

Windies' gift for Lara

FROM PAGE 13 with Lara playing circumspectly, coasted closer and closer to the magic number, despite losing Dwayne Smith in the 34th over and Lara in the 40th.

Table with columns: Player, O, M, R, W. Includes players like Clarke, Dillon, Batty, Gough, Harmison, Extras, Total, and West Indies bowlers.

SCOREBOARD Scoreboard of the sixth and penultimate one-day international between West Indies and England on Sunday.

NBL v'ball

SPORTS REPORTER Brothers Union defeated Nabajagarani Sangha 3-0 in the National Bank First Division Volleyball League at the Dhaka Volleyball Stadium yesterday.

In the Second Division, Bangladesh Bank beat Jibon Bima KS 3-1, Uttara Sporting Club blanked Mothertek Mitail Sangha 3-0.

Lee's mind games

AFP, Kolkata Top Australian fast bowler Brett Lee said Monday he was looking forward to giving an impressive performance in the upcoming Test series in India.

Earlier, sent into bat, Mohammedan made a fighting 254 for nine in 50 overs with Golam Mabud (36 off 43 balls) and Zahid Adil (24 off 51) providing an ideal start.

Rezaul Karim top-scored with 78 off 70 balls that included ten fours. Rafiqul made 40.

Left-arm spinner Rashed was the most successful Brothers bowler with three wickets while Mohammad Ali bagged two.

In the other match, Abahani virtually romped to a nine-wicket victory over Shatadal with almost 20 overs to spare at MAAziz Stadium.

Abahani also rode on the brilliance of another Pakistani all-rounder Mohammed Rizwan.

Rizwan blasted his way to an unbeaten 128 off just 78 balls as Abahani toppled a modest Shatadal total of 192 at the expense of Emran Ahmed (43 off 81 balls), who featured in an opening stand of 148 in 23.5 overs with the century-maker.

Rizwan set the second Test venue of the country afire with two sixes and 23 boundaries.

Rizwan also claimed two wickets to complete a virtuoso show.

Pakistanis provide

FROM PAGE 13 reaching quarter of a century.

He featured in two crucial stands of 66 and 74 with Nuruzzaman and compatriot Rashed Hanif.

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Sher-e-Bangla Cup

FROM PAGE 13 were not so lucky when they both were knocked out.

A goal each from Nurul Islam, Mantri and Ratan sunk Joyprhat who crashed to a 3-1 defeat to Sirajganj at the Joyprhat Stadium.

Feroz reduced the arrears for the home side.

In Cox's Bazar, the local boys suffered a 2-0 loss to Feni with Sajjad and Tipu scoring early second-half goals.

Chudadanga brushed aside neighbours Meherpur 5-1 at Chudadanga Stadium in a one-sided match in the Kapotakha Zone with Hagi scoring twice. Aminur, Chanchal and Ohidul were also on the scoresheet for Chudadanga while Russel narrowed the margin for the visitors.

Imrul Hassan slammed both goals in Bagerhat's 2-0 defeat of Patuakhali at Bhola Stadium in a Meghna-Zone match originally scheduled for tomorrow. The organisers rescheduled the opening match between Bhola and Jhalokathi without any notice.

All the seven winners have reached the zonal semifinals. Nine matches will be played today.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down words.

US wants piece of 2007 CWC

AFP, Lauderdale (Florida) A delegation from this South Florida city will deliver a bid proposal to the West Indies Cricket Board (WICB) this week in hopes of making the United States a host nation for the 2007 World Cup.

If the US plan is accepted by the WICB and International Cricket Council (ICC), this suburb 40 kilometres north of Miami would host matches in a cricket complex set to open in late 2006, the Sun-Sentinel newspaper reported.

City officials were to meet WICB officials in Barbados Thursday and watch a one-day match between England and the West Indies, already set as the 2007 World Cup host.

