

## 'I can't argue with snicko'

CRICINFO, undated

India were at the receiving end of two contentious umpiring decisions in the deciding match of the series but their captain Rahul Dravid didn't think present-day technology was good enough to aid umpires in all situations.

Both Dravid and Sachin Tendulkar were disappointed with their caught-behind decisions and stood their ground after umpire Aleem Dar raised his finger, but Dravid wasn't in favour of technology being used more often.

"I don't think the technology is good enough at the moment, especially for fine edges, snicks and lbws," he said. "It is for line decisions and I think there it should stay."

Replays were inconclusive with regard to Dravid's dismissal, suggesting that there might have been a faint edge after all. "I did not feel the snick at that stage," he said when asked about the Andrew Flintoff delivery that cut him in half before he had opened his account. "The technology showed that I got a snick and I have to accept it. May be they were right as I did not feel it at that moment because generally, you feel when you snick it. May be this time I didn't feel it. But I can't argue with snicko, can I?"

There were no doubts, though, about Tendulkar's dismissal. The bat did not make contact with the ball and television replays indicated that the bat had brushed the pad.

India's administrative manager Rajeev Shukla had earlier said that the team were planning to lodge a protest regarding umpiring standards in this series. "We'll lodge a complaint with the ICC about the decisions," Shukla was quoted as saying in PTI. Dravid was expected to furnish an umpires' report, as all captains do at the end of the series, and said he will convey his thoughts in that report.

England captain Paul Collingwood was satisfied with the overall quality of the umpiring despite the number of errors over the tour, starting from the Tests.

"I think overall the standard of umpiring has been pretty high," he said. "There's been some decisions that probably haven't been correct at times but we all make mistakes."

## Chowmin treble steers Friends

SPORTS REPORTER

Friends Social Welfare Organisation rode on a hattrick by Chowmin Rakhine to brush aside Jurain Janata 7-0 in yesterday's Third Division Football League at the Outer Stadium.

Chowmin scored four goals, Abu Hanif struck a brace and Pannu netted the other goal.

In the day's other match, City United Club blanked Jirabo Sporting Club 3-0 at the same venue with Mujibur scoring twice and Sohel firing the other.

## Ali Kabir new athletics boss

UNB, Dhaka

BIWTC Chairman ASM Ali Kabir has been appointed president of the Bangladesh Amateur Athletics Federation yesterday.

Kabir, a former National Sports Council (NSC) secretary, replaced information secretary Didarul Anwar who resigned on Thursday.

Earlier on August 14, the Caretaker Government dissolved the elected executive committee of the federation.

## Smith warms

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spell as West Indies took care of New Zealand at Willowmoore Park in Benoni, but this time the team batting first won. Powell took 3 wickets for only 4 runs. He removed Lou Vincent (2), Ross Taylor (2) and Scott Styris (4) as the Black Caps lost both their warm-up matches ahead of the tournament proper.

Only Peter Fulton scored 51 while Daniel Vettori (24) was the other batsman to reach double-figure.

Earlier, Chris Martin bowled well to take two wickets but West Indies reached 150 for 6 in 20 overs. New Zealand were bowled out for 115 in 18.4 overs.

In the last match of the day, Zimbabwe overturned their lack-lustre start with a win over Scotland at Sedgars Park in Potchefstroom. Young all-rounder Chamu Chibhabha scored a 34-ball 43. Scotland captain Ryan Watson scored 64 earlier.

## We must beat

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Scotland, but it could also turn out differently. There are too many possibilities," he said.

After eight of the 12 qualifying matches Italy sit third in group B with 17 points, behind France on 19 points and Scotland 18 points.

Ukraine are on 13 points but have played only seven matches after Saturday's 1-1 draw with Georgia.

After their midweek encounter in Ukraine, Italy face Georgia on October 13.

Donadoni's side then travel to Scotland on November 17 before playing their final qualifier, against Faroe Islands, four days later.



PHOTO: AFP

Pakistan's Mohammad Hafeez is about to sweep Sri Lanka captain Mahela Jayawardene (not in picture) reverse during a warm-up Twenty20 match at Centurion yesterday.

## Cricket's Champions League?

INTERNET, undated



Australia's elite cricketers could soon be earning wages to rival the world's top footballers. And they won't have to surrender their baggy greens.

Players will be offered the chance to play in a newly established Twenty20 tournament expected to feature domestic teams seeking to qualify for an international play-off and a share of 5 million dollars in prize money.

The Champions League-style tournament is a direct response to the threat posed by the rogue Indian Cricket League (ICL) and the Stanford 20/20 tournaments.

