

Lankan cricket in for trouble

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lankan cricket selectors were set for a possible showdown with Sports Minister Johnstone Fernando over the team picked to tour South Africa next month, officials said Wednesday.

The selectors had picked a 16-man squad and were awaiting the minister's approval, but he declined to accommodate skipper Sanath Jayasuriya's wish to exclude reserve wicket keeper Prasanna Jayawardena.

"We received a communication from the minister on disagreement over selections, but we are determined to stick to our original selections," a spokesman for the panel of selectors said.

Cricketer sources said skipper Jayasuriya wanted his club-mate and specialist batsman Tillekaratne Dilshan included in the squad in place of Jayawardena.

Skipper Jayasuriya also opted for Kumar Sangakkara to keep wicket, a role played by him only in one-day internationals in recent times.

Cute h'ball

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Shaghata Girls' High School lifted the women's title while Kholahati Juba Sangha clinched the men's in the CUTE Handball League at the Gaibandha Stadium on Tuesday.

Shaghata defeated Asaduzzaman Girls' High School 20-6 in the final. In the men's final, Kholahati beat Gobindaganj Physical College 27-15.

Later, deputy commissioner of Gaibandha distributed prizes.

Hussain

FROM PAGE 13

On Wednesday, however, he was more bullish.

"Everybody knows Australia are a fine side. We have got to work at finding ways of beating them. There are tactics, field settings that can beat them."

"I don't see why you should be intimidated by Australia. I've really enjoyed playing them. They play really tough but you get a great deal of enjoyment out of doing well against them."

"The one thing that is intimidating is their style of cricket. They will come at us with bat and ball and verbally and I hope everyone is ready for it."

Sehwag sets

FROM PAGE 13

Tendulkar and Dravid pressed home the advantage given by Sehwag, having so far added 65 for the unbroken third wicket.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the opening day of the first Test between India and the West Indies at the Wankhede Stadium on Wednesday:

INDIA: First innings			
Bangar c Sarwan b Dillon	55		
Sehwag c Jacobs b Dillon	147		
Dravid not out	28		
Tendulkar not out	35		
Extras: (lb-5, nb-7, w-1)	13		
Total: (For 2 wks in 90 overs)	278		
Fall of wickets: 1-201, 2-213			
To bat: Sourav Ganguly, Venkatesai Laxman, Parthiv Patel, Anil Kumble, Harbhajan Singh, Zaheer Khan, Javagal Srinath			

WEST INDIES: Carl Hooper, Chris Gayle, Wavell Hinds, Ramnaresh Sarwan, Shivnarine Chanderpaul, Ridley Jacobs, Ryan Hinds, Pedro Collins, Mervyn Dillon, Mahendra Nagamootoo, Cameron Cuffy.			
Umpires: David Shepherd (England) and Asoka de Silva (Sri Lanka).			

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Dillon	16	6	30	2
Collins	15	6	38	0
Cuffy	15	3	42	0
N'mootoo	21	4	70	0
Hooper	7	2	34	0
W Hinds	4	0	11	0
R Hinds	9	0	39	0
Gayle	2	1	3	0
Sarwan	1	0	6	0

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

37 Easter emblem

38 Singer Shania

39 Near the treasure

40 What 40-Kids' game

41 Liquid refuse

42 Exuberance

43 In one's cups

44 Narcissist's problem

45 Shrew

46 Line

47 Withdraw from the Union

48 Carry the scepter

49 "— what?"

50 Goofy

51 Inclusive one's option

52 Buggy area

53 Lacking

54 "Norma—"

55 Wall climber

56 Do-it-yourselfer's buy

57 Creole veggie

58 Make like new

DOWN

1 Sheltered

2 Painter

3 Chagall

4 Catch in a net

5 Carry on

6 Khan

7 Title

8 Jog

9 D.C.

10 subways

11 Thompson

12 Land

13 Blunder

14 Not pizzicato

15 Advantage

16 "L.A. Law"

17 Carry the motion

18 USNA

19 "Death-trap"

20 Com-motion

21 Miss Piggy, self-reverentially

22 Coaster

23 The "Way We—"

24 Stage item

25 Agenda heading

26 Turned blue?

27 Prior to

28 Nipper's boss

Solution time: 25 mins.

