

SL stagger to 200

HARARE, Dec 19: Sri Lanka made unusually hard work of their batting when they were all out for 200 against Zimbabwe in the final of five one-day internationals here, reports AFP.

However, the tourists can afford to relax as they hold a winning 3-0 lead in the series - one match was declared a no result because of rain.

Sri Lanka never fully recovered from the early losses of captain Sanath Jayasuriya and Ramesh Kaluwitharana for only 14 after Jayasuriya won the toss and decided to bat.

Marvan Atapattu, Mahela Jayawardena, Russel Arnold and TM Dilshan all failed to get going after making good starts to their innings but in Dilshan's defence he had to protect the tail-enders and was rewarded with a fine 51.

The Zimbabwe bowlers were much more accurate than in previous matches and they generally confined the Sri Lankans to taking quick singles.

Guy Whittall was unlucky not to get an outside edge as he beat the bat of Russel Arnold several times when it looked as though Sri Lanka's middle order would raise the tempo.

The batsmen reached 51 in 15 overs and 100 in 25 so they were never able to find the acceleration necessary for a good final score.

The target of 201 offers Zimbabwe their best chance of beating Sri Lanka for the first time on this long tour, but they have so often experienced batting collapses recently.

Zimbabwe brought back Bryan Strang and off spinner Andy Whittall in place of Eddo Brandes and Gary Brent for this final clash.

Sri Lanka took the opportunity to test Chaminda Vaas, Promodaya Wickramasinghe and Muttiah Muralitharan who have had a wearying tour.

This gave chances to get more experience for Indika de Seram, Indika Gallage and Sajeeva de Silva.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the Sri Lankan innings in the fifth and final one-day international against Zimbabwe in Harare on Sunday.

SRI LANKA				
Jayasuriya c A Flower b Rennie	6			
Kitharana c Goodwin b Olonga	7			
Atapattu b G Whittall	25			
Jawardena c Strang b Rennie	17			
Arnold c A Flower b G Whittall	39			
Dilshan c Carlisle b Strang	51			
De Seram c G Flower b G Whittall	7			
Chandana c A Whittall b Olonga	14			
Gallage run out (G Flower)	14			
Pikunara c A Flower b Strang	0			
De Silva not out	0			
Extras: (b-1; lb-3; w-11; nb-2)	17			
Total (All out in 48.3 overs)	200			
Fall of wickets: 1-14; 2-14; 3-36; 4-96; 5-110; 6-118; 7-161; 8-200; 9-200				
Bowler				
Olonga	8	0	42	2
Rennie	9.3	2	21	2
Strang	10	1	36	2
G Whittall	8	0	37	3
A Whittall	10	0	45	0
G Flower	3	0	15	0

Locals score at ease

EAST LONDON, South Africa, Dec 19: Nailed to the wall by a brilliant 72 from in-form Eastern Province batsman James Bryant, England's attack took an unexpected pounding in sweltering conditions at Buffalo Park here on Saturday, reports AFP.

With Bryant and opening batsman Brad White combining for a second-wicket partnership of 94, a Combined Eastern Province XI had amassed a massive first innings total of 331 for five at stumps on the first day of the four-day encounter.

The run glut also included a quick 63 by Wayne Wiblein, a whirlwind unbeaten 66 by captain Pieter Strydom and a soul-destroying 41 not out off 39 balls from Robin Peterson.

When eventually caught behind, Bryant had given England the run-around for almost three hours. But his dismissal brought no respite to a visibly wilting attack on a day when temperatures soared to the mid-thirties centigrade.

Making the most of a perfect platform, new batsman Wiblein cracked four fours and a six off successive deliveries from off-spinner Graeme Swann to clock up his half century off 101 balls.

He was out soon after, caught behind off Tudor for 63, only to be followed by skipper Strydom, who kept the runs flowing.

The tourists contributed to their own hard labour by missing out on a chance to get rid of White when he was on 13.

The ball flew hard to Darren Maddy's right in the gully and although the fielder got a hand to it he couldn't hold on and the batsman trotted through for a single.

