

## Reefat shares lead with 4 foreigners

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladeshi Grand Master Reefat Bin Sattar regained momentum in the title race in the 8th United Insurance and United Leasing Grandmasters Chess Tournament when he joined Iranian GM Ghaem Maghami Ehsan, GM Nguyen Anh Dung of Vietnam and Indian IM PDS Girinath atop the table after the seventh round yesterday.

Reefat beat local IM Abdullah Al Rakib at the NSC conference room to raise his tally to five points while Ghaem drew with Nguyen and Girinath beat IM Enamul Hossain Rajib.

Local FIDE Masters Sufian Shakil and Sheikh Nasir Ahmed and Pakistani International Master Mahmood Lodhi followed the leaders with 4.5 points each.

Nasir drew with GM Gopal of India, Lodhi beat Lalith Babu and Shakil beat Monir Hossain.

## ICC tweaks Powerplay rule

CRICINFO, undated

Teams will be allowed an additional fielder outside the 30-yard circle during the second or third Powerplay, the International Cricket Council's Cricket Committee has recommended after their two-day meeting in Dubai.

The committee, chaired by former Indian captain Sunil Gavaskar, came up with a number of recommendations on issues related to ODI regulations, ball tampering, glue on pitches, volume of cricket, international umpiring and the role of the television umpire.

While they felt that the use of Powerplays should continue they resolved that an additional fielder (making three in total instead of the current limit of two) should be allowed outside the outer ring during either of the last two Powerplays. Also it was decided to try out the idea of the captain of the batting side being able to choose when to take one of the Powerplays. It is set to be trialled in Australia; any other member country wanting to try out the new rule was also permitted to do so.

The committee came up with a number of recommendations with relation to ball tampering and stated that the following actions shall not be permitted: deliberately throwing the ball into the ground for purposes of roughing it up, applying any artificial substance to the ball and applying any non-artificial substance for any purpose other than to polish the ball, lifting or otherwise interfering with any of the seams of the ball, and scratching the surface of the ball with finger or thumb nails or any implement.

The use of adhesives in the preparation of pitches for international matches should be discontinued, the committee ruled. Polyvinyl Acetate adhesives had been used during last year's Champions Trophy in India for the purpose of holding the pitches together.

## T20 games in Toronto

CRICINFO, undated

Toronto could host a Twenty20 tournament involving Pakistan, West Indies and Canada in August. If plans go ahead, the teams will play some warm-up matches ahead of the Twenty20 World Cup in South Africa the following month.

Contrary to other reports, however, nothing has been set in stone. A spokesman for the Canada board told Cricinfo there had been preliminary discussions with the West Indies Cricket Board (WICB). "The CCA is most certainly supportive of the proposed event," he said, "particularly as we believe the 20/20 format is ideal for the North American market which is geared to three-hour Major League Baseball games."

"But, as yet, nothing is finalised. The prime consideration is the securing of global television rights -- which are not yet in place."

The CCA had held preliminary discussions with the WICB and it is understood that the WICB has also been in contact with Pakistan's board about the same event.

The tournament would have many benefits, not least for West Indies and Pakistan on a playing level. Pakistan have only played two Twenty20 matches to date, while West Indies have only played one.

Canada haven't played any, nor are they in the World Cup, but they would benefit financially. Another plus for them is that cricket in North America would be promoted at the same time.



PHOTO: STAR

Bangladeshi IM Enamul Hossain Rajib (L) and Girinath of India concentrate on their moves during their board of the United Leasing and Insurance Grand Masters' chess tournament at the NSC conference room yesterday.

## Younis not considered

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Younis Khan is unlikely to captain Pakistan, not at least under the current administration. Younis declined the captaincy when it was offered to him after the World Cup, the second time he had walked away from the position in the last seven months.

Younis had been Pakistan's vice-captain for the two years leading into the Caribbean tournament and was widely expected to take over the lead role from Inzamam-ul-Haq. He was eventually convinced to lead Pakistan during the Champions Trophy last year by Nasim Ashraf, the board chairman, after walking away from the post the previous day. He was the preferred choice of many, including Ashraf before Shoaib Malik was appointed.

While fully backing Malik's appointment, Ashraf expressed his disappointment at Younis's decision to scupper the board's succession plan. "To be honest, yes (I was disappointed)," he told Cricinfo.

## Samuels in for Sarwan

Cricket

BBC ONLINE, undated

West Indies have called up batsman Marlon Samuels to replace injured Rammrann Sarwan for the remainder of the Test series in England.

