? He is foolish to make such comments. It's a pity he had to say this. In what context did he say that? He should talk about the game..... that's his job. He cannot be personal. What has Gavaskar done for me?"

"He (Gavaskar) says I don't have a tomorrow. Well, it is he who doesn't have a tomorrow. "I am in the team. Who is he to talk like this? They are all trying to conspire against me and malign me and spoil my reputation. He (Gavaskar) is not going to look after me. It was all foolish and insane to make such statements. Intelligent won't talk like this. But no one can put me down. I have to be a very angry man."

Source: The Hindu, The Electronic Telegraph

BCIC International Tender Notice. The Managing Director, Urea Fertilizer Factory Limited, Ghorasal, Narsingdi, Bangladesh invites sealed quotation for sale of Arsenic Trioxide Powder "as it is where it is basis". Tender will be received up to 11:00 AM on 15-01-1998.

Dhaka WASA Local Tender Notice. Local tenders are invited by Dhaka WASA from bonafide suppliers/manufacturers and local agents for supplying 205m. ton MSD-Formed Bar for construction of Storm Swear line and Box culvert under Dhaka Integrated Flood Control Project.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Office of the Director General Fire Service & Civil Defence Kazi Alauddin Road, Dhaka Re-Tender Notice. Sealed re-tenders are invited from bonafide suppliers/contractors/manufacturing firms for purchasing spare parts of different vehicles/pumps, general goods, tyre (with tube) and uniform for operational officers and staff of Bangladesh Fire Service & Civil Defence Division.

Bangladesh Sugar & Food Industries Corporation Purbaragh Bhaban (1st Floor) 3 No. Dilkusha, Dhaka-1000 Enlistment/Renewal of Contractor. Applications in prescribed form are invited by the Chief Engineer (Civil), Bangladesh Sugar & Food Industries Corporation, Purbaragh Bhaban (1st Floor), 3 No. Dilkusha C/A, Dhaka from reputed firms for enlistment of A-1, A-2, A-3 class contractors and renewal of contractors for the year 1998 under Bangladesh Sugar & Food Industries Corporation for carrying out the Civil construction works at different enterprises.

Dhaka WASA Local Tender Notice. Local tenders are invited by Dhaka WASA from bonafide suppliers/manufacturers and local agents for supplying 205m. ton MSD-Formed Bar for construction of Storm Swear line and Box culvert under Dhaka Integrated Flood Control Project. Tenders will be received up to 12:00 Noon of 5/1/98 and will be opened on the same day at 2:00 PM before the tenderers or their representatives (if any) present.

The Daily Star TV Guide. Monday 22nd December (All programmes are in local time but subject to last minute change). BTV: 3:00 Opening announcement, Al Quran, Programme summary, 3:15 Recitation from the Bible, 3:15 Patriotic songs, 3:20 Banashree Session of Folk Song, 3:30 Dosh O Biggan, 4:00 News, 4:40 Dolan Champa, 5:15 Open University, 6:00 Bithyanon, 6:30 The Battle of Belunia, 7:00 News, 7:00 News in English, 7:05 Health programme, 7:25 A special programme of Victory Day, 8:00 News in Bangla, 8:45 Package Drama, 10:00 News in English, 10:30 Shoptok, 10:55 Comedy Series, 11:30 News in Bangla, 11:35 Tuesday Programme summary, 11:40 Close down. BBC: 6:00 am BBC World Headlines, 6:05 USA Direct, 6:30 World Living, Top Gear, 7:00 BBC World News Inc, World Business Report, Asia Today & 24 Hours, 10:00 BBC World News, 10:30 World Focus, World Review '97, 11:00 BBC World News, 11:30 World Focus, 12:00 Model TV, 1:30 World Living, The Clothes Show, 2:00 BBC World News, 2:30 BBC World News, 3:00 World Focus, World Review '97, 3:30 BBC World News, 4:00 News, 4:30 World Living, Top Gear, 5:00 The World Today, 6:30 World World, The Secret Nature of The Channel. STAR PLUS: 6:00 Travel Asia, 6:30 Nainad, 7:30 Good Morning India, 9:30 Rin Ek Do Teen, 10:30 Plus Preview, 11:00 The Oprah Winfrey Show, 12:00 Model TV, 12:30 Yes Minister, 1:00 Nine To Five, 1:30 A Law, 2:00 The Bold And The Beautiful, 3:00 Santa Barbara, 4:00 WWF Shotgun Challenge, 5:00 The Wonder Years, 5:30 Small Wonder, 6:00 Ashok Masale, Meri Pasand, 6:30 Plus Preview, 7:00 Lohit Kinare, 7:15 The Trial. STAR MOVIES: 7:30 Film Club: Jason's Lyric, 15:30 Family: Rigoleto?, 11:30 Horror: The Haunting 15 (Arabic Subtitles), 1:30 Romance: Rememberance, 15:30 Family: Heck's Way Home, 12:50 Action: Reservoir Dogs, 15:30 Family: Lucky Luke - Daisy Town PG (Hindi Subtitles), 9:30 This Week That Year, 10:00 Comedy: The Mask 15 (Hindi Subtitles), 12:00 World Cinema: Secret Sight 15 (English Subtitles), 2:00 Action: Predator 16 (Arabic Subtitles), 4:00 Thriller: Defenseless 18, 5:45 Comedy: Bachelor Party 15 (Arabic Subtitles). STAR SPORTS: 1:30 UIM Class 1 Offshore World Cup, 2:00 NFL Football (I) National Football League, 9:58 Live, 4:30 NBA Basketball - Houston Rockets vs San Antonio Spurs, 6:30 UEFA Champions League Highlights, 7:30 Sports India 8:00 Table Tennis ITTF Pro Tour Final-Final Day, Hong Kong 11:00 Heineken European Cup Semifinal, 1:00 NBA Basketball - Houston Rockets vs San Antonio Spurs. EL TV: 7:00am Yeodan Ki Barat, 7:30 Haseen Pal (Trailer Show), 7:40 Sur Tal, 8:20 Bajaj Darpan (Trailer Show), 8:30 Teer Kaman, 9:00 Bourmiva Ki Contest, 9:30 Zee News - English, 10:00 Aap Ki Adalat (Anchor - Rajat Sharma), 11:00 Hum Zamane Mein, 11:30 The Shotgun Show, 12:00pm Special Report, 12:30 Zee News - Hindi, 1:00 Hay Ma Ho, 1:30 Umeed (Serial).