

Champs Trophy Mixed day for Asians

AFP, Cologne

India beat Australia 3-2 and Pakistan lost 3-1 to the Netherlands, leaving India and Pakistan poised to meet, on the third day of the men's Champions Trophy here Tuesday.

All eyes

FROM PAGE 13 Nottingham. In the third Test the visitors scored their highest-ever score away from home, notching up 628 for eight thanks to Dravid's second century of the series (148).

They also finally unleashed their spin twins, leg-break bowler Anil Kumble and off-spinner Harbhajan Singh, after they had chosen to play only one spinner at Lord's and Kumble was injured at Trent Bridge.

Kumble and Harbhajan ran through the England line-up, taking 11 of the 20 wickets between them. Both must be looking forward to bowling on The Oval pitch, which has been tailored this season for Surrey's overseas import -- Pakistan's test off-spinner Saqlain Mushtaq.

England's pace bowlers have also suffered after an encouraging start at Lord's.

Since then they have sprayed the ball short and wide and failed to take advantage of pitches that have been ideal for swing and seam.

England have also not been helped by several injuries to key players.

They began the Test series without their two main strike bowlers Andrew Caddick (side strain) and Darren Gough (knee) -- and have since lost all-rounder Andrew Flintoff who needs an operation to fix a groin injury.

While Caddick did come back for the third Test he looked rusty.

England's batting line-up has also suffered.

Graham Thorpe, beset by personal problems, chose to take a break from all forms of cricket after the Lord's victory. Mark Butcher had only just returned from knee surgery and opening batsman Marcus Trescothick fractured his thumb in a domestic one-day game for Somerset.

Trescothick is likely to play on Thursday, though how match-fit he is will be a question Hussain must ask himself before helping to finalise his team.

England announced on Wednesday that they had released Essex all-rounder Ronnie Irani.

Irani only made his return to competitive action on Sunday following an operation on his right knee but claimed yesterday he was fit enough to withstand the Test.

But after looking at the wicket England have decided to allow his return to Essex and feature in their County Championship match against Middlesex at Chelmsford.

TEAMS

ENGLAND (from): Nasser Hussain (captain), Mark Butcher, Andrew Caddick, Dominic Cork, John Crawley, Ashley Giles, Stephen Harmison, Matthew Hoggard, Robert Key, Alec Stewart, Marcus Trescothick, Alex Tudor, Michael Vaughan.

INDIA (likely team): Sanjay Bangar, Virender Sehwag, Rahul Dravid, Sachin Tendulkar, Sourav Ganguly (captain), Vangipurapu Laxman, Ajit Agarkar, Parthiv Patel, Anil Kumble, Harbhajan Singh, Zaheer Khan.

Riding on Sachin wave



AFP, New Delhi

Cricket-crazy India on Wednesday put aside a sponsorship row to pay tribute to master batsman Sachin Tendulkar as he prepared to play his 100th Test match.

The 29-year-old will become the world's youngest cricketer to make a century of Test appearances when he takes the field in the fourth and decisive Test against England at the Oval on Thursday.

Newspapers across India brought out special supplements to mark a special day for what one writer described as the "symbol of a new, resurgent India and the heartbeat of an entire nation."

India's captain Sourav Ganguly led the praise in a signed article on the front page of the mass-selling Hindustan Times headlined "An honour playing with you."

"The game is his life and his world knows only one thing -- to score runs," Ganguly wrote. "What amazes me is his hunger and desire to succeed every single time he walks out to play for India."

The Times of India said: "Tendulkar announced his arrival (in 1989) with India on the cusp of liberalisation, but not quite recovered from the caste politics.

"Tendulkar's boyish innocence and exuberant, ebullient batsmanship provided the balm (from caste turmoil), the healing touch, the bonding ... in fact the reason to believe that India was still one of any other frontline batsman."

For Akram, "the saddest aspect about the breakdown of cricketing ties between India and Pakistan was that Pakistani fans had been deprived of one of the best sights in cricket -- Tendulkar's batting."

