

Kuranyi leads Schalke to final

AFP, Nuremberg

German international striker Kevin Kuranyi helped Schalke 04 blitz Nuremberg by setting up three goals in seven minutes to seal the Royal Blues' 4-2 League Cup semi-final win on Tuesday.

Having been 1-0 down to last season's German Cup winners Nuremberg, thanks to striker Robert Vittek's early goal, Schalke left it to the end of the first-half before they cut loose with Kuranyi creating all three goals.

First midfielder Levan Kobiashvili hit a left-footed shot on 38 minutes, then Fabian Ernst grabbed a second on 43 minutes before Peter Lovenkrands scored on the stroke of half-time with Kuranyi instrumental throughout.

It meant shell-shocked Nuremberg went into the half-time break on the wrong end of a 3-1 score-line.

Schalke's summer signing defender Heiko Westermann then grabbed a fourth goal midway through the second-half to make the win safe and book their place in Saturday's final in Leipzig, although Vittek grabbed a late second goal.

Schalke will face the winner's of Wednesday's semifinal between VfB Stuttgart and Bayern Munich.

Ganguly's back gives away

AFP, Nottingham

Sourav Ganguly's fitness was called into question just two days before the start of the second Test against England when he missed an indoor practice session at Loughborough University with a back injury.

Ganguly appeared to be struggling with a back problem during the second innings of the drawn series opener at Lord's where India, assisted by bad light and rain, clung on Monday with one wicket standing to ensure the three-match series remained level at 0-0.

However, India team spokesman Rufus Rockey played down concerns over Ganguly's fitness by telling AFP via a telephone call on Wednesday: "It's slight, minor, lower back stiffness. There's nothing to worry about."

Yuvraj Singh, left out at Lord's, would be the most likely replacement if Ganguly was declared unfit.

"It is not in my hands," said Yuvraj when asked about his chances on Wednesday. "I would love to play, but it is not in my hands whether I play or not. We will see how it goes in the next two days."

The second Test starts at Trent Bridge on Friday.

PCB to carry out dope tests

CRICINFO, undated

The Pakistan board has decided to carry out dope tests on the 30 players in the provisional Twenty20 World Championship squad before the final 15-man side is announced next month.

Nasim Ashraf, the PCB chairman, has instructed the board officials to get the tests carried out as soon as possible so that the results are received from a laboratory in Malaysia before the final squad is picked on August 10. The tournament takes place in September.

"We will begin dope testing on the players as soon as possible," said Ahsan Malik, PCB's Communications Director. "It will take up to ten days to get the results of the tests, which is why the players' urine samples will be obtained over the next few days."

Cycling risks

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lobbying hard for inclusion and could well supplant cycling as a sport at the global showpiece.

"Softball, rugby and karate are seen to be clean sports and do not carry the dirt of doping in cycling.

"Cycling is dreadful for the image of the Olympic movement and the Games itself."

Were cycling to be ejected it would see it barred from the 2016 Summer Games and with a fight on its hands to regain admission for the 2020 edition.

Vino scandal

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time in proving my innocence."

Vinokourov did manage a joke about his situation.

"I heard that I made a transfusion with my father's blood," Vinokourov said. "That's absurd, I can tell you that with his blood, I would have tested positive for vodka."

Kapil slates

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Kapil praised Mahendra Singh Dhoni's unbeaten 76 in the second innings, an under-pressure knock which rescued India from a certain defeat.

"He has the ability to win matches for India on his own. He was tentative on the last day of the Test match and was not able to play freely."



PHOTO: AFP

Schalke striker Kevin Kuranyi (L) and Nuremberg midfielder Marco Engelhard vie for the ball during their semifinal of the League Cup match at the EasyCredit Stadium in Nuremberg on Tuesday. Schalke won the match 4-2.

Marcus extends exile



AFP, Nottingham

Marcus Trescothick ruled himself out on Wednesday of the whole of England's (northern hemisphere) winter tour programme, saying he hadn't fully recovered from the effects of a stress-related illness.

However, he insisted he still wanted to play for England in the future.

The 31-year-old opening batsman, who hasn't played international cricket for nearly a year, was included in England's provisional 30-man squad earlier this month for September's inaugural World Twenty20 event in South Africa.

