

## Kenya crush Scotland

CRICINFO, undated

Kenya began their ICC Tri Series in comprehensive style with a 190-run win over Scotland at Mombasa on Wednesday after recording their second-highest one-day total of 328 for 5.

Scotland lost their opener Navdeep Poonia for a duck and were soon struggling on the slow, low pitch at 39 for 4. And when Neil McCallum -- who last week hit a fine hundred against UAE -- fell for just 10, the end was in sight, although Dougie Brown at least delayed the inevitable with a fighting 22 from 21 balls. There were three wickets apiece to Nehemiah Odihambo and Peter Ongondo.

Scotland's struggle to force the pace -- albeit to fine Kenya bowling -- emphasised the home side's impressive batting performance, with three batsmen reaching fifty, including Ravi Shah, making his comeback.

After winning the toss only Kenya's captain, Steve Tikolo who made just 1, and Maurice Ouma (12) failed as Shah and David Obuya put on 84 for the second wicket. Shah immediately looked in fine fettle. Although playing in his first game for Kenya since 2004 -- a knee injury and business commitments has kept him out -- he showed no signs of rustiness, late-cutting with deftness and crashing 10 fours, many through the covers, in his fluent 53-ball 54. "He was sublime," David Waters, Kenya's head selector, told Cricinfo, "and he looked a class act even though he's been away for so long."

Though Shah's class shone through, Kenya's middle-order were no less impressive.

Tanmay Mishra, the 20-year-old, cracked five fours in a brisk 66 -- which included a brilliant lofted cover drive for six -- before David's brother, Collins, struck 68 from 63 balls. Only Paul Hoffmann, playing in his 100th match for Scotland, was spared punishment by Kenya's batsmen, returning impressive figures of 2 for 45 from his 10 overs.

### BRIEF SCORES

**KENYA:** 328 for 5 (D Obuya 73, C Obuya 68 not out, Mishra 66)

**SCOTLAND:** 138 (Odihambo 3-25)

**Result: Kenya won by 190 runs.**

## Sampras, Vicario

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Sampras won 64 singles titles in his 15-year career, including seven Wimbledon crowns, five US Open titles and two Australian Open titles.

A career Grand Slam eluded him because the big-serving star could not solve the red clay of Roland Garros, his best French Open effort being a 1996 semi-final run.

Sampras, 35, played his final tournament at the 2002 US Open, where he was seeded 17th but won the title. He made his retirement official at ceremonies in Arthur Ashe Stadium, site of his final match, one year later.

Sanchez-Vicario, 35, won the French Open in 1989, 1994 and 1998 and in 1994 became the first Spanish woman to win the US Open singles crown. Her other Grand Slam titles included six in doubles and four in mixed doubles.

She won 29 career singles titles and 67 doubles titles in an 18-year career that ended with a record of 759-295 and held the world number one ranking for 12 weeks, taking the top spot in 1995.

Sanchez-Vicario led Spain to five Fed Cup titles, going 72-28 in 58 career ties, and captured four Olympic medals - 1992 bronze and 1996 silver in singles and doubles silver in 1992 and bronze in 1996.

Davidson, 78, won the 1957 French title to become the first Swedish Grand Slam champion. He reached a career high third in the rankings that same year.

## Steely Sharapova

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She looked a different player as she blasted six aces and comfortably commanded the game from the baseline, shutting out Rodionova to take the first set with three service breaks in 23 minutes.

However, Sharapova said there remained room for improvement when she meets Italy's Tathiana Garbin in the third round.

"I still think that I can play a lot better, I'm nowhere near my top level," she said.

Rodionova, 24, who has lost her previous two meetings with Sharapova, sat with her head between her knees covered by a towel between points as she tried to work out a way back into the game.

Sharapova, who was reduced to swearing at the umpire during her first round match, remained steely-eyed and determined to re-establish her credentials, allowing herself only an occasional fist pump as she hit 20 winners to her opponent's two.

She said she felt fortunate to emerge unscathed from the "dangerous" conditions of her first match and has some suggestions for tournament organisers as they review their extreme heat policy.

"When it gets to a certain point where it's extreme heat, players probably should stop. I think that's why the roof's there," she said.

"It's not only for the rain, but it's also for the conditions ... even if it's a 20 minute delay, I think that can save a lot of people from having to go to the doctor."



