

Khadafi's son Serie A bound?

PERUGIA, Italy, May 29: Libyan international Al Saadi Khadafi...

There are certainly possibilities but it is far too soon to announce anything definite.

I am happy to have received such an offer, Al Saadi told a London based Saudi paper.

A friendly between Perugia and Libya last July was called off after fighting broke out between the two teams after 17 minutes featuring players on the subs benches and various officials of the two sides.

Police were called in to restore order and Al Saadi who was not involved in the clashes was escorted out of the stadium as a precaution.



THE MOOD IS SOMBRE: Indian coach Kapil Dev stands in the middle while his charges do some stretching exercises at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. — Star photo

Storm allows no hockey

AMSTELVEEN, Netherlands, May 29: At 12:45 pm today all play in the Champions Trophy field hockey tournament was abandoned for 10 and 12 Beaufort scale approached, reports AFP.

Singles

From page 13 Bangladesh v Pakistan and Pakistan against India.

THE LUCKLESS TICKET TOUTS

Ticket tout had a bad day at the stadium as there was a poor turnout.

Most of the fans stayed home thinking that the match would not take place.

Seeing no one was interested to buy tickets, the touters were forced to sell them even at half price.

One was selling one Western Gallery ticket at 60 taka. The face value of that ticket was Tk 125.

The rate slipped to even Tk 40 after the first session.

However, rate for the India-Pakistan match on June 3 commands a steep price. A Western Gallery ticket was sold at between Tk 300-350.

FIRST DAY, FIRST FAILURE

Bangladesh opener Namir Rahman, who tied the knot on May 17, arrived at the crease with a lot of promise.

But he found out the omens were definitely not on his side.

His stay at the crease was short-lived as he responded to a call from opener Javed Omar for a non-existent single.

GOOD PITCH

Hats off to the groundsmen at the Bangabandhu Stadium for getting the pitch for yesterday's match in good shape.

With the pitch being kept under covers for almost a week as torrential rains wreaked havoc, everybody was in doubt whether that would be playable.

But the staff had smiles on their faces as well as the fans when they removed the covers with the appearance of the sun.

The world of cricket later watched in admiration what a good pitch the groundsmen had produced.

It was a sorry way to end such a promising innings that could have led a young, inexperienced West Indies side to a morale-boosting win ahead of their summer's visit to England, where their overseas record of losing their last ten Tests and three series will come into play.

The yoke of carrying the side to the result now rests with captain Jimmy Adams, unbeaten on 15 at stumps, Ramnaresh Sarwan, in his second Test, and out-of-form wicket-keeper/batsman Ridley Jacobs.

In pursuit of the magic number, West Indies lost two early wickets to Akram before rain intervened about 15 minutes before the scheduled tea break to drive the players off the field with West Indies 62 for two.

Antigua on knife's edge

ST. JOHN'S, May 29: A reckless stroke by Wavel Hinds conceded a pivotal West Indies wicket to Wasim Akram and Pakistan just prior to a rain-induced end to the penultimate day of the third and deciding cricket Test on Sunday here, reports AFP.

In a volley of strokes, Hinds was leading West Indies to the verge of a memorable and significant win at the Antigua Recreation Ground in a knock of 63 when he gave his wicket away playing the hook shot that had cost opening batsmen Sherwin Campbell and Adrian Griffith their hands.

His dismissal in the growing gloom and imminent showers that enveloped the ground on his retreat to the Sir Vivian Richards Pavilion left West Indies 144 for four, after Pakistan were bowled out for 219 in their second innings about ten minutes after lunch to set the host team a victory target of 216.

Hinds has been the most prolific batsman in the series on either side with 340 runs at an average of 68.00 including his maiden Test hundred in the previous Test in Bridgetown.

In only his fifth Test, his dismissal showed he still has much to learn about the psychology of the game.

