

## Harbhajan back to Surrey

AFP, London

Harbhajan Singh has rejoined Surrey and will link-up with the London-based club on July 2, the county announced Sunday.

The India off-spinner has been overlooked for his country's forthcoming three-Test and seven one-day international tour of England.

Now, with Surrey's Pakistan all-rounder Azhar Mahmood set to play in September's World Twenty20 in South Africa, officials have decided to bring back Harbhajan to The Oval where he played for the county in 2005.

Surrey are second bottom in the first division of the County Championship and have yet to win in the tournament this season.

"Let's be honest, Surrey haven't had the start to the season that we would like," said cricket manager Alan Butcher.

"We feel that a world-class spinner is an important part of improving our performance in the second half of the year," the former Surrey and England batsman added.

"Harbhajan is a great wicket taker, and with the club expecting Azhar Mahmood to play for Pakistan in the Twenty20 World Cup later this year, we no longer have to worry about a possible gap in our line up from August onwards."

"Azhar has made a great contribution to the club, and it's clear that international duty is a distinct possibility for him later this year, so we want to be prepared."

Harbhajan said: "This is obviously a great opportunity for me personally, and I can't wait to get out there and play some great cricket for Surrey. I want to make every performance count, with both bat and ball, and really look forward to catching up with my old team-mates soon."

The 26-year-old bowler, nicknamed 'The Turbanator' has taken 238 wickets in 57 Tests at an average of just under 30 apiece.

## Stoner reigns supreme at Donington

AFP, Donington

Casey Stoner of Australia extended his overall world championship lead after claiming his fifth victory of the season at the British MotoGP here on Sunday.

The Ducati rider finished ahead of American Colin Edwards, who started from pole position on his Yamaha, with Australian Chris Vermeulen of Suzuki third on a circuit made slippery following earlier rain at Donington Park.

Stoner added to his wins in Qatar, Turkey, China and Catalunya two weeks ago to extend his lead on Italian Valentino Rossi in the world standings after the Yamaha rider crossed in fourth position.

Last year's winner Dani Pedrosa of Spain finished eighth despite leading for the first four laps before Edwards took the lead which he held until mid-race when he took a bend too wide and was overtaken by Stoner.

Earlier Italian Honda rider Andrea Dovizioso scorched to victory under the rain in the 250cc category ahead of San Marino's Alex De Angelis and Hiroshi Aoyama of Japan.

## Trescothick

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season. I am improving and I'm certain I'm getting closer."

Trescothick also quit England's tour of India in February last year and he agreed he had to be willing to travel if he wanted an international recall.

"Clearly, if I want to continue my career I have to undertake another tour. But for now, if and when I get back to full fitness and I think I am okay and ready to play, I'll make myself available for England."

"If they don't pick me, that is just tough."



## Did U Know?

The shortest woman to play in the Wimbledon Championships was Miss C G Hoaing of Great Britain (1937-1938) who was just 4 feet 9 inches.



PHOTO STAR  
Bangladesh and Tangail striker Prince races past two Kishorganj defenders during their National Hockey Championship match at the Moulana Bhasani Stadium yesterday.

## Gs see off Ireland

Cricket

AFP, Belfast

Gautam Gambhir and Sourav Ganguly's unbroken stand of 162 saw India to a nine-wicket win under the Duckworth-Lewis method in the one-off one-day international against Ireland at Stormont here Saturday.

India, set a revised target of 171 in 39 overs after rain delayed the start of their reply by nearly three hours, finished on 171 for one with 25 balls to spare.

Man-of-the-match Gambhir was 80 not out and fellow left-hander Ganguly 73 not out after batting star Sachin Tendulkar was bowled off the last ball of the first over by 26-year-old one-day international debutant Roger Whelan.

Earlier, India's teenage leg-spinner Piyush Chawla took a career-best three wickets for 29 runs as Ireland were bowled out for 193 in 50 overs.

The 18-year-old Chawla's figures, in his second match at this level, topped the three for 37 he took on debut against Bangladesh in Dhaka in May.

"It will be a long tour so it's important to start off well," Gambhir, 25 told reporters. For any cricketer, not just me, it's nice to start well and I'm pleased I got the runs.

"It's not like in India where you can just go out there and play through the line of the ball," added Gambhir after his 22nd one-day international.

"I toured England with India so I know something about batting on these types of tracks. You want to start off a season on a high note and I'm happy about the way it's begun."

Ireland captain Trent Johnston, who made a valuable 34, said: "I thought we did pretty well to post 190 off 50 overs and the rain gave us 171 to defend which I thought was okay."

"Getting Tendulkar out first over, I thought something might happen here. I really did believe we had enough runs to do that but we just didn't ask enough questions and that was the disappointing thing."

Gambhir was not overawed by Tendulkar's early exit, clipping Whelan off his legs for four. He completed a 72-ball fifty featuring six fours before Ganguly reached the landmark, for the 68th time, in 79 deliveries.

The hosts were indebted to wicket-keeper Niall O'Brien's 52 and his stand of 48 with Johnston after they'd slumped to 121 for six following India captain Rahul Dravid's decision to field first.

Ireland, who produced the shock result of the World Cup when

beating Pakistan and advancing into the second round -- something India were unable to do after defeats by Bangladesh and Sri Lanka -- had just six survivors from their team in the Caribbean.