PHOTO: AFP

A visible agitated Sania Mirza disputes a line call during her second round match against Aiko Nakamura at the Australian Open in Melbourne on Thursday.

# Mirza bites the dust



AFP, Melbourne

Chinese number one Li Na and Japan's Aiko Nakamura booked their places in the Australian Open third round Thursday but Indian starlet Sania Mirza bit the dust.

Japan's Akiko Morigami also headed for an early exit, comprehensively beaten 6-3, 6-0 by fourth seed Kim Clijsters, while China's Peng Shuai was undone 7-5, 6-3 by eighth seed Patty Schnyder.

Li, seeded 19 and in scintillating early season form, could meet Clijsters in the quarter-finals if she continues her hot run, although some heavy duty obstacles stand in her way, including former champion Martina Hingis.

The 24-year-old from Wuhan thrashed Lourdes Dominguez Lino of Spain 6-0, 6-2 in just over an hour and will next meet Russia's Dinara Safina or French wildcard Youlina Fedosova.

"I'm feeling good mentally and

physically but I can always be better," Li told AFP.

"I had never played Lourdes before so I didn't know what to expect so I just played my own game. I'm in good touch."

Osaka resident Nakamura ended Indian hopes by spanking Mirza, who again failed to shine on the big stage.

Nakamura was stronger all round, running out a comfortable 6-3, 6-2 winner.

It sets up a hazardous third round clash with Hingis, who won here in 1997, 98 and 99 and has rocketed back up to world number seven after a three-year injury layup.

"Hingis, of course, is a very good player but I am playing some good tennis too," Nakamura said.

"She is a very good player of the ball but not a hard hitter so I will play aggressive against her."

"I'll just go out and enjoy myself against Martina and play my own game. Can I beat her? I hope so."

Despite her defeat, Mirza, 20, was unfazed and said it was simply an off day.

"There's not much you can do when you play like that," she said.

"The court felt like it was too small and I just couldn't put the ball in.

"I'm obviously disappointed but all players have off days, although it does hurt more because it's a Grand Slam."

Morigami didn't stand a chance against Clijsters, but she said she gave herself credit.

"I've been playing well. I'm not happy I lost but I give myself credit. I played as well as I could. I came to the net alot and used a variety of shots, but it just didn't go my way."

Asian representatives still in the draw are fast shrinking, although Thai hero Danai Udomchoke remains in the hunt.

He plays his third round match against rising Serbian teen Novak Djokovic, seeded 14, on Friday.

The region also has a host of doubles challengers, led by defending women's champions Zheng Jie and Yan Zi of China, who are safely into the second round.

Joining them are Taiwanese pair Chan Yung-Jan and Chuang Chia-Jung, while India's Leander Paes teamed with the Czech Republic's Martin Damm to book a second round berth.

## Tennis meet begins Saturday

UNB, Dhaka

The qualifying round of the fifth BKSP International junior tennis tournament begins Saturday at the BKSP Tennis Complex in Savar.

A total of 125 players, including 41 girls from 19 countries are expected to compete in the Under-18 competition.

The participating countries are Belarus, Canada, Chinese Taipei, Czech Republic, England, Finland, India, Japan, Jordan, Korea, Netherlands, Pakistan, Philippines, Romania, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Ukraine, Uzbekistan and hosts Bangladesh.

Meanwhile, some players of South Africa, England and Canada have already arrived in the capital.

Four Bangladeshi players -- Henry Pithul Mondal, Ranjan Ram, Tajmul Islam and Mazharul Islam -- will be entitled to play in the boys' main draw while Ma Hi Ching in the girls' main draw.

A total 32 players -- 24 from direct entry, four from qualifying round and the remaining four wild cards -- will play in the singles main draw.

Sixteen players will play in the doubles main draw -- 14 from direct entry and two wild cards.

## Bond can breathe now

AFP, Wellington

New Zealand cricket breathed a sigh of relief Thursday when injury-prone star fast bowler Shane Bond was cleared of a potentially career ending stress fracture of the spine.

Bond had to leave the field suffering back pain on Tuesday in Hobart during New Zealand's loss to England in the one-day Australian tri-series.

Bond, who has taken 99 wickets in 53 one-day internationals, has been sidelined several times during his career because of stress fractures.

But scans of his back in Sydney Thursday revealed no stress fractures, team manager Lindsay Crocker said in a statement.

"We've been down this path with him before, had bone scans, and it's a big exhalation of air for Shane and all of us when we know it's not that dreaded stress fracture," he later told journalists in Sydney.

