

3-dayer drawn in Colombo

UNB, Dhaka

The three-day match between touring Bangladesh Under-19 team and Sri Lanka U-19s ended in a draw at the Colts Cricket ground in Colombo yesterday.

The hosts, who scored 329 runs in the first innings, resumed the second innings on the final day on overnight 41-1 and declared at 178-4.

The Bangladesh U-19s, who were all out for 228 in the first innings, reached 222 for six at stumps.

Mahmudul Hasan scored 81 not out, Nasir 64 and Mithun Ali 23 for the tourists.

Bangladesh will play their Sri Lankan counterparts in the next three-dayer beginning on July 12.

DRU cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Channel i thumped Bhorer Kagoj by 29 runs, Karatao handed a 19-run defeat to Sangram while Naya Diganta edged Inqulab by four runs at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium.

In other matches, CSB beat BSS by five wickets, New Nation defeated Manavzamin by same margin, Janakantha thrashed Bhorer Dak by 62 runs and Banglabazar defeated Amader Shomoy by three wickets.

Meanwhile, Amar Desh received full points against satellite TV channel Boishakhi who illegally fielded players who are not DRU members.

Bravo missing Ireland trip

BBC ONLINE, undated

All-rounder Dwayne Bravo has been ruled out of West Indies' trip to Ireland for a one-day series there which will also feature the Netherlands and Scotland.

The 23-year-old Trinidadian has stayed behind in London and will return home after treatment on an ankle injury.

"We're going to miss Dwayne but we decided against replacement because it is a short trip with only three games.

"We've had some good performances who did not get a chance in the one-dayers in England," coach David Moore said.

"Darren Sammy did well but unfortunately missed out in the ODIs and Austin Richards Jr and Lendl Simmons will also have a chance to stake their claims."

Selection

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Akram meanwhile, was not ready to explain their U-turn about the inform batsman, whose exclusion from the Test squad had raised a lot of eyebrows.

Chief selector Faruque then defended that Tushar was given enough chance but failed to prove his worth but suddenly, the selectors found that Tushar is an inform batsman who can rescue the team from batting debacles.

"Actually we considered him after our unexpected failure of the top order batting. We thought that Tushar would be a good choice to strengthen the batting," Akram told.

The selectors were also in confusion over the one-day fate of Habibul Bashar as they have actually no policy about the one-day team.

It has been all but confirmed that he will return home on conclusion of the Test series except one place. Bashar lost his captaincy mainly because of his poor form in limited-overs cricket and continued his bad patch in the Test series to jeopardise his chances to stay.

However, it was learnt that Faruque wants to see his last Test performance before deciding his one-day fate.

Kandy's favourite

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He was crazy about cricket but he hardly had any ambition with the game in the early days. I feel proud because of my son's simplicity," said the 65-year old, the owner of one of the big companies in Sri Lanka.

"You know we are Tamil but the masses love him very much regardless of caste and religion and everybody has taken him above all the controversy and conflicts. You can understand if I give you one example: few years back my driver was summoned to court because of some problem with his license but the judge simply released him when he learnt that he was the driver of Murali's father," said Muthiah.

"You know we sent him to England for higher study but he came back after a month as he thought that his career was not in studies but in cricket. He is a very responsible person and rarely gets upset, not even when he was in big trouble in Australia," he informed.

It is not hard to find out the house of Murali in the city as the Kundasale area is well known as a residence of the superstar of Sri Lanka cricket.

"Everybody knows the Muthiahs," confirmed the auto rickshaw driver, M Razeeq.



Jamie Murray of Great Britain and Jelena Jankovic of Serbia celebrate after defeating Jonas Bjorkman of Sweden and Alicia Molik of Australia in the mixed doubles' final at the Wimbledon on Sunday.

WI's KP plan worked

Cricket

AFP, Nottingham

Daren Powell has revealed how the West Indies deliberately targeted England batting star Kevin Pietersen in their decisive one-day international here at Trent Bridge.

South Africa-born Pietersen, ranked Sunday as the world's second-best one-day batsman behind Australia captain Ricky Ponting, failed to make much of an impression during the three-match series.