Except for Akram, none of the other Pakistani bowlers seemed to trouble him in an innings that lasted 3 1/2 hours, 128 balls and contained seven fours and two sixes, both off leg-spin bowler Mushtaq Ahmed, who has been his nemesis in the earlier part of the series.

Hinds however, got into a wrangle with Saqlain Mushtaq and on one occasion barged into the off-spin bowler for no apparent reason. This confrontation seem to knock him off the tracks, since his timing and his concentration was askew after it.

When Moin Khan, the Pakistan captain and wicketkeeper, played his 'ace' late in the day with the end beckoning, Hinds clearly had lost sight of his purpose.

On 60, he was dropped by second slip Mohammad Wasim, flying to his left to get a hand to the ball, off Akram and eventually dragged a short-ball from the champion left-arm fast bowler into his stumps to be bowled in his following over.

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Hinds and left-handers Campbell and Griffith were at the crease and had just begun to explode just prior to the stoppage that prompted an early tea break in their third-wicket stand of 63.

Chanderpaul played a flick through backward square leg and a steer to third man for boundaries off Akram, whose removal of opening batsmen Sherwin Campbell and Adrian Griffith carried him to 395 Test wickets.

Hinds played three pulls off leg-spin bowler Mushtaq Ahmed for a four, six and deuce to the deep mid-wicket boundary just before the rain arrived to stamp his authority.

The two left-handers had been paired after Akram sent back Campbell, caught at deep backward square leg, and Griffith, caught at long leg, in his fourth and sixth overs respectively. Both batsmen were out playing hooks.

Campbell was the more sedate of the two opening batsmen as Griffith, his place at the top of the order tenuous, tried to hit his way out of form and clubbed four boundaries from 36 balls before his fatal departure.

After tea, Pakistan did not have to wait too long for the breakthrough which was provided by Abdur Razaq, the fast bowling all-rounder, whose thigh strain had made him a doubtful starter for the Test in the first place.

Chanderpaul, playing back to a well-pitched ball moving away, seemed a little unfortunate to have been adjudged lbw to Razaq for 31 off 40 balls in an hour with four fours.

The ball might just have started outside the leg-stump and this was probably on New Zealand umpire Doug Cowie's mind before his belated decision.

Overnight 157 for five, Pakistan saw Curtly Ambrose and Reon King share four of the last five wickets to leave their marks on their match.

Ambrose's removal of Saqlain Mushtaq, caught at first slip, and Waqar Younis, caught at second slip, carried his career tally to 388 in his 93rd Test and probably last in front of his home crowd.

King's dismissal of Yousuf Youhana, lbw for 42 in 215 minutes off 176 balls with five fours, and Akram, caught brilliantly with his right-hand by Adams diving full-stretch at mid-wicket, made him the most successful West Indies bowler with four for 48 off 23 overs.

In between, Razaq was run out after he and Saqlain got the communication all wrong and wicketkeeper Ridley Jacobs relayed Hinds' throw from backward point to Franklyn Rose at the bowler's end.

Scoreboard at close on the fourth day of the third and deciding cricket Test between West Indies and Pakistan at the Antigua Recreation Ground on Sunday:

PAKISTAN: First innings 269 (Yousuf Youhana 103 not out; Courtney Walsh 5-83)

WEST INDIES: First innings 273 (Shivnarine Chanderpaul 89; Wasim Akram 6-61)

PAKISTAN: Second innings (overnight 157 for five) M Wasim b King 21

Nazir c Sarwan b Walsh 0

Younis lbw b Ambrose 2

Inzamam c Jacobs b Rose 68

Youhana lbw b King 42

Moin c Hinds b King 10

Saqlain c Campbell b Ambrose 15

Razaq run out 0

Akram c Adams b King 24

Waqar c Adams b Ambrose 16

Mushtaq not out 3

Extras: (b-2; lb-4; nb-12) 18

Total: (All out in 90 overs) 219

Fall of wickets: 1-1, 2-3, 3-49, 4-129, 5-150, 6-162, 7-163, 8-186, 9-213.