## Seeds stamp

FROM PAGE 21  
Sharapova, who needed almost three hours to overcome Frenchwoman Camille Pin in the opening round, redeemed herself Thursday with a 6-0, 6-3 demolition of fellow Russian Anastassia Rodionova in 58 minutes.

It was a statement of intent for the 19-year-old, who would not want to be left behind as the main rivals on her side of the draw show they can toy with lesser opponents.

"It was very important to get out there and get off to a good start then end the match on a good note rather than dragging it out," she said.

Other women through included Russian ninth seed Dinara Safina, 12th seed Anna Chakvetadze, also from Russia, and Serbian 13th seed Ana Ivanovic.

## Keane the Cardiff

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any doubt, went for the kill in the 42nd minute.

Benoit Assou-Ekotto played a pass in from the left to Malbranque, who was given time to turn by Cardiff's hesitant defence and he took full advantage with a low shot that flashed past Alexander from 25 yards.

After an inconsistent Premiership campaign, Tottenham's season will be defined by the knockout competitions and, with a League Cup semi-final against Arsenal to come and a place in the last 32 of the UEFA Cup secured, they harbour dreams of landing a cup treble.

Lacklustre Cardiff never threatened to endanger their FA Cup progress and England striker Defoe, on for Berbatov, completed the rout in the 81st minute as he tapped-in after Alexander had parried a long shot from Hossam Ghalay.

## Parma land

FROM PAGE 24  
United on November 10, 2004 against Crystal Palace.

He has since gone on to play for Newcastle United for a total of one goal in 16 Premiership appearances.

Rossi finally came to Italian attention in August when he made his international debut for Pierluigi Casiraghi's Under-21 side and now has given caps to his name.

This is an important reinforcement for the Tardini outfit, which is up for sale after the bankruptcy of majority shareholders Parmalat.

Today Swiss-Italian businessman Gaetano Valenza confirmed that he was very interested in buying up the side.

# It's different for Sachin



AFP, New Delhi

Poor form has ended sporting careers or at least forced a relegation to the bench. In Sachin Tendulkar's case, it has led to a promotion.

Tendulkar, 33, will be vice-captain to skipper Rahul Dravid for the one-day series against the West Indies starting on Sunday amid speculation that he may even be named Indian captain after the World Cup.

The unexpected appointment comes at a time when the master batsman is struggling to regain top form after a spate of injuries that threatened to end a glorious 17-year career.

Tendulkar averaged just 33.16 in three Test matches and 23.25 in four one-day internationals on the recent tour of South Africa, a far cry from his lofty record-setting standards.

The selectors, however, chose to keep faith in him even as Test vice-captain Venkatsai Laxman and one-day deputy Virender Sehwag were dumped for the first two one-dayers against the West Indies.

Chairman of selectors Dilip Vengsarkar said he made Tendulkar vice-captain because someone was needed to "guide

Dravid in the important season ahead."

"Those who were vice-captains earlier (Sehwag and Laxman) are not in the team at present," said Vengsarkar. "It is not easy to drop a vice-captain from the team so we wanted to appoint a permanent member as the deputy."

"We just can't promote someone who is young and inexperienced. If something happens to Rahul, we have Tendulkar who has played the World Cup before and knows everything about the game."

"Basically, we want somebody with experience. Sachin is a legend."

Vengsarkar, a former captain himself, did not hesitate when asked if Tendulkar could lead India again.

"It's obvious that it is the vice-captain who takes over from the captain in case he is hurt or not in form," the chief selector said.

Tendulkar led India in 25 Tests and 73 one-dayers between 1996 and 2000 before he voluntarily stepped down after a home series against South Africa to concentrate on his batting.

Tendulkar, who turns 34 on the day of the first World Cup semi-final in Jamaica on April 24, dismissed media speculation he may be named captain after the World Cup.

"At the moment the World Cup is the top priority," he said in a recent

interview. "No one has consulted me nor have I discussed with anyone about taking over as Indian captain after the World Cup."

"It is too early to say anything right now."

Tendulkar is the world's leading one-day batsman with 14,537 runs from 374 matches with an incredible 40 centuries and 74 fifties.

The Indian is almost 3,000 runs ahead of second-placed Inzamamul Haq of Pakistan (11,591 runs) and has 17 more centuries than his nearest challenger Sanath Jayasuriya of Sri Lanka (23).

