



England's Nasser Hussain celebrates after he takes the catch to get rid of West Indies' Shivnarine Chanderpaul on the fourth day of the second Test in Trinidad yesterday.

Hosts lift DC Gold Cup

OUR CORRESPONDENT

Gaibandha Pourashava emerged champions in the Deputy Commissioner Gold Cup football tournament beating Pabna Zila by 6-5 in the tie-breakers at the Gaibandha Stadium yesterday.

The final ended 1-1 in normal time. Rajshahi Divisional Commissioner Mosle Uddin distributed the trophy.

Sims rescues

Table with columns: Bowler, O, M, R, W. Lists bowling figures for various players like Alamgir, Tareq, Enamul, Faisal, Jamal, Kapali, Rafin, Ashraf.

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Mercury goes

FROM PAGE 13 not only have the momentum with them, but also the confidence that comes from successfully chasing a big score like 293.

"As a captain, a no-ball or a wide irritates me no end. The lack of discipline by the bowlers cost us the match. It is about time they put their hands up and do the job for Pakistan."

Pakistan coach Javed Miandad said he was confident the bowlers would do better on Wednesday.

"There is so much pressure on Shoaib Akhtar because he is the spearhead of our attack. He has made mistakes but I have a lot of faith in him," Miandad said.

"I have been a great series so far and I am sure the finale will be as good. I hear the Indians choke in a final. I hope they choke again but we are not going to take them lightly."

The playing elevens for the decider, described by former Indian Test player Navtej Sidhu as "too close to call", will be named just before the toss on Wednesday.

India is expected to retain the same side, while Pakistan is seeking a place for dashing opener Taufeeq Umar, who hit a century in the Indians on March 10.

INDIA (likely): Sourav Ganguly (captain), Rahul Dravid, Virender Sehwag, Sachin Tendulkar, Venkatesh Laxman, Yuvraj Singh, Mohammad Kaif, Zaheer Khan, Laxmipathy Balaji, Irfan Pathan, Murali Kartik.

PAKISTAN (from): Inzamamul Haq (captain), Yousuf Youhana, Shahid Afridi, Yasir Hameed, Younis Khan, Shoaib Malik, Abdul Razzaq, Moin Khan, Shoaib Akhtar, Mohammad Sami, Shabbir Ahmed, Taufeeq Umar.

Eng won't lose series

Cricket

AFP, Port-of-Spain

England completed a seven-wicket win over the West Indies in the second Test here Tuesday to go 2-0 up in the four Test series.

Resuming the final day needing 28 to win, England lost a wicket second ball when Nasser Hussain edged Adam Sanford behind for five.

New batsman Graham Thorpe almost fell to the third delivery but Ridley Jacobs was unable to hold onto a low edge to his left. Mark Butcher then hit the winning runs in the fifth over to finish 47 not out with England on 99 for three.

The win means that England have avoided a series defeat in the Caribbean for the first time since 1968. And they retained the Wisden Trophy which they took with a 3-1 win at home in 2000.

The loss was bitter for the West Indies and resulted in the immediate resignation of team manager Ricky Skerritt.

Skipper Brian Lara, however,

said it was not the time to press the panic button.

SCOREBOARD

Final scorecard on the fifth and last day of the second Test between England and West Indies at Queen's Park Oval on Tuesday.

WEST INDIES: First innings 208 (Gayle 62; Harmison 6-61)

ENGLAND: First innings 319 (Thorpe 90; Butcher 61; Hussain 58; Giles 37; Collins 4-71, Best 3-71, Gayle 2-20)

WEST INDIES: Second innings Gayle b Jones 16; Devon c Hoggard b Jones 17; Sarwan lbw b Jones 13; Jacobs c Flintoff b Jones 70; C'paul c Hussain b Flintoff 42; Lara lbw b Harmison 8; Dwayne c sub b Flintoff 14; Best lbw b Hoggard 2; Sanford c Trescothick b Hoggard 1; Collins b Jones 7; Collymore not out 0; Extras: (b-1, lb-3, w-5, nb-10) 19

Total: (All out in 67 overs) 209

Fall of wickets: 1-34, 2-45, 3-56, 4-158, 5-171, 6-194, 7-195, 8-200, 9-205

ENGLAND: Second innings Trescothick b Best 4; Vaughan lbw b Sanford 23; Butcher not out 47; Hussain c Jacobs b Sanford 5; Thorpe not out 13; Extras: (b-4, lb-2, nb-1) 7

Total: (For 3 wks in 15 overs) 99

Fall of wickets: 1-8, 2-59, 3-71

Did not bat: Flintoff, Read, Giles, Hoggard, Jones, Harmison

Bowler O M R W Best 4 0 27 1; Collins 4 0 26 0; Sanford 4 1 32 2; Collymore 3 1 8 0

Result: England won by 7 wickets and lead the 4-Test series 2-0.

Man-of-the-match: Steve Harmison.

Warne after history

FROM PAGE 13 wickets in the last two matches, but needs 15 more to overhaul Walsh.

