

No sign of rebels

Cricket

AFP, Harare

A continued boycott by 15 white Zimbabwe professional cricketers has forced the national selectors here to choose a team once more from the country's second string to meet Sri Lanka in the third of five internationals at Harare Sports Club here Sunday.

They are sticking to the side which has already suffered two big defeats at the hands of the bemused tourists.

In refusing to show up for practice on Saturday as part of a new deal proposed by the Zimbabwe Cricket Union (ZCU), the dissident players underlined their rejection of a plan which would mean mediation by an independent body and of new procedures to resolve union and player differences.

Details of this plan are being withheld by the ZCU, but they are known to entail the involvement of an independent arbitrator and a one-on-one method of resolving future issues between the union and professional players.

It took former captain Heath Streak and senior batsman Grant

Flower just a few minutes on Friday to turn down the idea of a mediation mechanism which the ZCU hoped would move negotiations forward quickly. Flower said later that the other 13 had also expressed disapproval.

As the stalemate continued into a fourth week since their insistence on reinstatement as captain of Streak - which ZCU chairman Peter Chingoka has said is "no longer for discussion" - there seems to be no further sign of a breakthrough.

Many of the players are still scattered around the country on holiday -- at Nyanga mountain resort, Victoria Falls and Lake Kariba.

A players' meeting is being planned for Tuesday or Wednesday next week, after the return from neighbouring South Africa of their lawyer Chris Venturas.

Flower said: "Nothing is going to happen until at least then."

In these circumstances the 15 could not turn up for practice, which would be an indication that they are available for selection, until the crisis is resolved, because that would concede a negotiating position.

It seems inevitable that Sri Lanka will proceed Sunday on their way to

a series whitewash by the final match on Thursday.

Left-arm Sri Lanka seamer will be looking for three more wickets to take him to a career 400, while Mahela Jayawardena wants just 10 runs to reach 4 000 in this form of cricket.

The Zimbabwe team and Sri Lanka squad from which a final eleven will be chosen just before the match.

TEAMS

ZIMBABWE: Tatenda Taibu (captain), Vusi Sibanda, Brendan Taylor, Dion Ebrahim, Elton Chigumbura, Stuart Matsikenyeri, Alester Magwedere, Mluleki Nkala, Prosper Utseya, Douglas Hondo, Tinashe Panyangara. 12th man Tawanda Mpariwa.

TEAM: Marvan Atapattu (captain), Mahela Jayawardene, Sanath Jayasuriya, Kumar Sangakkara, Tillakaratne Dilshan, Russel Arnold, Saman Jayantha, Thilina Kandamby, Chaminda Vaas, Nuwan Zoysa, Dilhara Fernando, Nuwan Kalasekera, Farveez Maharoof, Muttiah Muralitharan, Upul Chandana, Rangana Herath.

Result: Acme won by four wickets.

CityCell vs Partex

Partex: 247 for 8 in 45 overs (Parvez 13, Moniruzzaman 35, Sajjad 20, Ashraf 81, Azam Iqbal 25, Neeyamur Rashid 23, Asadullah Khan 13, Masudur Rahman 10 not out, Nadif Chowdhury 14 not out; Debrabata 1-58, James 1-48, Hasan 4-43, Imran Parvez 1-37, Ali Arman 1-59).

Acme: 250 for 6 in 44 overs (Hannan 13, Sakib 49, Nahidul 36, Bashir 73 not out, Hasan 46, Imran Parvez 19 not out; Murshed Ali Khan 1-49, Masudur Rahman 1-47, Azam Iqbal 2-38, Nadif 1-45).

Result: Acme won by four wickets.

CityCell vs Partex

Partex: 151 all out in 49 overs (Pappa Sharma 18, Tariq 18, Rezaul 30, Mianzor 40, Pratik 18, Anisur Rahman 3-22, Sharifullah 1-23, Humayun 1-27, Sanwar 3-32)

CityCell: 174 all out in 41 overs (Nizamuddin Ripon 71, Ali Nishan 24, Waseluddin 15, Syed Russell 18, Anisur Rahman 3-22, Sharifullah 1-23, Humayun 1-27, Sanwar 3-32)

Result: CityCell won by 77 runs.

Biman vs Gazi Tank

Gazi Tank: 174 all out in 41 overs (Nizamuddin Ripon 71, Ali Nishan 24, Waseluddin 15, Syed Russell 18, Anisur Rahman 3-22, Sharifullah 1-23, Humayun 1-27, Sanwar 3-32)

Biman: 178 for 4 in 36.5 overs (Rashedul Haq 85, Jahangir Alam 14, Sanwar 33 not out, Hasanuzzaman 17 not out; Sanjoy 1-23, Shafulullah 1-31, Murad Khan 1-30, Garry 1-28).

Result: Biman won by six wickets.

Happy birthday

FROM PAGE 13

"I don't know if his batting has changed in the conventional sense, but today he knows his game very well. He is more solid now," Indian leg-spinner Anil Kumble told the Press Trust of India news agency.

"I am not sure the emergence of young players has made him relax, but I'd certainly say he is more comfortable now."

And that will be uncomfortable news for bowlers, who have been finding themselves at the receiving end of his array of shots for more than a decade.