White went on to score a solid 48 off 127 deliveries before being trapped leg before by Swann.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at close of play on the first day of a four-day cricket match between England and a Combined Eastern Province XI on Saturday:

COMB EP XI: First Innings				
B White lbw Swann	48			
C Bradfield c Butcher b Gough	11			
J Bryant c Read b Hamilton	72			
W Wiblein c Read b Tudor	63			
P Strydom not out	66			
L Gamiet b Tudor	0			
R Peterson not out	41			
Extras: (b-13; lb-9; b-4; w-4)	30			
Total: (For 5 wickets in 90 overs)	331			
Fall of wickets: 1/29; 2/123; 3/161; 4/241; 5/253				
Bowler				
Gough	18	4	55	0
Silverwood	21	7	45	0
Tudor	15	1	72	2
Hamilton	14	3	49	1
Swann	17	3	79	1
Adams	2	0	8	0
Maddy	3	0	10	0



Inter Milan's Grigorios Georgatos (L) wins possession from Bari's Michael Enynnaya (lyin?) during their Serie A clash at Bari on December 18. — AFP photo

Serie A

Bari lesson for Inter



ROME, Dec 19: Inter Milan crashed to a 2-1 defeat at Bari here Saturday in one of two Serie A matches played, reports AFP.

Inter are likely to lose touch with the leading pack of Juventus, Lazio, Roma and Parma when Sunday's programme is completed.

Nigeriano Ugo Michael Enynnaya, aged only 18, put Bari ahead with a 35-yard pilderiver after just seven minutes.

Inter soon hit back with an equaliser five minutes later from their world record signing Christian Vieri when the 31 million pounds man diverted a mishit shot from Chilean Ivan Zamorano into the net.

But Bari came up with the winner with just two minutes remaining when 17-year-old Antonio Cassano notched the deciding goal in his first appearance in the starting lineup.

In the other match Sunday Verona saw off Venezia 1-0 with a 56th-minute penalty from Brazilian Adailton.

Inter coach Marcello Lippi slammed his men for their

worst performance since he took over the club to Bari's teenagers.

Lippi, who became Inter's coach last summer, made no excuses for his team of millionaires, saying: "It was probably Inter's worst performance of the season. We were really rotten, we were never in the match."

"There were major mistakes being made at the back, in the middle and up front. We played badly, really badly, everywhere. And when you play as badly as that, you lose and there's not much you can do about it."

"I'm very disappointed, particularly because I really didn't expect to be in for a night where we showed absolutely nothing."

Inter have had an erratic season since Lippi arrived after quitting Juventus in February. A sparkling start was followed by a long spell in the wilderness, while more recently they had strung together three consecutive league wins before losing to 10-man Juventus last Sunday.

Lippi admitted: "It's very difficult to build something positive if every three or four matches someone gives you a really hard smack. Because that's certainly what we got here."

"And it feels particularly hard because we'd been improving recently, and not just in terms of results. But here, we did nothing. We couldn't string three passes together and we were always arriving late for the ball."

Dismissing any help from seasonal folklore, he said: "It's been a while since I wrote a letter to Father Christmas. But the only thing I could ask myself and my team is that we show more continuity."

"Five defeats in 14 matches doesn't change our objectives, because our sole aim must be to play more consistently."

"As for our other objectives," he added, referring to their waning hopes of winning the championship, "there is still plenty of time. Twenty to go is a lot of matches."

Bari have long established themselves as Inter's bogey team, the mid-table club having won six of their last seven encounters, including each of the last five.

Coach Eugenio Fascetti, like Lippi from the Tuscan seaside resort of Viareggio and who joined Bari in 1995, said: "This is one of the best days since I came here."

Marseille players point at fans



MARSEILLE, France, Dec 19: Players with under-achieving French First Division side Marseille pointed at the club's notoriously volatile fans after a 2-1 home defeat by Lens on Saturday saw their season go from bad to worse, reports AFP.

Marseille are in midtable in the First Division, struggling in the European Champions League, have already sacked coach Roland Courbis and are the subject of police inquiries

Marseille took an early lead but lost 2-1 even though Lens had been reduced to 10 men. Given the intimidating atmosphere it is hardly surprising that the players have started to hit back.

"The fans want this team to live and it is no longer alive," said defender Patrick Blondeau. Assistant coach Christophe Galtier said: "The players are very disturbed by the environment and what they can hear."

So bad was the abuse that the Marseille players who could not play because of injury or sus-

that the ill-feeling stemmed from Monday's bad-tempered meeting between players, fans and the administration.

