

'Applaud Murali'

FROM PAGE 17
Sri Lanka to walk off midway through a one-day match in Adelaide four years later.
Murali refused to tour Australia in 2004 because of his treatment by Australians, including Prime Minister and cricket fan John Howard.

Largely on the back of controversy surrounding Murali, the International Cricket Council set up a detailed study of bowling actions with the latest scientific equipment, and found that just about every bowler threw the ball to some extent.

It was only when a bowler's arm flexed to 15 degrees that it became detectable to the naked eye so the ICC set 15 degrees as the limit for a bowler's elbow movement.

Any bowler now reported by umpires for having a suspect action must be scientifically tested. If found to be outside the 15-degree parameter the bowler is banned and must have remedial work with experts before being allowed to play again.

ESPN warns

FROM PAGE 17
from the England and Wales Cricket Board to telecast the ongoing series in India and Nepal, which is currently being beamed on its new channel 'Star Cricket'.

The broadcaster said the court had also passed an injunction order against unnamed cable operators found to be indulging in piracy of cricket matches involving India and England.

Police authorities have been also been directed to render all assistance to ESPN to enforce the order, it added.

ESPN had contended before the court that many cable operators across the country indulged in rampant cable piracy.

Emeka powers

FROM PAGE 17
Elia Junior. Then it was Junior himself who headed directly into Mohammedan goalkeeper Himel's lap after heading in a right-flank cross from midfielder Liton in the 29th minute.

Himel foiled another attack, saving Junior's close range shot off a Mamun pass in the 41st minute.

Come the second-half, and Brothers continued to attack as Faisal Mahmud's volley went wide.

Mohammedan then almost opened their account but Brothers' custodian Ali rushed in to stop a through-ball from Emily which was intended for Emeka's well-timed run into the danger area.

Yellow cards: Kamal, Divine and Zahid (Mohammedan SC); Rony, Junior (Bothers Union Club).

MOHAMMEDAN: Himel, Arif, Peter, Biplob, Kamal, Divine, Mithu, (Rony), Sharif, Paul (Farhad), Emeka and Zahid.

BROTHERS UNION: Ali, Rony, Shuvra, Jewel, Mamun, Masud, Liton (Tapu), Faisal, Inani, Junior and Jalal (Rintu).

Referee: Mansur Azad.

Errant Seedorf

FROM PAGE 20
Cup by beating Liverpool 2-1 in Athens, Greece, on May 23.

Seedorf is the only player to have won the Champions League with three different teams Ajax in 1995, Real Madrid in 1998 and Milan.

He said that his Milan-based charity_ Champions for Children will sponsor a minor soccer league in this former Dutch colony. The matches will take place in a stadium that he built and opened in 2002.

During his two-day visit, Seedorf also planned to hold a clinic for young players at his stadium and meet with President Ronald Venetiaan.

Ecclestone

FROM PAGE 20
Roman Abramovich, stepped in.

The motor racing boss is regularly seen at Chelsea matches and he admitted that any move for Arsenal would cause him embarrassment at Stamford Bridge. "Imagine the trouble I'd be in at Chelsea," he said.

While he denied the Arsenal rumour that initially appeared in The Mirror, the 76-year-old tycoon typically refused to rule out any future venture into the football market.

"I'll buy anything if it's cheap enough," he added. "If somebody offers me something that I think is good value, I'll have a go."

None to fill

FROM PAGE 20
Ferguson said: "Gabby is on holiday after playing in the Copa America. He needs his rest, but I expect back in training at Carrington in two weeks' time."

"There is no situation that I need to address with him. Both we and he knows that it is his agent that is driving the mechanism for what is happening at the moment."

"We need to steer through the minefield because his people have been difficult people to deal with."



PHOTO: COURTESY

Governor of Bangladesh Bank Dr. Salehuddin Ahmed (sitting second from L) and Osman Morad (L), chief executive officer of sponsors Standard Chartered Bank, are seen with the winners of the 9th Schools Chess Tournament during the presentation ceremony at the conference room of the National Sports Council yesterday.

