



Action from the Green Delta Premier Division Hockey League encounter between Mariner Youngs and Usha Kriha Chakra at the Maulana Bhasani National Stadium yesterday.

## Harbhajan doosra reported

Cricket

AFP, London

India off-spinner Harbhajan Singh has been reported for a suspected illegal bowling action after concerns were raised over his 'doosra' delivery, the International Cricket Council (ICC) announced here Monday.

Among those making the report was former England batsman Chris Broad, now a match referee, who earlier this year raised similar concerns about Sri Lanka's former Test wicket world record-holder Muttiah Muralitharan's 'doosra', a delivery which turns away from a right-handed batsman -- the opposite of an orthodox off-spin ball.

In a statement, the ICC said the report had been made following the conclusion of Monday's second Test between Bangladesh and India in Chittagong where Harbhajan took two for 19 in the hosts' second innings during an innings and 83 run-win that saw India clinch the series 2-0.

As well as Broad, the ICC said the report was made by on-field umpires, Aleem Dar (Pakistan) and Mark Benson (England) and the TV umpire, Mahbubur Rahman (Bangladesh).

ICC chief executive Malcolm Speed said: "Having closely reviewed the action Harbhajan

Singh employs during this delivery, the match officials decided to report the bowler to the ICC and, in line with the protocol, notified the India team management of this course of action."

He added: "Harbhajan Singh will now work with an expert team over the next six weeks to address these



HARBHAJAN SINGH

concerns. He can continue to play international cricket and cannot be reported again during this period."

Although the ICC ultimately has the power to ban from international cricket any bowler it considers has an illegal action, its rules for dealing with such cases are currently in limbo.

A committee made up of former Test players, chaired by former India captain Sunil Gavaskar, has recom-

mended a new rule allowing bowlers to straighten their arms by up to 15 degrees.

The new rule varies the amount of straightening allowed depending on the type of bowling. Under existing regulations spinners are restricted to five degrees, medium pacers to seven and a half degrees and fast bowlers to 10 degrees.

Under the proposed ruling, which will be put to the ICC chief executives' committee of the 10 Test-playing countries at its next meeting, in Melbourne, Australia, in February, almost all modern bowling actions would be classified as legal.

Tests showed that Muralitharan's elbow straightened by 14 degrees, nine degrees more than the current limit for spinners, when bowling the doosra.

Extensive research into the biomechanics of bowling over the past four years has revealed that almost every bowler straightens his arm before letting go of the ball.

This is not the first time Harbhajan, nicknamed the 'Turbanator' on account of the head covering he wears as a Sikh, has had his action come under official scrutiny.

Back in 1998 he was forced to undergo remedial work in London where former England off-spinner Fred Titmus helped him remodel his action.

## Zoysa injured in rained off tour opener

Reuters, Wellington

Fast bowler Nuwan Zoysa is a doubt for Sri Lanka's first one-day international with New Zealand this week-end after dislocating a finger on Tuesday.

The Sri Lankan left-arm fast bowler hurt the finger attempting a return catch off Ewen Thompson against Central Districts at New Plymouth.

A team doctor was able to put the digit back in place but Zoysa had also suffered a deep cut that needed stitching, casting doubts over his chances of playing the Kiwis on Sunday.

Tuesday's warm-up match, Sri Lanka's first on a tour that features five one-day internationals and three Tests, was later abandoned after heavy rain.

The home side batted first, making 220 for seven from 49 overs, and Sri Lanka were 20-2 in reply when the match was called off because of the persistent showers.

## Lee on Aussie A squad for 1-dayers

AFP, Sydney

Brett Lee, who has endured a frustrating run as Test cricket 12th man, has been picked for Australia A in one-day matches against Pakistan and West Indies next month.

The fast bowler was Tuesday included in a 13-man Australia A squad for one-day matches against the West Indies at Hobart's Bellerive Oval (January 8 and 9), another against Pakistan at the Adelaide Oval (January 12) and then the country's first international Twenty20 match, against Pakistan in Adelaide on January 13.

## Nayeem keeps

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Yamin, who dodged past Usha defender Yamin Hossain and sounded the board with a superb reverse hit from the top of the box.

Mariner pressed hard for an equaliser but failed to convert any of their six penalty corners inside a four-minute blitz.

