



Did U Know?

For the first time Australia and New Zealand jointly hosted the cricket World Cup in 1992.



Kim Clijsters

(Belgian tennis star)
"I've never said that tennis is the most important thing in my life. I think there's a lot of other things too. That's something I'm really looking forward to."



STAR Sports
FIFA WC Qualifier
England vs Austria
Live at 8:55 pm

Junior Tigers do no better than seniors

SPORTS REPORTER

The Junior Tigers followed in the footsteps of their seniors in Sri Lanka as the visiting Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) Development Squad were shot out for just 161 on the second day of their four-day match on Friday.

But the home team also fell into trouble in their second innings as they lost four wickets for 53 runs by the close, which gave them a massive 236-run lead. The Sri Lankan side amassed 344 in their first innings.

Farhad Reza, who came to light after a brilliant performance in the last National League, was top scorer with 40 while captain Mushfiqur Rahim added 35 and Raqibul Hasan 30 respectively in the Bangladesh innings.

Tendulkar might miss Duleep opener

CRICINFO

Sachin Tendulkar, named captain of the West Zone team for the Duleep Trophy league opener against South Zone, is unlikely to play in the tie as it coincides with the three-day camp for the Indian team to prepare for the forthcoming seven-match one-day international series against Sri Lanka.

Ajit Agarkar and Zaheer Khan, Tendulkar's West Zone teammates, would also miss the match due to the same reason.

SK Nair, the Indian board's secretary, told PTI: "All the team members selected on October 14 for the first few ODIs against Sri Lanka should attend the camp at Bangalore from October 19-21 that has been proposed by coach Greg Chappell and agreed upon by the Indian cricket board."

Tendulkar is set to return to competitive cricket during the October 10-13 Challenger Trophy after a fourth-month post-surgery lay-off. He had another full practice session at the Wankhede Stadium in Mumbai on Thursday along with his Mumbai Ranji Trophy mates and was seen batting with more freedom during his 25-minute stint at the nets than witnessed on the first two days.

He was, however, not available for comment to mediapersons and is expected to address them on Friday after another net session before proceeding to Mohali on October 8 to play in the Challenger Trophy.

Uncomfortable with the pool



SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) had introduced the pool system in the hope of a balanced distribution of the national cricketers in various sides and also to make local leagues more competitive. But many top players and cricket officials believe that the system needs to go through a revision ahead of the major domestic competitions of the new season.

The call for a change gained momentum following the three-day players' transfer of the Corporate Cricket League (CCL) when some national players struggled to get a team to play for.

In the past, some former and current national players had suggested abolishing the pool altogether for the Premier Division Cricket League. That view was not supported by chief selector Faruque Ahmed and

captain Habibul Bashar. However, both now feel that adjustments have to be made so that it really benefits the players.

"The system was introduced to make the league more competitive with an equal distribution of national players but the experience over the last few years has not been encouraging. We have seen that the bowlers are the real sufferers because most of the teams go for including only specialist batsmen," said former Bangladesh skipper Akram Khan.

During the CCL bourse paceman Anwar Hossain Munir only got a team at the last moment. Last year left-arm spinner Manzarul Islam Rana encountered a similar situation.

"Some national bowlers in the end had to settle for a very small amount. I think it is time to drop the pool," said Akram. Another former skipper Khaled Mahmud also supported Akram.

"I have seen a number of players,

especially bowlers, suffering financially for this system. That situation could be avoided if the Board only included the contracted players in the national pool," said a Bangladesh player on condition of anonymity.

Chief selector Faruque, whose selection panel suggests the names of who should be in the pool to the Board, said the concept was not bad but acknowledged the fact that there are some faults in the system.

"There are some areas that need to be fixed as we have seen how the pool sometimes affect the bowlers. We are thinking about the matter and I believe by increasing the quota of pool players eligible for a team, we can solve the problem," said Faruque.

Bashar said: "I think the difference will be huge between the teams if we take out the pool system. It could be a perfect system if the Board increases the number of players from three to five for each side."

Ganguly unlikely for Lanka ODIs



AFP, Mumbai

Indian captain Sourav Ganguly was on Friday ruled out of competitive cricket for 10 days due to an elbow injury, making him a doubtful starter for the upcoming one-day series against Sri Lanka.

Ganguly was advised to rest for 10 days after being examined by orthopaedic doctor Anant Joshi and team physiotherapist John Gloster, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) said in a statement.

"Gloster and Doctor Joshi examined the injury and also studied an MRI report. In their opinion, it was a mild tennis elbow symptom," the release added.

The left-hander suffered the injury during a practice game on the recent Zimbabwe tour, but still played in both Test matches.

