

I can run faster: Powell

Athletics
AFP, Rome

Jamaican Asafa Powell set a new men's world 100m record of 9.74sec at the IAAF Grand Prix at Rieti, Italy, on Sunday weekend and then stated he can get faster.

Far from resting on his laurels by his performance in Italy when he beat his old mark of 9.77 set in Athens in June 2005, Powell said he is capable of running significantly quicker.

Beaten into third place by American Tyson Gay at the World Championships in Osaka last month, Powell's performance in Italy has put him back into centre stage.

"In Osaka, I was too tense," Powell said. "I thought too much about my race and the time I was hoping to achieve. On the other hand I was very relaxed in coming here (Rieti). That means I could run 9.68."

The 24-year-old Powell had predicted in Stockholm at the beginning of August that he felt he was capable of beating the world record this year.

When asked about his physical limits, he had said at the time they were around "9.74 or 9.73, even below 9.70."

Powell dominated the race ahead of Norway's Saïdy Ndure

Jaysuma (10.07) and 2003 world champion from St Kitts and Nevis, Kim Collins (10.14).

"After the world championships, where I made several mistakes, I worked with my coach so that I could regain my best form. Now I'm back!" said Powell on RaiSport.

"I did what I had to do on a very fast and bouncy track. And then Italy is my second home," he said.

At the Osaka world championships on August 26, the Jamaican failed to win the 100m title, finishing third in 9.96sec behind Gay (9.85) and Derrick Atkins of the Bahamas (9.91).

"I was in great shape and ready to go, but I made a huge mistake in the final," he lamented at the time.

Powell set his world-record 9.77 in 2005 and equalled it twice last season on the way to being named male athlete of the year.

He is yet to win a major title after false starting at the 2003 worlds, missing 2005 with injury and finishing fifth at the last Olympics.

The Jamaican won last year's Commonwealth title but only after risking disqualification by veering into a competitor's lane during the semifinals.

Gay had held till this record-breaking run the fastest time of the season of 9.84sec, set on June 22 in Indianapolis.



Jamaican Asafa Powell slows down after sprinting to new world record in men's 100m at the International Amateur Athletics Federation Grand Prix at Rieti in Italy on Sunday. Powell clocked 9.74sec to better his own mark of 9.77sec set in Athens in June 2005.

Mushtaq to stay at Sussex

BBC ONLINE, undated

Pakistan leg-spinner Mushtaq Ahmed has signed a new two-year deal with Sussex.

Mushtaq took 104 wickets in his first season at Hove in 2003 as Sussex claimed their maiden Championship title and helped them win it again in 2006.

Warwickshire were interested in signing the 37-year-old, whose current contract runs out at the end of this season.

"I, along with the rest of the staff, are delighted the best bowler to ever have pulled on a Sussex shirt is staying," said captain Chris Adams.

LOCAL SNIPPES

FROM PAGE 17
SADAT BADMINTON
Bangladesh Biman shuttlers Parash and Konika both won double crowns in the Sadat Smriti Summer Open badminton tournament.

Parash defeated teammates Rais 21-14 and 21-13 in the men's singles final before clinching the men's doubles pairing with Sumon with a 21-15, 21-14 win against Sylhet's Enam and Jamil.

Konika fought hard to beat her teammate Shapla 21-13, 17-21, 21-13 in the women's singles final but Konika and Shapla effortlessly lifted the doubles title beating Chittagong duo Lima and Seema.

Information secretary Didarul Anwarul distributed trophies among the winners at the Woodenfloor Gymnasium.

ARMY FOOTBALL
UNB adds: The 24 Infantry Division lifted the Bangladesh Army football championship defeating Headquarters Log Area 3-2 in an exciting final at the Comilla Cantonment. Brig Gen Anisur Rahman of the 33 Artillery Brigade witnessed distributed prizes as chief guest.

SWIMMING CAMP
Twenty-seven male and female swimmers out of a 40-member national squad began a monthlong residential camp at the Mirpur Swimming Complex yesterday for preparation of this December's 2nd Indo-Bangladesh Bangla Games in Dhaka. The remaining 13 swimmers are expected to report later.

Lights come

FROM PAGE 17
increase the capacity from around 28,000 to more than 35,000.

The MCC will not only have to pay for the floodlights themselves; what last night did show was that the lighting in the stands and on the concourses will also need a major overhaul.