The president said: "It's absolutely false. If I join in this hatred where are we going to go?"

The manner of the defeat by Lens was farcical. An own goal by William Gallas - a "joke goal" according to Galtier - allowed Lens to equalise while French World Cup winning star Robert Pires had a good claim for a penalty turned down.

Another player Yannick Fischer lamented: "Lens had one shot at goal and won 2-1."

Marseille coach Bernard Casoni, who replaced Courbis last month, said: "In this situation, the smallest grain of sand can derail us."

Marseille, now only three points above the relegation zone, have already revised their targets for this season - last year they reached the UEFA Cup Final and lost the title race on the last day of the season to Bordeaux.

Casoni said: "We have to look at the table from the bottom up and think just about staying up."

Marchand, who has pledged a radical overhaul of the playing staff during the midwinter break, said: "Until May each match will be a war."

Celtic sign Brazilian

GLASGOW, Dec 19: Celtic have agreed a five-million-pound transfer for Brazilian international Rafael Felipe Scheidt from Gremio of Porto Alegre, reports Reuters.

Coach John Barnes said yesterday that a fee and personal terms for the 23-year-old central defender had been settled after a week of negotiations.

"He is one of the best young players in Brazil," said Barnes after Celtic's 4-1 victory over Dundee United in the Scottish Premier League.

"We have agreed personal terms on a contract for four years and now we only need a work permit to conclude the signing."

Scheidt, who has made two international appearances, flew back to Brazil on Saturday after a three-day visit to Glasgow.

Another Scottish Premier League club, Hearts, expect to complete the signings of two internationals within the next few days.

Robert Tomaschek, the 27-year-old captain of Slovakia, has agreed to join the Edinburgh club from Slovan Bratislava after a week on trial at Tynecastle.

Finland goalkeeper Antti Niemi, 26, has yet to conclude his move from Rangers but told BBC radio on Saturday that he could sign before Sunday's match with Hibernian.

SL-ZIMBABWE SCOREBOARD

Final scoreboard after fourth one-day international between Sri Lanka and Zimbabwe played on Saturday: **ZIMBABWE**: 260 for 4 in 50 overs (Carlisle 121 n.o.)

SRI LANKA				
Jayasuriya c G Rennie b J Rennie	8			
Kaluwitharana b Olonga	99			
Atapattu c A Flower b J Rennie	6			
Jawardena c A Flower b	63			
Brandes	42			
Arnold not out	20			
Dilshan not out	24			
Extras: (lb-2; nb-7; w-15)	262			
Total: (For 4 wickets in 44.4 overs)	262			
Fall of wickets: 1-25; 2-44; 3-188; 4-213				
Bowler				
Brandes	10	0	52	1
Rennie	8	0	36	2
Brent	5.4	0	48	0
G Whittall	13	0	34	0
Olonga	10	0	54	1
Campbell	2	0	9	0
G Flower	6	0	27	0

Result: Sri Lanka won by six wickets.

French First Div Monaco go five points clear

PARIS, Dec 19: Under-pressure Marseille were felled by a last minute goal from substitute Franck Queudrue in a 2-1 loss to 10-man Lens at the Stade Velodrome on Saturday night despite being a goal up as the eventful south coast club yet further angered disgruntled fans, reports AFP.

Police clashed with supporters at the stadium in another turn of dramatic events which have dogged the club this week.

Montenegro scored for Marseille in the 22nd minute but an almost laughable own goal by William Gallas four minutes after the break caused further distress before Queudrue's fierce left foot shot to win the match.

Monaco extended their lead at the top from three to five points with a 1-0 victory over Montpellier while Lyon beat Metz 2-0 to jump over Paris Saint Germain into second spot.

Meanwhile Marseille must have been pleased to get on to the pitch in a period of light relief from all their troubles.

Earlier in the week, Patrick Blondeau said he feared an exodus of players in the wake of fans going on the rampage at their training ground.

With certain players out of favour following Casoni's sticking of a dozen players, a win was really needed to help team cohesion, but even playing against 10 men they couldn't manage it.

Marseille's painful transitional period since Bernard Casoni replaced Roland Courbis in the coach's role was not helped with players being booed onto the pitch and then being given the silent treatment by protesting fans who simply refused to chant during the match.

Daniel Montenegro volleyed home after being set up by Ibrahim Bakayoko but even his goal failed to could not take the edge off the icy atmosphere at the stadium.