Ganguly, 33, was to lead India Seniors in next week's domestic

Challenger one-day Series in Mohali, a selection trial for the seven-match series against Sri Lanka starting on October 25.

Ganguly's injury also put the selectors in trouble because they have to name the captain on October 13, the last day of the Challenger Series, and the team the following day.



SOURAV GANGULY

The October 10-13 tournament would have given Ganguly a chance to silence critics who have been calling for his ouster because of his poor batting form.

Ganguly has been dogged by form and fitness problems in recent months. He contributed just 48 in three home Tests against Pakistan early this year.

He scored a century against Zimbabwe in the opening Test at Bulawayo last month, but his painstaking six-hour knock against the weakest attack in international cricket did not satisfy all his critics.

Ganguly and coach Greg Chappell were involved in a public spat last month with the coach saying in a leaked e-mail to BCCI chiefs that the captain was unfit to lead the team.

Ganguly, the most successful India captain with 21 Test victories, is only the fourth batsman in one-day cricket to complete 10,000 runs after compatriot Sachin Tendulkar, Sri Lankan Sanath Jayasuriya and Pakistan's Inzamamul Haq.

Sania sails, Paradorn fails



AFP, Tokyo

India's rising star Sania Mirza upset top-seeded Vera Zvonareva to reach the semifinals of the Japan Open tennis tournament, while Asia's number one Paradorn Srichaphan was knocked out of the men's draw Friday.

The 18-year-old Mirza, the first Indian woman ever to win a WTA Tour title, powered her way to a 5-7, 6-2, 6-4 quarterfinal win over the Russian in two hours 28 minutes.

In the rain-postponed men's third round, Thailand's Paradorn, the ninth seed, was sent packing by seventh seed Jarkko Nieminen of Finland, 2-6, 7-6, 7-5.

"It was hard to lose a match like this," said Paradorn. "I was up during the whole match. I was up a set and a break and eight match points. Suddenly my opponent played well, he was playing hard and better at the end."

Mirza twice broke Zvonareva in the opening set, but each time surrendered the advantage on her own serve before hitting an easy overhead into the net at 30-40 in the 12th game to lose the set.

But she rallied in the second and third sets, firing her dangerous forehand to both sides of the court for a barrage of winners and never allowing Zvonareva to take the lead.

"On the important points, she would play a great point with good ground strokes, which kind of confused me. I think I played one of my best matches," said the eighth-seeded Mirza, currently ranked 37th in the world.

"She's the number one seed, and I'm happy that I was able to play my game." Zvonareva said: "I started out OK. I think I played well in the first set, but then I lost my concentration and couldn't get my game back."

"She's a good player. For me, it was important to concentrate on my game and do what I needed to do, but I couldn't play good tennis throughout the whole match," lamented the Russian, ranked 24th in the world.

Fourth seed Maria Kirilenko of Russia, fresh from her first career title at the China Open two weeks ago, joined Mirza into the semifinals after beating the 2002 Japan Open champion, American Jill Craybas, 6-2, 4-6, 6-2.

Second seed Nicole Pietrangeli of the Czech Republic defeated Sofia

Arvidsson of Sweden 2-6, 6-3, 6-2 for a place in the semifinals against Kirilenko, while third seed Tatiana Golovin of France completed the all-teen semifinals by beating Japan's Ai Sugiyama 3-6, 6-2, 6-2.

Meanwhile, men's third seed and US Open semifinalist Robby Ginepri failed to celebrate his 23rd birthday in winning style, losing to Bjorn Phau of Germany 6-4, 6-3 in the quarterfinals.



Indian tennis sensation Sania Mirza makes a return against Russian Vera Zvonareva at the Japan Open quarterfinals on Friday.



I LOVE THIS: Explosive Australian opener Adam Gilchrist is all smiles after his century against the ICC World XI in the second one-day international in Melbourne on Friday.

ICC CAPTAINS' MEET

Bashar off to Sydney tomorrow

SPORTS REPORTER

Habibul Bashar will fly to Australia tomorrow to attend the ICC (International Cricket Council) Test captains' meeting to be held on Sunday in Sydney.

The Bangladesh captain is expected to focus on three issues during the meeting.

"Issues such as benefit of doubts decisions, which I think as the captain of a weak team seems to go against us, as well as the newly introduced super-sub and Twenty20 cricket will be things that I hope to discuss with other skipper," said Bashar.

"Use of super-sub is still confusing to most teams. I think it would be better if captains are allowed to name their super-sub after the toss is completed and not beforehand."

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SAFF C'SHIP WARM-UP Bangladesh play China on Oct 27

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh will take on China in their opening match of the four-nation invitational football tournament in Myanmar on October 27.