Four International Cricket Council (ICC) full member countries - Australia, India, England and South Africa -- have proposed it and will be ICC sanctioned.

A major first step will happen this week when the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) announces a new domestic Twenty20 competition in India that will feature an ownership model similar to the English Premier League, where teams are owned privately or by investors.

The other bodies -- Cricket Australia, the England and Wales Cricket Board and the United Cricket Board -- are still investigating ways to capitalise on Twenty20's popularity without detracting from the lucrative traditional forms of the game. They could follow the Indian model.

The top two teams from each country's competitions will qualify for an international tournament, which is planned for late next year. Organisers are now searching for a two- or three-week window in the hectic international schedule.

Games will be played in time zones convenient to the massive Indian market. Matches take only three hours so scheduling can be flexible.

The international competition will have a salary cap, with limits yet to be decided, and exemptions for marquee signings. Players will be able to be traded between teams, opening up a transfer market.

Team owners may explore on- and off-field marketing opportunities, meaning that Sachin Tendulkar could represent NSW, or Adam Gilchrist could play for Mumbai. They could make hundreds of thousands of dollars for a few weeks' work.

The tournament would allow the most sought-after players to significantly raise their incomes without jeopardising their place in official Test and one-day teams. Some national boards recently declared that any player who signed with the ICL would be banned from playing first-class cricket.

A few name players have already signed. But the BCCI is hitting back, targeting some of the ICL's potential marquee players who are yet to commit to the rebel competition.

Some of those who have already signed are said to be regretting their decisions. Shane Warne was close to signing with the ICL but opted out.

It appears that the ICL has caused a major shake-up among the establishment authorities. National bodies have cautiously embraced Twenty20, but the process of settling on a working model has been hastened by the ICL's initial success and the knowledge among the players that their pay packets can now potentially compare with the world's highest-earning sportspeople.

Insiders associated with the ICC-sanctioned competition say the ICL would be a second-rate format. It would be reliant on retired players and be mostly staged at unsuitable venues as a made-for-TV event.

The new competition, they believe, would have greater credibility, a higher standard and access to established infrastructure. They believe that it would eventually create specialist Twenty20 players and a new tier of stars.

Australia staged its first proper domestic Twenty20 tournament last summer, with Victoria defeating Tasmania in the final.

Meanwhile, Australia begin their World Twenty20 campaign on Wednesday against Zimbabwe.

### Hosts face stiff

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responsibility."

Samuels lauded Rammal Sarwan's captaincy and said, "I think Sarwan has been doing a very good job as a leader so far, the entire team is pulling with him. It's one for all and all for one." Sarwan had missed most of West Indies' tour of England due to a shoulder injury after taking over as captain following the World Cup in the Caribbean.

Samuels admitted that there were aspects of the game that West Indies need to improve on. "In the bowling department we looked a bit rusty and bowled too many wides and in the field we dropped a few catches but we are looking decent at the moment."

West Indies face New Zealand on Sunday in their final warm-up game before the tournament begins.

## Master vs Minnow

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stood his ground, saving one set point with a return winner, then breaking with a cross-court forehand.

They appeared headed to a tiebreaker, but Federer broke back to end the set with an angled forehand volley. It was the first set lost by Davydenko all tournament -- and, unfortunately for him, it wouldn't be the last.

In the third set, Davydenko twice held a set point but couldn't convert either, and as Federer won the last four games, he began punctuating shots with shouts of "Yes!" or "Come on!" when winners left his racket.

It all left Davydenko in a daze,

and he said: "I don't know how it's possible," for Federer to come up with some of those strokes.

Ferrer ran Nadal ragged while upsetting him in the fourth round, but Djokovic seemed more bothered by the weather, seeking treatment from a doctor, draping a towel filled with ice around his neck, and donning a white baseball cap for shade.

"The conditions were extreme," Djokovic said. "It was so hot."

When the match ended with a beautiful volley by Djokovic, he dropped to his knees with arms raised, then got up and pulled off his shirt.

A sign of his exhaustion: Djokovic tried throwing the shirt

into the stands, but it didn't quite reach the seats. Then he picked it up and heaved it again, underhanded, and this time was successful. In the player's guest box, Djokovic's dad followed suit, pulling off his shirt and encouraging others nearby to do the same.

It was Djokovic's fluid play that frustrated Federer.

After losing a point, the Spaniard kicked an on-court clock with full force, temporarily breaking the digital display. It was stuck on "0:50" for about 10 minutes.

So Ferrer managed to stop time.

He couldn't do a thing about stopping Djokovic.

Now it's Federer's turn to try.

