

Gaibandha cricket

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Munshipara Krira Sangstha beat Gaibandha Abahani Krira Chakra by 27 runs in the First Division Cricket League at the local stadium here yesterday.

Munshipara scored 171 after deciding to bat. In reply, Abahani were bundled out for 144.

Oram sidelined

AFP, Hamilton

New Zealand cricket allrounder Jacob Oram has been sidelined for the immediate future after a scan revealed a bone injury in his back, New Zealand Cricket said Wednesday.

Oram, 26, had the bone scan in Hamilton on Tuesday. He has been sidelined since January 9 with persistent back pain, feared to be a stress fracture.

New Zealand Cricket (NZC) said in a statement further tests would be needed for a conclusive diagnosis.

"The extent of the injury is yet to be determined but will become clearer in a few days after he has a CT (computed tomography) scan," NZC said.

If the injury is confirmed to be a stress fracture, Oram will almost certainly miss the tour by Australia in February and March, and two tests against Sri Lanka in April.

Oram is a key member of the New Zealand side with 35 Test wickets and a batting average of 40.8. His loss would be a heavy blow for the home side in the series against the world champions Australia.

The news comes two days after New Zealand left arm spinner Daniel Vettori left the field with back pain in the second charity one-day match against a World XI. Vettori was ruled out of Wednesday's final match against the World XI in Hamilton and is expected to have tests this week if the pain does not subside.

Vettori suffered stress fractures to his back during a series against Australia in 2000 and later the same year in Zimbabwe.

GP Pacer Hunt

FROM PAGE 13

A total of 25 pacemen took part in the final.

"We will now submit a final report to the Bangladesh Cricket Board. Eight bowlers impressed us today but we will submit our observation on all the 25 who participated," said coach Sarwar Imran, who conducted the programme in eleven zones across the country.

The former national coach also informed that they will conduct a similar programme next year to unearth more quick bowlers.

BCCI in complete

FROM PAGE 13

The sharp divisions within the BCCI have also delayed finalising Pakistan's schedule a month before they land here.

A two-member PCB team, including security expert Sohail Khan, is currently in India inspecting proposed venues. One Test venue suggested by India is Ahmedabad, the main city in the western state of Gujarat where at least 2,000 people, mostly Muslims, were killed in communal riots in 2002.

It remains to be seen if Pakistan agree to play in Ahmedabad.

If that is not enough, various cities are battling each other for the right to host the tourists and enrich their coffers.

The final itinerary is unlikely to be known before the first week of February, giving the chosen venues less than a month to make arrangements.

"All in good time," a BCCI official told AFP. "Deadlines don't worry us. As long as we make good money everything will be fine."

Captain's best moment

FROM PAGE 13

At crucial moments. Although there was never much chance of a rain-hit match producing an outright result, South Africa had a tilt at pulling off a miracle win, with AB de Villiers and Jacques Kallis hitting centuries to enable Smith to declare.

De Villiers, 20, was named man-of-the-match after following up his first innings of 92 with a polished 109.

Kallis, South Africa's top scorer in the series, finished unbeaten on 136 before Smith declared on 296 for six. Kallis finished the series with 625 runs at an average of 69.44, just behind England's Strauss, who was named man of the series after making 656 runs at an average of 72.88.

South Africa added 237 runs in 54 overs Tuesday to back up Smith's claim that his team would "give it our all" in an effort to force a result in a match affected by rain.

South African hopes flickered when Makhaya Ntini dismissed Andrew Strauss without scoring in the second over. Two more wickets fell by the end of the 15th over, with Shaun Pollock trapping Robert Key leg before wicket and Ntini bowling Marcus Trescothick.

Vaughan and Graham Thorpe opted for extreme caution, scoring just five runs in their first ten overs together as Smith tried a variety of bowlers with some enthusiastic appeals and a few near misses. The pair stayed together until the 32nd over when Thorpe was caught at third slip off Ntini for eight, made off 56 balls. Ntini finished with three for 12 off 11 overs.

Andrew Flintoff gave a bat-pad chance to Jacques Rudolph at short leg off Nel before he had scored but stayed until the end with Vaughan, scoring an unbeaten 14. Vaughan faced 86 balls for his 26 not out.

SCOREBOARD

Final scoreboard on the fifth and final day of the fifth and final Test between South Africa and England at Centurion Park on Tuesday.

SOUTH AFRICA: First innings 247 (De Villiers 92, Rudolph 33, Smith 25, Boucher 25; Flintoff 4-44, S Jones 4-



A proud England captain Michael Vaughan shows off the Test series trophy after the fifth and final Test against South Africa at the Super Sports Park in Centurion on January 25.

Table with cricket statistics including England's first and second innings, South Africa's first and second innings, and a result summary.

