

NZ, India go even

AFP, Wellington

New Zealand and India ended the first day of their Davis Cup rubber Friday tied 1-1.

The Asia/Oceania Zone Group I semifinal saw New Zealand number one Mark Nielsen, ranked 343, defeat India's Harsh Mankad 6-4, 6-0, 6-1.

The game was played in difficult conditions with strong winds making some returns unpredictable. Nielsen was largely unchallenged by the Indian number two, ranked 754, who found the power of the New Zealander too much to handle.

Scholten stable

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condition, a Royal Perth Hospital spokeswoman said.

"Her condition has improved slightly and she is stable, but still seriously ill," the spokeswoman said.

Scholten, who turned 23 the day after the crash, suffered severe head and chest injuries when Hollioake's Porsche, in which she was a passenger, slammed into a brick wall in South Perth on March 23.

The 24-year-old Australian-born all-rounder died at the scene of the crash.

About 250 people, including England Test captain Nasser Hussain and former skipper Alec Stewart, attended a funeral for Hollioake near here last week.

Pak demand

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Pakistan says it has lost revenues in excess of \$20 million since December 2000 after India twice pulled out of matches in Pakistan because of political tension between the two nations.

Hopes of a resumption of matches between the two countries rose last week when Zia met senior Indian sports official Suresh Kalmadi, who described the talks as "very positive".

New Zealand postponed a tour to Pakistan last year in September and West Indies insisted on playing a modified series at a neutral venue in January and February as fighting raged in neighbouring Afghanistan.

New Zealand are due to visit Pakistan for two tests and three one-day internationals from 18 April and have agreed to take part in a triangular competition in the country along with Australia in August.

Nasser comments irk ICC

RSMs appointed to police matches

Cricket

REUTERS, London

The International Cricket Council (ICC) is "disappointed" over comments attributed to England captain Nasser Hussain that he was unconcerned his side had been overtaken by New Zealand in the ICC Test Championship.

New Zealand moved into fourth place in the official ICC Test Championship standings after beating England by 78 runs in the third and final Test in Auckland on Wednesday to draw the series 1-1.

"The ICC is disappointed to note media comments about the ICC Test Championship attributed to the England team captain after the Auckland Test," the game's world governing body said in a statement on Thursday.

"We don't want to get into any actual conflict over this, but we wanted to make the point that the ICC Test Championship has generated a great deal of interest in cricket right across the globe," an ICC official spokesman told this news agency.

"The role of the Championship in helping to place Test match cricket and team performances into context has been welcomed by team captains, players and followers of the

game around the world since its introduction last May."

"I'm not interested in the Test table," Hussain had told reporters on Wednesday after his side's defeat.

"I'm more interested in how we are going to beat Sri Lanka next summer and how on earth are we going to win an Ashes series."

Australia continue to head the ICC Test Championship rankings with 1.54 points following nine Test wins in 13 games.

South Africa are second on 1.50, having picked up 11 victories in 16 Tests.

Sri Lanka are third on 1.14 while New Zealand, fourth on 1.13, occupy their highest position since the table was first introduced in May 1996.

Countries are ranked by the number of points earned divided by the number of Tests played.

Each Test win earns two points with one point for a draw.

The next two series in the ICC Test Championship are the matches between West Indies and India in the Caribbean, beginning in Guyana on April 11, and Pakistan's rearranged home series to New Zealand, starting in Lahore on May 1.

Meanwhile, the ICC has appointed five regional security managers (RSMs) in a bid to protect the game from corruption, the world

governing body has announced.

Each of the managers has been assigned two international teams and will be present at all future ICC-sanctioned tours and tournaments in their region.

"These appointments are a powerful demonstration of the ICC's resolve to rid the international game from the threat of match-fixing and corruption, which have tarnished cricket's reputation around the world over the past two years," ICC chief executive Malcolm Speed said on Thursday.

"The appointment of security managers was one of the major recommendations put forward by Lord (Paul) Condon's Anti-Corruption Unit report of April 2001 and accepted by the ICC."

The five managers, who all have a military or police background, are South African Arrie de Beer, who is assigned to South Africa and Zimbabwe, Lt Col Nuruddin Khawaja of Pakistan (Pakistan and Bangladesh), Australian John Rhodes (Australia and New Zealand), Briton Bob Smalley (England and West Indies) and India's NS Virk (India and Sri Lanka).

The appointments are effective from June 1 and each of the managers will attend an induction camp in Sri Lanka on June 10.

Hick's World Cup desire

AFP, London

Worcestershire captain Graeme Hick is preparing to end his year-long absence from the England set-up with a refreshing bid to return to the squad for the 2003 World Cup finals in South Africa.

Hick last played for England during the squad's tour of Pakistan and Sri Lanka last winter but, even at the seasoned age of 35, he feels he still has what it takes to play at international level.

"The World Cup is one of my personal goals and I am going to try to perform in the one-day games to put my name in the hat for that," Hick, speaking at Worcestershire's pre-season media day at their New Road ground, said.

"I feel it is a realistic possibility. Playing in a World Cup is a huge thing to be part of," added Hick, who will be featuring in his 19th season with Worcestershire.