The WICB and ICC plan a site visit here June 7-8 before match venues are named July 4 and a programme is announced on July 12.

"They want to make sure we can deliver what we say we can," Lauderdale spokeswoman Leslie Tropepe told the newspaper.

Biman placed

FROM PAGE 13 Both the pre-tournament favourites Bashundhara and GrameenPhone are pitted against Group B champions Partex in their Cup group.

The Cup competition begins on May 9 while the lower tier of the second phase -- the Plate -- starts May 6.

SCORES IN BRIEF Biman v BADC Venue: Fatullah Stadium BIMAN: 206-8 in 50 overs (Humayun 33, Ashiqur 27, Sanuar 62, Saikat 2-37, Turja 3-30). BADC: 139-8 in 50 overs (Saikat 64, Aminul 2-8)

Result: Biman won by 67 runs. Bashundhara v GrameenPhone Venue: BKSP BASHUNDHARA: 203-9 in 50 overs (Nafis 21, Sabir 24, Akram Khan 67, Naimur 24, Anwar Munir 2-44, Enamul Jr 2-42, Riyadh 2-38). GRAMEENPHONE: 200-10 in 49.4 overs (Nasirul 61, Tushar Imran 20, Tamim 41, Nuruzzaman 21, Hasibul 2-35, Enamul Haque 3-43, Sabir 2-40).

Result: Bashundhara won by three runs. Gazi Tank v Dev Squad Venue: Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium DEV SQUAD: 255-9 in 50 overs (Faisal 34, Sadat 32, Kamrul 20, Bashar 47, Saqib 39, Shamsu 22, Waheduzzaman 3-39, Monirul 3-38).

GAZI TANK: 256-7 in 49.2 overs (Niaz 62, Sumon 38, Rashed Rana 59 not out, Shahriar 42, Sazid 3-39, Sajib 2-54). Result: Gazi Tank won by three wickets.

Replying to another question, Faruque said that he will be part of the final team selection on the tour as it was his job as the chief selector but he was still in confusion whether he was the overall team leader.

Bangladesh Cricket Board's cricket committee chairman Mahbubul Anam however said that there was no need for debate on the issue.

"Coach Dav Whatmore will look after the cricketing aspects while Faruque will act as the manager. The only difference is that Faruque will also sit with the coach and captain when they select the playing eleven," said Mahub.

CRYPTOQUIP O H A * B L H T B Q U A W Z D C M M S U A J V Z J E H T C O M I U A U B M C L V M B Q H T J Q B

HI Z D Z " A Z S D Z E W " ? Yesterday's Cryptoquip: AN ACCURATE DEFINITION OF A FAD IS A THING THAT GOES IN ONE ERA AND OUT THE OTHER.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: D equals S 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.

Beckham's pocket fattest

AFP, Paris England captain David Beckham has become the top paid footballer in the world earning 22.4 million euros (26.7m dollars) last year, bi-weekly soccer magazine France Football report in their Tuesday edition.

The 28-year-old player's revenue was amassed from 6.4 million euros (7.6m dollars) paid by his Spanish team Real Madrid, bonuses of 100,000 euros (119,000), advertising deals estimated at 11.4m euros (13.6), advances for his autobiography worth 3m euros (3.6m) and 1.5m euros for his Asian tour.

The England star leads two other Real Madrid players in the earnings stakes, Brazilian striker Ronaldo and French midfielder Zinedine Zidane who earned 16.5 and 14m euros respectively.

Michael Owen is the highest-paid Premiership player according to the report, the Liverpool striker earns 9.1million euros while Thierry Henry, whose goals have been instrumental in winning Arsenal the Premiership this season is on 8.4million euros. Alex Ferguson is the top paid manager with the Manchester United boss earning 8.6m euros, ahead of England manager Sven-Goran Eriksson, the second highest paid with 5.5m, and AS Roma's Fabio Capello on 4.1m.