Sarwan is returning home after hurting his shoulder while fielding during the second Test defeat at Headingly.

Vice-captain Daren Ganga is set to take over as skipper and Samuels will fill the gap in the middle order batting.

He was a surprise omission from the original squad but has a modest Test record, averaging 28 after 23 matches.

The 26-year-old Jamaican has failed to build on the promotion shown when he made 104 against India in Calcutta five years ago.

He is, however, a regular in the West Indies one-day side and the selectors hope he now has the maturity to help plug the gap left by Sarwan's injury and the retirement of Brian Lara.

The squad for two Twenty20 internationals against England and

Younis had been groomed for this position and he also deserved an automatic place in the team, just like Shoaib Malik," he added. "Younis has got leadership quality and it was part of a succession plan that the board had put in place. When he did that after the World Cup, I think it was because of personally taking that performance to heart too much and he was mentally I think depressed about it." By suggesting that Malik could remain captain for the next three World Cups, Ashraf has seemingly closed the door on Younis returning as captain at least under his tenure.

Since the decision, Younis has been playing for Yorkshire, choosing to make himself unavailable for the Abu Dhabi series against Sri Lanka. His refusal to play in the three-match series and be unavailable till September for Pakistan, while turning out for a county side, irked the PCB officials.

But Ashraf asserted that though he will appear for Pakistan again, he won't be captain, that has been decided. But in terms of playing I hope that he makes himself available and that he continues to play

for Pakistan."

Ashraf revealed that Younis had sought, and been granted, permission to be unavailable till September, but added, "I want to also make it clear that people have to make themselves available first for Pakistan and then for anything else."

Ashraf also cleared up the confusion surrounding Shoaib Akhtar's withdrawal from the Afro-Asia Cup. Shoaib had initially said he was keen and fit to play for the Asia squad, though he had also preferred to skip the Abu Dhabi series. He was subsequently dropped from the Asia side on fitness grounds and Ashraf confirmed that the Shoaib was not fully fit yet.

"If anybody is not fit to play for Pakistan they are not fit to play elsewhere. Shoaib Akhtar had told me he was not fit to play in Abu Dhabi. He told me that he would be fit by September and that is a great motive for him. We didn't want him to get injured in the Afro-Asia tournament. But our policy is very clear: if you are not fit to play for Pakistan you cannot play anywhere else."

## Cremer leaves club in lurch

CRICINFO, undated

Zimbabwe's Graeme Cremer has been slammed by an Oxfordshire club side after he failed to honour an agreement to play for them this summer.

According to the Oxford Mail, Cremer had signed a contract to play and coach at Aston Rowant and was due to make his debut this weekend. But when club officials tried to contact him to confirm travel arrangements, they received a text message from Cremer saying he was no longer coming.

Paul Humphreys, Aston Rowant's captain, told the newspaper that the club was considering writing to the ICC for advice. "I've been told that there is no point in going to Zimbabwe Cricket because we won't get anything out of them," said Humphreys. "We could take it up with him because he has already broken his contract. We are out of pocket as a club and it is hugely frustrating for us."

"It's a bit of a muddle. We've been trying to get to the bottom of it. Two weeks ago he was selected to play for Zimbabwe A after being out of favour for a couple of years. Because he had already signed for us, he said it would be beneficial for him to play in the UK."

But Zimbabwe Cricket is blocking its cricketers from playing abroad, and all those who took part in the World Cup were forced to sign contracts agreeing not to seek overseas employment or they would have been dropped. Last summer several players, including Terry Duffin and Ed Rainsford, played for UK clubs.

Cremer did not sign such a contract, but it seems he changed his mind about playing for Aston Rowant once he was picked to represent Zimbabwe A against a touring Kenya Select XI. It is reported that he was told in no uncertain terms by Oziias Bvute, ZC's managing director, that if he joined an English club then he was finished as far as Zimbabwe cricket was concerned.

However, Cricinfo has learned that Cremer failed to advise the club even though he knew he would not be coming more than a week before he texted them. "I just checked with him on Wednesday that he was OK," Humphreys said.

three one-dayers which follow will be announced on Saturday.

Ganga, meanwhile, spoke to reporters on the eve of his team's match against an MCC XI at the Racecourse Ground, Durham.

There, he will face a side including Sri Lanka captain Sanath Jayasuriya and Sir Viv Richards' son Mali, currently opening the bowling for UCCE.