But the Somerset left-hander, in a statement issued by the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB), said: "Whilst I have been enjoying my cricket for Somerset this summer and feel that I am making good progress, I need to ensure that I am completely ready for a return to international cricket before making myself available for selection."

Trescothick added: "I recently informed the selectors that I was

happy to be included in the 30-man squad for the Twenty20 World Cup to leave all options open but I am now clear that I should take more time to complete my recovery. I still have ambitions to play for England."

England's chairman of selectors, David Graveney, said: "The selectors have been acutely conscious that it would be counter-productive to try to rush Marcus back into international action before he was ready."

"We appreciate the fact that Marcus has alerted us at the earliest opportunity of his decision which will avoid there being any disruption to the team's one-day planning processes."

"Marcus has proved himself to be a very special talent on the international stage and we look forward to his making himself available again for England when the time is right and to his pushing his case for selection through his performances for Somerset."

Trescothick has been in fine form for Somerset this season, scoring three first-class hundreds, including a career-best 284 and Brian Rose, the county's director of cricket, said: "Marcus has made terrific progress this summer with Somerset and his longer term future remains the

primary concern for us all."

"His decision has clarified the way forward for Somerset and England. He is still relatively young for an international batsman and we believe that he has many more years playing at club and international level," the former England batsman added.

Trescothick, who has appeared in 76 Tests and 123 one-day internationals, hasn't played for England since being bowled for nought by Shoaib Akhtar during a limited overs international against Pakistan at Hampshire's Rose Bowl ground on September 5 last year.

Following that match, he made himself unavailable for the Champions Trophy tournament in India.

He was, however, included for the subsequent Ashes tour of Australia but withdrew before the first Test.

Trescothick has scored 5,825 runs in Tests with 14 hundreds at an average of 43.79 and 4,335 at 37.37 in one-day internationals with 12 hundreds -- an England record.

But replacement opener Alastair Cook has made a fine start to his international career with the 22-year-old Essex left-hander scoring six hundreds in his 19 Tests to date.

Exhibition handball

SPORTS REPORTER

The visiting handball teams from Hyderabad had mixed fortunes on the opening day of their Bangladesh tour yesterday.

The men's team from the South Indian state Andhra Pradesh lost 31-23 to national champions Bangladesh Rifles but their women's team defeated recently national crowd BJMC 22-15 in the two friendly matches.

Both the matches were held at the Mirpur National Indoor Stadium.

The Bangladesh Handball Federation has organised the 'Goodwill Handball' matches which will also be played today against different local teams.

McGrath eyes ICL

CRICINFO, undated

Shane Warne will join Brian Lara in the Indian Cricket League if his conditions are met, however Warne's manager conceded that such an agreement was still a long way off. Glenn McGrath has not ruled out his involvement and his manager said negotiations could progress in the next week.

The ICL on Monday announced Lara as its first big signing, two months after his name was initially linked with the group. Warne's manager James Erskine said he had been in talks with ICL officials including Tony Greig.

"They haven't offered what we have asked for, so negotiations are proceeding," Erskine told the Australian. "Provided the terms and conditions are right, Shane Warne will play, but it's a long way off before we get the contract signed." The paper reported that Warne's proposed pay package was worth up to \$2 million.

McGrath's manager, Warren Craig, said he had met with ICL officials some time ago and although there had been few developments since then, this week's events were likely to speed the process up. "We certainly haven't ruled it out," Craig said.

"Now Lara has signed, things might start to hot up a bit. Things could start to move over the next week or so." However, Craig said the ICL had given no indication what salary it would offer to lure McGrath out of retirement six months after his final ODI appearance.

Mirza outlasts

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Shvedova rallied to eliminate Ukraine's Julia Vakulenko 3-6, 6-3, 6-2, setting up a second-round match with Swiss fourth seed Patty Schnyder.

Israeli fifth seed Shahar Peer lost five of the first six games but rallied to defeat France's Camille Pin 7-6 (7/5), 6-2. Peer plays Belarus qualifier Olga Govortsova next.

Beckham watches

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new event involving US and Mexican teams.

The Galaxy's first goal since Beckham's arrival came from Alan Gordon in the 50th minute. Damian Alvarez equalized for the Mexican side before Landon Donovan scored the winner for the Galaxy.

Galaxy coach Frank Yallop had said Beckham was unlikely to play Tuesday but was more confident Beckham will play Saturday for the Galaxy's next Superliga match against Chivas Guadalajara at the huge Los Angeles Coliseum.

