

Camp starts sans Sachin

CRICINFO, undated

Sachin Tendulkar and Wasim Jaffer missed out on the opening day of the fitness-specific camp for the batsmen that kicked off in Bangalore at the National Cricket Academy (NCA) on Saturday. Tendulkar, who has been allowed to miss the start of the camp "for personal reasons", is scheduled to join on June 10 while Jaffer, who is already in Bangalore, has been diagnosed with flu and is unlikely to attend the camp.

The nine batsmen who were present and Sreesanth, the lone bowler, underwent an indoor training programme on the first day, one that began with a yoga session in the team hotel. The players then moved into the indoor training facility at the NCA where they underwent drills to enhance core stability, associated with the torso and spine regions, and shoulder stability. There were multi-stage fitness tests too (also called bleep tests) and skin fold measurements, an indicator of the fat composition in the body.

Physical trainer Gregory King is overseeing the camp, one of the three to be conducted ahead of India's tour of Ireland and England. Sreesanth was expected to attend the first two days of the camp – since his selection for the Afro-Asia Cup Twenty20 match meant he missed out on the bowlers' camp in Mysore. His fast-bowling partner VTV Singh, who had a viral attack last evening, was admitted to a local hospital but is expected to be discharged on Sunday.

Four Indian batsmen -- Sourav Ganguly, Virender Sehwag, Mahendra Singh Dhoni and Yuvraj Singh -- who're currently involved in the ongoing Afro-Asian Cup, are expected to join the camp after the three-match series concludes on Sunday. The batsmen present at the camp on the first day were Rahul Dravid, VVS Laxman, Gautam Gambhir, Robin Uthappa, Dinesh Mongia, Dinesh Karthik, Rohit Sharma, Mohammad Kaif and S Badrinath.

This camp follows one that was held specifically for the bowlers, in Mysore from June 4 to 8. It will be followed by a conditioning camp from June 13 to 16 at the NCA, and will be attended by players selected to represent India in the tours of Ireland and England. These teams will be selected, in Delhi on June 12.

ICC considers WC duration

PTI, Dubai

After the criticism about the World Cup in the Caribbean stretching for too long, the International Cricket Council is looking to shorten the tournament to five weeks in its future editions.

"Yes, we are looking at the duration of future World Cups," ICC Chief Executive Malcolm Speed said.

"I'm hopeful that we can find a format that gets us down to five weeks. There was a lot of criticism of the length of the event. We looked at that. We accept that. We will revise it and try to get it down to five weeks," Speed said.

However, he said there would not be a reduction in the number of matches.

"I think we will end up playing just as many matches, but will do it in a shorter format."

Worst is past

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come to Wembley. If we play like we did against Brazil in our first game there, we can beat all of them.

"As for finishing top, I still think the group is wide open."

"We've still got a lot of big games to play in this group. I'm confident we can beat all those sides. The team has shown over the years that when we are under pressure, we can dig out a result."

And Gerrard is confident the return of Michael Owen from injury will help England's chances.

"Michael is a fantastic goalscorer and he has got a great record at this level. Any team that has got Michael Owen fit, sharp and ready, is going to be stronger."

"We have missed him, of course we have, and any side having people like Michael available can only benefit."

For a noble

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or national charities but as a team we decided to use our role as England footballers to not only contribute money and our time but to also help raise awareness of particular issues.

"Every player to a man is looking forward to supporting our charity."

The sum of one million pounds will primarily be raised through the players donating all of their England match fees to the players' charity, but it's expected the minimum figure will be exceeded by additional charitable activities undertaken by the players.

The Team England Footballers Charity is also planning to launch its own grassroots initiative to help disadvantaged youth teams across the country.



PHOTO: AFP
HOSTILE: England batsman Kevin Pietersen is dismissed after a Dwayne Bravo bouncer hit him on his helmet and dropped on the stumps during the third day of the third Test at Old Trafford on Saturday.

Gough breaks hand

Cricket

AFP, Manchester

Former England fast bowler Darren Gough had his best first-class figures for nine years Friday but suffered a broken bone in his bowling hand, which could keep him out for up to a month, during Yorkshire's First Division County Championship match against Kent.

Gough, who returned from Essex at the start of the season to captain his native county, took three wickets for four runs in only six deliveries to finish with six for 47 as Championship leaders Yorkshire bowled out hosts Kent for 292 on the third day of four at Tunbridge Wells.

But after an X-ray revealed Gough's injury, Kent recovered to 149 for one at stumps with England batsman Robert Key 72 not out and former South Africa international Martin van Jaarsveld unbeaten on 56.

Sri Lanka great Muttiah Muralidaran took his 20th five-wicket haul in 23 Championship appearances as Lancashire eyed victory against Durham on Saturday's final day.

Lancashire reached 310 for seven in their second innings, a lead of 365 after Muralidaran took five for 95 in Durham's 312.

Elsewhere champions Sussex need eight wickets for victory on the final day at home to neighbours

Hampshire with the visitors set an unlikely 500 to win.

Sussex captain Chris Adams scored a hundred but former Zimbabwe batsman Murray Goodwin fell for 99.