US Open to have electronic eyes

AFP, Melbourne

The US Open is set to become the first Grand Slam tennis tournament to introduce computer-generated video replays to help umpires rule on contentious line-calls, officials said Wednesday.

A United States Tennis Association (USTA) spokesman said the body was "very bullish" about providing umpires with electronic replay aids at the 2005 championships following the uproar at last year's tournament.

The controversial quarterfinal between Jennifer Capriati and Serena Williams was marred by a series of rulings against Williams that replays later showed were wrong.

Capriati advanced but US Open officials removed umpire Mariana Alves before later apologising to Williams for the blunders. Now USTA officials are anxious to avoid any chance of a repeat by making use of advances in technology.

"We are bullish in our desire to have some form of electronic line-calling technology in use at the 2005 US Open," USTA spokesman Chris Widmaier told AFP.

"The Jennifer Capriati-Serena Williams match really brought the desire to provide technological aids to officials to the forefront." Widmaier said a special task force had been formed to look at the various options, emphasising that no decisions had been taken yet.

Various technologies were available, with the 3D 'Hawkeye' and 'Auto-Ref' systems already used with success by television broadcasters among the options.

"We are taking a look at all the existing systems," said Widmaier. "There are two main issues we need to determine -- which will be the most accurate and the most consistent?"

Fed Cup Football

FROM PAGE 13

But the organisers have decided to break the trend by allowing Brothers Union, who crashed out of the qualifiers last season, to play in the final round.

"We have decided to honour Brothers' record in the last season. They won both the Premier and National League titles, so it would be ideal to see the top teams in the final phase," said Azfaruddin Sohrab, a member of the tournament committee.

Brothers will now join Mukti-jodha Sangsad, Mohammedan Sporting Club, Abahani Krira Chakra and Sheikh Russel Krira Chakra -- the other automatic qualifiers as semifinalists.

The decision will see the number of qualifiers cut down to three.

3RD BD-ZIM ODI

FROM PAGE 13

Matsikenyeri 2 0 12 0 Uteya 10 0 33 2 Chigumbura 2 0 15 1 Taylor 5 0 23 2

ZIMBABWE

Matsikenyeri st Mashud b Manzarul 16 Rogers lbw b Mahmud 51 Ebrahim c Aftab b Nazmul 1 Masakadza c Enamul b Manzarul 9 Taylor c Iqbal b Mahmud 23

Taibu c Manzarul b Mashrafee 46 Chigumbura lbw b Manzarul 27 Panyangara b Nazmul 8 Uteya st Mashud b Manzarul 1 Hondo b Mashrafee 10

Mpofu not out 3 Extras: (lb-3, w-5, nb-1) 9 Total: (All out in 47.5 overs) 204

Fall of wickets: 1-45, 2-50, 3-76, 4-93, 5-133, 6-177, 7-181, 8-185, 9-198

Bowler O M R W Mashrafee 8.5 0 38 2 Nazmul 9 0 34 2 Manzarul 10 0 34 4 Mahmud 10 0 42 2 Enamul 10 1 53 0

Result: Bangladesh won by 40 runs. Man-of-the-match: Manzarul Islam. Fourth ODI: Jan 29, Dhaka (D/N).

Serena's point to prove

Australian Open

AFP, Melbourne

Serena Williams insists she has nothing to prove to anyone. But defeating Maria Sharapova in their Australian Open semifinal Thursday should silence those who say she is in decline.

Williams has a losing record against 17-year-old Sharapova, with painful defeats coming last season in the Wimbledon final and the WTA Tour Championships in Los Angeles.

The controversial quarterfinal between Jennifer Capriati and Serena Williams was marred by a series of rulings against Williams that replays later showed were wrong.

Capriati advanced but US Open officials removed umpire Mariana Alves before later apologising to Williams for the blunders. Now USTA officials are anxious to avoid any chance of a repeat by making use of advances in technology.

"We are bullish in our desire to have some form of electronic line-calling technology in use at the 2005 US Open," USTA spokesman Chris Widmaier told AFP.

"The Jennifer Capriati-Serena Williams match really brought the desire to provide technological aids to officials to the forefront." Widmaier said a special task force had been formed to look at the various options, emphasising that no decisions had been taken yet.

Various technologies were available, with the 3D 'Hawkeye' and 'Auto-Ref' systems already used with success by television broadcasters among the options.

"We are taking a look at all the existing systems," said Widmaier. "There are two main issues we need to determine -- which will be the most accurate and the most consistent?"

Fed Cup Football

FROM PAGE 13

But the organisers have decided to break the trend by allowing Brothers Union, who crashed out of the qualifiers last season, to play in the final round.

"We have decided to honour Brothers' record in the last season. They won both the Premier and National League titles, so it would be ideal to see the top teams in the final phase," said Azfaruddin Sohrab, a member of the tournament committee.