Flare within the gloom



CRICINFO, undated

According to reports in Friday's papers, Lord's is fighting for its right to host two Tests a summer. There are simply too many venues and too few big matches to go around, and the likes of Chester-le-Street and the Rose Bowl are agitating for their share of the action.

Friday's extraordinary events in St John's Wood, however, could hardly have been more timely for the MCC. Back in the winter of 2003, they took the bold decision to dig up and relay the entire square, at the cost of 1.25 million pounds. On Friday, as two months' worth of rain fell on the ground and then vanished, that investment was justified a million times over.

Other grounds up and down the country would simply never have coped with the deluge -- Worcestershire's flooded executives at New Road, for instance, can only look on in envy as they contemplate the cost of aborting their second home fixture in a row. It's a moot point whether England's batsmen were quite so enamoured by Lord's powers of recovery, however.

"We were surprised we were playing as early as we did, considering the rain we had," said James Anderson, ever England's master of understatement. At 12.30 this afternoon, there was simply no way back for the day -- the top tier of the Edrich Stand was doing a passable impression of the Jog Falls, while the Hooghly and the Meghna seemed to have been spirited from the Bengal Delta to the Tavern Stand boundary. Two hours (and a frantic scramble for the pads) later, England had lost their last six wickets for 30 in a performance that left a succession of bemused batsmen blinking into the sunlight.

The rain had freshened up the pitch and made the ground especially

receptive to swing, but England's mindset seemed to go a little bit rusty in the interim -- little wonder, seeing as the same players who had risked trenchfoot as they trudged across the square to the indoor nets were now expected to gather their thoughts and face a trio of fast bowlers who had learned swift lessons after their wayward performance on the first morning.

India's transformation was as dramatic as the weather itself. Venkatesh Prasad, the bowling coach who performed with such distinction on the 1996 tour, doubtless impressed the importance of keeping things simple as Sreesanth, the pick of the attack with three lbw in 14 balls, spoke of hitting the "right areas" no fewer than six times in a five-minute chat with the media.

"Maybe the rain helped us, we really enjoyed ourselves in the dressing room," said Sreesanth. "It was a good break and we were really together. I listened to a lot of music, just relaxing, and the moment the umpires said the game is on from 1.50pm, I said 'okay cool.'" Such an angst-free attitude will carry the squad far.

India's progress was so serene, in fact, that they were able to make light of the sort of moment that might have caused a more highly strung unit to snap. When Kevin Pietersen edged Zaheer Khan to MS Dhoni behind the stumps and trudged off for 37, he had made it all the way to the pavilion gate before turning round to find that the umpires were still in consultation about the legitimacy of the catch. Two balls later, he was on his way again -- another edge, another take and this time no dispute.

It was a messy situation all round. The umpires are entitled to change their decision at any stage, although it was ironic that Pietersen, perhaps in the spirit of the recent Cowdrey Lecture at Lord's, had walked for the edge before Simon Taufel had raised his finger. But Steve Bucknor was less certain, as were certain members of the England dressing room

who caught Pietersen's attention as he reached the rope.

"A few of the guys spotted it, but I'm not sure exactly what happened," said Anderson. It mattered not in the end. Rarely has Pietersen looked so confused on a cricket pitch -- his on-off switch had been flicked so many times in the course of the hour his lights had effectively fused.

By the day's end, however, England's bowlers had turned the situation to their favour, as the young-gun attack of Anderson, Ryan Sidebottom and Chris Tremlett made light of their rookie status with a performance that was as mature as it was professional. They may boast just 23 caps between them, but lurking in the dressing-room is a man with a lifetime of situational experience to hand out.

Allan Donald was actually ushered off the pitch by the umpires as he attempted to bring on the drinks and a few words of advice, but his influence had already been ingrained in his charges. "He has a very different approach -- he talks more about match situations and less about run-ups," said Anderson. In his previous incarnation as an England cricketer, Anderson was as anonymous as the fifth Beattie, notable only for the way in which he would wheel away at a single stump during Test-match intervals.