Bowler O M R W

Ambrose 21 5 39 3

Walsh 20 4 39 1

Rose 20 2 69 1

King 23 6 48 4

Adams 6 1 18 0

WEST INDIES: Second innings

Campbell c Youhana b Akram 6

Griffith c Waqar b Akram 23

Hinds b Akram 63

Chanderpaul lbw b Razaq 31

Sarwan not out 0

Extras: (b-3; lb-3) 6

Total: (For 4 wts in 49.3 overs) 144

Fall of wickets: 1-16, 2-31, 3-84, 4-144.

Bowler O M R W

Akram 12.3 4 28 3

Waqar 11 0 39 0

Mushtaq 7 0 36 0

Graf angry at paparazzi

BERLIN, May 29: The former world number one women's tennis player, Steffi Graf, told the Sunday newspaper, Welt am Sonntag, that she planned to keep her private life even further out of the media spotlight, reports AFP.

The German former champion said she was no longer willing to "tolerate articles containing damaging material" and that in several of them, the line had been "crossed often in spite of common sense."

She mentioned a recent visit she and her partner, the US tennis player, Andre Agassi, made to Rome for a couple of hours, during which the couple's car was closely followed by the paparazzi on motorbikes, who tried to take photos of them.

"They put themselves and all those around them in danger for a photo that is of no value. I just can't understand that," Graf said.

Another success for Zimbabwe

CASTLEFORD, England, May 29: Zimbabwe warmed up for Thursday's second Test at Trent Bridge with their second consecutive victory on Yorkshire soil beating MCC by 22 runs here on Sunday, reports AFP.

The tourists, beaten with embarrassing ease by England in the first Test at Lord's and badly out of touch elsewhere this summer, played themselves back into form with a morale-boosting win over Yorkshire at Headingley earlier this week -- and added this victory against an MCC side which featured several current county players.

All-rounder Neil Johnson was the key man for Zimbabwe. He made 49 at the top of the order lead them to 164 for seven from 46 overs between the showers, and then added an economical spell of one for 19 from nine overs with the new ball as the MCC reply realised only 142 all out.

Pace linchpin Heath Streak showed he is on his way back from injury with a spell of one for 32 from 10 overs, while Muleki Nkala (three for 28) was the Zimbabweans' most successful bowler. Yorkshire's Anthony McGrath (46) fared best of the MCC batsmen.

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Extras: (b-2; lb-4; nb-12) 18

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WHAT'S COOKING?: International Cricket Council (ICC) match referee John Reid (2nd from L) explaining something to the Indian think-tank of vice-captain Rahul Dravid (C), coach Kapil Dev (2nd from R), captain Saurav Ganguly (R) and manager Samiran Chakraborti at their team hotel yesterday. — Star photo by Amran Hossain

India ask Interpol to hurry up

NEW DELHI, May 29: Indian police have asked Interpol to speed up efforts to obtain voice samples of disgraced South African skipper Hansie Cronje who is charged with match-fixing in India, an official said Monday, reports AFP.

A top Delhi police official, part of a team investigating the match-fixing case, told this news agency that two urgent reminders had been sent to the international police coordination agency to speed up efforts.

"Interpol is taking its time so we sent two urgent reminders asking for Cronje's voice samples and other evidence needed to go to the courts," the official told AFP on condition of anonymity.

He said the reminders had been sent "very recently".

"Once we have all that, we will start thinking of extraditing Cronje and the others charged in the case," he said, a day after Delhi police commissioner Ajai Raj Sharma claimed significant progress in the probe.

South Africa and India are not bound by an extradition treaty.

The Delhi police crime branch charged Cronje, Herschelle Gibbs, Nicky Boje and Pieter Strydom on April 7 with match-fixing and said it had tapes containing damning conversations between the South African skipper and London-based Indian bookmaker, Sanjiv Chawla.