But the experiment was a success and the first of a number of hurdles was successfully overcome.

Handball made its debut as an Olympic sport at the 1972 Munich Games.



Did U Know?

Trophies follow Ponting

Cricket
CRICINFO, undated

The last time Ricky Ponting walked off a cricket pitch he was holding the World Cup after Australia's victory-in-the-dark in Barbados. Five months later, having not played a match since, he was back in the familiar position of clutching prizes after winning the ICC Player of the Year for the second year running, and also taking away Captain of the Year, plus spots in both the Test and one-day teams of the year.

Ponting only stepped off a plane from Sydney hours before mingling with the world's cricketing elite in Johannesburg at the fourth ICC Awards. His family health issues have improved and he has made it in the nick of time as he prepares to lead Australia's campaign for another trophy. The team were given a sound beating by South Africa in their final warm-up game and Ponting admitted they had "some cobwebs to blow away" but after five months off (a rare luxury and not something any of the Australians will moan about) it isn't surprising.

Neither was it surprising that Ponting was so heavily featured in this year's awards. When he took Player of the Year in Mumbai, last November, he and his team had only just begun on their glorious seven-month period in which they regained the Ashes, retained the World Cup and won the Champions Trophy for the first time. At the time he said there was more to come from himself and Australia. He said similar this year. It's a scary thought for all opponents and one of the major reasons why there are plenty of fingers crossed that it isn't Australia's name on the ICC World Twenty20

Freddie eyes captaincy

Cricket
BBC ONLINE, undated

Andrew Flintoff says he still hopes to become England captain, despite being stripped of the vice-captaincy in March following the 'Fredalo' incident.

He told BBC1's Inside Sport he did not expect to be offered the job now but added, "If it became available years down the line, who knows?"

"I'd have another go if asked. People almost forget I'm a cricketer. I'm that bloke who tried to get on a pedalo.

"But I've moved on. If you scratch the surface, there's a whole lot more."

Flintoff, 29, has led England in 11 Tests and 14 one-day internationals, including the series victory in Australia last February.

But the all-rounder was sacked as England vice-captain during the World Cup and dropped from a match against Canada following a drunken escapade on a pedalo in St Lucia.

Flintoff's most pressing current concern is simply playing for England, let alone being captain.

The Lancashire star may not be able to play a full part in the ICC

trophy in two weeks' time.

Besides the Twenty20 being a chance for a team to exploit Australia's rustiness -- although they'd better act swiftly -- it is also a vital tournament for ICC as they attempt to regain their image, which was left in tatters during the World Cup. Major judgments can wait until the final, in Johannesburg on September 24, but the Awards evening continues to be an event which struggles to be as slick and dazzling as it wants.

The double act between the two hosts -- Harsha Bhogle and Kass Naidoo -- didn't quite work, with a few of Bhogle's attempts at humour going down like Ramesh Powar at third man. However, they can't be blamed for the brief power failure on the big screen, but it's no wonder the show isn't broadcast live -- the background vanished midway through Mahela Jayawardene's speech for Sri Lanka's Spirit of Cricket Award. Jayawardene later had to be at his diplomatic best when asked, five months on, about the squash ball Adam Gilchrist used in his glove during the World Cup final.

At least it was possible to hear Jayawardene's speech. In the media centre the first batch of awards, including Shaun Tait as Emerging Player and Thomas Odoayo as the first Associate Player of the Year, was a vision-only opportunity as journalists were instead offered extended versions of pop songs. What made this more problematic was that Tait's acceptance speech was a recorded video with the player unable to make it to South Africa.

Odoayo, one of the leading allrounders from the Associate nations, made it to the press conference but didn't exactly face a grilling. The countries below Test status still have a lot of work to do to maintain interest in their cricket.

Given Ireland's success at the World Cup, boosting their and the game's profile in an Associate nation, it was disappointing they came away with nothing. None of their players were nominated on the short list -- Cricinfo understands that the votes were spread too thinly for one player to make the cut -- and Sri Lanka took the spirit award, which would surely have suited Ireland.

But it was the two honours handed out to Mohammad Yousuf and Michael Vaughan which offered the most interesting stories. Yousuf's international future is uncertain now that he has signed up to the Indian Cricket League and he too appeared via video to accept his award. Whether he gets the chance to repeat the form that earned him the Test Player of the Year is unclear, but it merely emphasised what a loss he would be to Pakistan cricket.

