

Mum's pride

AFP, Port of Spain

The mother of giant Bermudan spinner Dwayne Leverock has warned his World Cup rivals to stop making fun of her son's size.

Police constable Leverock weighs in at a huge 255 pounds (116kg) and found himself on the front pages of international newspapers last week when he took two wickets against England in a warm-up game.

But most editors concentrated on his girth rather than his spin.

The British tabloids, in particular, were merciless.

Headlines such as 'Bermuda Pie-angle', 'Lard Before Wicket' and 'Owfat' greeted his display.

"They are more focusing on his size than his achievements. I have been angry about it," said Allison Leverock, the mother of the player nicknamed 'Sluggo'.

"Some of them have been very cruel. They had a reference to Eddie Murphy's Nutty Professor. I don't think that's necessary."

"People see his size now. They probably don't know he's worked hard to lose a lot of weight. He was over 300 pounds at one point. He knew he had to be in a better condition to compete at a better level."

"He doesn't eat a lot of food - he picks. It's in his genes. He comes from a big family, both sides."

Mrs Leverock told the Royal Gazette in Bermuda that she had a theory why her son was able to snare the highly-prized English wickets of Kevin Pietersen and Paul Collingwood.

"I wonder if they said something to him?" she said.

"He's my hero. He was anyway. Now he's everyone's hero. I'm keeping all the papers for him and doing up a scrapbook."

Leverock, who will play in Bermuda's first ever World Cup game against 1996 champions Sri Lanka at the Queen's Park Oval

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5



PHOTO: AFP

BREAD N' MEAT: Australia opener Matthew Hayden cracks a square-cut off Scotland captain Craig Wright (R) during their World Cup match at Warner Park in St. Kitts on Wednesday.

Easy start for SL

AFP, Port of Spain



If ace Sri Lankan spinner Muttiah Muralidaran sends down a 'doosra' (the second one' in Hindi), a delivery which turns away from right-handers instead of coming in like a normal off-break.

It is not surprising because even quality batsmen in the world have fallen prey to the 'doosra' (the second one' in Hindi), a delivery which turns away from right-handers instead of coming in like a normal off-break.

And Bermuda are not to be blamed as they are making their debut on the biggest one-day stage, especially against a country which claimed the Cup in 1996 and boasts of more than one match-winner in their ranks.

A mismatch is predicted on a good Queen's Park Oval track here, but Bermuda hope to avoid an embarrassment by being competitive. Their recent form suggests that they will struggle to test the 1996 winners.

"We want to play good cricket and earn respect along the way," said Bermudian skipper Irving Romaine.

"The guys are here to play good cricket and to represent their country well. This is our first time at the World Cup and we are looking forward to every aspect of it."

Sri Lanka could not have asked for a better outing to begin their campaign and adjust to the conditions before taking on Test-playing nations India and Bangladesh in the remaining two games.

The top two sides will make it to the next Super Eight stage.

Sri Lanka skipper Mahela Jayawardene has already said his team's chances in the event will depend on how quickly they adjust to the conditions in the Caribbean.

"Playing in the sub-continent or away is not a big factor. It's a matter of peaking at the right time," said the Sri Lankan captain.

"Our prospects in the World Cup will depend on the team getting used to the conditions."

Sri Lanka have attractive stroke-makers in veteran Sanath Jayasuriya, Upul Tharanga, Jayawardene, Kumar Sangakkara and Marvan Atapattu, who are likely to feast on an inexperienced Bermudian attack.

The Bermudian batsmen also will not find the going easy against left-arm seamer Chaminda Vaas and Muralidaran, who are proven match-winners.

Coached by former West Indies batsman Gus Logie, Bermuda bagged the wooden spoon at the World Cricket League in Kenya recently when they won just one of their five matches.

Their form in the World Cup warm-up games was hardly encouraging as they lost to both England and Zimbabwe.

Bermuda have just one professional cricketer in batsman David

Arambagh split points with Rahmatganj

SPORTS REPORTER

Hemp who has represented English county Warwickshire and now leads Glamorgan.

They have a tidy left-arm spinner in Dwayne Leverock, who may be carrying extra weight but is known for keeping batsmen silent. He will be tested against a big side for the first time.

The tiny island nation, located in the Northern Atlantic Ocean, gained a place in the World Cup two years ago by finishing fourth in the ICC (International Cricket Council) Trophy.

All the four Group B sides have arrived here and had workouts in bright sunshine on Tuesday.

SQUAD

SRI LANKA (from): Mahela Jayawardene (capt), Kumar Sangakkara, Sanath Jayasuriya, Upul Tharanga, Marvan Atapattu, Tillakaratne Dilshan, Russel Arnold, Chamara Silva, Chaminda Vaas, Farveez Maharoof, Lasith Malinga, Dilhara Fernando, Nuwan Kulasekara, Muttiah Muralidaran, Malinga Bandara.

BERMUDA (from): Irving Romaine (capt), Dean Minors, Delyone Borden, Lionel Cann, David Hemp, Kevin Hurdle, Malachi Jones, Stefan Kelly, Dwayne Leverock, Saleem Mukuddem, Stephen Outerbridge, Oliver Pitcher, Clay Smith, Janeiro Tucker, Kwame Tucker.

Umpires: Daryl Harper (AUS) and Ian Howell (RSA)

LOCAL SNIPPETS

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Arju slammed a hundred as Kalatia High School outclassed Mohammadpur Government High School by 214 runs in the Standard Chartered Young Tigers National School Cricket tournament at the Kalindi cricket ground yesterday.

Kalatia rode on Arju's 133-ball 108 with the help of ten boundaries to pile up 355-9 before dismissing their opponents for 141.