Tendulkar is now the most senior member of the team, but still plays the game with the enthusiasm of a youngster making Test debut. The desire to dominate and win has still not diminished.

Former Pakistani skipper Waqar Younis said Tendulkar had now become more compact and started playing like a very mature batsman.

"With the passage of time he has understood what Test cricket is about and that he has to stay at the crease. Now you do not see him play any flashy shots," he said.

"If you do not change your game, the bowlers are going to catch you. He has changed his game and has become even more difficult for bowlers."

Tendulkar may have curbed a few strokes of late, but remains one of the most entertaining batsmen in the world.

"He was more flamboyant in his early years, but is an extremely difficult batsman to bowl to these days. If he gets into double-figures, he more or less closes the options for bowlers," said teammate Harbhajan Singh.

"He might have scored 20,000 runs and 70 centuries in international cricket, but still wants to perform to his optimum level."

Former Indian skipper Ajit Wadekar said Tendulkar's presence in the middle was a boon for young players.

"He is a matured batsman now. He has realised he needs to stay in the middle to guide youngsters so that they could be moulded into reliable batsmen for the future," he said.

"It is the youngsters' good fortune that they are being guided by a player of his status. It is a learning experience for them."

Tendulkar concedes a lot has changed since his debut Test series.

"I think as you grow old, things change. Similarly with cricket. It's a gradual change for the better. I am also trying to be as compact as possible."

Windies 57-2

FROM PAGE 13

Ricardo Powell, Dwayne Smith, Ridley Jacobs, Dwayne Bravo, Mervyn Dillon, Ravi Rampaul, Corey Collymore.

ENGLAND: Michael Vaughan (captain), Marcus Trescothick, Andrew Strauss, Paul Collingwood, Andrew Flintoff, Rikki Clarke, Ian Blackwell, Chris Read, Darren Gough, James Anderson, Stephen Harmison.

RICKY PONTING

bowling in Test matches to get a real idea and understanding of what's going on.

"It's a little bit strange that they're talking about bending some of the rules again. I don't really understand how that works."

Ponting said Muralitharan, who he called "an absolutely sensa-

lure start losing his serve to fall 2-1 down before Coria went onto take the first set when his opponent netted a backhand from the baseline.

The colourful Russian sent down 17 unforced errors compared to the Argentinian's five to hammer home his frustration.

But Safin was soon back in charge breaking in the second and sixth games with a flourishing, attacking game which had Coria constantly pinned far back behind the baseline.

Safin, with just five errors in the set, levelled the match after 68 minutes on court with a blistering forehand.

He saved two break points in the fourth game of the decider but the errors were creeping back in and he was powerless to prevent Coria from breaking in the eighth game to lead 5-3 when Safin hit a lazy, long forehand.

Coria will be chasing his second title of the year and eighth of his career.

Australian Open runner-up Safin, who was also a finalist in Estoril last week, got off to a lack-

Coria sends Safin packing

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 42 Los —, 2 Author

1 Impale NM 24 Put into

5 Encountered 3 Bohemian words

8 Maker of 4 Dark gray

12 Dagwood's boss's wife 5 Get the

13 "Little Teapot" 6 Ostrich's

14 Erstwhile Peruvian 54 Green

15 Picnic invaders 55 Sought

16 Topics 56 Egos'

18 Capital of Saudi Arabia parts

20 Most wise 57 Corner-stone info

21 Polygraph blips 19 Gossip

23 Undeniably 22 Do the

24 Take away baddie

28 Unescorted

31 Wore away

32 Un, deux, —

34 Raw rock

35 Miss America's term of office

37 Dunk

39 Flitch

41 Stagger

DOWN 1 "Lion" 22 Do the

30 King" pots and pans

33 Cutaway 36 Cavorted

38 Walking on air

40 Haloween shout

42 Answers, on

43 Waikiki wingding

44 Half" (Pref.)

45 TV chef

47 Egress 48 Partake

50 Affirmative action

Solution time: 24 mins.

CRYPTOQUIP

Saturday's Cryptoquip: COULD A BLIZZARD

BE CONSIDERED A WEATHER PHENOMENON THAT WINTERRUPTS TRAFFIC?

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: I equals B

The Cryptoquip 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.

Bashar steals

FROM PAGE 13

victory 178-4 in 36.5 overs.

SCORES IN BRIEF

Acme vs BEXIMCO

BEXIMCO: 247 for 8 in 45 overs

(Parvez 13, Moniruzzaman 35,

Sajjad 20, Ashraf 81, Azam Iqbal

25, Neeyamur Rashid 23, Asadullah Khan 13, Masudur Rahman 10 not out, Nadif Chowdhury 14 not out; Debrabata 1-58, James 1-48, Hasan 4-43, Imran Parvez 1-37, Ali Arman 1-59).

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2-38, Nadif 1-45).

Result: Acme won by four wickets.

CityCell vs Partex

Partex: 228 for 9 in 50 overs (Imran

66, Intiaz 11, Moniruzzaman 62,

Rajin Saleh 45, Rezaul 13 not out,

Tapas 15; Pratik Shaha 3-37,

Rezaul 1-40, Mehrab Hossain 2-29).

Result: CityCell won by 77 runs.

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