But millions of fans have been frustrated in recent months by Tendulkar's inconsistent form and his failure to play match-winning innings as in the past.

In his last 10 Test matches, Tendulkar has managed just 387 runs at 25.80 without adding to his 35 centuries.

His one-day form is even worse, plodding to 248 runs in 10 matches at 24.80.

Tendulkar's backers argue that as he nears 34 he cannot be expected to play the blazing knocks he did as a youngster.

But Inzamam, who turns 37 in March, Jayasuriya and West Indian captain Brian Lara, who will both turn 38 this year, still continue to play crucial innings despite their age.



INTERNET, undated

Virender Sehwag needs a 'brain trainer' more than ever. A few things may be wrong with his game, but then there were always a few things wrong about his basics. It's his mind that has strayed from the game now, making batting seem like a trip to a house of horrors. He never knows what will turn up at which turn, although such gargoyles may be more in the mind.

Here is a match-winner who is averaging a tad below 50 in Test matches and who on his day can turn an ODI in just a quarter of the scheduled overs. If he does not seem capable of putting bat to ball now, particularly the new ball, there must be something seriously wrong with him, perhaps even with a system that seems unable to help him.

Sehwag plays for a team that has as the coach one of the finest batting brains of the modern era. In his time, Greg Chappell was technically the soundest and aesthetically the most pleasing batsman. He also went through the horrors when the short ball thrust upon him a string of scores in a postal pin code sequence. He worked his way past that before signing off with a century in his final Test.

If Chappell cannot get through to Sehwag's mind despite all his efforts, then obviously the opener must look elsewhere for support. The manner of his dismissals in South Africa did suggest that Sehwag would primarily be better off if, first, he takes some time off from the game. Any reconstruction of his batting must start from scratch and that is possible only after a break.

Given the predilections of a batsman prone to letting his bat take the lead role in instinctive and primal responses, Sehwag is not the one who can put together bare-knuckled shows of mental strength at the crease. He is not going to grind out an innings in order to recover the form

that has deserted him. His only response to pressure seems to be to wave his bat at everything, as he did in South Africa with the exception of the one time when, sent down the order, he found a semblance of form.

Every coach he goes to will probably say the most well meaning things like 'tighten up' and 'concentrate'. A player like him needs a little more of what is called mind training since he cannot altogether abandon the attacking mode of play that fetched him such high-scoring sequences as the one in which he became the only Indian to pass 300 in a Test innings.

That was less than three years ago in which time success may have dulled the appetite a bit even as reflexes and reaction times may have come down a shade. As Kapil Dev says, in order to perform a man must be hungry. And Test cricket is a team game that revolves a lot more around individual success and Team India can do with all the runs the batsmen can provide.

Whatever be the levels of satiation in terms of success in physically measurable terms such as the financial value of contracts and endorsements besides celebrity status bordering on pop star like cultism, the mystery is over why any athlete would want to give it all up? And it is not as if Indian cricket is so chock full of match winners that established stars can be shown the door with any degree of finality.

There are three South African batsmen, including current players Jacques Kallis and Andrew Prince, who swear that mind training under a bio kinetiscist called Paddy Upton helped them realise their sporting goals. Sport is not rocket science and mind training is possible at any stage of a career, especially when things do not seem to be working out in the middle.

While there can be few men better than Greg Chappell to talk to about batting, Sehwag must seek the help of those who can 'talk' to his mind and set him right.

The dasher from Najafgarh may

# Brothers, Arambagh

FROM PAGE 21

The foreigners will fill the gaps. It looks a bit different as we have to go through very strict discipline and follow the code of conducts. We have played away matches in tournaments in the past but the experience of playing league matches outside the capital would be tough," told the veteran fullback.

He also felt the need of a professional footballers' association to look after the players' interest. Faisal Mahmud, reported to have some payment issues to be settled with Mohammedan, also completed formalities by submitting his contract to the BFF.

"I signed some papers for Mohammedan under pressure last year but I have not taken any payment from them," said the midfielder Faisal.

Brothers, who have Under -13 and -16 camps running, have appointed Mohiur Rahman Miraj as assistant coach.

Arambagh secretary and football team manager Mobinur Rahman informed that they started camp a week earlier at the Dhaka University ground but had to change practice venue as the Army has set camp there.

"We have moved to Dhupkhola and hope to return to the DU ground soon," he said adding that their preparation has all but completed.