In the day's other matches, West End High School (306-10) knocked down Manarat Dhaka International School (151-10) by 155 runs. Bangladesh Indian International School (230-10) earned a 100-run victory over Dhaka Government Muslim High School (130-10) and BKSP (155-3) secured an emphatic seven-wicket victory against Parzoar Kalindi High School (150-10).

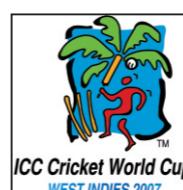
BKSP CUP

BKSP will host the first BKSP Cup

SEE PAGE 18 COL 4

Tamim jolts India

INTERNET, undated



Tamim Iqbal is a name that doesn't connect instantly to cricketing world but try putting the q u e r y to Indian cricketers and their faces would immediately betray an anxiety.

The 17-year-old batsman from Chittagong made his international debut only last month but his name is doing the rounds in Indian camp because of the thunderous innings of 46 he played against New Zealand in a practice game the other day.

Iqbal has respect for nobody and his assault on express Shane Bond that day carried Bangladesh beyond the line. It enhanced Bangladesh' reputation as a giant-slayer and India, understandably so, is working on its nails.

Thankfully, the professionalism of its

computer analyst Ramakrishnan is coming to its aid, as they have been able to lay hands on the footage on the boy wonder.

Ramki has been alert to keep an eye on Iqbal and prepare a file-dossier on him which is a bit of a surprise given that the practice game against New Zealand wasn't telecast at all. But "Ramki" had followed closely the Bangladesh-Zimbabwe encounters of last month and was thus able to get hold of footage of Iqbal's batting.

"I have done my job and now it's up to the team to take advantage of it," commented the affable "Ramki".

"Ramki" has also been good at preparing a CD of international cricketers which has now been handed over the Indian cricketers. In this compact disc, there is reference to every single cricketer - yes every single cricketer who is taking part in this World Cup.

In this compact disc, batting and bowling styles of cricketers have been neatly filed with particular references to their strong as well as weak points.

Tamim Iqbal and Mashrafe Bin Mortaza are two Bangladesh cricketers who are being talked of highly for their daredevil approach.

"If I face up to bowlers, I see the ball, not their faces," said a typically defiant Iqbal in response to his approach to batting.

"The difference between Bangladesh of today and one of immediate past is that this side believes it can win," said Upadhyay, sports editor of Prothom Alo.

"Earlier, the team was just happy if it could compete in the park - now this side goes into the middle with an attitude to win."

These are dangerous words for India who are known to suffer from early hiccups during a long campaign. Bangladesh could catch them on the wrong foot early in the competition and that's what is keeping the Indians on their toes.

Onus on Zimbabwe

AFP, Kingston



Understrength Zimbabwe and debutants Ireland may look like a lightweight contest in a World Cup

group which also includes mighty West Indies and Pakistan.

Ireland, like Bermuda in Group B, are playing in the World Cup for the first time, and Johnson readily acknowledges that his side is the least recognised of the four in the section, but they want to make a big impact in the competition.

"West Indies are going to be difficult to beat on home soil and they have that extra bit of an incentive to do well," he said.

"Pakistan are a world-class team with world-class performers, and Zimbabwe are capable of causing an upset, but there is no reason why we cannot cause an upset of our own."

"If a bit of luck goes our way, and we execute our plans, I believe we

can make it to the next round."

Zimbabwe's captain Prosper Utseya says it will be a little difficult planning for Ireland, since television footage and other information about them is not readily available.

"We have been seeking some information about them, but we feel no pressure because we have nothing to lose, since we just have to play to our best," he said.

"We have been working very hard for the last two months before we came here."

"We have taken some positives out of our warm-up games, so I feel we are moving in the right direction, and we just need to take that momentum into the competition."

Utseya noted that Zimbabwe have the reputation of causing an upset or two in previous World

SEE PAGE 18 COL 2



PHOTO: AFP

Title race still alive

SPORTS REPORTER



total on board after resuming the day on a precarious 87-7.

Uttam Sarker and Anwar Hossain, however, initiated a much better show for Dhaka, who were bundled out for 87 in their first essay. They put on 93 runs for the opening wicket to help the home side finish the day on 168-2, still 202 runs away from victory.

Uttam made 47 off 119 balls with help of six fours and wicketkeeper Anwar contributed a 168-5 that saw five boundaries. Skipper Al-Shahriar remained not out on 59.

CHITTAGONG-RAJSHAHI

Left-arm spinner Sohrabdi Shuvo picked up two more wickets yesterday to finish with five wickets as Rajshahi gained a meagre but very important 37-run first innings lead against Chittagong at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium.

The home team were all out for 310 to Rajshahi's 347 after resuming the day on 239-6.

Off-spinner Sabir Khan then grabbed four wickets but still, Rajshahi consolidated their position by reaching 211-6, a total lead of 248 runs, in their second innings at stumps. Rabiu Alam topscored 64 off 100 balls hitting half-dozen fours and one six.

SCORES IN BRIEF

RAJSHAHI: First innings 347 and second innings 211-6 in 63 overs (Rabiu 64, Junaid 27, Farhad 8, Naeem 27, Anisur 20, Musfiq 41 not out, Forhad Reza 10, Hasanuzzaman 12 not out, extras 2; Sajju 2-62, Sabir 4-89).

CHITTAGONG: First innings 310 all out in 108.2 overs (overnight 2 3 9 - 6)

SEE PAGE 18 COL 8

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TODAY'S MATCHES

Team	Time	Venue
Sri Lanka v Bermuda	7:30 pm	Trinidad & Tobago
Zimbabwe v Ireland	8:30 pm	Jamaica

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