

England 113/2

EAST LONDON, South Africa, Dec 20: England's batting problems worsened on Sunday as opener Mark Butcher failed yet again and Michael Vaughan, one of their few successes, sustained a bad finger injury, reports Reuters.

Darren Maddy, Butcher's main rival for the opening berth, also managed only 14 as England reached 113 for two in reply to the 384 posted by a combined Border/Eastern Province XI before rain ended play at tea on the second day of their four-day match.

With the third Test against South Africa only six days away, England were hoping for a good performance from at least one of their openers.

But Butcher was dismissed for a duck, caught in the slips in the opening over of England's

Day Three rained off

EAST LONDON, South Africa, Dec 20 (AFP): Rain washed off the third day of a four-day fixture here on Monday between the touring English side and a combined Border/Eastern Province XI.

Play would resume on Tuesday morning if the weather allowed, an official said.

England were on 113 for two at the close of play on Sunday in reply to the combined team's first innings of 383. Batsmen Chris Adams (59) and Alec Stewart (16) were the not out batsmen.

innings and Maddy, who scored 133 in a one-day match on Thursday to push his Test claims, fared little better.

It was the injury to Vaughan that will be of most concern to coach Duncan Fletcher. Having scored just seven, the in-form Vaughan was struck on the right index finger by a rising delivery from seamer Garner Kruger.

The initial diagnosis was severe bruising but Vaughan is unlikely to take any part in the rest of the match and is to undergo further tests on Tuesday to ensure there is no fracture.

The combined XI earlier added only 53 more runs for the loss of their last five wickets after they had resumed on 331 for five.

Piet Strydom top scored with a measured 86 off 173 balls which included 15 boundaries while left-arm spinner Robin Peterson also weighed in with a gusty 42 off 53 balls as seamers Gavin Hamilton and Chris Silverwood wrapped up the tail.

Test discard Hamilton finished with the best bowling figures of three for 61 while Alex Tudor was expensive as he ended with three for 72 in 15.1 overs.

Suruj Ali cricket

Sports Reporter

The Suruj Ali Master smriti cricket tournament got underway at Tongi yesterday.

Joymoni Eleven won the opening match against Feelings by nine runs. Earlier, industrialist HM Kabir declared the meet open in a colourful ceremony.

Rajshahi soccer

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Dec 20: Abahani Krir Chakra defeated Alif Lam Mim Club 2-0 in the First Division football league organised by Rajshahi District Sports Association played at the Rajshahi A H M Kamruzzaman Stadium.

Kamal opened the account in the 11th minute and Tapas scored the second goal in the 72nd minute.

Mahmedan Sporting Club will take on Upasham Sporting Club tomorrow.

NSW thrive on Brett power

PERTH, Australia, Dec 20 (AFP): Another fiery spell of pace bowling by Test aspirant Brett Lee spearheaded New South Wales to outright victory over reigning champions Western Australia in a Sheffield Shield game ending here Monday.

Lee, who had taken four wickets in the first innings, snapped up 4-55 as Western Australia collapsed for a second innings 164, giving New South Wales their first outright win of the season.

Lee is a strong contender for selection in the Australian side to meet India in the second Test starting in Melbourne on Boxing Day (December 26).

Former Test leg-spinner Stuart MacGill also made a major hole in the Western Australian batting, taking 4-42.

It was Western Australia's fourth outright loss in four games -- their worst losing sequence in almost 40 years.

Soccer boss faces child abuse trial

LIVERPOOL, England, Dec 20 (Reuters): Southampton Football Club manager Dave Jones was ordered by a British court on Monday to stand trial for child abuse after denying fresh charges dating from when he worked in a care home in the 1980s.

Through his solicitors Jones denied three new counts of abuse at a hearing at Liverpool magistrates court. He must now appear at the city's Crown Court to answer more than 12 charges of abuse.