Arsene Wenger who lead Arsenal to the Premiership title earned 3.4m.

SL draw tour match

AFP, Harare A three-day match between a Zimbabwe A side and Sri Lanka ended in a high-scoring draw here at the Takashinga Cricket Club on Monday.

The match was called off about two hours earlier than scheduled on the third day.

Zimbabwe "A" scored 294 in their first innings, followed by 306-8 declared. Sri Lanka notched up 461 in their first and only innings and did not bat a second time by agreement.

The Zimbabwe A second innings featured 97 by Trevor Gripper and 89 by night watchman Prosper Utseye. They put on 193 runs for the second wicket.

Leg-spinner Upul Chandana took four wickets for 80 to add to his 3-90 in the home team's first innings.

Sri Lanka will now begin practice for the first Test match at Harare Sports Club on Thursday.

European roundup A Milanese week

Football

AFP, Paris AC Milan won the Italian league title for the 17th time on Sunday after beating Roma 1-0 in a violence-marred contest at the San Siro as reigning Spanish champions Real Madrid's grip on their crown loosened badly when they went down 2-0 at Deportivo La Coruna the previous day.

The defeat left second-placed Roma nine points behind with two games left to play in this season's Serie A.

Ukrainian striker Andrei Shevchenko scored the winner in the second minute to hand Milan their first title since 1999.

Milan coach Carlo Ancelotti paid tribute to his players, who trailed Roma by six points before the winter break.

"Today, we played fantastic and overall we deserved the Scudetto," he added. "It was an extraordinary season and I am truly happy."

Primera Liga

The destination of the Spanish championship is in the hands of Valencia after they opened up a four-point lead at the top of the Spanish first division with a 2-0 win over Real Betis on Sunday.

Valencia are well on their way to lifting their second title in three years with 74 points from their 35 games.

Real Madrid stay in second but their grip on their crown loosened when they went down 2-0 at Deportivo La Coruna on Saturday.

Barcelona remain in third after their 4-1 derby win over Espanyol but now have 69 points and close the gap on Real to one point.

Ronaldinho was the creative genius for Barcelona, scoring one goal and taking part in the others.

Raul Tamudo gave Espanyol the early lead by converting from the penalty spot in the 19th minute after Oleguer Presas kicked Tamudo in the shin at the Camp Nou.

Ronaldinho began the comeback with a perfectly placed header in the 35th minute.

Eight minutes later, Ronaldinho's back-pass allowed striker Javier Saviola to put the hosts in the lead. Saviola added a second in the 58th, and defender Giovanni Van Bronckhorst scored the other in the 55th.

Espanyol hasn't won at the



HAIL THE ARCHITECT: AC Milan coach Carlo Ancelotti is lifted by his ecstatic players at the end of their match against AS Roma at Milan's San Siro Stadium on May 2.

Chelsea manager Claudio Ranieri

AFP, London Claudio Ranieri's English may still be a work in progress but he didn't have any difficulty understanding why the English newspapers recently took to calling him a dead man walking.

Even the Italian himself now appears resigned to being replaced as Chelsea's manager this summer with the club's billionaire owner Roman Abramovich determined to bring in FC Porto's Jose Mourinho.

But every condemned man has a right to a final appeal and Ranieri's comes at Stamford Bridge on Wednesday, when Chelsea will attempt to overturn a 3-1 first leg deficit in their Champions League semi-final against Monaco.

Having guided Chelsea to the last four of the Champions League and virtually secured second place in the Premiership, Ranieri can hardly be accused of failing to provide Roman Abramovich with a decent return on his investment in the west London club.

The Italian is also acutely aware that his reputation as a coach has been compromised by the tactical blunders which allowed a ten-man Monaco to emerge from the first leg with such a commanding lead.

In theory, the 2-0 win it would take to put Chelsea into the final should not be beyond them. In practice, as Ranieri readily admits, containing Monaco for an entire 90 minutes is a fiendishly difficult task.