"It is one of my lasting regrets that I did not get to bowl to Tendulkar in Tests when I was at my peak in the early 1990s."

Tendulkar, who made his Test debut in Pakistan, has played only seven of his 99 Tests against the arch-rivals.

"Tendulkar exists where we can't," said former team-mate Ajay Jadeja.

West Indian great Vivian Richards, one of Tendulkar's heroes, refused to be drawn into the batsman's weak points.

"When a guy is playing like that, you don't look at his batting for faults," Richards said. "I would say he is 99.5 per cent perfect."

Fans are hoping Tendulkar's landmark will inspire India to victory in the Oval Test, giving them their first series win outside Asia since 1986.

The Indians go into the Test amid a row with the sport's world governing body over the players' refusal to sign sponsorship contracts for next week's 12-nation Champions Trophy in Sri Lanka.



SACHIN TENDULKAR

The papers devoted space to tributes from current and past players from around the world, including former Australian captain Ian Chappell, Pakistani allrounder Wasim Akram and South African paceman Allan Donald.

"Tendulkar is the best batsman of his era," Chappell wrote. "Slightly better than West Indian Brian Lara and comfortably ahead of any other frontline batsman."

Dalmiya charm fails

ICC to talk with contract rebels



BBC ONLINE/REUTERS, London

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has responded to a plea from India's cricket chief and will hold talks with Indian cricketers to try to resolve the Champions Trophy row.

Indian players have refused to sign a sponsorship agreement with cricket's world governing body for the 12-nation tournament, starting in Sri Lanka on September 12.

President of the Board of Control of Cricket in India (BCCI), Jagmohan Dalmiya, said he had made the request in a letter to ICC chief executive Malcolm Speed on Wednesday.

"We don't have any negotiating power. It's the best option that the ICC speaks to the Indian players in England," Dalmiya said in the letter.

"Since the team is in London and you are also in the same city, you may interact with the players either today or at the latest tomorrow."

ICC press officer Brendan McClements confirmed to the BBC that the game's governing body will cede to Dalmiya's request and talk with the players on Wednesday.

Sourav Ganguly's team is against the clause which gives the ICC rights to use the players' images for six months from the completion of the Champions Trophy or next year's World Cup.

The Indians, who initially rejected the clause which prohibits them from endorsing rival products for 30 days after the event, said they were willing to accept the moratorium if the images clause was removed.

"We can't settle the issue. We can't offer anything to the players as it's the ICC contract," said Dalmiya.

Dalmiya's letter to the ICC came a day after a group of around 30 supporters protested against the ICC outside the Eden Gardens Test ground in Calcutta.

And a poll conducted by an Indian TV station showed 80 per cent of those who voted back the team, which is currently preparing for the final Test of their tour to England.



JAGMOHAN DALMIYA

They have also been given the backing of former captain and coach Kapil Dev, who was recently voted as India's Cricketer of the 20th Century.

"I am amazed the ICC wants our cricketers to break existing contracts, wants them to do something unlawful," he was quoted as saying.

Out of 12 participating nations, India is the only team to fall into line as South Africa's players have finally agreed to sign contracts.

"The UCB is pleased to confirm that South African players who have been chosen to represent South Africa in the ICC Champions Trophy in Sri Lanka this month have agreed, through their players' association, to sign the necessary player terms agreements," a UCB (United Cricket Board) media statement said.

Tuesday's UCB statement followed a meeting in Cape Town between UCB chief executive Gerald Majola and Tony Irish, his counterpart with the South African Cricketers' Association.

"We have reached agreement on those issues and I am pleased to confirm that South Africa will send its best available team to the ICC Champions Trophy and that the players have agreed to sign the player terms agreements."

Majola said "outstanding issues" would be discussed after the team returned from Sri Lanka.