Arambagh have 19 local and Ugandan players Idris, Dominich and Eedi at their disposal and still looking for a foreign defender.

"Our total budget for football this year is Tk one crore and we will

spend Tk 20 lakh for the Senior Division. It would be an investment.

"It will serve two purposes. In future, the transfer fees will rise and having a second team would supply us with players. We would be able to handle any economic crisis as well as grooming footballers."

Coach Neyamul Majid Jolly, who will be assisted by ex-national goalkeeper Arifur Rahman Pannu, has targeted to lift Arambagh from the mid-table position.

"I am not sure about the line-ups of the other teams but I have 12 old players and a few good inclusions. The difference between so-called big and small teams are not huge nowadays and my team will be competitive," said Jolly, whose side will use the familiar black and white outfit as their home jersey and orange-black in away games.

Arambagh, who have proved nightmares for big teams in the past, are also allegedly used to 'throw' points deliberately. The Professional League will provide them a good chance to annul the gossips.

**A R A M B A G H S Q U A D :**  
Goalkeepers: Piru (Farashgan), Sounik (Sheikh Russel), Mithun (Arambagh); Shamim (Abahani), Sumon (Badda), Sharif (Russel), Monu, Murad, Ramjan, Akram, Nadir, Bony (Arambagh); midfielders: Moloy (Badda), Idris (Dipali), Juku, Morshed, Dominich (Arambagh), Eedi; forwards: Tabith (Youngmen's), Idris (Dipali), Ritu, Nurul, Ridon (Arambagh).

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have begun his career as a Tendulkar clone but he went on to better even the master to the extent of becoming a match winner vital to team requisites. He achieved so much so soon in over 4,000 Test runs and nearly 5,000 ODI runs that such problems were bound to crop up. The belief commonly held is Sehwag is still capable of delivering to Team India at the World Cup. This is regardless of his batting position that may be dictated by team priorities. Beyond the World Cup, a degree of apathy may crop up because who would really care about what happens to individuals after the big event?

The truth is Sehwag must be the master of his own destiny at this point of time. He must seek the trainers and the coaches in order to try and recapture his glory days as the swashbuckling opener without a care in the world. India needs him fit and firing at the World Cup.

## Milan dream

FROM PAGE 24

Ronaldo, who scored both of Brazil's goals in the 2002 World Cup final win against Germany and is the highest scorer in the competition's history, has rarely featured for Real under Fabio Capello.

But at a press conference on Wednesday, the Real coach showed some reluctance to let Ronaldo leave.

"He's a Real player. I see him with the Real Madrid jersey," Capello said.

Wealthy Saudi Arabian club Al Ittihad, who have just snapped up Portuguese winger Luis Figo, are also reported to be keen on signing Ronaldo.

## Sourav leaves

FROM PAGE 21

England, were followed by 13 losses in their final 17 matches in 2006.

Their batting has been a problematic area, and the selectors have gone for Ganguly's experience to shore up an unstable top order, with opener Virender Sehwag dropped.

Ganguly said: "I don't really know the reason (for the poor run) because I've not been part of the team for the last year."

"But I am sure the selectors and everybody else is concerned about it and if we get the right side I am sure we can do well."

"We have a good bowling attack, and though the batsmen haven't done well over the last eight or nine months in one-day cricket I'm sure there's enough talent there."

"There's guys who have done well before. I'm sure they can turn it around."

## Loye's chance

FROM PAGE 21

Bond has a long history of back problems, but bone scans on Thursday confirmed that the soreness was not caused by skeletal damage and he will remain with their squad.

Bond entered the record books last Friday, becoming just the second New Zealand bowler to claim a one-day hat-trick in the loss to Australia.

### TEAMS

**AUSTRALIA:** Adam Gilchrist (captain), Matthew Hayden, Brad Hodge, Michael Clarke, Andrew Symonds, Michael Hussey, Cameron White, Nathan Bracken, Mitchell Johnson, Glenn McGrath, Brett Lee.  
**ENGLAND (from):** Andrew Flintoff (captain), Andrew Strauss, Ian Bell, Mal Loye, Paul Collingwood, Ed Joyce, Ravinder Bopara, James Dalrymple, Pual Nixon, James Anderson, Jon Lewis, Monty Panesar, Chris Tremlett, Sajid Mahmood, Liam Plunkett, Chris Read.