

Coverage scare in Pakistan too

REUTERS, Karachi

A dispute over television rights could affect coverage of Pakistan's forthcoming tri-series and Test matches against Zimbabwe and Sri Lanka, cricket officials fear.

Dubai-based television channels Ten sports and ARY, who both secured broadcasting rights for Pakistan cricket last year at a cost of 43 million dollars until 2008, are embroiled in a dispute.

Ten sports are taking ARY to court in a case which will be heard on Monday in Lahore High Court.

"We are worried because they have gone to court against each other and it is possible that one party will say 'Give rights to both parties or no-one' and that could affect the telecast of the series," Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Shahayyar Khan told Reuters on Sunday.

"It is a mutual conflict between them, not with us. They were partners when they took the rights but now have developed differences which do not involve us," Shahayyar said.

"We are supporting no-one. We have remained positively neutral with each side. But if they don't reach a compromise then we are worried that telecasts of series could be affected."

Zimbabwe are already touring Pakistan and Sri Lanka for the tri-series from next Saturday until October 16. Pakistan play Sri Lanka in two Tests from October 20 to November 1.

Last year, when New Zealand flew in to play five one-day internationals, a television dispute between a private channel and the state-owned Pakistan television led to the blackout of the first match in Lahore.

The matter was resolved after the government intervened.

Bandarban soccer

OUR CORRESPONDENT

Tiger Sporting Club got walkover against Alikadam Upazila Kirira Sangshtha in yesterday's Bandarban Football League at the local stadium yesterday.

Alikadam did not turn up after losing 6-0 in their previous match.

Naikhangchari Upazila Kirira Sangshtha will take on Thikadar Kalyan Samity in today's match.

Varsity football

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The other semifinalist will be decided after a play-off match between North South and IBAIS today at the same venue.

India look

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Series as favourites, having won all the six matches against their arch-rivals this year with the last win coming at Athens by 3-0.

"We are also a young side and once you enter the ground all past achievements are a thing of the past but we still are favourites," said Pakistan captain Waseem Ahmed.

Quetta, the capital of the south-western Baluchistan province is hosting an international sporting event for the first time since a one-day international cricket match was played here between Pakistan and Zimbabwe in 1996.

Extra security will be in place for the match due to terrorist activities in the city since last year.

More than 50 people were killed when gunmen opened fire at a Shiite mosque in July last year.

The third match of the Pakistan leg will be played at Peshawar on September 29 and the fourth in Lahore on October 1.

India will host four matches between October 4-10.



PHOTO: STAR

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) advisor Aziz Al Kaiser (L) shakes hands with the general manager of Pan Pacific Sonargaon Hotel Grant J Gaskin during a press conference yesterday after the luxury hotel became the official hospitality partner of Bangladesh cricket for a duration of 19 months. The Dhaka establishment of the renowned chain of hotels has also decided to host a 'Cricket Award Night' for the year 2004-2005 where it will give away prizes in five categories of cricketers excellence. The categories are, cricketer of the year, best batsman, best bowler, emerging player of the year, best all-rounder and cricket journalist of the year.

Serena stops Svetlana



AFP, Beijing

Top seed Serena Williams celebrated her 23rd birthday Sunday by beating Russian Svetlana Kuznetsova 4-6, 7-5, 6-4 in a tightly fought and bad tempered final at the inaugural 585,000 dollar China Open.

Williams, who smashed her racket berating a line call in the first set and saved a match point in the second, used a blistering serve and a powerful ground stroke to overpower the reigning US Open champion and second seed Kuznetsova.

The American's strength proved all too much, jumping out to a 5-2 lead in the final set as her Russian opponent appeared to run out of gas, slamming her racket onto the

court in disgust after one bad shot.

The win gave Williams a second WTA title in an injury hampered 2004, and earned her a cheque for 93,000 dollars.

Kuznetsova, ranked five in the world, saw her 14-match winning streak snapped, a run that included the Wismilak title in Bali last week and the US Open earlier this month.

During the match both players showed plenty of emotion as Kuznetsova's steady baseline game countered the big shots from the American, thrilling the nearly sold out crowd at the sparkling new Beijing Tennis Center.

In a fiercely fought first set both players held serve until the 10th game when Kuznetsova broke Williams on a questionable line call that left the world No. 10 American fuming as she smashed her racket to pieces while berating the line judge.

The second set saw both players break each other twice, with Williams needing six break points to win the crucial seventh game before holding her serve to level at 4-4.

The six time Grand Slam winner then saved a match point in the tenth game before coming back to break the Russian, with a frustrated Kuznetsova losing her temper and slamming her racket onto the court after bad shot as the American served out the set.

