

## Woolmer stands by minnows

AFP, Kingston

Pakistan coach Bob Woolmer believes non-Test playing nations should be at the World Cup despite a series of humiliating results here.

Three of the four heaviest defeats in the history of the World Cup came in the first three days of the 2007 tournament.

Sri Lanka beat Bermuda by 243 runs, South Africa romped to a 221-run win against the Netherlands, in a match reduced to 40 overs each because of rain, while Scotland lost by 202 runs to Australia.

But Woolmer, whose Pakistan side were facing Ireland on Saturday, insists that the Associate member sides, comprised of mostly amateur players, will only improve by being exposed to top-level competition.

"My view is that the World Cup is a wonderful incentive for these countries to improve their cricket internally and help grow the game worldwide," Woolmer wrote in his [www.cricinfo.com](http://www.cricinfo.com) column.

"Ultimately, it's only when the players in those countries are playing regular top-class cricket and are paid professionally that they will start to make inroads into the Full Member nations."

## Luuk sees

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West Indian great Sir Gary Sobers was the first to reach the landmark of playing for Nottinghamshire against Glamorgan at Swansea in 1968 with Malcolm Nash the bowler taking the punishment.

Former India all-rounder Ravi Shastri then equalled the feat against Raj Tilak for Bombay against Baroda in 1984.

However, both those achievements came in first-class matches, not international one-dayers.

Van Troost admitted it was embarrassing being captain as Gibbs unleashed all of his fire-power.

"What can you say? I told Daan after the third ball, 'try to bowl a quicker one' and he said, 'I just did.'

"There were a few good balls in it and a few shit balls. It's terrible to be a captain in that situation. The last couple of overs I didn't know where to put my players any more, or where to bowl, I thought I'll take the last over; someone's got to do it. Nightmare for a captain."

In all South Africa hit 18 sixes, another record.

When asked how van Bunge reacted in the dressing room, van Troost replied: "He had some flashbacks. He started laughing as he was sitting in the dressing-room. Serious!"

"What can we say? It's a nightmare. We can hide in our rooms or take the positives out of it, and show against Australia (their next opponents on Sunday) that we can play better than today (Friday)," said van Troost.

"They totally outplayed us, I was quite happy with the start actually (when they removed opener AB de Villiers for nought), but after that they were cruising. After we came off everyone was very negative."

## Rana laid

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matches for Bangladesh.

Coach Jalal Ahmed and Abahani officials Sajidul Islam Bobby also attended burial.

Bangladesh Cricket Board, Bangladesh Football Federation, Bangladesh Hockey Federation, Bangladesh Chess Federation, City Club, Brothers Union, Jatiya Samajtantrik Dal and Bangladesh Sports Journalist Association has expressed their condolences and deep shock at the untimely death of Rana and Setu.

The national cricketers in Port of Spain, chess players and school cricketers in different part of the country took part in a minute's silence before their respective games began.

## Styris, Oram

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Did not bat: Anderson, Panesar. Bowler O M R W Franklin 9 0 43 2 Bond 10 1 19 2 Oram 6 0 25 1 Patel 8 0 42 0 Vettori 10 0 53 0 Styris 7 0 25 2

**NEW ZEALAND** Vincent c Nixon b Anderson 0 Fleming c Joyce b Anderson 7 Taylor c Flintoff b Plunkett 0 Styris not out 87 McMillan c Dalrymple b Panesar 27 Oram not out 63 Extras: (b-2, lb-11, w-11, nb-2) 26 Total: (For 4 wkt in 41 overs) 210 Fall of wickets: 1-1, 2-3, 3-19, 4-72. Did not bat: McCullum, Vettori, Franklin, Bond, Patel.

Bowler O M R W Anderson 8 0 39 2 Plunkett 7 0 43 1 Flintoff 8 1 17 0 Collingwood 3 0 20 0 Panesar 10 0 47 1 Dalrymple 4 0 29 0 Pietersen 1 0 2 0 Result: New Zealand won by six wickets. Man-of-the-match: Scott Styris.

Toss: New Zealand. Umpires: Rudi Koertzen (RSA) and Asad Rauf (PAK). TV umpire: Peter Parker (AUS). Match referee: Mike Procter (RSA)



PHOTO: AFP

**TALKING ABOUT GIBBS?** Australian batsmen Michael Hussey (C) and Andrew Symonds (2nd from R) wait for their turn to bat during a training session in Saint Kitts and Nevis on Friday.

## LOCAL SNIPPET

SPORTS REPORTER

Badda High School clinched the zonal final of Standard Chartered Young Tigers National School Cricket competition at the East End ground yesterday.

