

Indian elected USSF president

AFP, Nevada

Sunil Gulati, a native of India who teaches economics at Columbia University and long-time US Soccer executive, was elected president of the US Soccer Federation here on Saturday.

Gulati, a US Soccer vice president who ran unopposed, replaced Robert Coniguglia, who served eight years in the post. Gulati already serves on several committees for world football governing body FIFA.

The switch at the top comes three months before the US team plays its opening World Cup match against the Czech Republic on June 12.

Gulati, a former deputy commissioner of Major League Soccer, announced plans for diversity and international relations programs.

Temperament due to parents: Dravid

PTI, London

Indian skipper captain Rahul Dravid will be the sixth Indian to play 100 Tests in the third match of the series against England in Mumbai beginning March 18.

"To reach 100 Tests is a huge honour and something I never imagined when I started in my first Test," Dravid said.

The Bangalore batsman, who is also jostling with Ricky Ponting and Jacques Kallis for the highest contemporary average in Tests, all over 57, says he got some of his temperament from his parents.

The focus, tenacity and intelligence that personify his batting may be characteristics handed down from his mother Pushpa, who at the age of 55 did a doctorate PhD in art, The Sunday Telegraph wrote today.

She has now retired but taught architecture at Bangalore University for 30 years. "She's very determined woman so I guess that's something that rubbed off," he said.

"I get some of my temperament from my dad as well, who's a relaxed sort of person. He's retired now but he was a food scientist for a company that made jams and juice, that sort of stuff; he worked there for 30 years."

Zia removed from top

SPORTS REPORTER

Grand Master Ziaur Rahman slipped from the top of the table when the defending champion crashed to his old pal International Master Reefat Bin Sattar in the third round of the Mercantile Bank 30th National Chess Championship at the BCF hall-room yesterday.

Zia's previous-round co-leaders FIDE Masters Sheikh Nasir Ahmed and Rezaul Haque shared the top spot with maximum three points after beating Abdul Maleq and Enayet Hossain respectively.

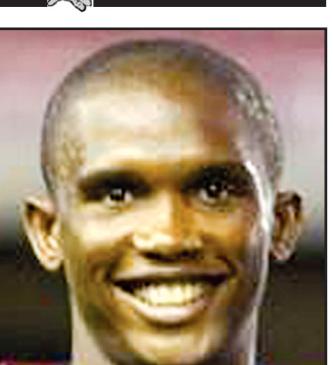
IM Abdullah Al Rakib was at the second place with 2.5 points after beating Delwar Hossain.

In other third round games, GM Niaz Moshref defeated FM Mehdi Hassan Parag, IM Enamul Hossain Rajib beat Hassan Imam and Abu Sufian Shakil beat Syed Mahfuzur Rahman.



Did U Know?

Anil Kumble of India took 5/76 in the first innings of the second Test against England. It took his aggregate to 501 wickets and he became the fifth player to exceed 500 wickets.



Samuel Eto'o

(Barcelona star striker)

"For me, Ronaldinho is like my brother. To talk is very easy and to lie still easier. I have never had a problem with Ronnie because I admire him and I feel a co-contributor to his triumphs."



PREMIERSHIP Rooney double downs Magpies

AFP, Manchester

Wayne Rooney warmed up for this summer's World Cup by scoring both goals as Manchester United strengthened their grip on automatic Champions League qualification by brushing aside Newcastle 2-0 at Old Trafford on Sunday.

Rooney, who is expected to spearhead Sven Goran Eriksson's England attack in Germany, produced two sublime finishes to take his Premiership tally for the season to 12 during a one-sided contest.

It was Manchester United's fourth straight league win as well as one of their easiest.

Newcastle have shown great promise under caretaker manager Glenn Roeder following Graeme Souness's exit last month, but they should have left Manchester on the back of a much more emphatic defeat.

United, thanks to Rooney's exceptional finishing, were 2-0 up inside the first 15 minutes, a suicidal piece of defending by Peter Ramage helping Sir Alex Ferguson's side on the way.

The Newcastle defender was guilty of seriously under-hitting a ninth minute back-pass and instead of finding his keeper Shay Given, the ball ended up at the feet of Rooney who required just one look before finding the net with an inch-perfect lob into the net.

Rooney once again illustrated why he will be one of the players to watch at the World Cup as he found the net with ease after John O'Shea had carved open the Newcastle defence.

The visitors were much better after the interval.

Lee Bowyer, a replacement for Shola Ameobi at the start of the second-half, forced Edwin van der Sar into his only meaningful save of the game in the 56th minute but Newcastle were no match for a rampant Manchester United side which now lies 15 points behind leaders Chelsea.

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