ACROSS

37 EMBLEM

38 SINGER

39 NEAR

40 WHAT 40-KIDS' GAME

41 LIQUID REFUSE

42 EXUBERANCE

43 IN ONE'S CUPS

44 NARCISSIST'S PROBLEM

45 SHREW

46 LINE

47 WITHDRAW FROM THE UNION

48 CARRY THE SCEPTER

49 "— WHAT?"

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21 MISS PIGGY, SELF-REVERENTIALLY

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23 THE "WAY WE—"

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28 NIPPER'S BOSS

SL police blasts ICC

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lankan police have denied overstepping their brief in trying to prevent match-fixing during the recent ICC Champions Trophy tournament here and slammed the ICC for not sufficiently enforcing its own rules.

Cricketer authorities here said Wednesday that police had taken strong exception to remarks attributed to Sir Paul Condon, the head of the ICC's Anti-Corruption Unit (ACU), that they had exceeded guidelines.

In a strongly-worded report, police said although the International Cricket Council overtly appeared keen to crack down on match-fixing, the ACU was lax in enforcing its own guidelines on access control.

The tournament, involving all 10 Test-playing nations and cricket minnows Holland and Kenya, ended in something of a damp squib with India and Sri Lanka sharing the trophy after rain washed out play on two days.

The ICC said it was "overall pleased" with the level of security provided by Sri Lankan authorities to enforce anti-corruption rules.

Much of the attention, however, was on what the players did off the field, with security officials battling players and their guests to enforce the "access control" regulations

ordered by the ICC in the teams' hotel.

The elite police unit which provided security for the tournament, the Minister's Security Division (MSD), had been locked in a battle with West Indies manager Ricky Skerritt over his entertaining women in his hotel room.

Police said that "had the ICC authorities acted in a firm manner, the situation may not have deteriorated to such proportions."

"It appeared that while the ICC overtly wanted to stringently enforce the access control regulations, the implementation of it did not receive the required backing," an official quoted police as saying in their report.

Police rejected media reports of police overstepping their brief, especially in the Skerritt incident.

The West Indies Cricket Board in a statement issued in London five days ago quoted Condon saying in a letter to Skerritt that he had been the victim of a "bad and unfair experience."

"Cultural and language differences clearly played their part. However, the most important factor was that the Sri Lankan police exceeded the guidance my unit gave to the Sri Lankan cricket board."

Police in their report hit back, however.

"This is totally untrue and we can only hope that the ACU chief Sir Paul Condon had been either mis-

quoted or misunderstood in blaming the MSD for 'language and cultural differences'," it said.

Police, it added, had received information that prostitutes frequented the deluxe Taj Samudra hotel where the teams were staying and tried to make contact with visiting players and officials.

"Book-makers could have used call girls to obtain information from players or pass on instructions to them. While the MSD at no stage intended to impose moral values on visiting players, it was concerned that the ICC's access control regulations were flagrantly violated at the hotel."

It said two Sri Lankan women had provided information to the MSD "about their entertaining several visiting players and officials, raising questions of the effectiveness of the access control regulations and attempts of the ICC to ensure a clean game."

It also noted that police anti-narcotics agents had reported seeing a West Indies player in the company of a suspected drug dealer who was under surveillance.

Cricketer officials said the MSD sent them a detailed report on several incidents involving players, including the West Indies team, and subsequent investigations showing that women entertained by the players had forged identity papers.

Simpson finds Aus wobbly

REUTERS, New Delhi

Former coach Bob Simpson has described Australia's world championship one-day side as "wobbly" after their tame defeat to hosts Sri Lanka in last month's ICC Champions Trophy.

The team's batting in one-day internationals was too flashy and fielding and catching were slipping, said the former skipper who coached Australia to their first World Cup in 1987.