"I think we are more out than in the final but we have a last chance and we believe anything could happen," he said.

Bayern defeated Cologne 2-1

ensuring that the one-time European Cup finalist were relegated from the Bundesliga.

Serie A At the San Siro a tense match was marred by trouble on the terraces with Milan goalkeeper Dida twice hit by missiles thrown from the end of the ground occupied by Roma fans.

The violence began soon after the break when Roma had appeals for a penalty turned down as Shevchenko used an arm to block a free-kick that was heading towards him.

Milan got off to the perfect start, taking the lead with less than two minutes on the clock.

Brazilian midfielder Kaka skipped past Olivier Dacourt down the right wing and crossed for Shevchenko, whose angled header skimmed off the head of Zebina on its way to the top corner.

Rome struggled to contain Milan's hard-working midfield and were spending all their time defend-

goals better than Bayern

- with just three games remaining. Bayern defeated Cologne 2-1, ensuring that the one-time European Cup finalist were relegated from the Bundesliga.

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Premiership

Once upon a time Leeds

Football

AFP, London Leeds United's spectacular collapse from the brink of the Champions League final to virtually bankrupt also-rans has reached its inevitable conclusion - relegation from the English Premiership.

Exactly three years to the day after they played Valencia in the last four of Europe's elite competition, Leeds were condemned to first division football next season by a 4-1 thrashing at Bolton on Sunday after having Mark Viduka sent off in the first half.

It was an undignified end to a 14-year spell in the top flight for a club that won the English title only 12 years ago and is underpinned by one of the biggest and most loyal followings in the country.

The supporters could not however save Leeds from the consequences of the financial profligacy that was linked to the club's success under former manager David O'Leary.

As well as putting together an outstanding squad of players, O'Leary and then-chairman Peter Ridsdale also oversaw a surge in spending that left the club with debts currently estimated at around 80 million pounds (140 million dollars).

Administration was only staved off at the last minute by a rescue bid mounted by a consortium of local businessmen at the start of this year.

But after selling off players of the calibre of Rio Ferdinand, Jonathan Woodgate and Harry Kewell, Leeds did not have the playing resources left to fend off relegation.

"If you are second bottom after 36 games, you don't deserve anything else," caretaker manager Eddie Gray admitted after Sunday's defeat.

"At the end of the day we just lacked a bit of quality," Gray added. "Three years is a long time in football, especially when you lose a lot of players and you have not got any money in the bank."

"If you took six players out of Arsenal or Man Utd teams... it makes a big difference to a foot-

ball club and we just could not cope with it. It's quite simple really."

While Leeds were contemplating an uncertain future, Liverpool and Aston Villa were treating their fans to the prospect of brighter days.

A convincing 2-0 win over Middlesbrough at Anfield kept Liverpool in pole position in the race for fourth place, the final qualifying place for the Champions League.

But Villa, now managed by former Leeds boss O'Leary, are only a point behind them after Juan Pablo Angel's 22nd goal of the season earned them a 1-0 win over Tottenham and stretched their unbeaten run to seven games.

Newcastle, who travel to Anfield on the final day of the season, are also still firmly in the hunt, three points behind Liverpool but with a game in hand.

A Danny Murphy penalty was quickly followed by an Emile Heskey strike as Liverpool killed off their match in the first ten minutes of the second half and spared their long-suffering supporters an anxious finale.

It was a thoroughly deserved victory for Gerard Houllier's side, who had been unfortunate not to go ahead in the first half, Harry Kewell's diving header having been chalked off by a marginal offside decision.

Leeds's fate was sealed by three goals in the ten minutes after the interval - a Youri Djorkaeff double and an agonising own goal by Ian Harte - after Viduka had given them a first-half lead from the penalty spot.

Kevin Nolan extended Bolton's winning margin near the end but the real damage was done by the petulance of their Australian striker, who was sent off for the second time in a month after receiving two yellow cards in the space of as many minutes.