Worcestershire, who made a mammoth 701 for six declared against Surrey featuring captain Vikram Solanki's 232 and 124 from Australia's Phil Jaques, could yet force their first win of the season.

Surrey's Jon Batty scored 114 at New Road but the visitors still had to follow-on and now need a further 273 just to make Worcestershire bat again.

Basement club Glamorgan, bottom of the Second Division table, secured their first home win for three years with a 55-run victory against Northamptonshire, who will need another 298 on the final day to make their opponents bat again.

Spinner Dean Cosker took five wickets with Australian David Hussey top scoring in Nottinghamshire's second innings with 63.

South African seamer Charl Willoughby took five for 82 as Somerset beat Leicestershire by an innings and 259 runs at Taunton.

Somerset's huge 675 for five declared included 182 from Marcus Trescothick, still absenting himself from England duty on health grounds, and 114 from Australia's Cameron White.

Gloucestershire, who followed-on, managed a draw away to Derbyshire in a match where New Zealand's Hamish Marshall scored

120 in what was their eighth straight day of cricket.

Essex are on course for victory against Northamptonshire, who will need another 298 on the final day to make their opponents bat again.

High Commissioner Anwar Choudhury will host the event at his residence in Baridhara to encourage 35 young footballers aged between 12 and 14.

UK-based Canary Wharf launched a new football project in Bangladesh in August 2006 to develop the skills of young footballers of Bangladesh.

Under the project, they selected 35 promising players, among some 6,000 participants, who are now undergoing a four-year training programme at BKSP.

RATING CHESS

Destiny International Rating Chess Tournament begins today at the Bangladesh Chess Federation hallroom.

More than a hundred players are expected to take part in the competition. A total of Tk 64,000 will be distributed among the winners as prize money.

CORPORATE FOOTBALL

Twenty-four corporate houses will take part in the BRAC Bank second five-a-side corporate football tournament at the International School Dhaka (ISD) gymnasium today.

IDLC, Aarong, Asiatic, Nestle, HSBC, Radio Foorti, Multimode Group, Radisson Hotel, BRAC Bank, Unilever, Ice Technology, ISD, Scholastica Group, Grey, Rahimafrooz, Bangla Cat, Ispahani Group, Mojo, Square Group, Aqua Paints, Banglalink, Flora Telecom, GrameenPhone and Dhansiri Media are the teams which will take part in the knockout format of the competition.

Event management firm Excalibur Entertainment is in charge of organising the entire affair.

GAYLE REJECTED

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This raises serious issues about who selects not only the captain but also the team. It is reported that the selectors have no problem with the decision to veto Gayle but they feel strongly that the WICB should not involve itself in choosing the squad.

"Ganga is not in the ODI team. If the board picks him as captain, then they are essentially picking the team," a well-placed source with knowledge of the situation told Caribbeancricket.com.

There is also a row over the A team squad for the tour of Zimbabwe. The selectors picked Ryan Hinds as vice-captain to Sylvester Joseph only for the WICB to veto it and pick Narsingh Deonarine.

Ze Roberto

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confirmed Thursday agreement had been reached with the Brazilian, but on condition that he quits international football.

"We feel that it wouldn't be reasonable for a player of his age to make the return trip between Germany and Brazil five times a season to play for the national side," said Hoeneß.

Ze Roberto was one of the few players to remain in the national side after the clearout following their 2006 World Cup quarterfinal defeat to France.

He has won 83 caps and scored six goals for Brazil.

Ze Roberto played his last match Wednesday for Santos.

He joined the Brazilian side after his four-year contract with Bayern ended last June, having previously played four seasons at Bayer Leverkusen.

England near series

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A Pietersen drive go straight through his legs at mid-off for four.

The only wicket to fall before lunch saw England captain Michael Vaughan caught and bowled by Test debutant Darren Sammy for 40.

England had a first innings lead of 141 after dismissing West Indies for 229 in reply to their 370, the tourists losing their last six wickets for 13 runs.

Gloucestershire, who followed-on, managed a draw away to Derbyshire in a match where New Zealand's Hamish Marshall scored

ENGLAND: Second innings (over-night 34-1)

Strauss lbw b Edwards 0

Cook not out 89

Vaughan c and b Sammy 40

Pietersen hit wkt b Bravo 68

Collingwood not out 3

Extras: (b-2, lb-3, w-6, nb-12, pen-5) 28

Total: (For 3 wkt in 63 overs) 228

Fall of wickets: 1-1, 2-99, 3-221.

To bat: Bell, Prior, Plunkett, Harmison, Sidebottom, Panesar.

Bowler O M R W

Edwards 10 0 46 1

Taylor 10 0 42 0

Collymore 7 2 24 0

Sammy 11 2 35 1

Chanderpaul 10 1 33 0

Bravo 8 2 14 1

Gayle 7 0 24 0

Toss: England

ENGLAND: First innings 370 (I Bell 97, Cook 60; Collymore 3-60, Edwards 3-94)

WEST INDIES: First innings 229 (Chanderpaul 50; Panesar 4-50, Sidebottom 3-48)

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