Brothers will now join Mukti-jodha Sangsad, Mohammedan Sporting Club, Abahani Krira Chakra and Sheikh Russel Krira Chakra -- the other automatic qualifiers as semifinalists.

The decision will see the number of qualifiers cut down to three.

3RD BD-ZIM ODI

FROM PAGE 13

Matsikenyeri 2 0 12 0 Uteya 10 0 33 2 Chigumbura 2 0 15 1 Taylor 5 0 23 2

ZIMBABWE

Matsikenyeri st Mashud b Manzarul 16 Rogers lbw b Mahmud 51 Ebrahim c Aftab b Nazmul 1 Masakadza c Enamul b Manzarul 9 Taylor c Iqbal b Mahmud 23

Taibu c Manzarul b Mashrafee 46 Chigumbura lbw b Manzarul 27 Panyangara b Nazmul 8 Uteya st Mashud b Manzarul 1 Hondo b Mashrafee 10

Mpofu not out 3 Extras: (lb-3, w-5, nb-1) 9 Total: (All out in 47.5 overs) 204

Fall of wickets: 1-45, 2-50, 3-76, 4-93, 5-133, 6-177, 7-181, 8-185, 9-198

Bowler O M R W Mashrafee 8.5 0 38 2 Nazmul 9 0 34 2 Manzarul 10 0 34 4 Mahmud 10 0 42 2 Enamul 10 1 53 0

Result: Bangladesh won by 40 runs. Man-of-the-match: Manzarul Islam. Fourth ODI: Jan 29, Dhaka (D/N).

"I don't have to win this tournament to prove anything. I know that I'm one of the best players out here."

Yet though the six-time Grand Slam winner has nothing to prove, there would be no better way to confirm her return than with victory over Sharapova, even if she says revenge is not on the agenda.

"Revenge? No, I look at it as a chance to be in the finals here again," Williams said.

After a quarterfinal where she demolished world number two Amelie Mauresmo, making light of furnace-like conditions in the process, beating Sharapova looks a distinct possibility.

Even allowing for the fact that the notoriously brittle Mauresmo claimed to have been injured throughout a one-sided contest, Williams produced some of her best form to win 6-2, 6-2.

The weather conditions, and more hot weather is forecast, may turn out to be crucial. The Florida-based Williams is used to tropical heat and humidity and positively bounded through her match with Mauresmo.

By contrast the Siberian-born Sharapova, who is also based in Florida, has found the heat much harder to deal with than Williams.

She has spent her off-season training in heat in order to prepare herself for the conditions at Melbourne.

But against compatriot Svetlana Kuznetsova in the quarterfinals it was sheer force of character that came to the rescue.

Her gritty 4-6, 6-2, 6-2 victory owed as much to her extraordinary mental resilience as her physical condition.

Sharapova admitted afterwards she had been struggling.

"I need a wheelchair right now," she said. "I was just trying to tell myself mentally just to get through it," she said, adding that gruelling winter conditioning work had paid off.

"I kept thinking back in my off-season, you know, how hard it was when I was training physically, and I thought I couldn't go any more, but I knew that I had some more even though my body thought I didn't."

"I remember those moments, and I just kept fighting, just trying to take as much time as I can and fight."

HEAD TO HEAD

Table comparing Maria Sharapova and Serena Williams with their head-to-head record and tournament results.



THE FUTURE OF PACE: Qualifiers from the GrameenPhone Pacer Hunt are seen with Bangladesh Cricket Board's fast bowling coach Sarwar Imran (9th from L, standing) and Moeen Tariq (7th from L, standing), GP's deputy media manager, after the final round at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

No Leeway for Windies

FROM PAGE 13

Chanderpaul was run out in the 29th over after calling for a runner late in his innings.

The runner, Wavell Hinds, was trapped well short of his ground by a direct hit from Michael Clarke fielding at point.

Marlon Samuels then fell to Darren Lehmann, leaving the Windies at 147 for 5 in the 36th over and all their hopes resting on skipper Brian Lara.

But Lara, trying to boost the run-rate, fell foul of Lee while on 29 after top-edging him skywards to be caught and bowled.

Lee then trapped Courtney Browne leg before with a yorker and his golden duck left the Windies in deep trouble at 153 for 7 and Lee with another hatrick opportunity.

Again, he came close, striking Ian Bradshaw on the pads with a full delivery, which umpire Steve Davis ruled was missing leg stump.

The win means Australia stays undefeated in the series while the West Indies, yet to record a victory, now face Pakistan in Adelaide on Friday.