"All-out attack has been the loudly proclaimed option from the Aussie camp and while they have had some success in the last 12 months the wheels have been decidedly wobbly," Simpson wrote in his column in the Indian sports magazine, Sportstar.

Australia suffered a seven-wicket defeat in the semi-finals of the prestigious 12-team event, just a few months before their title defence at the February-March World Cup in South Africa.

They were shot out to 162 after their top order tried to slog their way out of trouble against spin to fritter away the advantage of winning the toss on a dusty pitch.

Both openers Matthew Hayden and Adam Gilchrist were out at the same total playing big shots against spinners, a tactics which Simpson described as "suicidal".

A cricketer

FROM PAGE 13

By now, the team would have settled into the right combination and the players would have been well prepared for any kind of conditions and opponents. The players could have played more first-class games and the domestic structure would have flourished immensely.

The attitude towards the first-class system at the moment in Bangladesh is careless because we have got the Test status too early. This means the players cannot make it into the team until they tour with the A team or have to wait for the next season.

A weaker base means that debutants are a regular occurrence as the selectors are always struggling to make the correct call. All the players need time to lift their game in the longer version and it will eventually help their ODI performances.

--- Haji Mohammad Isam, Dhanmondi

A Javed

FROM PAGE 13

elegant Aussie right-hander Mark Waugh.

It was rumoured that Iqbal was kept away from the Pakistani team by people out to settle scores with Miandad.

But the old man was not concerned. "I know Faisal has talent and its upto him to perform so that no one can stop him," Miandad once said.

The chance came last year when Iqbal was summoned to New Zealand after an injury to key batsman Inzamam-ul-Haq.

With Miandad himself the team's coach, Iqbal grabbed the opportunity by making 42 and 52 not out on debut to help Pakistan win the Auckland Test.

He followed that with a gritty 63 in the second Test.

When Iqbal fell for 16 and 14 against England at Old Trafford last summer, exposing his weakness against the short, rising ball, Miandad took the youngster back in his stride.

The result was evident at Colombo when he stood up to the dreaded pace trio of Glenn McGrath, Jason Gillespie and Brett Lee.

Just as Miandad had done against the likes of Dennis Lillee two decades ago.

Rivals face to face

14th Asian Games BUSAN 2002

AFP, Busan

Arch rivals India and Pakistan on Thursday clash in an Asian Games hockey semifinal which is more important for both teams than even the final.

"An India-Pakistan hockey encounter is more important than any other match, even the final," said Pakistan captain Mohammad Sarwar.

"But a final featuring these two teams would have been better for the tournament."

Pakistan have an enviable record at the Games, winning the title seven times while India and South Korea, who take on Malaysia in the other semi-final, have won two golds each.

The common continental flair for stickwork makes every encounter between neighbours India and Pakistan a delight to watch, but the passion aroused is because of other reasons.

India and Pakistan have fought three wars since bitter partition in 1947 saw thousands dead in communal riots while, now, their relationship is soured by the

Kashmir issue with India claiming Pakistan backs Muslim militants in the disputed state.

Pakistan denies the claims. Furthermore, recent missile testing by the two countries has raised fears of an arms race between the two nuclear states.

"The tension of an India-Pakistan match can't be compared to any other," said Pakistan coach Tahir Zaman.

"It's one match both teams want to win desperately to please people back home."

Any good performance in a contest between these two countries makes a player a hero overnight; defeat brings brickbats.

No one knows this better than Rehman Butt, who knocked in two goals as Pakistan scored a 4-3 win over India after trailing 2-1 in the bronze medal match at the recent Champions Trophy in Cologne, Germany.

"When I went back home after the win at Cologne, people carried me on their shoulders. But I also know people will expect me to do it again and again for them, which may not be possible."

Pakistan coach Zaman is confident that his team will beat India. "We've been playing well in this tournament and after our 6-1 win

over Malaysia, I don't see any weakness in our side. But we have to be careful in defending penalty corners as India are strong in that department."