Hasan Ahmed struck an unbeaten 119 to power Badda to a seven-wicket victory after Mugdappa were bowled out for 197 runs in 45.2 overs. Badda reached the target in 35.5 overs losing only 3 wickets.

Earlier, pace duo Mohammad Shaon and Delwar Hossain ripped open the Mugdappa top-order as they shared the first five wickets. Shaon took two while Delwar picked up three wickets.

Badda lost three quick wickets themselves but Hasan, coming in at number four, struck 17 boundaries and three sixes in his stunning knock that took him 108-balls to 50.

The three-day competition will conclude on March 24.

### UNDER-20 BASKETBALL

BKSP won the inaugural under-20 basketball competition when they beat Green Herald 68-66 at their basketball court in Savar.

Shetu scored 22 points for BKSP. In the third-place deciding match, Chittagong Basketball Training Centre beat St Gregory 68-51 earlier.

Hamid rallied from behind after

## Muktijoddha beat

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It was however Mohammedian, having four points to their account, who put on a spirited display and created more opportunities than their opponents and they were frustrated by Muktijoddha's second goalkeeper Titumir Chowdhury who salvaged his side at least on two occasions.

Creative but now a bit burly, midfielder Arman Miah however was about to draw the first blood for Muktijoddha in the very second minute, but his powerful right-footer from 40 yards narrowly missed the target.

Mohammedian however took some time to find the rhythm and their Nigerian recruit Emeka almost put one home, but the unmarked forward's header on his compatriot Paul's cross just flew away in the 22nd minute.

The Motijheel outfit then kept their opponents under constant threat from the right flank thanks to impressive performance by Zahid Hossain and Zumratul Hossain Mithu but Nakib, Emeka and Paul missed several opportunities to

having conceded the first game to Sultana but then won the next two games to clinch the tournament.

Shamima Akhter finished on third position.

### INTER CLUB TENNIS

Dhaka Club will play host to the second Dhaka Bank Independence Day inter-club tennis competition from March 19.

All the leading clubs will take part in the tournament which is expected to be inaugurated by Dhaka Club officials.

### NATIONAL KARATE

Four hundred players from 36 organisations will take part in the Navana Group 20th National Karate competition at the Chittagong Rifles Club from March 22.

The three-day competition will conclude on March 24.

### INTERNATIONAL SNIPPET

International Woman Master Rani Hamid won the national women's chess competition for a record seventeenth time after she defeated Sharmin Sultana 2-1 in the championship play-off game at the federation chess room.

Hamid rallied from behind after

cash in on the surge.

Trailing by 1-0, Mohammedian went all out in the second half to level the score and Paul unleashed a right-footed salvo in the 58th minute, but Titumir splendidly fisted the danger away.

Muktijoddha however left the field with dissatisfaction as Saiful Islam received a red card in the dying moments of the match due to hurling abuse towards referee Ramkrishna Ghosh.

Red card: Saiful Islam (Muktijoddha). Yellow cards: Rajani, Motiur Munna, Brahim, Bozziber and Alfaz (Muktijoddha), Biplob and Paul (Mohammedian).

Yellow cards: Rajani, Motiur Munna, Brahim, Bozziber and Alfaz (Muktijoddha), Biplob and Paul (Mohammedian).

**TEAMS**

**MUKTIJODDHA:** Titumir, Rajani, Hasan Al Mamun, Tito, Saiful, Arman (Biddut), Arman Aziz, Motiur Munna, Brahim, Alfaz (Kanchan) and Moni.

**MOHAMMEDAN:** Himel, Zahid, Arif, Peter Odafe, Biplob, Ripon, Emeka, Chibuike, Mithu, Nakib (Forhad) and Paul.

Referee: Ramkrishna Ghosh.

## Thanks to the wives

AFP, Kingston



Take a bow Vanessa, Geraldine and Maebh, the unheralded stars of the Irish cricket team.

Without them, Ireland may not have managed their thrilling last ball World Cup tie against Zimbabwe.

Irish girls all, Vanessa is the wife of skipper Trent Johnston, Geraldine is married to batsman Jeremy Bray, who made an unbeaten 115 in Thursday's match, while Maebh met Dave Langford-Smith when the bowler travelled to Ireland to attend Bray's wedding.

The common link? Johnston, Bray and Langford-Smith are all Australian.

Johnston met Vanessa when he was playing club cricket in Leinster but then moved to Sydney.

However, the couple returned to Ireland where Johnston was entitled to an Irish passport through marriage.