The former Everton defender and 43-year-old father of four has denied all charges against him and spoke in court on Monday only to confirm his name.



Action from yesterday's Cute First Division handball league match between Prime Sporting Club and Arambagh Krira Sangha at the court near Bangabandhu National Stadium.

— Star photo

Sport

Cute handball

Sports Reporter

Arambagh Krira Sangha recorded a comprehensive victory over Prime Sporting Club in the Cute First Division handball league match at the court adjacent to the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

In the first match of the day, Arambagh defeated Prime Sporting Club by 16-5 goals. The winners led the first half 5-2.

In the another match, Mariner Youngs Club and Swarittha Club played out an exciting 14-14 draw.

Rating chess

Three International Masters of Bangladesh Biman are jointly leading in the Prime Bank 2nd International Rating Chess competition bagging five points each after the sixth round matches at the NSC chess room on Sunday, reports UNB.

The leaders are, Ziaur Rahman, Reefat bin Sattar and Abdullah Al Rakib.

In the day's sixth round matches, Rakib beat Sheikh Nasir Ahmed of Bangladesh Ansars while Zia and Reefat shared points.

Three players — FIDE Master Enamul Hossain Rajib of Titas Club, Taiyibur Rahman Sumon of Uttara CCC and Abu Sufian Shakil of Ansar followed the leaders securing four and a half-point each.

In the day's other matches, Rajib beat Firoz, Emon beat Anis, Shakib beat Mahmud, Shafiq beat Moniruzzaman, Jamil beat Parag, Mithu beat Sohel, Delu beat Tipu, Aminul beat Arman and Mustafa beat Alamgir while Reza drew with Sumon, Lavlu drew with Hasan and Ahmed got walkover against Monir.

Three players — FIDE Master



Juventus' Croatian international Igor Tudor (C) scores from a header against Fiorentina on December 19. — AFP photo

Ind-Tas 4-dayer drawn



HOBART, Australia, Dec 20 (AFP): The uncertain future of wicketkeeper Nayan Mongia kept the touring Indians on tenterhooks as the four-day match against Tasmania was drawn here yesterday.

Both the Indian board and the team management passed the buck around on whether Mongia, a late addition to the touring squad, should be retained for the rest of the series.

Mongia, a veteran of 40 Tests, joined the Indians just before the first Test following a knee injury to first-choice wicket-keeper Manna Prasad.

But when Prasad recovered enough to play the Test, the team management asked the board to decide whether Mongia should be sent home.

Board secretary Jayawant Lele said the board may take up to a week to take a decision on Mongia, by which time the first of the two back-to-back Tests would have started.

The match, meanwhile, pended out tamely after the hosts, resuming at 472-4 with a lead of 156, prolonged their first innings till just before lunch on the final day.

Tasmania ended with 548 for five declared with Daniel Marsh, son of former legendary Australian wicketkeeper Rod Marsh, making 157 and Shaun Young 62.

The total was Tasmania's third highest first-class score.

Acting Indian captain Saurav Ganguly criticised Jamie Cox's late declaration, but in reality the clash was already consigned to a draw.

"We should have played in a much fairer way," Ganguly said.

"They continued on for too long this morning when we (both captains) should have tried to make a game out of it.

"But we were looking at it as a practice so we are happy with whatever practice we got because for us the important games are the test matches and one-dayers."

The Indians used the remaining time for batting practice ahead of the second Test at Melbourne, with opener Venkat Laxman making 58 in a second innings score of 130 for three.

Laxman and left-hander Sadagopan Ramesh sealed their opening partnership for the Boxing Day Test in Melbourne with a first-wicket stand of 64.

Ramesh was caught behind for 27, but Vijay Bharadwaj followed his three wickets in Tasmania's first innings with a total of 15 off 106 balls.

Cox continued the farcical nature of the match on Monday afternoon when he gave all his 11 players a bowl, the skipper

making 19 changes in a 24-over period.