Now he is leading England's line, his confidence restored after classy performances in the championship for Lancashire, and massaged by the scalps of both Rahul Dravid and Sachin Tendulkar. "I felt during the one-day matches a little more responsibility, and I enjoyed that on Friday," he said. "I see this as a chance to show what sort of form I'm in and what I can do."

Upgrade soon at P Sara

CRICINFO, undated

Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC) has launched a major development drive to upgrade media facilities at all international venues in time for England's tour in October and the 2011 World Cup.

The P Saravanamuttu Stadium, which hosted Sri Lanka's inaugural Test match against England in February 1982, has been the first stadium to be upgraded just days after the local and foreign media lambasted its facilities during the second Test against Bangladesh.

The media centre was first contracted in 2001 with basic facilities on the understanding that it would be developed into a complete unit with time. However, the promised renovations did not materialise and end result was the stadium being starved of international cricket.

However, the stinging public criticism of facilities during the second Test encouraged the ground's owners, the Tamil Union, to take swift action. With two weeks the box was transformed from an empty corrugated-roofed space with electrical problems to a modern air-conditioned centre equipped with comfortable seating, power points and Wi-Fi.

Hamer

FROM PAGE 17
After the meeting, Mahbub said that the government has not yet asked them to step down after Sports Adviser Tapan Chowdhury earlier this month said that the board will be dismantled in July.

Joint secretary Reazuddin Al Mamun added that they will honour to the government's decision while also mentioning that the confidence of the government was most important for the board.

Meanwhile, the ACC Trophy-winning women's cricket team members will each receive Tk 50,000 from the cricket board while former cricketer and writer Hasan Mahmud was donated Tk 50,000 to help his treatment. Mymensingh-based coach Hanishadan Roy was also donated Tk 15,000.

The meeting also decided that sponsorship for the national and Twenty20 team clothing will be determined by an international tender to be conducted next month.

PCB agrees

FROM PAGE 17
"PCB is even willing to play this match during the forthcoming Pakistan tour to India in November-December 2007 and consent from the BCCI is awaited on this."

Woolmer died after collapsing in his hotel room in Jamaica following Pakistan's surprise defeat by Ireland.

An initial pathologist's report concluded that he had been strangled.

But Jamaican police later announced they were satisfied that Woolmer had in fact died of natural causes after three expert witnesses contradicted the original findings.

Last week, meanwhile, the PCB appointed former Australian fast bowler Geoff Lawson as Woolmer's successor.

He will take charge of the team for the first time at the inaugural ICC World Twenty20 in South Africa in September.

Japan vanquish

FROM PAGE 20
gunfire into the night sky.

It is only the second time that Iraq have made the last four, having been thwarted at the quarter-final stage at the last three Asian Cups.

The Iraqis stumbled to United Arab Emirates in 1996, Japan in 2000, and China in 2004, but they were always in charge against Vietnam, playing in their first Asian Cup for 47 years.

Vietnam's Austrian coach Alfred Riedl before the game called on his youthful team to play like men and not boys, but they were physically out-matched by the bigger Iraqi players who were superior in the air. The double took Mahmoud's goal tally to three for the tournament, one behind Japan's leading sharpshooter Takahara.

Messi eyes

FROM PAGE 20
about the new signings, especially (Gabriel) Milito, and I cannot wait to meet them all.

"We are building a team with the best players in the world and we will be battling for all the trophies."

Cannavaro

FROM PAGE 20
all the speculation by announcing that his client would be staying with Los Merengues for the foreseeable future.

"Fazio is in Madrid where he has adapted very well," Fedele continued..

"They have won a championship and hence I don't think there is a possibility he will leave Madrid."

"Fazio's wish is to win the Champions League and the only team that can let him do that is Real Madrid."

'Ganguly inspired me'



CRICINFO, undated

At Brisbane four years ago, in what was also a series opener, on another soggy second day, Australia went from a commanding 262 for 2 to a modest 323 for 9, all in a span of 16 overs. On Friday, after about three hours' delay when rain soaked the ground, England came apart, losing 6 for 30 in 11.2 overs to a bowling line-up that had sleepwalked through most of Thursday.

