

Liu sets new

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compatriot Shi Dongpeng, who posted a personal best of 13.28sec, with Masato Naito of Japan taking the bronze.

It bettered the 13.20sec Liu set at the last Games in Busan four years ago but, at the end of a long season, was well outside his world mark of 12.88sec set in Lausanne in July.

"It's great to win the Asian Games. The Olympics are world famous but the Asian Games remain Asia's main competition," said the 23-year-old.

However, his heroics were overshadowed by another drugs scandal, with Iraqi bodybuilder Saad Faeaz thrown out of the Games for attempting to bring banned performance enhancing drugs into Qatar.

The athlete was caught with 134 ampules of nandrolone, an anabolic steroid which helps build muscle bulk, at Doha international airport on December 4. OCA director general Husain al-Musallam said.

Due to drawn out investigations, Faeaz was allowed to compete in the 75kg category four days later and finished seventh in the pre-judging section.

"His result is cancelled and he is disqualified," said Musallam, adding that it was the first time in Asian Games history that an athlete had been thrown out for doping offences without a laboratory test.

It was the fifth doping case so far.

Controversy also darkened the Games with a row over match-fixing in the field hockey.

Malaysian coach Wallace Tan claimed that Pakistan and Japan's 0-0 draw on Sunday to advance to the semi-finals was a fix.

It put Malaysia out of the competition on goal difference even though they finished on equal points.

"You don't play a game where there are no moves made without prior arrangement between the two sides," Tan told AFP, drawing immediate flak from Malaysian officials in Kuala Lumpur.

"Don't say the game between Pakistan and Japan was fixed," Malaysian Hockey Federation (MHF) secretary T. Paramalingam demanded of Tan, suggesting that Malaysia missed out because they didn't play with enough "heart and soul".

Boje calls

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Spin bowlers have played a minor role in South African teams in recent years and Arthur acknowledged it was possible that, depending on conditions, the final eleven for the Wanderers might not have included a spinner.

He said the same could apply for the second Test in Durban but that a spinner would almost certainly be needed for the third and final Test in Cape Town from January 2.

Boje, who took 95 wickets and scored 1410 runs in 113 one-day internationals, has not been picked for the South African one-day team since October 2005 and is unlikely to be selected for South Africa's squad for the 2007 World Cup, especially as Cricket SA have set a target of seven black players in a 15-man party.

Scots vow

Wright also pinned hope on his experienced four players -- Douglas Brown, Navdeep Singh Poria, Gavin Hamilton and John Angus Rae Blain -- who have the played in English county cricket. Brown and Hamilton also played for England.

The Scots will leave the capital for Chittagong, where they will play a warm-up match against an Academy side on December 14 and then engage with Habibul Bashar's men in the first one-day on the next day, this morning. The last match is in Dhaka on December 17.



PHOTO: AFP

West Indies captain Brian Lara plays with a football during a practice session at the Multan Cricket Stadium yesterday. His side takes on Pakistan in the fourth one-day international today.

KP cheers England on

Cricket

AFP, Perth

Kevin Pietersen said embattled England knows it's crunch time for its Ashes defence and expects his team to rise to the challenge when the third Test begins Thursday.

England are down 2-0 and would hand the Ashes back to Australia with defeat at the WACA Ground in Perth, but Pietersen said the intensity at training here indicated the English had fully recovered from their Adelaide nightmare.

"I think we mean business for this week," he said.

"The boys have been put through their paces massively today and from the first ball that was bowled this afternoon, it was 90mph-plus.

"So we'll be coming out all guns blazing, knowing we have to play positive cricket and we have to win."

He said England's captain and talisman, all-rounder Andrew Flintoff, was also bearing up well under the pressure of the first two defeats.

Flintoff is battling ankle soreness and has coppered criticism for his role in some controversial team selections but bowled well in the nets on Tuesday, and Pietersen said the skipper was in good shape.

"I see him daily and Freddie just seems to be fine," he said.

"He's got that belief and he knows how good he is. He's a true champion, the best all-rounder in the world, so there's not a lot that can get to him."

Australian fast bowler Glenn McGrath meanwhile seemed to dismiss England's hopes at a function on the neighbouring practice wickets while the visitors were going through their paces.

Delighted with his own team's form, McGrath gave a hint of the rising confidence in the Australian camp when he admitted to being disappointed England hadn't been more competitive in the first two Tests.

"The last Ashes was one of most amazing series I was involved in," he said.

"What it did for cricket in England and Australia was amazing," said McGrath.

"The way we have played this

series has been quite exceptional.

"It is a little bit disappointing after the last series that the first Test was quite one-sided and the last one was a good battle."

Australia's champion leg-spinner Shane Warne needs just six wickets to become the first bowler ever to reach 700, and Pietersen said he was looking forward to taking him on again.