However, Vaughan's position as an opening batsman in the Test team completes a return to the top of a game he feared he might never play again after his serious knee problems. The voting period for these awards runs from August 8, 2006 to August 8, 2007; Vaughan's year only started in May and included six Tests (five within the 12-month period). His hundreds against West Indies, on his return at Headingley, and his stunning 124 against India at Trent Bridge showed him at his best.

But no-one can argue with the award given to Ponting, one of the greatest batsmen of his generation and destined to be recalled as a legend of the game when he eventually retires. That day, however, remains a while off yet and there are more trophies for him and Australia to collect. It's about time someone challenged them in a major tournament. The Twenty20 is a perfect opportunity.

World Twenty20 starting in South Africa on Tuesday because of a long-standing ankle problem.

And he admits he might have to be on a "constant rehabilitation programme" for the rest of his career.

"The danger is, you get back to playing, and you're out all day in the field, and then you come off," he continued.

"And I've still got to do my exercises, I've still got to do the strength work on my ankle.

"I'm going to have to be disciplined to do that if I want to prolong my career."

Some observers have suggested he needs to change his bowling action because it puts too much pressure on his ankle.

But the all-rounder dismissed that notion, saying: "At 29, to start changing my action and tinkering with my feet would be unrealistic."

Flintoff also said that the public perception of him, exacerbated by the 'Fredalo' incident, was misguided.

"They see this fella who loves playing cricket, you see him with a pint in the evening and that's something which they think I'm all about.

"Some mornings I'm up at 6.30am to go running or do my training with Dave Roberts the physio.

FIFA medicine course ends

UNB, Dhaka

The five-day FIFA Football Medicine Course organised by Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) and supported by FIFA concluded on Monday at the BFF Bhaban.

Some 28 participants including four female doctors took part in the course, conducted by Dr. Gurucharan Singh. He also distributed certificates among the participants.

The FIFA sports medical committee member and acting director of AFC sports medicine department Gurucharan said: "Please try to implement what you've learnt from the course. You should meet after three months at the BFF to discuss among yourselves along with the expert medical consultants."

He also urged the participants to get involved with the local football clubs to increase the football medicine awareness among the players as well as officials.

BFF president SA Sultan, vice president Abdur Rahim, acting general secretary Manzoor Hossain Malu, Bangladesh Olympic Association chief operating officer Col (retd) Wali Ullah, local instructor Dr. Omar Faruque and Dr. Ali Emran were also present.

'Dravid should bat at three'

PTI, Mumbai

With a batsman at Rahul Dravid's calibre at their disposal, Team India need not explore other options for the crucial number three slot, said chief selector Dilip Vengsarkar.

In an exclusive interview to PTI, Vengsarkar wondered what made the think-tank try out Dinesh Karthick, Yuvraj Singh and Gautam Gambhir at the slot when they had an automatic choice in Dravid.

Vengsarkar also rued that the team lacked a genuine all-rounder and felt neither Ajit Agarkar nor fellow Mumbai mate Ramesh Powar did justice to their batting ability.

He, however, appreciated the healthy competition and team spirit and said a relaxed dressing room atmosphere during the lengthy UK tour was one of the key reasons for the turn-around in the team's performance.

Vengsarkar said Cricket Manager Chandu Borde too played an important role with his outputs during the tour.

The Indian team vanquished South Africa 2-1 after coming from behind in the off-shore ODI series in Ireland, carried that momentum into the three-Test rubber against hosts England by defeating the hosts 1-0 and then narrowly lost the best-of-seven ODI series 3-4, after fighting back from 1-3 behind.

Kaif looking at comeback

PTI, New Delhi

Sweating it out in practice sessions, seeking tips from seniors, fine-tuning technique -- Mohammad Kaif has tried everything and is now banking on divine intervention for a comeback into the Indian cricket team.

"God willing I will comeback," Kaif told reporters at the Ferozeshah Kotla here on Tuesday.

Kaif leads India A in a four-day match against South Africa A starting here on Thursday and the cheeky Uttar Pradesh cricketer said though comeback remains on the back of his mind, he is not putting himself under any pressure.