Ganga, still officially in the role of acting captain, said: "We have put what happened in Headingly behind us. If we don't make the same mistakes again, we're heading in the right direction."

"(Captaincy) is a very big challenge. I did not really think about it while being vice-captain but these things happen in cricket and it's an opportunity for me to lead the guys."

"It's about my philosophies and the way I see things as a leader, but the coach and the management staff share the same vision and it's very important for us to work together as a team."

"If we can support each other and work together in harmony that's the only way we're going to go forward."

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The national camp for the series will start from June 7, three days after the announcement of the team.

The Tigers are expected to fly to Colombo on June 17.

## Sinclair could leave NZ

CRICINFO, undated

Mathew Sinclair is considering a move to England, Australia or South Africa after being dumped from New Zealand's list of contracted players for the second time. Sinclair is one of only three New Zealand batsmen to have scored two or more Test double-centuries but he was overlooked in the 20-man squad as the selectors instead chose a backup wicketkeeper, Gareth Hopkins.

Sinclair had been on the outer since losing his national contract in 2005 but regained it last year and was recalled to the Test side for the home series against Sri Lanka in December. It was Sinclair's first taste of Test cricket since late 2004 and although he made only 36, 4, 6 and 37, he was not expecting to be discarded so soon.

"Obviously, with the big workload of Tests ahead, it did surprise me," Sinclair told the New Zealand Herald. "I thought if I was the incumbent, possibly they would carry on with me. As I've just found out, nothing's guaranteed. I'd love to be able to carry on here, but deep down I feel that it's for me."

Because Sinclair, 31, is considered a Test-only batsman, he was always going to struggle to earn enough points in New Zealand's ranking system when many players are viewed as Test and one-day cricketers. Sinclair, who was born in Australia, is now considering his options.

"I've been scarred twice now by the selectors and I really don't see much of a future for me here," Sinclair said in The Press. "I guess it's time to start thinking seriously about my future and whether I want to continue playing cricket and I'm sure the general public would understand that."

Although he has a respectable Test record of 1448 runs at 35.31, Sinclair's domestic season in 2006-07 was disappointing. He managed only 375 runs at 34.09 for Central Districts in the State Championship.

Inzy days over?

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"Inzamam will certainly get a central contract if he is among the shortlist finalised by the selectors," Naqmi said on Friday.

"The selectors will give us at least 30 names and we will then pick the best 20 for the year old new contracts," he said, adding the new contracts would be approved by the board's ad-hoc committee at a meeting in Dhaka on June 16 and would be given out by July 1.

Inzamam announced his retirement from one-day internationals and stepped down as captain after Pakistan were eliminated in the first round of the World Cup. The 37-year-old, however, expressed his wish to continue playing Test cricket.

To be

FROM PAGE 17

is likely to appoint two local coaches.

Former national coach Sarwan Imran and ex-national cricketer Dipu Roy Chowdhury are leading the race.

Youshny made it through to face Federer by outlasting 2003 champion Juan Carlos Ferrero of Spain 6-7(3), 7-6(7/3), 6-2, 6-2.

Federer has won all nine matches he has played against Youshny, but he insisted he would not make the mistake of underestimating his opponent.

"Although I have never lost to him, I have a lot of respect for his game. I like the way he plays, so I

## No Tests for Zimbabwe

Cricket

BBC ONLINE, undated

Zimbabwe should not be allowed to return to Test cricket until the team improves its standard of performance.

The ICC's Cricket Committee concluded that to allow Zimbabwe to resume five-day matches risked undermining the integrity of Test cricket.

But its recommendations in relation to Zimbabwe have still to be ratified by the full ICC Board and the Chief Executive's Committee when they meet in London next month.

Zimbabwe have not played Tests since September 2005 but are still permitted to take part in one-day internationals, including the recent World Cup in the Caribbean.

However, the MCC's World Cricket Committee recently called for Zimbabwe's one-day status to be suspended as well.

"Once the social unrest has been addressed, the ICC should assist

Zimbabwe in rebuilding as a serious cricket nation," said a statement.

"While it is not for the committee to make judgements on the politics of any particular country, we believe that the decline in the standard of cricket in Zimbabwe is directly related to the political situation there."

"An improvement is unlikely while the current regime is in place."

The MCC (Marylebone Cricket Club) committee was set up to discuss global cricket issues but has no legislative power in the game.

The MCC, founded in 1787, is responsible for safeguarding cricket's rules and spirit, though the world game is run by the ICC (International Cricket Council).