Bowlers delight England



GEOFFREY BOYCOTT

Who says Test match cricket isn't exciting? So often you hear people say that one-day cricket is fun, full of wickets and runs and Test cricket is tedious. But this Test match had everything.

First of all, it had a fantastic pitch that allowed a fair contest between bat and ball. If you batted really well you could make runs; if you bowled well you could get wickets. If all Test matches were played on pitches such as this, people would be satisfied and thrilled with the quality of cricket.

England outplayed India in batting, bowling and fielding, and deserved to win. But the Indian rope trick got India out of jail. If the rain hadn't arrived to save them, India would have lost because of their bowling in the first two sessions of the match.

Their seam bowling lacked direction, commitment and intensity and allowed England the luxury of reaching 197 for one by tea. You cannot give anyone that sort of start in any sport. Fancy giving Seb Coe 50 metres start in an 800m race and then try catching him! You have to be ready from the first ball. When their bowlers got it together, India took eight wickets for 46 runs, but by that time the damage was done.

That takes nothing away from England's exceptional performance -- the three reserve seamers bowled out of their skin. They bowled as if every ball was important, and got stuck into India's batsmen from the word go. Their intensity and aggression blew

India's middle order away. Two of the best players in the world with the best techniques, Rahul Dravid and Sachin Tendulkar, were made to look ordinary.

I have always been a fan of Jimmy Anderson because he has a natural ability to move the ball around, either with swing or seam. If you bowl lightning-fast like Michael Holding did, you don't need to do much with the ball. But if you are fast-medium you are not going to get good players out in Test cricket unless you do something with the ball.

For the past few years Anderson has been sitting on his bottom in the England dressingroom or on occasion has been injured. All he has needed is plenty of bowling in matches, as no one gets better at anything if they don't play. This summer Anderson has played championship matches for Lancashire and that has been the difference. When you are bowling regularly you get wickets, your confidence goes up and you know where the ball is going.

Ryan Sidebottom has been a revelation. He just looks a quality bowler. Some people say to me: "OK, he does all right in England, but how will he do in Sri Lanka on their flat pitches?" I say that Chaminda Vaas bowls left-arm over at the same pace as Sidebottom and he seems to do OK.

Chris Tremlett was a surprise choice ahead of Stuart Broad. Lord's can be a difficult ground for bowlers, especially if, like Tremlett, you have not played a championship game here. It can take time to come to terms with the slope.

Tremlett was obviously comfortable from the Pavilion End, but he

struggled when he switched to the Nursery End for a couple of overs. There have been some great bowlers who have found it difficult to bowl at both ends at Lord's, however.

Although Monty Panesar didn't have a big say in this match, he is now a high-quality bowler. Batsmen are not going to take him apart, so Michael Vaughan can always exert some control when Monty bowls.

I thought Kevin Pietersen's batting was outstanding. He thrilled the crowd towards the end of his innings, but what I liked most was his discipline early on. He and Vaughan knew it was important not to lose wickets on Saturday night and first thing on Sunday morning.

We all know that Kevin has got tremendous shot-playing talent, but we want to see him learn to assess situations and play to them. I thought he did splendidly and there is no wonder he rates this as his best Test hundred. If he plays like this every time he takes a week's holiday, perhaps the selectors should let him have a week off more often. Maybe he should take the rest of the batsmen with him.

I'm sorry that Andrew Strauss didn't get a hundred because I believe that sport is as much about character as talent. His 96 might not have been the most aesthetically pleasing innings he has played, but if ever a guy deserved a hundred for sheer determination, this was it.

(England great Geoffrey Boycott wrote this article for The Daily Telegraph website).

Coach defends Vaughan



AFP, London

England coach Peter Moores has rejected criticisms his side's slow over-rate contributed to their failure to win the first Test against India here at Lord's.

The hosts were just a wicket away from going 1-0 up in the three-match series when bad light and rain on Monday's final afternoon ended play with India, at 282 for nine, on the brink of defeat.

England had fallen five short of the required over-rate on Sunday evening and were a further five behind by the time the elements ended the game.

However, Moores said he was happy for England captain Michael Vaughan to take his time over setting the field.

"We have to look at the bigger picture," said Moores. "If we're a couple of overs short in a session because the captain has moved the field and it's gone towards getting a wicket then it's great."