If the drainage system at Lord's was efficient, India's bowlers were doubly so. They began the day with the old ball, hit the straps early, took the new ball, dislodged the night-watchman, induced two edges from the most dangerous opposition batsman, and swung out the tail. Six of England's last seven batsmen totalled two runs between them. It wasn't Wasim Akram and Waqar Younis unleashing reverse-swing, just a set of medium-fast bowlers applying some common sense. All breakfast and lunch that was consumed on Friday must be preserved in the new board office at Mumbai.

Delays cause lethargy, especially when you're watching the incessant plitter-patter. India began snappily without dawdling around and waiting for things to happen. Wickets weren't followed by

stunned celebrations but a far more expected routine. India weren't surprised they were getting wickets but glad they'd managed to hit their stride. It was this belief that carried them through and the lack of it that undid the batsmen.

Mid-way through the third over of the day, Rahul Dravid decided to take the new ball. Two balls later, RP Singh provided the breakthrough. Dravid could have easily been tempted to giving RP Singh a few more overs; he resisted and brought back his main men.

Zaheer Khan outfoxed Pietersen in his very first over. When Simon Taufel reversed the decision, he didn't overtly show his frustration but walked back purposefully, ready to strike again. Sreesanth summed up the mood at that moment: "If he got him once we were sure he was going to get him twice. If you can get somebody out once, I'm sure he can be out again." It took just two balls for him to find the snick again.

Sreesanth conceded ten in his first over, seeming to fall back to wayward habits, but was soon pitching it up and pumping his fists. No unnecessary short balls, no extra aggression, just full and straight. Three for 11 in four overs, hands outstretched and hair flopping. Zaheer mopped it up: short of a length, outside off, inside edge onto the stumps. Two for seven in 4.2 overs, buoyant strides and big smiles.

The relaxed start to the day seems to have had a salubrious effect.

"I listened to a lot of music," said Sreesanth, "was just relaxing and the moment the umpires said the game is on from 1:50 I said, 'Ok cool'. We (himself and Zaheer) were lucky RP (Singh) was bowling a few overs, we had some more time. He got the first wicket and I said, 'Ok, he's hitting the right areas. I'd decided to do the same in the morning. Venky (Prasad) really helped us. When there was a delay in the start he told me not to lose the focus and come back hard."

It was a stark contrast to Thursday's opening spell, one where nerves got the better of him. "I started bowling like Sreesanth only when I bowled the seventh over, the first of my second spell," he said triumphantly in third person. "I was standing at fine leg on Thursday and I saw Sourav Ganguly bowling. It really inspired me -- he was just hitting the right areas. He got Cook out, the first wicket and showed us the way. I'm thankful to him to be honest."

The bowlers will be doubly thankful to Ganguly if he can stay out there and build a few partnerships tomorrow. At Brisbane four years ago he walked in when India were 127 for 3; on Friday he came in at 106 for 3. His sublime 144 set up an classic series back then; a repeat here could take this Test down a similar route.

ZC faces snub



CRICINFO, undated

Zimbabwe Cricket is still frantically trying to put together scorecards for the Logan Cup, more than two months after the end of the first-class competition. As things stand, they face having many matches removed from the record books.

A number of scorecards for the matches played in April and May are yet to be found. The bulk of those, which have been provided, came from Cricket Kenya as a Kenya Select side took part in the competition.

The missing information is despite the fact ZC had reporters equipped with laptops at most of the matches, while provincial general managers were also required to submit end-of-day cards where the ZC reporters were not present. This they almost certainly did as the Herald and, intermittently, the ZC website carried daily reports with potted scores.

The situation gas not been

helped by confusion within ZC over who is really responsible for collating the cards between the amply-staffed Lovemore Banda's media department and Christian Chiketa's operations department. The scorecards were sent to both but neither appears to have them.

Cricinfo has been told that Banda was present during the match between Westerns and Kenya Select played at Queens Sports Club in Bulawayo but this is one of the games whose card is missing.

Banda and Chiketa are reported to have phoned scorers and general managers in the respective provinces, and some have sent even original copies of the scorecards but these too have disappeared.