He then announced himself as an international player when he took two wickets in Ireland's famous win over the West Indies two years ago.

"Ireland is home now. I love the lifestyle -- the weather's different but the people are just as laid back," Johnston told the Sunday Tribune newspaper.

Bray was Australian player of the year at under-19 level and played youth tests for his country.

He played for New South Wales but went to Ireland when girlfriend, Geraldine, returned to care for her seriously ill father.

Langford-Smith arrived in Ireland for Bray's wedding and met Maebh.

"We went home for our honey-

### Passion rules

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"Andy Pick has been really good about defining our game -- what we need to do. Forget who's at the other end, whether we bowl or bat," said Cummins

"We know we're rank underdogs. We've got to hope that the gods are in our favour, that we are at the top of our game."

moon in December 2005 and after a few weeks I started to feel homesick -- for Ireland," said the bowler.

The trio's odyssey enjoyed a glorious stopping-off point here on Thursday with Ireland's last ball tie in the country's first World Cup match.

"We have played quite a few games which have gone to the last ball or the last over," said man-of-the-match Bray, the 12th opening batsman to carry his bat in a World Cup game.

"But the skipper has always told us to keep fighting and fighting even when our backs are to the wall."

Bray said he was looking forward to taking on Pakistan in the next match here on Saturday.

"They are a fantastic side but it's one-day cricket. If we play to our ability and they have an off-day, anything can happen."

### If it's your day ...

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and sixes being hit in one-day cricket by powerful batsmen with big bats.

"Yet no-one has ever hit six sixes in one over of any international match."

"The only people who have ever done it in first-class cricket are our own Gary Sobers and India's Ravi Shastri."

"To me this tournament, with our traditionally short boundaries, is the time to change that."

Commentator Barry Richards, one of the finest South African batsmen ever, said on commentary last Wednesday that he had picked up Gibbs' bat at a training session.

Richards told listeners on Test Match Special that he was amazed by the quantity of wood in the blade compared to the lightweight pick-up of the bat.

### A great relief

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seven, after Shane Bond struck twice in four balls to remove top-scorer Kevin Pietersen (60) -- the only England batsman to make a fifty -- and fellow dangerman Andrew Flintoff (nought).

The Kiwis then collapsed to 19 for three in turn before an unbroken stand of 138 between man-of-the-match Scott Styris (87 not out) and Jacob Oram (63 not out) wrapped up victory with nine overs to spare.

"It was a nervy win, a great relief and brilliant to get the two points in the bank," said Fleming. "It was a tense day. The first game could have a massive bearing on the next stage and to win it was a great relief."

He added: "It was a poor top-order display that put the pressure smack back on us but we responded well."

Fleming also praised fast bowler Bond.

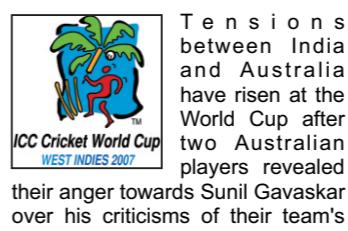
"Shane's ability to change his pace was very effective. To get two of the big guns, Kevin Pietersen and Andrew Flintoff, so quickly, was the turning point."

"That really cut down a 250 par score to 210. Flintoff and Pietersen, coming to the end of an innings, can be incredibly dangerous."

New Zealand's next game is against Kenya on Tuesday.

## Sunny in hot water

AFP, Melbourne



Tensions between India and Australia have risen at the World Cup after two Australian players revealed their anger towards Sunil Gavaskar over his criticisms of their team's behaviour, reports said here Saturday.

Former India captain Gavaskar hit a raw nerve here by linking the death of former Test cricketer David Hookes, who died after he was punched outside a Melbourne hotel, with the treatment the Australians could expect if they behaved as boorishly in a bar as he claimed they did on the field.

Batsman Brad Hodge, who was coached by Hookes in Victoria and is a member of Australia's World Cup squad in the Caribbean, was stony-faced when asked about Gavaskar's comments.

"Pretty disappointed. I'm disappointed about comments made about my former coach David Hookes," Hodge told Saturday's The Age newspaper.

"That's all I'm going to say about it."

The Age said the Australian players are anxious not to turn the feed into a World Cup distraction, but have found it hard to conceal their dismay, which has been conveyed to International Cricket Council chief executive Malcolm Speed.

Australia and India are seeded to meet in a potentially volatile Super Eight match in Antigua on March 31, a repeat of the 2003 World Cup final that has been given extra heat since Gavaskar escalated his attack on Ricky Ponting's team.