The police charges relate to five one-day internationals South Africa played in India between March 9 and 19. India won the series 3-2.

Cronje, who had initially denied the allegations, was sacked after he admitted having been "dishonest" with the South African cricket board over his activities in India.

Police last month arrested a Delhi-based bookie, Rajesh Kalra, and jailed film actor Kishan Kumar on charges of match-fixing. They said the two acted as the linkmen between the South Africans and London-based Chawla.

The police source here said the crime branch had built an "iron-clad" case against the two arrested suspects.

"We have solid proof against Kalra and Kumar and we are going in for their prosecution," the official said, as a court here Monday allowed the arrested Indian bookmaker to apply for bail.

The official, however, said the crime branch will not pursue the stunning match-fixing allegations levelled against several top Indian cricketers by former Indian Test all-rounder Manoj Prabhakar.

"The Indian cricketers are not part of our case. They are the babies of the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI). Our case just involves the South Africans and bookmakers who cheated Indian cricket fans at large."

"The CBI will catch them, don't worry," he said in a reference to Prabhakar's deposition last week to the federal investigating agency.

Prabhakar, who has charged Indian cricket icon and current national coach Kapil Dev with offering him money to underplay in a match against Pakistan in 1994, on Saturday displayed 90 minutes of footage which he said he shot with a spy camera to clean the game of corruption.

The display at a news conference left cricket-crazy India gasping as the video clips contained candid admissions from domestic cricketers and administrators that they were aware of deep-rooted corruption in the game.

Prabhakar too faces similar charges, according to the latest issue of India's Outlook magazine.

World Team Cup Slovakia's

DUESSELDORF, May 29: Dominik Hrabty and Karol Kucera led Slovakia to its first World Team Cup title Saturday, coasting to singles wins against Russia's two favoured Top 10 players, reports AP.

Hrabty beat a struggling cursing Yevgeny Kafelnikov, 6-4, 7-6 (1), while Kucera followed with a 6-3, 6-2 win against Marat Safin, one of the tour's hottest players, in a highly entertaining match.

Both Slovakian players, dropping just one match between them all week, kept whistling shots down the line and finding the corners at the dlr's 1.9 million event, which features eight nations split into two groups.

That wasn't the case for Kafelnikov and Safin, two players with a chance to claim the French Open starting Monday.

"It just gets better and better," said Hrabty, seeded 14th at the French Open, of his game. "I'm really looking forward to Roland Garros."

Kafelnikov, the 1996 winner of the Grand Slam event who holds fourth in the points race, and No 9 Safin helped the Slovaks win their erratic play, giving away too many points.

Hrabty, ranked 16th, blasted a forehand down the line just inside the left corner at match point to close out the match against Kafelnikov in 1 hour, 18 minutes at the dlr's 1.9 million event.

The event, dividing eight nations into two groups with Russia and Slovakia emerging as the winners, gives top players a final chance to tune up their games for the French Open.

Kafelnikov, whose only victory at the event came against rising Australian star Lleyton Hewitt, again made numerous errors, a pattern set with several early exits from tournaments this year.

During the match, his temper flared and he twice threw his racket, along with bickering with the umpire.

"That gives you confidence," said Hrabty, who reached the final of Monte Carlo. "When I saw that, it motivated me. You think now you have the chance."

A meaningless doubles match will follow later Saturday, but Slovakia has already clinched the title with the two singles victory in the best 2-of-3 tie.

Safin entered the match riding a streak that included 19 wins in 21 matches, two major clay court titles and reaching the final last week at Hamburg. The rising 20-year-old star was also unbeaten at the Team World Cup.

But Safin kept squandering break chances against Kucera until he finally succeeded against Kucera on his sixth try. That pulled him back to 1-2 and serving in the second set.

But Kucera broke back in the next game to take a 3-1 lead and Safin responded by hitting a ball high into the stands, leading to a warning from the umpire.