"If I perform in the middle for Worcestershire I will have an opportunity. I think I am still good enough."

Hick's absence this winter from the non-stop international schedule is a factor, he says which could go in his favour.

"I've still got the hunger and feel very fit. The England guys are just coming back from a long winter and I don't know how much cricket they'll have to play before their international duties are up and running again."

Davis Cup Russia blank Sweden

Tennis

AFP, Moscow

Yevgeny Kafelnikov and Marat Safin gave Russia a commanding 2-0 advantage after the opening day of their Davis Cup quarterfinal tie

against Sweden here on Friday.

The Russians are now in a strong position to win the tie and, with it, claim their first ever win over the Swedes as they head into the doubles on Saturday and the reverse singles on Sunday.

Kafelnikov defeated fellow 28-year-old Enqvist in straight sets to follow Safin's similarly comfortable

win over Australian Open champion Thomas Johansson.

Kafelnikov and Enqvist kept their serves through to force a tiebreak, which Russia's Sydney Olympic champion won 8-6 to take a 1-0 lead after 45 minutes.

Kafelnikov broke early into the second set earning a 3-1 lead. Enqvist fought tooth and nail in a desperate attempt to pull the scores level but the Russia's veteran broke again to win the second set 6-3 in 32 minutes.

Enqvist, who is currently 19th in the ATP race and four places above his Russian opponent, failed to resist Kafelnikov's accuracy and power in the deciding set losing it 6-1 in just 25 minutes.

Earlier, Safin put Russia 1-0 up beating Johansson also in straight sets.

Safin, playing confidently from the start, took advantage of

Johansson's apparent awkwardness on the clay courts of Moscow's Luzhniki Sports Palace to beat

Sweden's current ATP race leader

6-4, 6-4, 6-4 in 2hr 12min.

Hattrick hero Morshed

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Holders Mohammedan, who will take on Surjo Tarun Club in today's lone match at the Bangabandhu national Stadium, are leading the table with 10 points from six matches

SCOREBOARDS

Scoreboards of the two GrameenPhone Premier Division Cricket League matches played at different venues on Friday:

Brothers Union v Dharmundi Club

Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium

DHARMONDI CLUB

Shaful c & b Athar 7
Hasibul c Joy b Morshed 0
Riad c & b Morshed 4

T Mehmed c Athar b Mustadir 61

Monirul run out 36
Adil c & b Morshed 38

Monir c Joy b Imran 1
Nuruzzaman c Mustadir b Imran 1

Debrabata c Sajjadul b Morshed 23

Tamim not out 1

Ashraf c Joy b Morshed 1
Extras: (B-1, lb-5, nb-4, w-13) 23

Total: (All out in 49.1 overs) 196

Fall of wickets: 1-5, 2-14, 3-16, 4-121, 5-140, 6-148, 7-158, 8-194, 9-194.

Bowler O M R W

Morshed 9.1 2 29 5

Athar 10 2 25 1

Sajjadul 2 0 11 0

Imran 10 1 38 2

Masroor 4 0 25 0

Mustadir 10 1 38 1

Aslam 1 0 13 0

Ziauddin 3 0 11 0

BROTHERS UNION

Sajjadul c T Mehmed b Monir 34

Harun b Tamim 26

Masroor not out 81

Mustadir not out 29

Extras: (b-4, lb-3, nb-3, w-17) 27

Total: (For 2 wickets in 44.2 overs) 197

Fall of wickets: 1-52, 2-120.

Bowler O M R W

Debrabata 7.2 0 40 0

Ashraf 7 0 33 0

Monir 10 0 49 2

Kapali 7 1 40 0

Tamim 9 0 29 1
Monir 8 2 40 1
Shaful 3 0 28 0

Result: Brothers Union won by eight wickets.

Victoria SC v Uttara SC

Venue: Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium.

UTTARAS C

Al-Shahriar run out 72

Sajjad c Tillekeratne b Ashfaq 6

Jahangir st Rana b Faisal 26

Nuruzzaman b Tillekeratne 26

R Hanif c & b R Hanif 24

Enamul b Tillekeratne 0

Masud run out 1

Kapali not out 16

K Masud not out 7

Extras: (b-3, lb-4, nb-1, w-15) 23

Total: (For 7 wickets in 45.3 overs) 221

Fall of wickets: 1-33, 2-103, 3-156, 4-187, 5-187, 6-191, 7-200.

Bowler O M R W

Rumman 4 0 25 0

Ashfaq 6 0 21 1

Sumon 2 0 18 0

Mahfuz 3 0 20 0

Moin 9 0 37 0

Tillekeratne 8.3 1 45 3

Faisal 10 1 31 1

Sohag 3 0 17 0

Result: Victoria SC won by three wickets.

VICTORIA SC

Al-Shahriar run out 72

Sajjad c Tillekeratne b Ashfaq 6

Jahangir st Rana b Faisal 26

Nuruzzaman b Tillekeratne 26

R Hanif c & b R Hanif 24

Enamul b Tillekeratne 0

Masud run out 1

Kapali not out 16

K Masud not out 7

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