He said he had moved on from his much-discussed shot selection on the final day of the Adelaide Test, when he attempted to sweep Warne and was bowled around his pads as Australia's push for victory gained momentum.

The right-hander said he simply missed the ball and that he was ready to have another go.

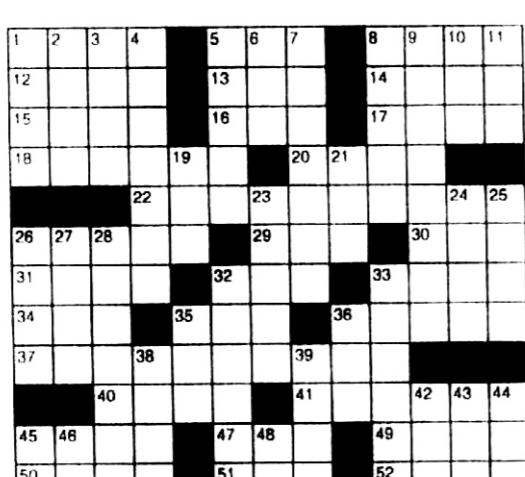
"I played him okay over the first two Test matches, but then I said it only takes one ball from a great man to knock you over," Pietersen said.

"He's the greatest bowler who's ever lived and it will be fun facing him."

"I've always enjoyed facing Shane and I'll enjoy facing him this week -- as long as I last longer than one ball."

Umpires: Nigel Llong and Zameer Haider.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer



CRYPTOQUIP X B J F T N W J L T F I O A G V O R R I Y O F Z Q W A H V W X B T M X O E M Q Q R X O E E Z M X J N J A X M O Q Q G W X H T X O H Y W I

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF A CHEF IS TEACHING YOU TO USE A COLANDER, I'D CALL YOU AN APPRENTICE IN STRAINING

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: X equals 1

The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

SOLUTION TIME: 25 mins.

ACROSS 1 Graceful girl, 5 Edge, 8 Hit, 12 Unyielding, 13 Mound, 14 Mexican, 15 Oklahoma, 16 Prohibit, 17 Highway, 18 Take, 19 Mamie's out, 20 Resign, 22 Local, 26 Winnows, 29 --, 30 Squabble, 31 Ark, 32 Poolroom, 33 Between jobs, 34 Possess, 35 Hiatus, 36 Indulges in voguing 2 Se eagle, 3 Disturb, 4 Compre- hensive, 5 "Louis", 6 A Gershwin, 9 Vicinity, 10 Cleo's, 11 Ardor, 12 Long- city, 13 Popular, 14 talk-show 15 talk-show ists' wear, 16 host, 17 Neighbor, 18 51 Mamie's of Can- 10 man, 11 Deily, 12 Facility, 13 stat, 14 Cleo's, 15 vanquisher, 16 Ardor, 17 50 Long- city, 18 52 Facility, 19 "My 23 German 24 Double agent, 25 Rams, 26 Uppity sort, 27 "The Music Man", 28 Enthusiasts, 29 Team leader, 30 Charged, in a sense, 31 Astronaut Grison, 32 Team leader, 33 Cards, 34 Bouts- onniere site, 35 Down, 36 PEND- 37 ART, 38 Jack, 39 Bouts- onniere site, 40 Equip- ment, 41 Down's employer, 42 Dispat- ched a dragon, 43 Rock, 46 Dem's rival, 48 Tackle moguls

30 Squabble, 31 Ark, 32 Poolroom, 33 Between jobs, 34 Possess, 35 Hiatus, 36 Indulges in voguing

YES OLD SOAP SPEAK PULSE TINSEL JEKYLL AND HYDE BITS LINEB DOW PEND ART, MARY SPA KIANO G PLU HIDE AND DOOSE EX COMPETE IMAGE HIPPY NERO TAT GEL

12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11

Sania storms into final

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history at Wimbledon earlier this year when she became the first Chinese woman to reach the quarterfinals of a Grand Slam.

But she seemed rattled by the large, cheering Indian crowd, and never had a grip on the match.

Mirza, seeded four, broke Li in the first game and again in the fifth before taking a 5-2 lead and serving out for the set.

After a marathon, energy-sapping game in the second set, Mirza finally broke for a 2-1 lead which the Indian said was crucial to winning the match.

Li appealed at one stage to her entourage for help as Mirza, backed by screaming fans, broke again for 4-1 when Li completely missed a routine forehand.

They both held serve leaving the Indian to serve out the match.

Mirza agreed that the crowd had helped her.

"It's amazing. It's the biggest turnout today, more people than ever."

She has another chance at gold when she teams with Leander Paes in the mixed doubles semi-finals later Tuesday.

In the men's singles, Lee conceded that the first set had been tough, saying he felt sluggish and describing Mamit's style of play as aggressive and tenacious.