And on Saturday he was out for a second-ball no-hitter in Nottingham during West Indies' 93-run win which gave the tourists a 2-1 victory overall.

Powell produced a classic piece of fast bowling, softening up Hampshire shotmaker Pietersen with a first-ball bouncer before having him caught in the slips with a full-length delivery.

"After the first Test at Lord's (where Pietersen made a hundred), we realised that if we attacked him, he tried to go out of

his shell and it progressively worked for us in the one-day series. We attacked him a lot and it paid off for us," Powell explained.

"To me, he's the kind of person who doesn't like people to get on top of him. When he comes out to bat, I normally talk to him and stuff like that, tell him things that probably make him uncomfortable."

"This time I didn't do that. I bowled a sharp ball at him and give him a stare. Then I got my ball in the right area, he went and played a stroke and he nicked one."

Powell added he had tried to learn from some of the world's leading fast bowlers. "When you watch (South Africa's) Makhaya Ntini and Shaun Pollock, they just give a batsman a stare and the (Australia) great Glenn McGrath did the same thing. I just tried that and it worked."

The 29-year-old Jamaica quick put England, chasing 290 to win, even further on the backfoot by dismissing openers Matt Prior and Alastair Cook in an aggressive opening spell that saw the hosts slump to 33 for three.

Powell, named man-of-the-

match after finishing with four wickets for 40 runs added: "For the past couple of seasons representing the West Indies, when it's come to crucial games like this I haven't picked up any wickets at all, even in the last game of the World Cup (where England beat West Indies in Barbados)."

"On Friday night I sat in my hotel room and thought about what I had to do to create pressure and take early wickets."

"On Saturday morning, I assessed the wicket when our guys went out to bat and I realised I had to bowl straight and vary my pace. I thought about my game, and put the ball in the right areas."

Powell, who has previously expressed a desire to play county cricket, also revealed he'd been in talks with Welsh side Glamorgan.

"I'm still in negotiations. It would be nice to play some county cricket here whether it's Glamorgan or wherever."

"Playing county cricket, would help my game improve a notch for West Indies cricket as well. I just want to use it to propel my game to the next level."

Federer targets

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"He has 11 Grand Slams and he is very close to 14 but whether he wins 14, 16 or even 13, his tennis level is the best in history," said Nadal.

The Spaniard, who will return to the more familiar clay of Stuttgart next week before heading for the American hard court season, still boasts a better career record of eight wins against five defeats with Federer but refuses to even consider himself as an equal.

"I'm a better player than last year but you cannot compare me to Roger. I have three Grand Slams, he has 11. But I am young and I will keep practicing and trying to improve."

Despite the plaudits heading his way, Federer said he will take the All England Club this year was just his second since he walked away from the sport in 1981.

"It's very special when greats come and watch you," said Federer.

"I got very emotional in Australia last year when I won. Rod Laver gave me the trophy. Only then it sunk in that he was there."

"This was different. I didn't expect Bjorn to come down and give me the trophy, but I saw him up in the stands. Maybe it made me a bit more proud of myself."

Federer was in tears as he collapsed to the ground to celebrate his latest achievement but he knows that Nadal, four years younger, is improving year by year.

SLC body expanded

CRICINFO, undated

The Spaniard also proved on Sunday that he got closer to dethroning Federer as Wimbledon champion than the Swiss did to taking his French Open title which he has held for the last three years.

"He's playing phenomenal tennis," Federer said.

"He's definitely improved yet again. He had more of a game plan this year than he had last year. I think last year he came out, nothing to lose, kind of hit hard but didn't know why."

"This year around, he's changed his game a little bit. Plays maybe a bit more aggressive, knows the game of grass much better. That's why I think he's not only just a good clay court, he's a good all-around player."

"He deserves a title here. He's not getting any worse. It was a tough match and I have the highest respect for him."

Federer now turns his attention to defending his US Open title and he admits he still has plenty of ambitions left in the sport.

But with 11 Grand Slams under his belt, he also knows the pressure is off his shoulders as he remains comfortably the best player in the world.

"I haven't won Paris, I haven't won the Davis Cup, the Olympic Games," he said.