Usha were relieved one minute from time when captain Moududur Rahman Shuva tapped home after a concerted move by Mazharul Islam and Talib.

## Strauss leads

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getting in the act with a square drive for four as 11 came off the penultimate over.

Strauss batted for three hours, faced 134 balls and hit 12 fours and a six.

He made 126 in the first innings, meaning he had scored centuries on both his home and away debuts.

England, who whitewashed New Zealand 3-0 and West Indies 4-0 at home before coming to South Africa, won seven consecutive Tests between 1928 and 1929 under Percy Chapman.

"You don't go out to make history, it just comes along," England coach Duncan Fletcher said.

There were more landmarks for Strauss. He became the third player in Test history after Australians Johnnie Taylor and Jack Gregory to be on the winning side in his first eight Tests.

West Indian Eldine Baptiste, Australia's Brett Lee and Thilan Samaraweera of Sri Lanka won their first 10 Tests, and the record of 15 is held by Australian Adam Gilchrist.

England's record sequence started when they beat New Zealand in all three home Tests earlier this year and followed up by a 4-0 clean sweep at home against the West Indies.

## SCOREBOARD

Final scoreboard on the fifth day of the first Test between South Africa and England at St George's Park in Port Elizabeth on Tuesday:

**SOUTH AFRICA: First innings** 337 (Dippenaar 110, Rudolph 93, Pollock 31, Hoggard 3-56, Flintoff 3-72, Giles 2-69)

**ENGLAND: First innings** 425 (Strauss 126, Butcher 79, Trescothick 47, Flintoff 35, extras 57; Ntini 3-75, Pollock 2-61, Hall 2-95, Steyn 2-117)

**SOUTH AFRICA: Second innings** 229 (Kallis 61, Smith 55, Rudolph 28; S Jones 4-39, Giles 2-39, Flintoff 2-47)

**ENGLAND: Second innings** (over-night 93-3)

Trescothick c Tsolekile b Pollock 0

Strauss not out 94

Butcher c Smith b Ntini 10

Vaughan b Steyn 15

Thorpe not out 31

Extras: (lb-3, nb-2) 5

Total: (For 3 wickets in 40.4 overs) 145

Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-11, 3-50

Bowler O M R W

Pollock 11 2 36 1

Ntini 6.4 1 24 1

Hall 9 1 14 0

Steyn 6 1 29 1

Smith 8 0 39 0

Result: England won by seven wickets and take 1-0 lead in the 5-Test series.

Man-of-the-match: Andrew Strauss.

Second Test: Dec 26-30, Durban.

## FIFA world rankings

## Brazil's hattrick

Football

AFP, Zurich

World champions Brazil have topped FIFA's world rankings for the third year running, football's world ruling body announced Monday.

France, the World Cup winners in 1998, remain in second place ahead of another of South America's giants, Argentina. All three teams retained the places they held at this time last year.

Teams having moved up the table since December 2003 include the Czech Republic, who dislodged Spain to take fourth place while the Spaniards drop to fifth, China, Greece and Japan.

Mexico moved up one place to seventh with England going in the other direction down to eighth.

The biggest achiever in the current top ten is Portugal, who moved up eight places to ninth thanks mainly to their performances during their hosting of the 2004 European Championships.

China meanwhile moved up a massive 32 places to 54th, in the process winning the Best Mover award after adding 101 points to their 2003 total.

However because they failed to qualify for the 2006 World Cup finals in Germany, the Asians dropped five places since November this year.

Japan moved up 12 places to 17th while Greece, who stunned a host of more prestigious teams by winning the European Championships, also moved up 12 places to sit in 18th place.

Three other teams have also climbed 30 or more places since December 2003 - Ivory Coast (40th, up 30), Uzbekistan (47th, up 34), and St. Vincent and the Grenadines (137th, up 32).

Another nine teams have gained more than 20 ranks on last year,

including Australia (58th, up 24), Libya (61st, up 22), Panama (100th, up 25) and Oceania Nations Cup surprise packages Solomon Islands (130th, up 26).

With 1019 games having already been played this year and close to 30 matches still outstanding (Tiger Cup, Gulf Cup, CECAFA Cup, 2004 may well set a new all-time record (currently 1044 matches in 2000).

The next FIFA World Rankings will be published on 19 January 2005.