Safin and Kucera had some sparkling rallies with Kucera, full of traded volleys, hard baseline shots and drop shots, which delighted the spectators.

Forget the fixing

From page 13 Replying to a question on how he Rahul Dravid and Anil Kumble will adjust to the Dhaka weather after having been in England for the last couple of months, Saurav said, "The place where I was playing it was six degrees Celsius and here it must be forty-six. But it doesn't matter. We were brought up in this type of climate. So we hope this will not be a problem."

Kapil, who has been embroiled in match-fixing allegations levelled by former teammate Manoj Prabhakar, said his team was at the moment focused only on their opening match opponents Bangladesh.

"To me playing is more important. We will take it match-by-match. Weather here is not really very kind. So, we are thinking about that also," said the Indian legend.

About Pakistan and Sri Lanka, Kapil said, "I think they are just two good teams. So, you have to play to the best of your ability."

"It's very difficult to plan ahead because the weather might force us to play a 25-overs-a-side match any time."

Asked how he felt coming here after repeatedly suggesting to the BCCI not to send India in the Pepsi Asia Cup, Kapil diplomatically replied, "Now I'm the manager of the Indian team. So, I won't talk about that here. I wish to talk about it later on."

"I think it is the authorities who should be asked to clarify. Our job is to play the game," Kapil said.

On Sachin Tendulkar's poor run of form, the Indian coach said, "It's a team game not individual. Yes, everybody is important. I don't say A is better than B because to me all the 14 cricketers are equal."

Ganguly had one last comment to make he said he was tired of constantly hearing scandal after scandal and it was time to end it once and for all.



WASIM AKRAM



WASIM AKRAM

Hinds and Adams, both products of this year's Jamaica side that won the Busta Cup West Indies first-class championship, would be very familiar with each other and came together to add 60 for the fourth wicket.

Hinds would have benefited from the level-headed approach of Adams, playing his 44th Test, and when things looked like it would get ugly between him and Saqlain, there was the West Indies captain to step forward and play the role of peacemaker.

It was however, not to be enough to keep Hinds focused upon his job in the end and has given greater meaning to the final day not only for the immediate, but long-term future of West Indies, whose record of losing only one series in the last 25 years will be on the line.

As they have done for the last three months, the West Indies pacers had earlier bowled with conviction to retrieve the situation for their side, although Pakistan gained the

position: West Indies need 72 more runs to beat Pakistan with six second innings wickets standing.



Bangladesh opener Javed Omar misses out on an attempt to run the ball down to thirdman at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. — Star photo

French Open starts smoothly

PARIS, May 29: Brazilian clay court maestro Gustavo Kuerten was in no mood to waste time when the French Open began at Roland Garros on Monday. The fifth seed breezed into the second round of the men's event with a quickfire 6-0, 6-0, 6-3 win over Sweden's unseeded Andreas Vinciguerra, reports AFP.

Kuerten, the champion here in 1997 and the Hamburg Masters Series winner earlier this month, is at his best on the slow red clay here and completely outplayed Vinciguerra - taking just 73min to breeze into the last 64.

Kuerten next plays Argentine qualifier Marcelo Charpentier, who won a marathon against Morocco's Karim Alami 6-7, 6-4, 6-3, 1-6, 6-3.

The brilliant Brazilian was joined in the second round by 13th-seeded Briton Tim Henman, who won a grinding affair against chronic American loser

Vince Spadea 7-5, 7-5, 6-4. Spadea contributed to his own demise by serving 10 double faults.

Henman, seldom comfortable on clay, was persistent enough to hand Spadea his 19th straight defeat - a streak which stretches back to late last year.

Nicolas Lapentti, the 11th seed from Ecuador, also was a straight sets winner in downing Julien Boutter of France 6-4, 6-2, 6-0, but eighth-seeded German Nicolas Kiefer fell at the first hurdle.

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