Bangladesh, who departs on October 25 to play in the meet as preparation for the SAFF Football Championship, will play the hosts on October 29 and India on October 31 respectively. The final will be held in Yangon on November 2.

Myanmar is expected to field a full-strength team. But no information was available about the other two.

In 1995, the Bangladesh team also participated in a four-nation tournament in Myanmar as preparation for their SAF Games campaign and won their first international football title defeating the hosts in the final.

ASIAN CHESS Zia shares a point

SPORTS REPORTER

All the Bangladeshi players except Grand Master Ziaur Rahman got off to winning starts in the fifth Asian Individual Chess Championship that began in Hyderabad, India on Thursday. Zia drew with MRR Laxman of India in the first round at the Kotla Bhaskar Reddy Indoor Stadium while International Masters Reefat Bin Sattar, Enamul Islam Rajib and Abdullah Al Rakib won against their Indian opponents.

Reefat, is looking forward to increasing his rating to fulfil the quota of earning the GM title, defeated ON Gopal while Rajib and Rakib beat Sudhakar Babu and Somak Palit respectively.

Top ten players out of 86 participants from 18 countries will qualify for next year's World Chess Championships in Italy.

In second round ties on Friday, SEE PAGE 13 COL 4

Glorious Gilchrist

Aussies clinch Super Series



AFP, Melbourne

Australia romped to victory in the ICC Super Series on the back of Adam Gilchrist's fastest one-day century by an Australian and an unfulfilled World XI batting challenge in the second one-dayer here Friday.

Australia backed up their crushing 93-run win in Wednesday's opening game with a 55-run win over the world all-stars to clinch the best-of-three match series with the final game to play on Sunday.

Man-of-the-match Gilchrist smashed a 79-ball 103 in Australia's imposing 328 for four and they weathered an explosive start by the world all-stars before dismissing them for 273 off 45.3 overs to storm to victory.

Gilchrist claimed his 12th one-day century in 76 balls in the officially-sanctioned ODI, cracking eight fours and four sixes to eclipse the mark of 78 that Gilchrist had shared with former captain Allan Border.

The world team early appeared well on target in the imposing chase with Virender Sehwag, Chris Gayle and Kumar Sangakkara taking the willow to the largely-inexperienced Australian attack.

Sehwag smashed four boundaries in 15-ball 21, West Indian Gayle, who replaced Muttiah Muralitharan as

super sub, clobbered 54 in 48 balls with eight fours and a six.

Gayle and Sangakkara hammered 98 runs for the second wicket off 75 balls before Gayle swooshed outside off-stump at Shane Watson and was caught by Gilchrist.

Sangakkara, who topscored with 64 in the first match, was run out for 61 off 44 balls in a mix-up with Jacques Kallis in the 20th over and from there it was downhill for the world team.

Brian Lara followed up his two-ball duck with a dismal five, out to a poor shot to left-armer Nathan Bracken over driving on the up to Andrew Symonds in the covers for five.

Another crazy run out cost the world dearly with Kallis just beaten home by a diving one-handed throw down by Ponting and given out by the video umpire for 11 with two wickets falling on 157.

Rahul Dravid and Andrew Flintoff steadied the innings with a 63-run partnership for the sixth wicket before Flintoff got his feet in a tangle and chipped a catch to Symonds in the covers off Bracken for 42 off 52 balls.

That left the world XI 109 runs short of the target with 13 overs left which was out of sight when Dravid was bowled by Symonds for 26 at 235 for seven.

Gilchrist threw off the disappointment of a lacklustre Ashes series in England and launched into another of his pyrotechnic innings, clubbing

Shoaib Akhtar, Muttiah Muralitharan (twice) and Daniel Vettori for sixes, two of which were caught by members of the crowd.

The world bowlers looked impotent against the Australian onslaught with England's Ashes hero Flintoff going for 1-64 off eight overs, Shoaib 0-61 off eight overs and Kallis 0-33 of three overs.

Gilchrist should have been run out on 98 when he went for a quick single off Sehwag only for England's Kevin Pietersen to miss throwing down the wicket from close range before Sehwag bowled the opener.

Ponting strolled to his half-century off 54 balls, picking off the world bowlers at virtually a run-a-ball in tandem with Damien Martyn.

Ponting and Martyn put on 103 runs for the third wicket before a mix-up led to the Australian captain being run out by Flintoff for 66 off 72 balls in the 46th over.

Martyn was bowled next ball by Flintoff for a run-a-ball 54 in a return to form after his undistinguished Ashes series.

Andrew Symonds (31 not out) and Michael Clarke (17 not out) kept the run-flow high right to the end of the innings, taking 13 off the last over bowled by Kallis.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard in the second Super Series

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