

BCB academy take the lead

SPORTS REPORTER

The visiting Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) National Cricket Academy took a slender lead of six runs over Pakistan Cricket Academy on the third day of the first four-day match at the TMC ground in Karachi yesterday.

At stumps, the BCB side openers Nazmus Sadat (33) and skipper Mehrab Hossain (9) were unbeaten as they took the second innings total to 49 for no loss in 16 overs in their second innings to gain an overall lead of 55 runs. The hosts finished their first essay at 383 in 118.3 overs.

Earlier, spinner Marshall Ayub sparked a late-order collapse to restrict the rampant hosts after they started well from their overnight score of 246 for two.

The young right-arm took three for 41 to sink the Pakistanis from the relative ease of 350 for five to 383 all out while fast bowler Nazmul and left-arm spinner Mehrab supported him with two victims each. Opening bowler Shafiq Al Jabir took his only wicket on the second day while another left-arm Mosharraf Rubel took one wicket as well.

For the hosts, Nasir knocked 124 but Fawwad missed his ton when he fell to Mehrab on 96, ending a massive 208-run third wicket stand with Nasir. Shahid also stroked a quickfire 80.

First ODI washed out

AFP, Colombo

Heavy rain washed out the first limited-overs international between India and Sri Lanka at the Sinhalese Sports Club here on Saturday.

A sharp thundershower around 10.30am local time (0500 GMT) waterlogged the outfield and forced the game to be called off an hour later.

The remaining two matches will be played on Sunday and Tuesday at the same venue, weather permitting.

India were due to resume at Friday's score of 11-0 in 3.4 overs with captain Rahul Dravid on nine and Sachin Tendulkar, returning to international cricket after five

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PHOTO: AFP
TOO HEAVY FOR GOLD: Bangladeshi weightlifter Hamid Islam lifts on his way to winning the bronze medal in the 62kg men's category during the 10th South Asian Games in Colombo on Saturday.

Pakistan stay on top

Cricket

AFP, London

England's bowlers belatedly found their form as Mohammad Yousuf's third hundred of the series came to an end but Pakistan remained in control on the third day of the fourth and final Test at The Oval here Saturday.

At tea Pakistan were 444 for seven, a lead of 271, after Yousuf had scored 128 in a match the tourists are playing for pride with England having already wrapped up the series.

Faisel Iqbal was 30 not out after Shahid Nazir (17) was caught off the last ball before tea by Matthew Hoggard off fellow quick Sajid Mahmood.

On a pitch possibly freshened by rain which meant only 33.5 overs had so far been bowled in the day, England's pace bowlers looked a threat for the first time in this match.

Spearhead quick Stephen Harmison had been well below his best during more than 22 wicketless overs where he conceded 98 runs. But the Durham fast bowler took two wickets for one run in 15 balls to dismiss Yousuf and wicketkeeper Kamran Akmal (15).

However, this effort did nothing to answer the criticism that Harmison was the bowling equivalent of a 'flat-track' bully, unable to take important wickets in less than helpful conditions.

And the renewed life in the pitch would have been welcome by Pakistan's quick bowlers, who'd dismissed England for a lowly first innings 173.

Pakistan started the day on 336 for three with Yousuf 115 not out, after twice being dropped in single figures, and captain Inzamam-ul-Haq two not out.

Yousuf's century followed his 202 in the drawn first Test at Lord's and 192 in England's series-clinching 167-run third Test triumph at Headingly. It was also his fourth hundred in five Tests against England.

During the course of his innings Yousuf became the leading run scorer in Test cricket this year, his tally now standing at 1,123 runs.

And the right-hander's current series aggregate of 631 runs was the most by a player for either side in an England-Pakistan Test campaign.

Harmison had gone wicketless for more than 22 largely lacklustre overs, conceding 98 runs in the process.

But after an hour-long rain break, Inzamam, on 31, nicked a lifting delivery from Harmison to England captain Andrew Strauss at second slip.

It was Harmison's first wicket in 281 balls since he dismissed Yousuf for 192 at Headingly.

Then, six balls later, 379 for four

became 381 for five when Yousuf edged Matthew Hoggard through to wicketkeeper Chris Read.

In all Yousuf batted for nearly five-and-three-quarter hours, facing 236 balls with 18 fours. But he was a becalmed figure Saturday with only six scoring shots in 45 balls.

After Akmal was well held by third slip Paul Collingwood, Nazir, on 14, was dropped by Hoggard off Monty Panesar.

That was England's fifth drop of the innings, the previous four all off Hoggard with Yousuf missed on five and nine by first slip Marcus Trescothick and gully Alastair Cook respectively.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at tea on the third day of the fourth and final Test between England and Pakistan at The Oval on Saturday:

ENGLAND: First innings 173 (Gul 4-47, Asif 4-56)

PAKISTAN: First innings (overnight 336-3)

Hafeez c Strauss b Hoggard 95

Farhat c Trescothick b Hoggard 91

Younis c Read b Mahmood 9

Yousuf c Read b Hoggard 128

Inzamam c Strauss b Harmison 31

Faisel Iqbal not out 30

Akmal c Collingwood b Harmison 15

Nazir c Hoggard b Mahmood 17

Extras: (lb-11, nb-8) 28

Total: (For 7 wkt in 115.5 overs) 444

Fall of wickets: 1-70, 2-148, 3-325,

4-379, 5-381, 6-398, 7-444

To bat: Asif, Gul, Kaneria.

Bowler O M R W

Hoggard 33 2 119 3

Harmison 30 6 119 2

Mahmood 21.5 3 84 2

Panesar 23 4 75 0

Collingwood 6 0 29 0

Pietersen 2 0 9 0

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