Cyril Rool was sent off in the 38th minute after his second yellow card in a clash with Montenegro but it didn't help them much.

In the 49th minute, Eric Sikora crossed from the right and William Gallas swung at the ball with the left foot to put it into his own net for the equalizer.

Then came Queudrue's dramatic winner to spark off troubles on the terraces.

Marco Simone's freekick in the 32nd minute earned Monaco their win over Montpellier in a fairly uneventful match by comparison. It was the Italian's 13th goal this season.

Lyon dominated for the most part against Metz and were rewarded in the 58th minute. Steed Malbranque, standing almost on the goalline, first accidentally blocked an initial shot, and then guided the rebound by Tony Vairelles back into the net.

Brazilian Sonny Anderson hit a second for Lyon with just under 10 minutes remaining to confirm the win and keep him top of the scoring list on his own with 14.

Primera Liga

Deportivo prevail in Galician derby



MADRID, Dec 19: In-form Deportivo La Coruna extended their lead in the Primera Liga to eight points when they saw off their closest challengers and Galician neighbours Celta Vigo in a tense derby match Saturday, reports AFP.

At the other end of the table fallen giants Real Madrid at last had some festive cheer with a 2-1 home win over Espanyol - their first at their once-mighty Bernabeu Stadium fiefdom for three months.

"Super-Deport", who have never won the Spanish title and were famously deprived on the final day in 1994 when Brazilian World Cup striker Bebeto missed what would have been a championship-winning penalty, saw off Vigo thanks to

past Vigo goalkeeper Richard Dutruel after good work from Brazilian playmaker Djalminha.

Vigo can consider themselves unlucky not to get a draw with Argentinian Gustavo Lopez and Russian Alexander Mostovoi both hitting the bar.

But Real will be equally pleased to have posted a much-needed victory with goals from long-serving pair Raul and Fernando Hierro to seal their first win at home since August 29 in the Primera Liga.

Meringues coach Vicente del Bosque bubbled: "It was three absolutely vital points. It was a win obtained through suffering."

Paraguayan World Cup forward Miguel Angel Benitez had put Espanyol ahead with a half-volley after trapping the ball on his chest and Real fans started

But then Raul squared the match and just to rub it in for Espanyol their goalkeeper Luis Cavallero had to be replaced after being injured in a vain attempt to prevent the goal.

Hierro popped up with the winner after Espanyol failed to clear the ball.

The Bernabeu fans gave a warm reception to English star Steve McManaman, who missed the Zaragoza debacle through injury but gave a more frosty welcome to French striker Nicolas Anelka, who is rapidly making himself as popular with the Spanish press as he was with the British media.

Real could even afford to squander a penalty with Raul the culprit, sending the half-wide of substitute goalkeeper Jose Luis Mora's left-hand post.

Defending champions Barcelona square up to Atletico Madrid on Sunday.

Karembou fancies Bundesliga move

BERLIN, Dec 19: Real Madrid's French World Cup winning utility man Christian Karembou said Saturday he would like to link up with France team-mate Youri Djorkaeff at German First Division outfit Kaiserslautern, reports AFP.

Karembou, who hails from New Caledonia and can play in defence or midfield, has been a fringe player with the struggling meringues.

He told German TV channel ARD: "I would love to be able to play at Kaiserslautern. At present my agent and the club are in negotiations. I can not yet announce the outcome."

MU to open training centres in Emirates

ABU DHABI, Dec 19: Manchester United, the world's wealthiest football club, is to open training centres in the United Arab Emirates, the official WAM news agency said on Sunday, reports AFP.

The project, due to start in March, was signed between English footballing legend Bobby Charlton, a director of the club and a former England captain, and Emirati Information Minister Sheikh Abdullah bin Zayed al-Nahyan.

Sir Bobby arrived on Saturday in the Emirates on a promotional visit.

Espanyol's Moises Arteaga (L) and Real Madrid's fernando Hierro are locked in an aerial battle during their Primera Liga encounter at Madrid on December 18. — AFP photo

a goal from Argentinian Jose Oscar Flores, known universally as Turu Flores. Flores fired a powerful shot

to fear a rerun of their last home league match when Real Zaragoza gave them a public 5-1 spanking.