"At certain stages of the game it

sometimes takes time to set things up. I thought Michael Vaughan was outstanding in his captaincy and trying to wrinkle out some of the batsmen who were intent on trying to save a Test match.

"Could we have saved a minute here or 30 seconds there, could we have run a bit harder to retrieve that ball? You could go on forever."

"There are arguments either way, but I don't really think it was that influential to the outcome of the match."

One huge plus for Moores was the performance of their pace attack at Lord's which produced arguably England's best collective bowling display since the Ashes-winning series of 2005.

Recalled seamer James Anderson took a Test-best five for 42 in the first innings, left-arm quick Ryan Sidebottom continued the form he'd already shown this season and Chris Tremlett took some important wickets on debut.

Indeed England came within a whisker of bowling India out twice despite missing the injured pace trio of Matthew Hoggard, Stephen Harmison and all-rounder Andrew

Flintoff.

"Sometimes injuries, although they are frustrating, can also be quite exciting because it gives opportunities to younger players to come in and do it and we saw people do it in that Test match," Moores said ahead of the second Test, which starts at Trent Bridge on Friday.

"We also saw one man just miss out in Stuart Broad and it would have been good to have a look at that as well."

"This is where the system the ECB have in place is good because we have someone like Kevin Shine working with players waiting to get into the squad. With Allan Donald working with the squad it's a good combination and that progression has been very positive."

Broad has been put on standby for Trent Bridge where Hoggard, ruled out of the second Test having failed to regain full fitness following the back spasms that kept him out at Lord's, could also turn up.

England will look to monitor Hoggard's recovery with the aim of allowing him to play for Yorkshire in the week leading up to the final Test at the Oval.

Iraq shoot out Koreans

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Adulrahman Al Qahtani won a free-kick on the left after somewhat typically throwing himself theatrically to the ground.

Taisir Al Jassam rose highest to meet his cross and the ball dropped kindly to Yasser Al Qahtani who needed no second invitation to rifle home.

That seemed to wake up the Japanese who were level just two minutes later.

Centre-back Yuji Nakazawa ran unchecked from deep onto Yasuhito Endo's corner and headed powerfully home from six yards, without even a hint of a Saudi challenge.

The second period was not allowed to settle into a pedestrian affair as the Saudis broke the deadlock two minutes after the restart.

Taisir Al Jassam released Ahmed Al Bahri down the right and his pinpoint cross was headed home by Maaz at the near post.

Once again it took a goal to awake the Japanese and they drew level again after another six minutes.

Nachiro Takahara rose highest to head back Endo's corner for Yuki Abe to volley home acrobatically.

As with the first half Japan dominated the ball but the Saudis

were always dangerous on the break.

And on 57 minutes they went in front again through a brilliant individual strike from Maaz, who twisted and turned two defenders before finishing with the outside of his boot.

Substitute Ahmed Al Mousa had a chance to finish the game on 64 minutes but greedily opted to shoot when a pass was needed.

Another substitute Naotake Hanyu almost took the tie into extra-time but thudded the bar from 25 yards with nine minutes to play.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS	36 "All My Children" role	DOWN	1 Use an old phone	20 Conger, e.g.
1 Knight-woman	38 Under-standing	13	21	23 Witness
5 Deposit	40 Branch	16	19	24 Mess up
8 Stop	41 Sailors	17	20	25 Shook
12 Holly	43 Ph. bk.	18	21	27 Comic-strip squeal
13 Blond shade	45 Quest	23	24	29 Cad
14 Malaria symptom	47 One with "I" trouble	24	25	30 "Let me think ..."
15 Lamb symbolizing	51 Con Savor	25	26	32 Sweet potato
17 Christmas mas	54 Mortgage	26	27	34 Nonproprietary
18 Crown of honor	55 Island	27	28	37 Curved line
19 Silver-white element	58 List. ending abbr.	28	29	39 "Fuh-gedda-boudit!"
21 Kinsman	59 Anger	29	30	42 Layered rock
22 Carina	61 Antitoxins	30	31	44 Sub spotter
23 Vast expanse	62	31	32	45 Garage event
26 Expert	63	32	33	46 Okla-homa city
28 Parasite	64	33	34	48 Title
31 Therefore	65	34	35	49 Urban blight
33 Frat party prop	66	35	36	50 Use a keyboard
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