Malaysia drub

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in the mixed team classical event at the Al-Dana Indoor Hall on Monday.

International Master Enamul Hossain Rajib beat UAE's GM Talib Moosa Ibrahim, GM Reefat Bin Sattar lost to IM Abdulla Hasan Al-Hamidi while Shamima Akhter Liza defeated Noura Mohamed Saleh.

Bangladesh, eleventh in the table, were facing Philippines in the seventh round yesterday. India, on 16 points, were leading the pack as usual, followed by Iran (11.5 points), Qatar (11.5), Kazakhstan (10.5), China (11), Vietnam (10), Indonesia (10), Jordan (9.5), Uzbekistan (9.5) and Mongolia (9.5).

Ireland runs

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second day's behaviour of the pitch, which looked more spin-friendly on the opening day.

"It was very tough for the batsmen to cope with the condition because we are not familiar to this. The bounce was not even on the second day but I must credit the pacers, especially Ireland who bowled brilliantly," observed the former national paceman.

SCORES IN BRIEF

ZIMBABWE A: 146 and 113 all out in 47 overs (Hove 2, Chibhabha 8, Matsikenyeri 16, Williams 32 not out, Nkala 4, Chigumbura 1, Mawoyo 17, Garwe 1, Higgins 20, Cremer 13, Ireland 2, extras 5, Tapash 3-39, Sharif 3-20, Shahjada 4-25).

BANGLADESH A: 142 all out in 44.1 overs (Javed 14, Salihuddin 16, Rajin 22, Tushar 33, Kapali 7, Manjru 0, Sahagir 5, Sharif 2, Tapash 25, Enamul 4, Shahjada 0, extras 14, Ireland 7-36, Cremer 2-17, Chigumbura 1-20) and 29-1 in 10 overs (Javed 9, Rajin not out 13, Tushar 2 not out, extras 5; Ireland 1-11).

Razzaq may lead

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South Africa as well," said Inzamam.

Pakistan play three Tests and five one-day internationals in South Africa before the World Cup in the West Indies in March-April next year.

West Indian coach Bennett King said his team were motivated despite the fact that they can only level the series.

"The boys look forward to the fourth match and are determined to make sure they finish this leg of the tour with two wins," said King.

The fifth and final match will be played in Karachi on December 16.

King said Pakistan's loss of key players was not a factor.

"I look at what we have in the team and we need to control Pakistan to win the match and once we go out we will do that rather than thinking of their combination."

King said he hoped key batsman Shivanirine Chanderpaul, who has yet to play in the one-day series, would return after recovering from a knee injury.

SQUADS

PAKISTAN (from): Inzamamul Haq (captain), Imran Farhat, Mohammad Hafeez, Shoaib Malik, Abdul Razzaq, Shahid Afridi, Faisal Iqbal, Kamran Akmal, Rao Iftikhar, Navedul Hasan, Umar Gul, Abdul Rehman, Danish Kaneria, Mohammad Sami, Yasir Hameed.

WEST INDIES (from): Brian Lara (captain), Chris Gayle, Lendl Simmons, Darren Ganga, Marlon Samuels, Runako Morton, Shivanirine Chanderpaul, Dwayne Smith, Denesh Ramdin, Ian Bradshaw, Corey Collymore, Jerome Taylor, Daren Powell, Dave Mohammed.

Umpires: Nigel Llong and Zameer Haider.

Bermuda on long, hard road to the World Cup

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Cricket

AFP, Doha

It's 2,500km from Hamilton to Port-of-Spain where Bermuda will open their debut World Cup campaign in March.

But it may as well be a million.

Six defeats in a row, questionable fitness levels and fears that an 11-million-dollar government grant for the sport could be squandered have cast a deepening gloom over preparations for the event.

The situation has got so bad that coach Gus Logie, the stylish former West Indies batsman, was almost at the end of his tether after a series of humiliating defeats -- three against Kenya, two against Canada and one against Holland, all fellow World Cup finalists -- on a five-week tour of Africa.

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The physical fitness of Bermuda's players is also a concern.

Many fear that when they face Asian powerhouses India and Sri Lanka in their opening World Cup group, which also includes Bangladesh, their poor shape will cost them dear.

"Fitness is critical, not just at this level playing one-day internationals, but also playing the longer version of the game," Logie told the Royal Gazette in Bermuda.

"You just can't get by without it in the modern game."

"The West Indies, through the 1980s and Australia through the 1990s and the early part of this decade have been outstanding, and I think without doubt they've been the fittest sides in world cricket, and the most athletic and most physical sides playing the game. Of course, they've had great skill levels as well."

Logie has plenty of headaches ahead of the March-April showpiece.

He has to decide whether or not

to keep faith with the majority of the 15 players who went to Africa.