"I just want to enjoy tennis and not just put myself under pressure all the time. I'm just happy with such a great run, especially at Wimbledon, the most important tournament of my life. I'm loving every moment of it."

Dhaka Open tennis

UNB, Dhaka

Top-seed Amal Roy, Dipu Lal and Pritul Mandal moved into the semifinals of the men's singles of the Dhaka Open Tennis tournament winning their respective quarterfinals at the National Tennis Complex yesterday.

Amal Roy of Bashundhara Club beat Laxman Lal of American Club 6-3, 6-2, Dipu Lal (Nordic Club) defeated Delwar Hossain (NTC) 7-5, 7-5 and Pritul Mandal (BKSP) beat Tazmul Hossain (BKSP) 6-4, 6-4.

In the boys' singles (16 years), Mofazzel Hossain, Hanif Munna and Sabir qualified for the semis.

In the girls' singles (16 years), Kibria Aysha Zaman Bhabna, Aachal, Anika and Tasnova advanced to the last four.

In the boys' singles (13 years), Rustam, Biplob Ram, Jamil and Raisul booked the semifinal berths.

Rahul backs VVS

CRICINFO, undated

Rahul Dravid, the Indian captain, has backed VVS Laxman to compensate for past failings in England and produce a big series this time round.

In a largely bat-dominated series in 2002, Laxman made only one fifty in six innings, averaging a touch under 40, a record Dravid believes will be rectified this time. "I back Laxman to have a big tour this time. The last time he didn't have as great a tour as the other guys. I can see that he's determined to correct it this time. He looks hungry," Dravid said.

Laxman began his tour in good shape with a sparkling 95 on the second day of a tour game against Sussex at Hove and is likely to feature in the first Test at Lord's, starting from July 19, after not being picked to play in either of the Tests against Bangladesh in May.

New BCB

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like it is in a big cricket organisation so that we can compete with them in that regard too," said the man who is regarded as the most known Bangladeshi face in world cricket since the 1980s.

But the names that are swirling in the closely-knit cricket circle of Dhaka suggest a few names that are definite causes for concern.

According to Huq, the board should have a business plan, run by full professionals with an executive board, but he emphasised that cricket should be decentralised, that is, the board should have people not only based in Dhaka but also from Chittagong, Khulna, Rajshahi, Barisal and Sylhet.

Huq slammed the current regime as one that has failed in maintaining a domestic cricket circle.

"In the next few years, BCB will receive an astronomical amount of money from the ICC so it would not be wise for someone with an honorary post to handle that much because that person would not have any accountability. A general secretary cannot exist when there is a CEO. But here, the CEO should be someone with some cricketing knowledge because he represents Bangladesh in the important ICC meetings. But for that matter, if you keep both, then I don't think it makes any sense," opined a lively Huq.

Qatar snatch

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lead eight minutes later when Abdulla Waled shot a 25-metre freekick toward the left post, forcing a diving punch away by gutsy Japan goalkeeper Yoshikatsu Kawaguchi.

Led by Celtic dead-ball specialist Shunsuke Nakamura, Japan pushed the attack but two long shots, including one from his left foot, in seven minutes before the break got nowhere.

Japan stepped up the pressure in the second period and were rewarded by a Takahara goal.

The Frankfurter man, who scored 11 Bundesliga goals last season, should have sealed the win 20 minutes later when he took a cross in front of the goal but sent his right foot wide.

Tevez deal

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"The essential thing for us is that everything is agreed," said Ferguson.

"We want complete clarity in the deal, with no suspicions or anything dodgy. There is no way we will be involved in anything underhand."

United legal expert Maurice Watkins has been left to find a solution to the impasse, with the Old Trafford club anxious to push through a deal quickly.

Sources close to the Red Devils are confident a compromise can be reached by the time Tevez's current commitments with Argentina at the Copa America are concluded at the weekend.

Kapil challenges BCCI

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Kapil Dev has challenged the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) to remove him from his position as chairman of the National Cricket Academy (NCA) for associating with the Indian Cricket League (ICL).

The ICL was launched by the Essel Group a few months ago and intends to organise a Twenty20 tournament in October.

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