## YEAR END RANKINGS

Team	Pts	Rank Dec '03	Change since Dec '03
1 Brazil	843	1	0
2 France	792	2	0
3 Argentina	785	5	2
4 Czech Rep	777	6	2
5 Spain	765	3	-2
6 Netherlands	758	4	-2
7 Mexico	753	7	0
8 England	752	8	0
9 Portugal	747	17	8
10 Italy	738	10	0
11 USA	726	11	0
12 Rep of Ire	716	14	2
13 Sweden	715	19	6
14 Denmark	711	13	-1
15 Turkey	711	8	-6
16 Uruguay	708	21	5
17 Japan	707	29	12
18 Greece	706	30	12
19 Germany	705	12	-7
20 Iran	697	28	8

## 'No Gerrard for Morientes'

Football

AFP, Liverpool

Liverpool have told Real Madrid to forget about using Fernando Morientes to lure Steven Gerrard to the Bernabeu next summer.

Liverpool made their first official move for Rafael Benitez's top transfer target on Monday when they lodged a 3.5 million pound bid with the Spanish giants.

Madrid are holding out for 7.5 million pounds but have hinted they will lower the price if an agreement can be reached over signing Gerrard next June.

Madrid president Florentino Perez is worried Chelsea or Arsenal might beat him in the race for the England midfielder if he becomes available in the summer.

But Anfield officials have made it clear to Madrid that Gerrard will not feature in negotiations to bring

Morientes to Merseyside in the January transfer window.

Benitez wants to add at least two



FERNANDO MIENTES

players to his squad in January but has only 5.5 million pounds to spend.

The nine-time European Cup winners are in no hurry to sell a player with 18 months left on his contract.

But Morientes has pleaded with Madrid to let him go.

He was loaned out to Champions League finalists Monaco last season and had been expected to join Liverpool last summer when Michael Owen went to the Bernabeu but that move fell through when then coach Jose Antonio Camacho refused to let him go.

However, he is still behind Ronaldo, Raul and Owen in the pecking order.

"Madrid know they must do something about me. They must sort out the situation by being sensible," he said.

"I like Liverpool and I am pleased that a club of their stature wants me. I have made it clear to Madrid what my position is and they understand that they have to resolve the situation."

"I have been patient, but I have not played, and I need to be playing. If the chance comes in January I want to take it."

## Low performing HP

FROM PAGE 13

Lankan bowlers with 3-21 from ten overs.

Touring coach Jeremy Jayaratne, happy at the performance of the second batch of the Academy, said after the match that his boys were never threatened by the Bangladesh attack in the two matches.

"I found their bowling pretty ordinary but they have a few good batsmen. Still, they need to brush on their technique," said Jayaratne adding that they did their homework on the players ahead of the tour with information available on different websites.

**SCOREBOARD**  
Scoreboard of the limited-overs match between BCB HP Squad and Sri Lanka Cricket Academy at the BNS.

**HP SQUAD**  
Rashedul b Wellegedera 5

Shamsur b Abydeera 36

Nafees c Gihan b Perera 22

Al Shahrari c Nawala b Abydeera 17

Tushar run out 26

Waseel c Indika b Gunathilaka 16

Riyadh b Wellegedera 26

Dhiman lbw b Perera 35

Sakib not out 0

Razzak b Wellegedera 0

Russell run out 6

Extras: (b2, lb5, nb8, w9) 24

Total (all out in 50 overs) 213

Fall of wickets: 1-19, 2-51, 3-77, 4-105, 5-128, 6-150, 7-153, 8-194, 9-104, 10-213.

**BOWLER** O M R W

Wellegedera 10 2 21 3

V Pathirana 10 1 36 0

Perera 6 0 46 2

Nawala 10 1 42 0

Abydeera 9 2 36 2

Gunathilaka 4 0 19 1

Wijaysingha 1 0 6 0

SLACADEMY

Muttalipth Dhiman b Razzak 27

Sandarwan lbw b Waseel 62

Vithana lbw b Waseel 6

Nawala run out 8

Perera c Shamsur b Waseel 0

Gihan not out 43

Wijaysingha b Sakib 16

Indika not out 37

Extras: (b1, lb3, nb3, w8) 15

Total: (six wickets in 46.2 overs) 214

Fall of wickets: 1-52, 2-75, 3-106, 4-110, 5-116, 6-151.