ICC cancels Pak meeting



AFP, Karachi

The International Cricket Council (ICC) cancelled a development committee meeting scheduled here for next month after delegates refused to visit Pakistan over security fears, officials said Wednesday.

"The ICC has conveyed to us that some of the delegates had concerns over their security and since the quorum was not complete the meeting would now be held in Amsterdam in the Netherlands on the same dates on October 20 and 21," an Asian Cricket Council spokesman told the news agency.

ICC chief executive Malcolm Speed was expected to preside over the meeting scheduled for the central city of Lahore.

Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Lieutenant General Tahir Zia confirmed the news, but said he didn't know why the meeting had been cancelled.

"We have been conveyed by the ICC about the cancellation, but no reason has yet been revealed," said Zia.

"It would be obviously disappointing if the reason is security concerns because it would send the wrong signals yet again."

Pakistan has become a high security zone for foreign teams and delegates since the United States launched military action on neighbouring Afghanistan in reprisal for the September 11 terrorist attacks last year.

New Zealand postponed a tour of Pakistan last year and their rescheduled series in May had to be cut short after a suicide bomb blast outside their hotel.

The ICC's executive committee meeting in October last year was also shifted to Kuala Lumpur, while Pakistan was forced to play its home series against the West Indies in Sharjah in February-March this year.

Australia cancelled a Pakistan tour after a bomb blast outside the US consulate in Karachi on June 14 which left 12 dead.

Pakistan will play their home Test series against Australia in Sri Lanka and Sharjah next month.

The PCB said it has incurred losses to the tune of 20 million dollars since last year and stands to lose spectator interest and more money if the situation persists.

Warne remains Victoria captain

AFP, Melbourne

Shane Warne was on Wednesday reappointed as cricket captain of his state Victoria, even though he might not be available to lead the team on the field.

The champion leg-spin bowler is expected to be captain in name only because of his busy international playing schedule, with former captain Matthew Elliott to lead the side in his absence.

Warne has made no secret of his Australian captaincy aspirations for either the one day or Test team, but these appeared unlikely because of off-field controversies.

In the last couple of years, he has toned down his off-field life and, most recently, has become much fitter in an effort to extend an outstanding career.

US OPEN IN BRIEF

AP, New York

Highlights Tuesday of the \$16.17 million U.S. Open tennis championships:

WEATHER Sunny and warm with a high of 82. ATTENDANCE Day session: 22,542. Night session: 19,153.

WINNERS: Men, Fourth Round No. 11 Andy Roddick, No. 17 Pete Sampras, No. 17

Women, Fourth Round No. 2 Venus Quarterfinals No. 1 Serena Williams, No. 4 Lindsay Davenport.

LOSERS: Men, Fourth Round No. 3 Tommy Haas, No. 26 Juan Ignacio Chela.

Women, Fourth Round No. 9 Martina Hingis, Quarterfinals No. 11 Daniela Hantuchova, Elena Bovina.

STAT OF THE DAY The second set of the Venus Williams-Chanda Rubin match, won by Rubin 6-4, was the first set lost by any of the top four seeded women.

QUOTE OF THE DAY "I got up at 10:30 because at 11 the breakfast is closed, otherwise I would stay in bed longer." -- Sjeng Schalken after being asked what time he got to bed Monday night -- 2:30 a.m. -- and what time he got up.

Injuries

FROM PAGE 13

The Pakistan camp have an equal share of injury problems with fast bowler Shoaib Akhtar and batsman Inzamam-ul-Haq doubtful for the final.

Akhtar, who was recalled for the Kenyan series, lasted only 13 minutes in his bowling spell against Australia on Wednesday before retiring with a knee injury.

Inzamam has not played any further part in the tournament since injuring his hip in Pakistan's opening match against Kenya on August 29.

It has not been a smooth sailing for the Pakistanis with members of the country's cricket board expressing their disappointment with the team's performance.

"Personally I am not happy with the way they have been playing," said Zakir Khan, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) general manager in charge of cricket operations.