Both teams are vying for the right to play Australia in the best of three finals.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the triangular VB Series one-day international between Australia and West Indies at the Adelaide Oval on Wednesday:

AUSTRALIA Clarke b Collins 21 Hayden c Browne b Collins 3 Ponting c Bravo b Collins 0 Symonds c Browne b Hinds 31 Lehmann c Browne b Collins 4 Katich lbw b Collins 76 Haddin b Bravo 32 Hogg c Browne b Bravo 3 Lee not out 38 Gillespie not out 44

Extras: (lb-3, w-8, nb-6) 17 Total: (For 8 wickets in 50 overs) 269

Fall of wickets: 1-24, 2-24, 3-34, 4-38, 5-85, 6-167, 7-182, 8-196

Did not bat: McGrath

Bowler O M R W Collins 10 1 43 5 Bradshaw 10 1 45 0 Dillon 6 0 37 0 Hinds 4 0 25 1 Bravo 10 0 71 2 Samuels 10 0 45 0

WEST INDIES Gayle c Haddin b Lee 2 Hinds c Haddin b Lee 0 Sarwan c Haddin b Hogg 39 Chanderpaul run out 55 Lara c and b Lee 29 Samuels c Ponting b Lehmann 14

STANDINGS

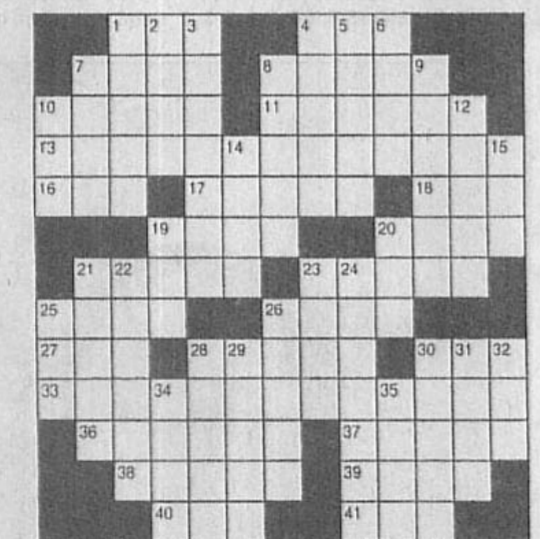
Standings in the limited-overs international VB Series between Australia, West Indies and Pakistan after Australia beat West Indies by 73 runs at the Adelaide Oval on Wednesday:

Table showing the current standings of the teams in the VB Series.

Note: Five points for a win, three for a no result, one for a bonus point.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down words.



CRYPTOQUIP W J G Y P U A U F M E F F Z E F G H Y J M G W Y X W R H U X X Z G H K W R V P X E Z W K F A U F X U P G M V E Y R U Yesterday's Cryptoquip: I HEARD OF A PINE CARPENTER WHO PROUDLY SAID "ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE MY SHELF!" Today's Cryptoquip Clue: F equals R

Last Australian

FROM PAGE 13

Davenport, chasing her fourth career Grand Slam title, looked to have squandered victory when she had her serve broken by Molik after holding match point at 5-4 in the final set.

The next four games went with serve, but Davenport scored the all-important break to take an 8-7 lead and then recovered from 15-40 down to hold serve and seal victory with a forehand volley.

"I don't know how I did that. I really thought I'd let the match get away from me in the final set," said Davenport. "I don't know how I got it back. It was a match with a lot of ups and downs."

Molik, dreaming of becoming the first Australian winner of the women's title since Chris O'Neil 27 years ago, refused to be downcast at the end of a campaign that has helped propel her into the top 10.

"The bottom line is I probably had a chance out there to win today. I guess I can be comforted by the fact that I feel like I'm going to put myself in more positions like today to beat the top five players in the world," she said.

Decby advanced to the first Grand Slam semifinal of her career after shading a tight encounter with

12th seed Patty Schnyder of Switzerland, winning 5-7, 6-1, 7-5 after an energy-sapping 2hr 33min contest.

But Decby voiced disappointment that the match was relegated to the Margaret Court Arena, the third-choice showcourt, at the same time as Molik's clash with Davenport, meaning only a smattering of fans bothered to watch.

"I feel really disappointed because you just think that nobody cared too much about this match, and it's still a quarterfinal Grand Slam," said Decby.

Decby has not beaten Lindsay Davenport in five attempts but believes she can make it sixth time lucky when she meets the world number one in the Australian Open semifinals Thursday.

The 25-year-old Guadeloupe-born right-hander is adamant that she won't just be making up the numbers against Davenport, who defeated the Frenchwoman in straight sets in Sydney a fortnight ago.

"I played her in Sydney and I played really well, even though I lost against her," Decby said. "I think I can (beat her) because I'm playing much, much better than two weeks ago."

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh Tender Amendment Notice. Includes details of the tender, amendment terms, and contact information for Narayan Chandra Biswas.