Indian coach Rajinder Singh felt the two teams were fairly balanced. "At Cologne, we beat them in the league but lost in the match for third place. I expect a keen contest and can promise a very good game of hockey," he said.

India and Pakistan used to dominate hockey on the continent until the emergence of South Korea in the 1990s.

In fact, all finals up to the 1982 Asiad in New Delhi were contested between the two countries.

Pakistan thrashed India 7-1 at the 1982 Games, a defeat that still rankles in most Indians' mind.

South Korea are expected to get past Malaysia in the other semi-final and keep a long-standing record intact - no other team except India, Pakistan and South Korea have ever made an Asian Games men's hockey final.

Pakistan are looking to regain the title they last won at Beijing in 1990. They failed to make the final in 1994 and 1998 with India and South Korea the finalists on both occasions.

Withe's moment of truth

14th Asian Games BUSAN 2002

AFP, Busan

Thailand coach Peter Withe has pledged to turn Thursday's Asian Games semifinal clash with Japan into a demonstration that his unheralded team can live with the continent's top sides.

The Thais, playing in their second successive Asian Games last four, are the rank outsiders for the gold medal, but Withe believes that the time is right for his lightweight but quickfire team to rise to the occasion.

"When I took over four years ago, people said that because I was English we would play a long ball game."

"But we have shown plenty of times that we can play with skill and technique. The players are part-time, but we all work very hard," said Withe who took the Thais to fourth place at the last Asian Games on home soil in Bangkok.

"When we reached the semi-final in 1998, a lot of people said that we were helped by being at home. But doing it abroad is a tremendous achievement and I think we have gone from being an average side to one that can compete with the best in Asia."

"On paper, we don't stand a cat in hell's chance against Japan but we have to make sure we play to our maximum ability," added the coach who should be able to recall vital players Kiatsuk Senamuang and Nongchai Vachiraban who both missed the quarter-final through suspension.

Thailand booked their place in Thursday's semi-final with a 1-0 win over North Korea but it is Japan who will start as favourites.

The Japanese, with a squad of players aged between 19 and 21 drafted in from the first and second divisions of the J-League, are determined that their squad will form the basis for an Olympic title challenge in Athens in 2004.

"The Asian Games are strictly part of our preparations for the Olympics," said coach Masakuni Yamamoto on the eve of the event.

"Regardless of the result, we want to build up a team on a solid basis."

liberty and they gave me poor results in return. None would be able to claim that I hesitated to fund in any of their projects or tours. But now it looks all went in vein.

We need to review the whole affair now and give them an outline for success since they could not do it on their own.

DSS: How do you plan to address this appalling downturn in cricket and football?

FR: Well, we have to start from the grassroots level. We need to reintroduce competitions at inter-school, inter-upazilla, inter-districts and divisional levels in different age groups. That is how we can qualify players.

DSS: What do you see as your major limitations?

FR: The major limitation I have is the human resource. None of the federations has any proper plan to scout young players and groom them. That's why we lack in quality players.

Besides, we need to have our policy and priority right. We must have a decision from which sports we can expect success at international level, and allocate funds to federations accordingly. We have 32 federations now.

DSS: You said you would give a peaceful solution to the tug of war between football and cricket over the ownership of Bangabandhu National Stadium (BNS). But we haven't seen any such solution as

yet.

FR: We are close to a solution when BCB demanded Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium exclusively for cricket. You have to understand that BNS is our main national stadium where we also need to hold many national programmes. So it is very difficult to give this stadium exclusively to cricket.

DSS: The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) has asked BFF to have an elected president. To do that, you need to amend the NSC Act at the Jatiya Sangsad. How are you going to deal with this?

FR: I am still trying my best so that AFC gives a second thought about it. We will try again to make them understand that we had been sticking to the policy of a selected president for the last 30 years. If they don't agree, I will definitely take necessary steps to amend the NSC Act.

DSS: The performance of Bangladesh in the Asian Games football was humiliating. BFF succumbed to the pressure of the clubs and no training camp could be held as a result. How do you look at this matter?