## Alonso claims Monza

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first chicane by Massa in his Ferrari.

The young Briton responded vigorously and regained second place as they entered the braking zone, but had to miss the apex of the second part of the Rettifilo Tribune to hold his position as they ran down to Curva Grande.

It was good news, however, for the many Spanish supporters of Alonso who had hung banners and waved flags from their grandstand seats opposite the pits.

Hamilton, running second, was the first of the front-runners to come in to the pits and refuel after 18 laps. His stop took 8.3 seconds and he was soon followed by the rest of the field, Alonso diving in two laps later for a stop timed at 9.1 seconds.

When the action resumed in

Raikkonen led the race for five laps before he pitted after 25 laps when Alonso, who remained narrowly ahead of Hamilton, regained the ascendancy. The two McLaren men stayed in control until Hamilton's second stop after 42 laps.

This was a long one, at nine seconds, and gave Raikkonen a chance to go through to second ahead of him, but the Finn, perhaps struggling with his car on worn tyres, lost that place when Hamilton passed him under braking on lap 42 at the first chicane.

A lap later and Alonso pitted for the second time from the lead, but this time kept his position when he rejoined, 4.5 seconds ahead of his teammate.

"I have given everything for tennis the last 20 years and it will be the same as that for the next few years."

## Australia biggest scalp

AFP, Johannesburg



Cricket's undisputed leaders Australia are favourites to win the inaugural Twenty20 world championships starting on Tuesday, but rivals are geared to spring surprises.

The shortest version of the game, marked by innovative strokeplay and a flurry of sixes and boundaries, promises to underline the belief that limited-overs cricket is an unpredictable sport.

Australia may have won three successive World Cup titles, but matches restricted to 20-overs-a-side have given other teams confidence that they are not there just to make up the numbers.

"The shorter the game, the more open it becomes because one false move and you could be out of it," said Sri Lankan captain Mahela Jayawardene.

"It is important to keep a cool head and think on your feet. If you panic, you will lose the battle. There is no second chance."

Veteran South African all-rounder Shaun Pollock agreed the Twenty20 game was like a lottery.

"It's a bit of a sprint," he said. "If one-day cricket is an 800-metre race, then Twenty20 is 100 metres.

"If you get off to a bad start you

can lose the game regardless of who you are playing."

Ricky Ponting's Australia are fielding the same squad that won the World Cup in April and have been bolstered by the return of pace spearhead Brett Lee who missed the trip to the Caribbean due to injury.

Ponting will play after delaying his arrival here due to a family illness, while all-rounder Shane Watson was cleared of a sore hamstring.

Short, sharp excitement is the name of the 20-overs-a-side game designed for those looking for thrills, but don't have the time or patience to sit through an entire day's cricket.

Twenty20 matches provide instant gratification, lasting three hours as compared to seven hours for a one-dayer, and draw big crowds even as purists frown at the hit-and-giggle exercise.

South Africa and the West Indies face off at the Wanderers here on Tuesday to kick-start the 27-match, 14-day tournament featuring the nine nations currently playing Test cricket along with Zimbabwe, Kenya and Scotland.

The 12 teams have been divided into four groups for the preliminary league with the top two advancing to the Super Eights round. The final will be played on

September 24. The mystic of the tournament is enhanced by the fact that most teams, barring England, are relative novices at the newest form of the game.

England are the most experienced with six Twenty20 internationals to their credit, while India, Zimbabwe and Bangladesh have played just one big match each.

Fireworks have already begun even before the tournament gets underway in Johannesburg, Cape Town and Durban.

Injuries and controversy have marked the build-up with fiery Pakistani pace bowler Shoaib Akhtar being sent home after a bust-up with new-ball partner Mohammad Asif during practice on Thursday.

South Africa look a divided house in their own backyard after all-rounder Jacques Kallis and batsman Loots Bosman questioned their omission from the hosts' squad.

When wicketkeeper Mark Boucher publicly defended teammate Kallis, he was hauled up before his country's cricket board and fined.

Sri Lanka's star spinner Muttiah Muralidaran will miss the tournament due to injury, as will Shaun Tait of Australia and Ravi Bopara of England.

Umpires: Aleem Dar (PAK), Ian Gould (ENG) TV umpire: Peter Hartley (ENG) Match referee: Roshan Mahanama (SRI)

## Jose warns

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"We were prepared to receive players such as Shevchenko or Balack because they are of the same dimension as those already playing at Chelsea," said Mourinho.

"Lampard, Terry, Drogba are equal to these two," he added.

"But you can't build anything if you have to have someone special at its centre. When you have a group, everyone has to be equal to achieve the end we all want."