Williams advanced to the final by defeating three other Russian's including hard hitting Vera Zvonareva in Saturday's semi-final, while Kuznetsova beat reigning Wimbledon champion Maria Sharapova in the other semi-final match up.

Williams has now beaten Kuznetsova twice, after winning their first match up 7-5, 6-0 in Rome in May.

Zimbabwe crushed

AFP, Lahore

Zimbabwe's inexperienced team crashed to an innings and 38-run defeat against the Pakistan Cricket Board Patron's XI on the fourth and final day of the tour game at Gaddafi Stadium here on Sunday.

The defeat is another major blow for Zimbabwe who are in turmoil after a strike by 15 white players led by former captain Heath Streak who alleged racism in selection policies in April this year.

Zimbabwe has since been forced to field weakened teams against Sri Lanka and Australia, resulting in the African team losing two Tests and five one-day matches against the Sri Lankans and another 5-0 one-day routing by the Australians.

The defeats prompted the International Cricket Council to suspend Zimbabwe's Test status until the end of this year.

Resuming at 142-8, the tourists saw their last two batsmen Tawanda Mupariwa dismissed for 4 and captain Tatenda Taibu, batting at unusual number 11 spot, for 5.

Graeme Alexander Cremer remained out for 19.

Paceman Rao Iftikhar, in line for selection in the national team, took 4-3-23.

The Patron's XI had made 529-9 declared in their only innings with centuries from captain Misbahul Haq and Aamir Bashir.

Brendon Taylor hit a valiant 141 but failed to save Zimbabwe from following on after they were dismissed for 324 in their first innings.

The tourists, who drew a two-day match last week, now take on Pakistan at Multan on September 30 in the first match of a one-day tri-series also participated by Sri Lanka.

B'baria cricket

OUR CORRESPONDENT

Paikpara Cricket Club and Madda Cricket Club won their respective matches in the Danu Mia Cup cricket tournament at the local Eidgah ground yesterday.

In the first match, Paikpara defeated Three Star Club by 20 runs.

Winning the toss, Paikpara batted first and collected 90 runs after being all out in 28.3 overs. Rajib topscored with 43.

In reply, Three Star managed 70 all out in 27.1 overs.

Rajib was adjudged man-of-the-match.

In the other match of the day, Madda beat Kandipara Cricket Club by 11 runs.

Madda made 110 for nine in stipulate 30 overs.

Rajon scored 68.

In reply, Kandipara collected 99 after being all out in 28.2 overs.

Rajon was declared man-of-the-match.

Barrichello makes history

REUTERS, Shanghai

Ferrari's Rubens Barrichello has made history as the first winner of a Formula One Grand Prix in China.

While the Brazilian celebrated before a sellout 160,000-strong crowd on Sunday, his world champion team mate Michael Schumacher was lapped in the first race he has finished without scoring a point for five years.

Britain's Jenson Button was second for BAR, 1.035 seconds behind Barrichello, with McLaren's Kimi Raikkonen third after challenging strongly in the first half.

It was Barrichello's second win in a row, and ninth of a career spent largely in Schumacher's shadow, and gave China a winner in red as the gleaming \$325 million (180 million pound) Shanghai circuit made its grand prix debut.

"I had a very good start and I was amazed by the grip on the first lap...I was feeling good the whole way through," said the Brazilian, second place in the championship now assured behind Schumacher who won his seventh title last month.

Schumacher has 136 points, Barrichello 108 and Button 79.

Spain's Fernando Alonso was fourth for Renault, ahead of Colombian Juan Pablo Montoya for Williams and Japan's Takuma Sato in sixth for BAR after starting 18th.

Sauber filled the final two scoring positions with Italian Giancarlo Fisichella seventh and Brazilian Felipe Massa eighth.

"It was really nice. Towards the end, because I had an eight-second gap, I didn't push that much," said Barrichello, who drenched the elegantly suited Ferrari president Luca di Montezemolo with champagne on the podium before pouring the remainder over his own head.

His race from pole position to chequered flag stood out in marked contrast to Schumacher's unhappy afternoon.

The German finished 12th and was lapped for the first time since the Hungarian Grand Prix of August 2003.

"Certainly it was not my weekend," he said.

"But I have had so many good weekends this year and we have still won the grand prix with Rubens and those are the important factors."

The last time Schumacher, who has retired from just one race this year, had finished a grand prix without scoring points was Australia in 1999 when he came eighth and the scoring system was different.

After spinning out in the worst qualifying performance of his career on Saturday and starting from the pitlane, the winner of 12 of the season's first 13 races banged wheels with Jaguar's Christian Klien on lap 12.

A spin three laps later pushed him back from 11th to 12th place and his frustration was compounded by a puncture 20 laps from the end.