"Pakistan is trying very hard and it has been a bit too much," accepted team captain Waqar Younis.

"Poor batting and poor shots have caused us matches against Australia. I have been trying to prevent our wickets early on and it is proving to be very difficult."

"However we are capable of changing the losing trend when Inzamam returns to batting again," added Younis.

Venus survives

FROM PAGE 13

came a scrappy start to beat Russia's Elena Bovina 3-6, 6-0, 6-2. The American fourth seed eventually found her heavy groundstrokes in time to win 12 of the last 14 games and seal triumph to set up the semi. Serena can't wait.

"I remember the year I lost to her in the quarters... it haunts me still," Serena said. "I was the defending champion but Lindsay played an amazing match that day. There was nothing I could do to beat her."

"I like playing Lindsay. Win, lose or draw I am going to have fun."

While Venus, Serena and Davenport advanced, the lights went out on another former champion, ninth seed Martina Hingis.

Having reached at least the semi-finals for the last six years, the 1997 champion was felled 6-4, 6-2 by Monica Seles.

Twice former winner Seles will clash with Venus for a spot in the semis of the hardcourt grand slam.

Coming into Tuesday's match with Rubin, Venus had won seven of the eight matches she had played with the 14th-seed -- only losing the first time the pair had met in 1997.

She was, however, far from convincing on Arthur Ashe stadium court, losing her first set here since the 2000 semifinals.

After two days virtually washed out by heavy downpours, day nine got off on time under blue New York skies and Venus started the match comfortably.

But she lost her way in the second set and needed all her experience to snuff out her fellow American in a see-saw third.

"I should have just closed it out," Venus conceded. "Really stayed tough... but it wasn't my fault. She played really well."

"I knew she was going to play well... and it was nice to win on a day when I was off."

Sixth seed Seles won a battle of former champions, easing past a still not match-fit Hingis.

The victory saw Seles through to the quarter-finals for the ninth time in 12 visits to the U.S. Open.

Sampras storms into qtrs



REUTERS, New York

Pete Sampras has answered taunts he was washed up and over the hill by riding a wave of New York night-time energy past third seed Tommy Haas and into the U.S. Open quarterfinals.

The American winner of a record 13 grand slam titles served with venom on Tuesday and unravelled his hunched shoulders into a series of stupendous forehands to see off

the German 7-5, 6-4, 6-7, 7-5 on a crackling Arthur Ashe stadium court.

Sampras's third round victim Greg Rusedski had said on Monday night that the 17th seed was no longer a great player and that he was slower and less fit than when he broke the record for majors at Wimbledon 2000.

But on Tuesday, the 31-year-old gave world number three Haas the runaround with some dynamic tennis from the top drawer to win his 200th grand slam match.

And the smile on his face as he sat courtside after his three-hour-

five-minute victory outshone the brilliant floodlights which illuminated his performance.

"These are huge matches for me... I've still got the game," he said as he composed himself before leaving the court.

"This is the U.S. Open -- you dig deep." His reward for such digging is a last eight clash with compatriot Andy Roddick who earlier saw off Juan Ignacio Chela 5-7, 6-4, 6-4, 6-4 in some style.

The 11th seed pulled off some of the shots of the tournament so far, whipping the boisterous Louis Armstrong stadium crowd into a frenzy before joining them at various flashpoints for frenzied 'high-fives' and back-slapping after points.

Roddick has won both previous matches against Sampras -- four times a champion here and runner-up the last two years -- but is not fancying his chances against his boyhood hero.

"It is a dream to play Pete Sampras here at the Open," the 20-year-old said.

"I have beaten him twice, but this is Pete's house... this is the U.S. Open."

Dutchman Sjeng Schalken battled past former world number one Gustavo Kuerten 6-3, 7-6, 6-7, 7-6 to reach his second successive Grand Slam quarterfinal.