Australia have yet to decide whether to go into the match with the same side or effect a couple of changes.

Andrew Symonds could make way for Simon Katich after contributing just 53 runs in four innings. Katich was unlucky to sit out after scoring a century in his last Test, against India at home early this year.

Brad Williams is also in contention if Australia decide to include three pacemen and one spinner.

"(Team selection) is not going to be easy. We'll sit back and talk about it," said Ponting.

Sri Lankan skipper Hashan Tillakaratne is in danger of losing the captaincy after the hosts had lost their first home Test series in three years.

"It does not bother me whether I remain captain for the next series. If I am stepping down I just want to go on a high note," he said.

"I think we have to be mentally tough against Australia. The finishing touches are not there. We have seen how they finished the two Tests and that is lacking in our cricket. We have learnt so many things from Australia."

Australia won both the matches after conceding first-innings leads.

"The Zimbabwe tour is round the corner and we will have to put our best foot forward. We cannot relax against them even for 10-15 minutes. It's high time we overcome our mistakes and try to win this Test," said Tillakaratne.

TEAMS AUSTRALIA (from): Ricky Ponting (captain), Justin Langer, Matthew Hayden, Damien Martyn, Darren Lehmann, Andrew Symonds, Adam Gilchrist, Shane Warne, Jason Gillespie, Michael Kasprovicz, Stuart MacGill, Simon Katich, Brad Williams, Shaun Tait, Wade Seccombe.

SRI LANKA (from): Hashan

Age Group cricket

SPORTS REPORTER Dhaka Division recorded a massive 128-run victory over Barisal Division in the Age Group Under-15 Development cricket tournament at the Faridpur Stadium yesterday.

Surpiyo hammered 71 as Dhaka made 224 for 7 in stipulated 50 overs.

In reply, Barisal were bundled out for 96 in 21.2 overs. Mehedi Rahman picked up four wickets for 16.

Chittagong pulled off an exciting one-wicket win against Sylhet in the other match at the Rajendro College ground.

The port city boys made 132 for 9 in 48 overs in reply to Sylhet's 128 all out in 42.5 overs.

In the under-13 competition, both Dhaka and Chittagong defeated their respective rivals.

Dhaka handed Barisal a massive 147-run defeat at the Dhanmondi Club ground while Chittagong beat Sylhet by five wickets at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium.

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SAF football Tough revised draw

SPORTS REPORTER

For all their protests Bangladesh will feel hard done after knowing their opponents for the SAF Games football competition. The revised draw was conducted in Islamabad yesterday.

The defending champions now find themselves in Group A along with India, the hosts and newcomers Afghanistan. The other group features Nepal, Sri Lanka and Bhutan. The Maldives, who were also drawn in that section, however pulled out at the last moment.

The revised grouping was made following Bangladesh's protests on technical grounds at having India and Maldives both semifinalists of the previous edition held in Kathmandu in 1999.

The football competition kicks off on March 27, two days before the South Asian gala event gets underway in the Pakistan capital.

Chennai manager Claudio Ranieri has told his players he will be leaving the club at the end of the season, newspapers reported Tuesday.

"I know what's going on. You know what's going on. Let's get on with the rest of our season," the Italian was reported to have told his squad after a training session.

An attempt to gain a vote of confidence from Chelsea chief executive Peter Kenyon fell on deaf ears.

"Now the club should say something, they should say it's rubbish," Ranieri told Sky Sports TV about the never-ending speculation he will be sacked at the end of the season.

"It's not for me, it's for the players," said Ranieri ahead of Wednesday's Champions League quarter-final first leg clash at home to Arsenal. "I think the club should support the coach and the squad."

Manchester United manager Sir Alex Ferguson was apparently

insisted neither the Gunners' star striker Thierry Henry nor Arsenal were unbeatable.

"I think he (Henry) has got everything," Terry told Chelsea TV. "He's very quick, he's got a great finish and a great first touch. His movement and the timing of his runs are excellent."

"But Arsenal aren't invincible and neither is Thierry Henry so let's stop worrying about them. Let's just go and beat them."

Chelsea are expected to start with Hernan Crespo and Eidur Gudjohnsen in attack because Jimmy Floyd Hasselbaink is nursing a hamstring strain.

Neither Arsenal nor Chelsea have reached the semi-finals of the Champions League where either Real Madrid or Monaco await the winners of their capital clash.

Wenger said his men knew what was at stake.

"The game at Stamford Bridge is massive for both of us," the Frenchman said.

"I promise that you will see a big game. We have a game after that against Manchester United but let's give it all against Chelsea."

"We give the maximum in every game and then see what happens after that."

Another factor in Arsenal's favour is that striker Dennis Bergkamp will be available for the game.

Normally the Dutchman's fear of flying prevents him from taking part in European away games but a trip across London should hold fewer concerns.

Ranieri says bye!