FR: Again, perhaps it was just because I gave full independence to the federations. But I can assure you this will not be repeated in future. BFF will have proper calendar from now on and everything will be done according to the plan.



Kuwait's Fawzi al-Shammari (L) crosses the finish line on his way to winning the men's 400m gold at the 14th Asian Games in Busan yesterday.

China under Saudi pressure

14th Asian Games BUSAN 2002

AFP, Busan

China began to assert its superiority in track and field at the Asian Games Wednesday, but their jump in the medal tally was overshadowed by a continuing Saudi Arabian medal rush and Susanthike Jayasinghe lining up a sprint double.

Triple jumper Salem al-Ahmadi won the Saudi's fourth gold and in the 400m Hamdan al-Bishi took silver in a desperate finish in which he was caught on the line by Fawzi al-Shammari of Kuwait.

Saudi Arabia's emergence, having never won an Asian Games track and field gold medal before Busan, highlighted the benefits of joining the famed training camp of California-based coaching guru John Smith.

Smith, who is in Busan watching his proteges, warned there is more rising talent in Saudi Arabia as it emerges from the track and field wilderness.

"They are a lot different now than when I started with them, and there are more promising people there," said Smith whose stable is headed by Olympic 100m champion Maurice Greene.

The third day of track and field produced seven finals, with China winning three, and the others shared between four Arabian Gulf states - Bahrain, Kuwait, Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

Al-Shammari and al-Bishi had a punishing schedule Wednesday, having to also contend with the heats and semi-finals of the 200m where they both qualified for Thursday's final where Japan's Shingo Suetsugu is a cut above the rest.

Suetsugu had the fastest semi-final time of 20.45sec, but appeared to indicate his pre-Games aim of breaking the 20.00sec barrier was no longer on.

"The surface of the track is a bit soft so maybe the times will not be so good," he said, before adding: "But look for a surprise in the final."

In the women's 200m heats, Sri Lanka's reigning 100m queen Jayasinghe remained on target for her double, although she eased up in her semi-final to be pipped by Viktoriya Kovreva of Kazakhstan in 23.59sec, while Saraswati Saha of India won the second semi in an even quicker 23.51.

In the men's 400m final, Al-Bishi, 21, stormed from the blocks and seemed to have the race sealed, before al-Shammari pushed his aching body for one last effort to win by a nose and equal the Games record of 44.93sec.

"I accelerated hard at 300 because I knew al-Bishi could turn up the pace in the last 100."

"I just pushed and pushed. For me it's been a great season and my goal after some time off is the world championships in Paris next year."

Al-Bishi, a former world junior champion, admitted he misjudged the race, pushing too hard early and "in the last 100m I just couldn't accelerate".

Qatar's Khamis Abdulla was so far clear in the home straight of the

men's 3,000m steeplechase that he had time to turn around and urge of teammate Abubakar Ali Kamal who was locked in a battle for second with Japan's Yoshitaka Iwamizu.

Even though Abdulla was more interested in the action behind rather than the finish line ahead he still managed to set a new Games record time of 8:30.44sec, with Kamal and Iwamizu deadheading for second.

"For me, it was an easy race, my opponents were not very strong," said Abdulla, explaining why he had time to turn around and beckon on Kamal.

Two of the Chinese favourites, women's pole vaulter Guo Shuying and men's 110m hurdler Liu Xiang, also set Games records.

Gao soared to 4.35m in winning the women's pole vault, while Liu, the reigning Asian champion, kept the high-hurdles title in China's hands for the fifth consecutive Asian Games with a new record of 13.27sec.

China's third gold medal Tuesday went to Li Meiju who was too strong in the women's shot put despite a tough challenger in South Korea's Lee Myong-Sun.

Bahrain struck gold in the men's 800m where Rashid Mohammad was too good for second placed Mathew Kalatathum of India, the brother of K.M. Beename, India's star who won the women's 800m on Tuesday and will go for the double in the 400 on Thursday.