The world at United's feet



PARIS, Dec 19 (AFP): Manchester United were crowned the unofficial club champions of the world in late November with a 1-0 victory over Palmeiras of Brazil in the Intercontinental Cup to complete an unprecedented quartet of trophies.

The English league title, FA Cup victory and European Cup triumph were also part of their incredible 1999 campaign which made them easily the most successful club side in the world.

United became the first ever English side to win the annual play-off between the champions of Europe and the South American, or Libertadores Cup, champions through skipper Roy Keane's 35th minute goal at the Tokyo National Stadium.

Welshman Ryan Giggs won a new sports car from sponsors Toyota after being voted man of the match by the Japanese press.

On an even more important evening for the Manchester club was their sensational European Cup final win in Barcelona on May 26 after substitutes Teddy Sheringham and Ole Gunnar Solskjaer each scored a goal in injury-time.

It was a stunning end to a final which United had looked destined to lose after going down to a sixth minute goal from Bayern's Mario Basler and

failing to make any impression on the German's solid defence.

But on a memorable night for European and particularly English football, Sheringham steered a low shot into the left hand corner and then Norway's Solskjaer hooked the ball into the roof of the net in identical sieges of the German goal after corners from David Beckham.

The remarkable victory brought them the third part of their unique "quadruple" triumph and allowed them to lift Europe's top trophy for the first time since Sir Matt Busby's triumph in 1968.

"I can't believe it. I can't believe it," said Manchester United manager Alex Ferguson afterwards. "That's football, bloody hell."

"But they never gave in, that's what won it. It's fantastic. I'm so proud of my players. It was such a bad start for us, we keep shooting ourselves in the foot."

Bayern, who won this competition from 1974 to 1976 and were hoping for a domestic treble in the German Cup final, were shattered by the two goals, their players dropping to their knees in front of a 90,000 crowd at the Nou Camp stadium after dominating for 90 minutes.

Ironically, Bayern went on to lose the German Cup final and the psychological blow was still hampering them as they started the 1999/2000 season.

Bayern led the Bundesliga from day one but ended the sea-

son in such a gloomy, despondent state as if they had been relegated to the Second Division rather than being Bundesliga champions and runners-up in two other competitions.

Just minutes before the shattering two-goal blitz, Bayern substitute Mehmet Scholl had tucked a shot past Schmeichel which hit the left-hand post and bounced out, while Carsten Jancker's bicycle kick had hit the crossbar.

The verdict at the final whistle could not have been more unexpected after the English club's faltering start on a balmy summer evening in the Catalan capital.

Italian club Lazio won the last ever European Cup Winners' Cup on May 19 when Czech midfielder Pavel Nedved crashed in an 81st minute winner to give them a 2-1 victory over Real Mallorca of Spain at Villa Park.

Nedved earned himself a permanent place in the Rome club's folklore as Lazio made up for losing last year's UEFA Cup final by winning their first ever European trophy.

Christian Vieri had given the Italians a seventh minute lead before Mallorca, playing their first ever season in European competition, hit back four minutes later through highly-rated Spanish striker Dani.

Classy outfit Parma beat depleted French side Marseille 3-0 in the UEFA Cup final in Moscow on May 12 in a dominating display of football.

Hernan Crespo of Argentina hit the first in the 26th minute, Paolo Vanoli managed a second 10 minutes later, and Crespo's strikepartner Enrico Chiesa managed a third in the 55th minute.

Parma, who were playing in their fourth European club final in the 90's, won this competition for the second time after victory in 1995.

Marseille coach Roland Courbis said: "I did not see a good match from our point of view. Even at 2-0 down at half-time, we had a chance, but the third goal was the end."

AC Milan won the Italian league title after Lazio had been seven points clear of Milan with eight games to play.

The previous two seasons, Milan had finished 11th and 10th respectively and coach Albino Zaccaroni had even told the media they were not aiming to win the league title this time around as it was a period of transition in the hope of winning in future seasons.

This attitude appeared to take the pressure off his players in the run-in, completed with a 2-1 win over Perugia on the last day of the season.

Bordeaux won the French title after a see-saw battle with Marseille, who finished runners-up which was seen as a failure in the eyes of their demanding supporters.

Bordeaux won 3-2 at Paris Saint Germain and Marseille also had a 1-0 awayday win at Nantes in their last game, meaning the Girondins won the title by just one point.