They struggled against the swinging ball before Chawla bowled Gary Wilson for 13 to leave them 75 for four.

Chawla, the successor to Anil Kumble, now retired from one-day internationals, then removed Kevin O'Brien via a top-edged a sweep to RP Singh.

Andrew White became his third wicket, caught off a thick edge by Karthik and that meant the Australian-born Johnston came in with Ireland on 111 for six. Johnston though pulled Sreesanth for Ireland's first six, in the 41st over.

Meanwhile O'Brien, completed a 78-ball fifty by driving left-arm quick Singh for his fourth four. But next ball the left-hander got a leading edge and was caught by debutant Rohit Sharma.

This was India's first match of a

Sunday.

### SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard in the lone one-day international between Ireland and India at Stormont in Belfast on Saturday:

**IRELAND:** 193 all out in 50 overs (N O'Brien 52, Johnston 34; Sreesanth 3-50, Chawla 3-29)

### INDIA

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Ganguly not out	73			
Tendulkar b Whelan	4			
Gambhir not out	80			
Extras: (lb-7, w-7)	14			
Total: (For 1 wkt in 34.5 overs) 171				
Fall of wickets: 1-9.				
Did not bat: David, Sharma, Urvraj Singh, Karthik, Chawla, Agarkar, RP Singh, Sreesanth.				

**Result: India won by nine wickets (D/L method)**



PHOTO: AFP

Man-of-the-match Gautam Gambhir takes off for a single after working the ball on the off-side during his unbeaten knock of 80 against Ireland during the one-day international at Stormont in Belfast on Saturday.

tour that features three Tests and seven one-day internationals against England starting in July. Ireland are due to play South Africa in a one-day international here on Sunday.

India and South Africa then face one another in three one-day internationals at Stormont on Tuesday, Friday and a week on

### Man-of-the-match: Gautam Gambhir.

Toss: India  
Umpires: Billy Bowden (NZL) and Mark Benson (ENG)  
TV umpire: Aleem Dar (PAK)  
Match referee: Alan Hurst (AUS)

## Johnston's demand

Cricket

AFP, Belfast

Ireland captain Trent Johnston said it was vital a professional structure was put in place for the country's cricketers as their present amateur status made it "impossible" to compete against the world's leading sides.

Ireland caused one of the shocks of the World Cup by beating Pakistan in March in Jamaica and advancing into the second round.

But, in their first one-day international since their Caribbean adventure, they went down to a nine-wicket defeat against India -- who failed to qualify for the World Cup Super Eights after losing to Bangladesh in their pool -- at Stormont here Saturday.

Irish cricket's lack of strength in depth was exposed by the absence of six members of the squad that beat both Pakistan and Bangladesh at the World Cup.

Eoin Morgan, Jeremy Bray, Boyd Rankin, David Langford-Smith and Andre Botha weren't available against India along with the Mooney brothers.

Rankin, Langford-Smith and Botha were injured but Morgan opted to play for English county Middlesex instead and Bray asked not to be considered.

"It's very difficult. We are amateur cricketers," said Johnston. "We get together for two or three hours a week as a squad to train and it's impossible to compete against these guys."

"I think you can see from our performances in the World Cup when we were 24/7 cricket, we were a different side. There's a lot more pressures when you are back here, you've got kids, you've got families."

"We've got to have professional contracts put in place so players can get back to the standard we set in the West Indies," the 33-year-old Australia-born all-rounder added.

Ireland, before the World Cup, enjoyed a training camp in South

Africa before taking part in a triangular series in Zimbabwe and the International Cricket Council World Cricket League in Kenya.

"Four months we were away playing cricket and you could see in our performance over there we were a much better team," said Johnston.

"Getting Tendulkar out first over, I thought something might happen here," said Johnston.

"But we are in a rebuilding process. Our two opening bowlers (Whelan and Thinus Fourie) have probably played three or four games in total between them for Ireland."

"To open the bowling against Ganguly and Tendulkar is a huge step up."

Johnston added: "We've got good young cricketers coming through. We've got to come back tomorrow (Sunday) and put in a good performance."

## Rajshahi, Tangail make flying start

UNB, Dhaka

Rajshahi and Tangail made flying start to the 27th National Hockey Championship crushing their rivals in the first appearances at the Moulana Bhasani National Stadium yesterday.

Rajshahi, riding on two hattricks by Panna and Krishna, earned a huge 9-1 victory over Comilla after dominating the first half by 4-0 in the afternoon.

Panna scored the day's first hattrick with three quick goals within 14 minutes while Krishna scored the second one with four goals, including the last three in a row. Shishu and Ronny netted the remaining two goals for Rajshahi.

Tabu netted the consolation goal for Comilla in the second half.

In another match of the day, a fine hattrick by Taifur Rahman enabled Tangail to earn a massive 12-1 victory over Kishorganj at the same venue in the afternoon.

Taifur scored the day's third hattrick scoring five goals. Asif scored three, Tuhin netted two, Ashiquzzaman and Ariful scored one each for the winners while Mamun netted the lone goal for the losers.

Faridpur got walkover against Sylhet as the latter side did not field their team.

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