Button ran a two-stop strategy, compared to the other front-runners three, which made his third place in

qualifying even more impressive.

His points, and Sato's fine effort, enabled BAR to pull nine points clear of Renault in the battle for overall second place with two races remaining.

Ferrari, who have already won the constructors' championship, have 244 points to BAR's 105. Renault have 96.

"It was a very tough race," said Button, celebrating his ninth podium of the year and fourth second place, who lost two places at the start as Alonso and Massa powered past.

"When you know the other guys are doing a three-stop and you're doing a two it does make it very difficult mentally because you've got so much weight on board."

Canadian Jacques Villeneuve, racing for the first time in almost a year as a replacement for Italian Jarno Trulli at Renault, was 11th.

Germany's Ralf Schumacher, also returning after a six-race absence following his crash at Indianapolis in June, retired.

Ralf picked up a puncture and feared damage after colliding with David Coulthard's McLaren, but the pitted rival before team mate Juan Pablo Montoya was due to come in.

"Since we didn't know whether his car had been damaged, we refuelled and changed tyres on Juan's car first," said BMW motorsport director Mario Theissen.

"When it became clear that Ralf had only a puncture, it was too late to send him out again."



PHOTO: AFP Brazilian Formula One driver Rubens Barrichello of Ferrari gestures during the presentation ceremony after he won the inaugural Chinese Grand Prix at the Shanghai International Circuit yesterday.

US-Spain Davis Cup final



REUTERS/AFP, London

The United States swept past Belarus on Saturday to clinch their first Davis Cup final appearance since 1997.

Twins Bob and Mike Bryan defeated Belarus's Max Mirnyi and Vladimir Voltchkov to give the Americans an unassailable 3-0 lead in the semi-final tie in Charleston.

The Bryans, who are unbeaten in Davis Cup matches, won 6-1, 6-3, 7-5 to finish off Belarus after world number two Andy Roddick and Mardy Fish had won their singles matches on Friday.

The Americans will face 2000 champions Spain taking an unbeatable 3-1 lead over France.

Spain's Rafael Nadal beat Arnaud Clement 6-4, 6-1, 6-2 in two hours, 12 minutes to book a second consecutive spot in the final which will host against the United States from December 3-5.

Paul-Henri Mathieu had given France the first point on Friday when he beat veteran Carlos Moya 6-3, 3-6, 2-6, 6-3, 6-3, with Juan Carlos Ferrero drawing the sides level by

beating Fabrice Santoro 6-3, 6-1, 1-6, 6-3.

Tommy Robredo and Nadal gave Spain the upper hand with their doubles victory to put them 2-1 ahead on Saturday when they beat Michael Llodra and Clement 7-6 (7/4), 4-6, 6-2, 2-6, 6-3.

It will be the fifth Davis Cup final for Spain who were runners-up in 1965, 1967 and 2003, and winners in 2000.

Elsewhere, Australia preserved their World Group status when Wayne Arthurs and Todd Woodbridge recorded a 7-6, 7-6, 6-3 victory over Moroccans Mounir El Aarej and Mehdi Tahiri for an unbeatable 3-0 lead in their playoff tie in Perth.

Croatia and 2002 champions Russia also secured their places among the 16 nations who will battle it out for the Davis Cup next season after taking winning 3-0 leads.

Romania and Germany will carry 2-1 advantages into the final day of their ties, while Britain and Austria were locked at 1-1 after bad light forced an early halt to their doubles encounter.

In Moscow, a rejuvenated Marat Safin vowed to help Russia win back the Davis Cup next year after teaming up with Mikhail Youzhny for a 6-2, 6-1, 6-4 win

over Thai twins Sanchai and Sonchat Ratiwatana.

Humbled by Belarus in the first round this year, Safin believes Russia can get back to the top.

"We have a new, young team, which is capable of doing great things in the near future," said the former US Open champion.

"(Igor) Andreev is turning into a top-class player, Youzhny is still young and capable of repeating his Davis Cup heroics and myself - we have a core of a pretty good team here."

In Asuncion, Jiri Novak and Radek Stepanek gave the Czech Republic a winning 3-0 lead over Paraguay while Fernando Gonzalez and Nicolas Massu earned Chile an unbeatable 3-0 cushion over Japan in Santiago.