After failing to venture past the third round in 28 previous grand slams, Schalken has discovered a fondness for tennis's big events over the summer having also made the final eight at Wimbledon before losing a five-set thriller to eventual champion Lleyton Hewitt.

"To reach the quarter-finals twice is a great feeling," said Schalken, who has won at least one tournament in each of the last seven years.

"Steadily I'm moving forward in my career, every year I'm improving my ranking."

Schalken will face Fernando Gonzalez next after the Chilean beat France's Arnaud Clement 6-4, 6-2, 6-3 with a solid display.



American Pete Sampras is jubilant after beating Tommy Haas of Germany at the U.S. Open in New York on September 3.

Seles has no plans to quit



AP, New York

Trapped in her hotel room by the rain, Monica Seles broke her own rule about not looking back.

There on the TV screen she saw herself, for the first time, in the 1991 U.S. Open semifinals match against Jennifer Capriati that changed their lives and women's tennis.

Seles was a lanky 17-year-old with pipstern arms, short hair and a fearless face. Capriati was poyntailed at 15, equally intrepid and just as strong, drumming groundstrokes down the lines.

Now Seles crinkled her nose and gave a thumbs-down to the hairstyles and dresses. The tennis made her happier as she watched herself win in a third-set tiebreaker. How good was she back then?

"I was very good," she said, laughing. Seles rarely revisits the past or gives herself credit. That she was able to do both says a lot about how she is coming to terms with the downslope of her career.

Moments after thumping Martina Hingis 6-4, 6-2 in Tuesday's sunshine to reach the quarterfinals against Venus Williams, Seles quashed rumors of her imminent retirement and spoke about her undiminished love of the game.

Some great athletes walk away when they can't win anymore. Seles can handle it. She's handled a lot more in her life and has her own

priorities. "Each time I say it, people just roll their eyes," she said. "I really never played tennis for winning the Grand Slam or to be No. 1 and stuff like that. Maybe it was a very naive thought. But truly, it's really not the driving force in me today."

"I love to play tennis. I said it many times. I wish we didn't have to go out there and win and lose because that part is very tough

emotionally. If you win a tournament, next week you have to play again and you never get time to enjoy it."

All the people pestering Seles about whether she's about to retire ought to take a rest from their own jobs. They harp on the same refrain day after day, on television and in post-match interview sessions, eliciting from her the same weary

sighs and denials. Enough already. No one who appreciates tennis should want to see Seles retire. Not after what she went through with her last years, the prime of her career, after her stabbing. So what if she can't beat Venus or Serena Williams. So what if she's 28 and hasn't won a Grand Slam title in six years. She's still grunting on every shot, going for winners, playing with passion.

That's how she played 11 years ago against Capriati, only then Seles was slimmer and quicker and squeakier in her grunts.

It was the first Grand Slam women's match to feature the kind of two-fisted power shots from both players that is so common now. Capriati had come into the Open expecting to win her first major and when she lost, feeling the match was in her hands and had slipped away, she fell into the tailspin that would drive her from the tour for several years.

For Seles, it was the match that showed, perhaps more than any other, the stubborn refusal to be beaten that would mark her reign as No. 1.

Seles watched virtually the whole match during Monday's rainout, experiencing a sense of nostalgia and perspective. She also saw her late father and coach, Karoli, at court-side.

"It was fun to see that, just to see even my dad's reaction to certain points," she said. "During a match you never realize it... It just brought back some great memories."

John Player arrives in Malaysia

PRESS RELEASE

The John Player successfully completed another leg of her 2002 World Adventure, having pulled into Port Dickson harbour in Malaysia following a 1,600 nautical mile voyage from the Maldives. Malaysia marks the third stop of the John Player's journey, which began in Dubai a month ago and will culminate in Hong Kong in October.

During their stay in Malaysia, the crew of the John Player will have the opportunity to explore the country's rich maritime heritage and to sail the fabled Malacca Straits, the gateway

to the East. Straddling the cross roads of major trade routes, Malaysia has always been a meeting point of cultures, traditions and trade.