Football

AFP, London

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ID football Big win for Brothers

RU CORRESPONDENT

Premier Division champions Brothers Union scored a massive 6-2 victory over Chittagong Mayor Ekadash in the Independence Day football tournament at Rajshahi Stadium yesterday.

Ace striker Alfaz opened the floodgates while Tapu, Rikta, Liton, Edward and Abul scored once each and Mozammel and Yousuf reduced the margin for the losers.

In today's match Mohammedan Sporting Club will play Sylhet Mayor Ekadash.

Indo-Pak rivalry

FROM PAGE 13 men win on Wednesday they will move to 107 and Pakistan will drop to 106.

This will leave India in fifth place and Pakistan on sixth, an ICC release said.

A Pakistani win would increase their rating to 108, while India would fall behind England to 105.

A tied match will leave Pakistan with a one-point lead over India, the release said.

ICC's official one-day rankings on Tuesday (placing, country, points):

Australia 135; South Africa 113; Sri Lanka 109; New Zealand 109; Pakistan 107; England 106; India 106; West Indies 100; Zimbabwe 64; Kenya 28; Bangladesh 3

(Where two teams are level on points, the team with the better win ratio is given a higher placing)

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Gunners have all the aces

UEFA CHAMPS LEAGUE

AFP, London

It is the match Chelsea cannot win and Arsenal cannot lose - at least that's what the statistics say ahead of the London rivals' Champions League quarter-final first leg match here Wednesday at Stamford Bridge.

Not only have Arsenal already beaten Chelsea 2-1 three times already this season they have not lost to their west London opponents in their last 16 meetings.

Arsenal lead the Premiership by nine points from Chelsea and are on course for a trophy treble with the FA Cup holders meeting Manchester United in the semi-finals of this season's competition next month.

While at least one piece of silverware seems destined to end up at Highbury, the same cannot be said for Chelsea.

And that is bad news for manager Claudio Ranieri who, almost ever since billionaire owner Roman Abramovich, has been having to read stories in the British press saying he will be sacked at the end of the season.

England coach Sven-Goran Eriksson has been Ranieri's most frequently touted successor although Arsenal dismissed suggestions that Abramovich could lure their manager Arsene Wenger across town.

Meanwhile any thoughts Ranieri had that winning the Champions League might be

enough to keep him at Stamford Bridge were rubbished by Monday's edition of the London Evening Standard which carried the headline "Nothing can keep Ranieri safe now".

Up until then the genial Italian, who has lavished 120 million pounds (220 million dollars) of Abramovich's money on players in an unprecedented spending spree by British standards, had laughed off all the talk about his own future.

But even Ranieri, whose contract is not due to expire until 2007, has a breaking point and on Monday he urged the club to end the speculation over his position.

"For me everything is rubbish, I don't believe it - but of course the club should say something if I'm under pressure," he told Sky TV.

"Not for Ranieri, the journalists have been killing Ranieri for a long time. But now, why? There is a different strategy. I don't know why they want to kill, not Ranieri, they want to kill the whole season."

Chelsea chief executive Peter Kenyon - who had previously warned Ranieri that a trophyless season would count as a "failure" - later came out with a statement in support of his manager although it was some way short of ringing endorsement.

"We will not add to this speculation by responding and only wish to reiterate that Claudio Ranieri has over three years to run on his contract."

Meanwhile Chelsea and England defender John Terry

Real's Ronaldo relief

UEFA CHAMPS LEAGUE

AFP, Madrid

Real Madrid go into their Champions League quarter-final with Monaco on Wednesday on the back of two defeats which have rocked the reigning Spanish champions.

An extra-time defeat to Real Zaragoza in the Spanish Cup final was a surprise but when the famous white shirts crashed 4-2 to Athletic Bilbao in the league on Saturday, it was the first time this season they had lost two consecutive matches.

However Zinedine Zidane, who has been unable recently to lift the team in his normal fashion, dismissed suggestions that a team who have won the Champions League twice in the past four years were a diminished force as they prepare for the visit of Didier Deschamps' side.

"We need to get our confidence, our game and our concentration back, but there is no frailness about us. I have no doubt about that," Zidane said.

"We have lost two matches, that's all. We have to forget these last two defeats and especially the

one against Zaragoza which really hurt.

"It's always bad to lose in a final but that happens in the course of a season. But we can win against Monaco."

The current World Player of the

League for the first time since 1994, Deschamps can pick from a virtually fully squad.

Central defender Sebastien Squillaci, one of the pillars of the team, is set to make his return after a month out with injury and Deschamps recognises his rearguard are the key over the two matches.

"I'm realistic," said Deschamps. "Player for player it's weighed in their favour from the start. We will have to limit their chances and make the most of opportunities when we get one."

"But Real haven't had the best preparation for this match either. For me, preparing for it has been exciting both tactically and psychologically."

Monaco have also hit a rocky patch of domestic form - two draws in the league came either side of elimination from the French Cup at the hands of amateurs Chateauroux and they have lost the lead in the league to Lyon.

But as they seek to reach the semi-finals of the Champions

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