Ranieri's last hurrah

UEFA CHAMPS LEAGUE

AFP, London

Claudio Ranieri's English may still be a work in progress but he didn't have any difficulty understanding why the English newspapers recently took to calling him a dead man walking.

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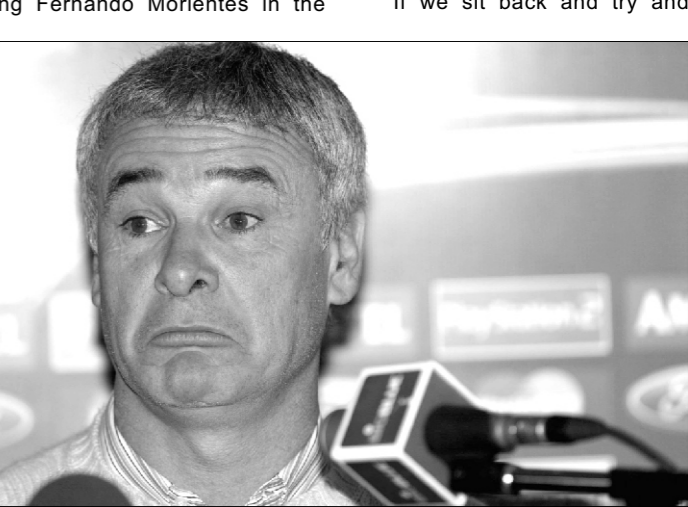
In theory, the 2-0 win it would take to put Chelsea into the final should not be beyond them. In practice, as Ranieri readily admits, containing Monaco for an entire 90 minutes is a fiendishly difficult task.

"I think we are more out than in the final but we have a last chance and we believe anything could happen," he said.

"It will be difficult because we believe Monaco are better away than at home - it was the reason I wanted to win the first leg.

"We have to stay calm, play our football and try and put them under pressure. It is very, very difficult but if we give our best performance, everything is possible."

Chelsea will have to do without the experience of Marcel Desailly, who is suspended after being caught on camera elbowing Fernando Morientes in the



Chelsea manager Claudio Ranieri at a press conference at the Chelsea training grounds in Harlington, London yesterday.

first leg, and his France teammate Claude Makelele, who is also suspended.

Ireland winger Damien Duff will also miss the match, and the rest of the season, after dislocating his shoulder for the second time in four months.

But Ranieri's side at least go into the match with their confidence restored after a 4-0 win over Southampton on Saturday, finally ending a five-match winless run that started immediately

after they beat Arsenal at Highbury to reach the last four.

Monaco in contrast looked lacklustre despite a 2-1 win at Nice in the French first division on Friday and Morientes has warned they will have to be on their guard on Wednesday.

The striker, on loan from Real Madrid, believes Monaco could come unstuck if they try and defend their lead and blow their chance of reaching the final for the first time in the club's history.

"If we sit back and try and

defend our lead we could be in for a nasty surprise," Morientes said.

"Chelsea have enough quality to score two or three times. But if we score, they will need four to go through and that is the attitude we have to take into this match.

"We are one step away from the final but we have got to keep our feet on the ground. If we can't cope with the pressure Chelsea will put on us we will not be going to any final."

Ronaldo ready for Chelsea?

Football

INTERNET SOURCE

Real Madrid superstar Ronaldo is ready to join Chelsea at the end of the season.

dismayed at the way Real's fans have turned on the team in recent weeks and would happily move to Stamford Bridge in the summer.

Chelsea owner Roman Abramovich has his chief executive Peter Kenyon holding talks with Juventus over David

Trezeguet. But the Frenchman is only regarded as a 'second tier' attacking target, with a big name also in the Russian's plans.

The Daily Mail says Ronaldo will accept a move to Stamford Bridge, but only if Abramovich asks him personally.