Cox instructed wicketkeeper Matt Atkinson to discard his gloves and take the ball for his first bowling stint in 80 first-class matches.

As if to reinforce the lacklustre affair, Atkinson delivered four overs of slow medium pace and conceded just one run.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard on the final day of the four-day match between India and Tasmania on Monday:

INDIA: First innings 316 (R Dravid 107, H Kanitkar 58; A Downton 5-90).

TASMANIA: First innings (overnight 472-4)

Cox v Prasad b Ganguly 139

Hills run out 84

Di Venuto v Mongia b Bharadwaj 12

Dykes lbw b Bharadwaj 61

Marsh v Dravid b Bharadwaj 157

Young not out 62

Kremerskothen not out 1

Extras: (b-1, lb-11, w-6, nb-14) 32

Total: (For five wickets) 548

Fall of wickets: 1-205; 2-227; 3-377; 4-381; 5-546

Bowler O M R W

Prasad 21 5 52 0

Mohanty 26 7 81 0

Ganguly 18 0 42 1

Kumaran 26 6 105 0

Bharadwaj 47 5 141 0

Bharadwaj 32 2 105 3

Kanitkar 5 0 10 0

INDIA: Second innings

Laxman st Atkinson b Young 58

Ramesh v Atkinson b

Kremerskothen 27

Bharadwaj lbw b Di Venuto 15

Dravid not out 18

Kanitkar not out 0

Extras: (b-3, lb-3, w-3, nb-3) 12

Total: (For three wickets) 130

Fall of wickets: 1-64; 2-98; 3-124

Bowler O M R W

Miller 16 7 29 0

Downton 8 1 30 0

Wright 8 3 10 0

Kremerskothen 9 3 22 1

Marsh 8 2 17 0

Young 2 0 6 0

Dykes 2 1 3 0

Atkinson 4 3 1 0

Cox 1 0 6 1

Hills 1 1 0 0

Result: Match drawn.

Vaughan gets green signal

EST LONDON, South Africa, Dec 20 (Reuters): England batsman Michael Vaughan has been cleared for selection for the third Test against South Africa after scans on Monday revealed only bruising to an injured right index finger.

Vaughan went for tests on Monday to ascertain whether he had fractured the joint after being struck by a rising delivery from seamer Garnett Kruger during England's tour match against a Border-Eastern Province Combined XI at Bufalo Park on Sunday.

The scan revealed no fracture and Michael will be available, if selected, for the Test side next Sunday, team physiotherapist Dean Conway said.

"The only irregularity that showed up was from an old injury to that same finger."

Vaughan, along with Michael Atherton, has been England's most successful batsman during their tour to South Africa and will be vital to England during the third Test in Durban.

His neat cut-back found McPhail and the 20-year-old midfielder precisely placed his left-foot shot past Chelsea's Dutch goalkeeper Ed de Goey for Leeds' opener.

With three minutes remaining McPhail doubled his career goals total.

His free-kick from the right-hand side was obscured from de Goey's view by leaping Leeds defender Eirik Bakke.

The ball curled past the keeper to strengthen Leeds'

Rivaldo's double delight

PARIS, Dec 20: Barcelona's Brazilian forward Rivaldo has been chosen as the European Player-of-the-Year, organisers France Football said today, reports Reuters.

Rivaldo, who guided Brazil to the Copa America and Barcelona to the Spanish league title, was the second Brazilian after Ronaldo in 1997 to receive the award.

Manchester United's David Beckham was second. The England midfielder was among the leading favourites after his team won the European Cup, the FA Cup and the World Club titles.

Rivaldo earned 219 points to Beckhams 154.

The Brazilian, who was fifth last year in the same poll, takes over from France's Zinedine Zidane, who had his 1999 season marred by a knee injury.

None of the three best-placed players of 1998, Zidane, Ronaldo or Croatian Davor Suker, are featured among the top 10 this year.