Once the home to great trading empires, Malaysia has the world's 17th largest economy, with a base as vibrant and varied as the people who drive it. Over the past four decades, the country has gradually diversified away from an agricultural and commodities base toward manufacturing and technology. A gleaming high-tech corridor near Kuala Lumpur, the country's capital, has turned Malaysia into a centre for

semi-conductor production and research.

Yet throughout its modern transformation, the Malaysia has never lost sight of its trading traditions. Its economy has remained open throughout, as seen by the large proportion of the gross domestic product that trade makes up.

However, the Malaysian economy is still strongly driven by raw materials, with exports of rubber, crude oil and natural gas. A lesser-known export is Palm Oil, the production of which has made rapid inroads into the region's agriculture sector over the past few decades. Palm oil exports amounted to US\$ 4bn last year, equivalent to four per cent of GDP and exceeding rubber and oil exports combined.

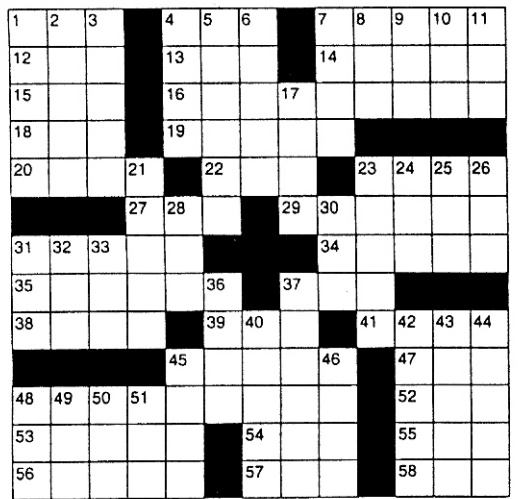
The John Player's arrival in Malaysia coincides with preparations to celebrate National Day on August 31st. Much to their delight, the crew will travel to Kuala Lumpur to observe the celebrations, known for their colourful parades and cultural attractions.

The John Player, a 140-foot mahogany and teak brigantine, set sail from Dubai en route to Hong Kong on her new journey, the Spirit of Enterprise on July 23rd, 2002. This year's trip will explore how maritime history has contributed to economic success in each of the destinations along the route.



CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 1 Apiece 4 Exlsted 7 -- cap 12 Do some down-sizing 13 Cleo's slayer 14 Wear away 15 Tavern 16 Infield position 18 Summer quaff 19 Jabs 20 Ego 22 Roulette bet 23 Entree choice 27 Guitar's kin 29 18-Across flavor 31 Cacophony 34 John the music-maker 35 Keglers' mecca 37 Sick-day excuse 38 Pinocchio play 39 D.C. figure 41 Sunup site 45 Anltoxin 47 Access stinger 48 Berry-flavored dessert 52 Blend 53 Stands choice 54 Afternoon affair 55 H look-alike 56 Skilled 57 Superlative ending 58 Longing DOWN 1 Half a 1960s and pop group 2 Ooze years -- 3 Insurrec-tionist 4 Nasly 5 Off the boat 6 Said 7 Household members 8 Some choice words? 9 Destiny 10 Com-motion 11 Agent 17 Start over 21 Joined together 23 Price 24 Tolkien 42 House Majority Leader Dick 43 Hotel booking 44 LBJ, e.g. 45 Numerical datum 46 23-Across, for one 48 Resort 49 Scuttle 50 Versifier's tribute 51 Sartorial embar-ment



CRYPTOQUIP K H S B L R A A O A H H K B R J I N I H K M R E K D M S J S N J A Q O F E R I B E Q N M I A D M I D I N S O L A P P S D F E R I P Y Yesterday's Cryptogram: WHEN YOUR POOR HEART BECOMES BROKEN, WHY NOT PATCH IT UP WITH SOME TICKER TAPE? Today's Cryptogram Clue: H equals F The Cryptogram is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.