Preparation

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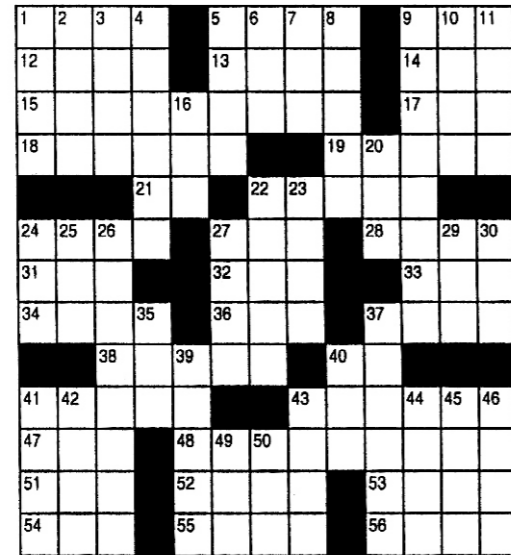
departments.

"In every other team, it is usually one player who is out of form at a given time. But for us the main problem is that we are all out of form at the same time. I am not saying that we will all regain our touch before the series but if two or three can start getting the runs, we can make a comeback," said the top batsman of the country.

The squad will have its first net session at the Bangabandhu National Stadium today.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid and clues for Across, Down, and Cryptiquip.



Cryptiquip crossword puzzle solution and clues.



PHOTO: STAR JUST FOLLOW ME: Spanish referees' instructor Fernando Tesaco briefs the local participants of the FUTURO-III on the first day of the course at the Army Stadium in Banani yesterday.

Let's start from here: Lara

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Lara praised the efforts of tail-enders after the unlikely duo had guided them to the two-wicket.

The stand of 71 was a ninth record for the West Indies in one-day cricket surpassing the 63 set by Joel Garner and Malcolm Marshall in Sydney in 1985.

"It was a tremendous effort. It is great to see guys believe in themselves - I'm not sure if Bradshaw has even had a net," said Lara.

"They are two guys from Barbados who have played together in many matches so I expected them to cope out there."

Bradshaw said his performance was the best of his career.

"It is the biggest moment of my career and I was overcome with emotion at the end. I knew what it meant to the team and people and I'm just happy to be a part of it."

And Lara hopes the win will lift the spirits of the people in the Caribbean who have been affected by the recent hurricanes.

"We have been lying in bed in England covered by a duvet and people in the Caribbean have been fending for themselves and their families. A lot of us have family and friends in the Grenada and Jamaica and we all feel very sad for people out there."

SCOREBOARD

Final scoreboard of the ICC Champions Trophy final between England and the West Indies at the Oval in London on Saturday:

ENGLAND: 217 all out in 49.4 overs (Trescothick 104, Giles 31, Strauss 18; W Hinds 3-24, Bradshaw 2-54)

WEST INDIES: Gayle c and b Harmison 23; W Hinds c Solanki b Harmison 3; Sarwan c Strauss b Flintoff 5; Lara c Jones b Flintoff 14; C/paul c Vaughan b C'wood 47; Bravo c Jones b Flintoff 0; R Hinds c Jones b Trescothick 8; Powell c Trescothick b C'wood 14; Browne not out 34; Bradshaw not out 35; Extras: (lb-11, nb-5, w-19) 35

Total: (For 8 wkts in 48.5 overs) 218

Fall of wickets: 1-19, 2-35, 3-49, 4-72, 5-80, 6-114, 7-135, 8-147

Did not bat: Collimore

Bowler O M R W

Gough 10 1 58 0; Harmison 10 1 34 2; Flintoff 10 0 38 3; Wharf 9.5 0 38 0; Trescothick 3 0 17 1; Collingwood 6 0 22 2

Result: West Indies beat England by 2 wickets to win the ICC Champions Trophy.

Man-of-the-match: Ian Bradshaw. Man-of-the-tournament: Ramnaresh Sarwan.

Federer still hungry



AFP, Bangkok

World No. 1 Roger Federer may appear to have it all right now in tennis - but that's not quite enough for the gold-standard champion of this season.

"I have goals left for 2004," the 23-year-old Swiss said Sunday during a presentation for Monday's start of the 550,000-dollar Thailand Open.

"This is my first (ATP) event in Asia and now that I'm out here, it puts pressure on me to do well," said Federer, who has won three of the four Grand Slams titles for this season.

"I don't have so many chances to show myself in Asia," added the holder of nine trophies so far this season with another handful of events to go before the eight-man Masters Cup season closer in mid-

November. Federer has been in the bustling Thai capital since Thursday evening following a whirlwind media day in Hong Kong.

He will be putting an impressive 64-6 record on the line beginning Tuesday night when he faces Frenchman Nicolas Thomann, back on court after injury.

BCB, Cordy

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release added. Cordy first joined the Board's age-group programme and worked with the U-19 team before being promoted as the national team's fitness advisor.

However, sources said that Cordy, originally a trainer for popular Australian game 'footy', has opted to take up a lucrative offer from a footy club back home.