**BOWLER** O M R W

Tareq 8.2 2 37 0

Russell 6 1 43 0

Razzak 9 1 41 1

Waseel 10 0 34 3

Sakib 10 1 34 1

Riyadh 3 0 21 0

Result: Sri Lanka Academy won by four wickets.

## Roberto Carlos wants a transfer

AFP, Madrid

Brazil World Cup star Roberto Carlos, continually thwarted in his pay demands, has demanded a transfer after Real Madrid dropped him for last weekend's 3-2 league win over Racing Santander.

The 31-year-old has told Real sporting director Emilio Butragueno he wants to move in the January transfer window, newspapers reported Tuesday.

The world's most famous left back joined Real in 1996 and his contract runs to 2007 but he has demanded a move several times in the past over Real's refusal to put him on the same wages as top-earners Raul, Luis Figo, Zinedine Zidane, Ronaldo and David Beckham who all pick up 6 million euros free of tax a year.

## Glazer ponders new offer for MU

AFP, London

The board of Manchester United said Monday said that US sports tycoon Malcolm Glazer was considering "potential revisions" to his previous unofficial takeover offer for the English football giants.

"The board of Manchester United confirms that at a shareholder meeting Glazer has indicated, on a very preliminary basis, potential revisions to its previous proposal," a statement to the London Stock Exchange said.

"The board does not intend to open discussions on this matter unless it receives a definitive proposal from Glazer," the statement added.

Manchester United ended talks with Glazer in October over his possible takeover, saying his bid risked leaving the club mired in debt.

Glazer and his family have built up a stake of 28.1 percent in Manchester United, the world's richest football club, but have not yet put a formal offer on the table.

The tycoon caused a stir recently by ousting three members of the board at United's annual general meeting, causing bankers JP Morgan to pull out of plans to financially support Glazer's bid.

The owner of NFL franchise Tampa Bay Buccaneers could however now be ready to raise the funds to complete a hostile 800 million-pound bid, despite deep opposition from the club's fans.

## Tigers begin

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He also said that the playing eleven would be announced after the final training session today.

When Bangladesh had a serious training, the Indians preferred to relax at the team's hotel.

Indian coach John Wright opted to give his star players some rest and instead put the six new replacements through their paces in a two-hour drill. Opener Virender Sehwag understandably attended training after two disappointing innings in Dhaka and Chittagong.

Meanwhile, six Indian cricketers arrived in Dhaka on Monday night and joined the team in Chittagong. They are Yuvraj Singh, Ajit Agarkar, Dinesh Mongia, Sridharan Sriram, Mahendra Singh Dhoni and Joginder Singh.

They will replace Anil Kumble, VVS Laxman, Gautam Gambhir, Dinesh Karthik, Gagandeep Singh and Shih Shankar Pal.

Laxman and Gagandeep left Dhaka yesterday while the other four Indian cricketers departed on Monday.

## Vaughan hails record win

Cricket

AFP, Port Elizabeth

England captain Michael Vaughan hailed a "very special" achievement after his team completed a record eighth successive Test win by beating South Africa by seven wickets on the fifth day of the first Test at St George's Park Tuesday.

While England celebrated, South African captain Graeme Smith made a thinly veiled criticism of his country's administrators, who have sacked two coaches, two convenors of selectors and one captain in the past two-and-a-half years.

"We need to stabilise in South African cricket," said Smith. "We have to get on a path, and work towards a goal. As a captain you start something and then six months later you have to start again, with a new coach, new convenor and new players. The United Cricket Board have to stabilise the key positions. The more you jump around the worse things become."

Smith vowed that South Africa intended to come back strongly in the five-Test series.

"When we were in England last year we started well and England came back, so we've had it happen to us. We have to regroup quickly. We have to improve on a few areas of our game, especially under pressure."

Andrew Strauss was England's star, taking the man-of-the-match award with innings of 126 and 94 not out. He made 43 of the 52 runs scored by England Tuesday as they took only 36 minutes and 9.4 overs to complete their victory.

"His attitude is spot on," said Vaughan. "He doesn't get too high when he's doing well or too low when he's not performing. His technique is pretty good and mentally he's got the ability to be a star for England for many years to come."

Vaughan said the whole team had shown character in coming back from a defeat by