Remarkably, the uncommunicative ZC media department, which has relocated to another office after moving from the Harare Sports Club and Highlands offices, has produced player statistics for the Logan Cup. The stats were given to the national selection panel to guide to help in picking a Zimbabwe Select squad to play against India A in two four-day matches and a Zimbabwe

Asquad to tour South Africa.

What remains unclear is how they produced the statistics without the scorecards and how credible the information used by the national selectors was.

ZC has failed to make available many scorecards for the Logan Cup, or any from the Faithwear Cup, the country's one-day tournament, to the international media.

It is thought that both could be stripped of first-class status if ZC does not provide the cards. Both Cricinfo and the Association of Cricket Statisticians and Historians have been unable to gain any response from ZC, and even the ICC has failed to obtain satisfactory answers despite raising the issue as long ago as April 3.

If the matches are not recognised then some personal bests will be expunged from the record books. Keith Dabengwa was the pick of the bowlers with 33 wickets in the five matches, including 7 for 1, while Graeme Cremer smashed a career-best 171 in one match -- his previous best was 26 not out.

Future bleak at Worcs



CRICINFO, undated

For the second consecutive match torrential rain has forced Worcestershire to abandon a Championship game without a ball bowled. This time the clash against Lancashire has been called off on the first day after further rain lashed New Road. Worcestershire are now bracing themselves for their home season being a write-off if the ground floods for a second time.

The band of heavy and thundery rain moved slowly up the country overnight and came to a standstill over the Midlands. The umpires called off play well before the scheduled 11am start and later in the afternoon news came through that the whole match was off.

A statement said: "Due to severe weather and a warning from the

environment agency about the impending flooding of Worcestershire's ground it has been decided to abandoned the County Championship match against Lancashire."

"Another flood would probably put us out of action for the remainder of the season," Worcestershire chief executive Mark Newton told Cricinfo earlier. "There are not any flood warnings out for the River Severn or the River Tems but we are monitoring them closely. We are not expecting the ground to flood but clearly it becomes a possibility the longer the rain stays around."

A decision to stage the current Championship match was taken by Worcestershire, Lancashire and the ECB on Monday and Newton says that even if they had relocated to another venue it wouldn't have helped them in this situation.

"No ground in Worcestershire, or the country, could cope with this

rain," he said. "There would have been no point moving to an outground because they don't have the same level of covering and hard-standing areas to take the rain."

"We could have staged a full day of cricket here on Thursday without any problems. The ground was fully prepared and up to standard but there is nothing we can do about the rain. And another month of this is forecast."

The ECB now face a potentially difficult situation after their decision last week to order a replay of the match against Kent later this month. It has set a precedent and Lancashire, along with Yorkshire and Hampshire, have already registered their protest at the ruling. It has gone before an ECB appeals panel and the outcome is still awaited, but this further torrential rain will put more issues on the table.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS		37 Memo-randum	DOWN
1 Azure gem		random	1 Meadow refuge
6 Gear tooth		38 Kitchen fixture	2 Every last crum
9 Jungfrau, e.g.		41 E.T.'s carrier	3 Cushions
12 Skip a		43 Felon's flight	4 Concept
13 Rd. phoneme		44 Desire	5 Logic
14 Earl Grey, e.g.		45 Willy side shelter	6 Pooh's
15 "Bananas" director		47 Hang-man's structure	7 Finished
16 Fireplace tool		49 Became immobile	8 Tooth-paste type
18 Sailor of India		52 Expert	9 Fermi's bits
20 Send forth		53 Water (Fr.)	10 Clark's companion
21 Past		54 Newsmans	11 Meat pie
23 Many millennia		55 Roulette bet	17 Prelude
24 Talkative		56 Catcher's place	19 Charmed place
25 Layers		57 Oxidizes	57 Oxidizes slitherer
27 Founded			
29 Acceptable			
31 A little lower?			
35 Giraffe's cousin			

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Yesterday's Cryptoquip: DO YOU SUPPOSE
TINY BITS OF UNEATEN FOOD MAY BE CALLED
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Today's Cryptoquip Clue: F equals T