"I have not set any goal or time-frame for a return. I'm just trying to relax and enjoy my game. Yes, a comeback is always there in my mind but you know there is a process for that. God willing, I'll be back to national team again," said Kaif, who played his last ODI against South Africa in November 2006.

Since then, Kaif has been working on his technique and doing everything else to ensure he returns a better cricketer.

"The last 7-8 months allowed me to work on these areas. I sought technical help from a few people, including my father who also played this game at the Ranji level. Hope things would soon fall in place." Asked if he had spoken to some of his former teammates, Kaif said, "I'm not going to reveal the names."

Dhiman ton

FROM PAGE 17
Kroger picked up four wickets each for the home side.

The local boys, however, showed a much improved batting in the second essay after bundling out for 96 in the first but did not look safe with two days remaining.

The NT Strike reached 252-6 before stumps were drawn for the day with Scollay batting on 67. McCann added 54.

Nazmul Hossain, Mahbubul Alam, Mehrab Hossain, Mosharraf Hossain, Nayeem Islam and Enamul took one wicket apiece for NCA in their last match of the trip.

Guide to T20 bowling

JEREMY SNAPE

Twenty20 provides both batsmen and bowlers with a unique challenge in cricket.

The is a huge difference between the shorter form of the game and even one-day cricket.

The more attacking the game the more important the chemistry between what the batsman is looking to do and what the bowler is attempting.

In four-day cricket your best bet might be to keep it really defensive -- bowling the same line and length ball over and over again until eventually the batsman loses his wicket through frustration.

My best delivery in four-day cricket may pitch off-stump and hit middle.

If you did that in Twenty20 you would get absolutely pounded out of the ground.

My best delivery is the opposite of what the batsman is expecting.

From a mental point of view I am always trying to predict what the batsman is looking to do.

If he is trying to play a big shot out of the ground then I can afford something away from my best delivery.

It is more about strategy and stopping what he wants to do rather than technique -- although your

skills of control are important.

The best players in cricket full-stop are the ones that assess the context of the game really quickly and are able to adapt their skills to that specific context.

As a spinner you are generally coming on in the middle overs -- so you are pretty aware where guys have been strong are if they are looking at ones and twos or all out for boundaries.

You make your assessments before the game when you come up with your gameplans -- and then again during the game.

Some players might favour the cross-batted approach or go for slog-sweeps, while others might aim to hit you back over your head -- that affects the way you are going to bowl.

If you can limit the scoring in Twenty20 you are likely to get wickets.

When you build up dot balls you can see a player's brain working overtime and that is often when they play bad, or higher-risk, shots.

I try to assess the situation but every ball is different and variety is the key.

This "moon-ball" that I bowl is a bit like Russian roulette -- if it goes wrong at 40mph it can look pretty stupid because you can get hit out of the park.

But when you get it right it creates so much doubt in a batsman's mind that it can mess up their other

shots as well.

It came out of bowling in the nets -- I just lobbed it up as a test and people struggled to hit it.

When they did connect it was in more predictable areas, which means you can set a field to it.

Even things like varying your run-up as a bowler are really important -- a batsman sets his hitting tempo against the rhythm of your run-up.

If that rhythm changes then it disturbs the batsman so I try and mix in a one or two-pace run-up rather than the usual eight or nine paces.

And then there is regularly altering the field.

If all the variables like flight, length, line and the field-placings change regularly then a batsman has to be right on their game.

When they are also having to run quick singles and are out of breath then they struggle to take in all of the information and make the correct decisions.

The more efficient we can make our thinking under pressure the more successful we will be.

Generally the players that have their mental game sorted are the ones that progress to the highest level in Twenty20.

(Jeremy Snape is making a comeback to England colours after almost five years. He is a Twenty20 specialist)



Bangladesh national footballers train at the Cox's Bazar sea beach yesterday as part of a special physical training programme of their monthlong residential camp in the southern tourist resort.

Terry wary of Russia threat

FROM PAGE 20
where Peter Crouch was hoping to return to the starting side at the expense of Emile Heskey, who combined well with Michael Owen on Saturday.

Crouch missed the Israel match through suspension and McClaren's positive endorsement of his ability suggested he could be asked to support Owen while also helping out England's out-numbered midfield.

"He is a big player for us," McClaren said of the giant Liverpool forward. "He scores goals and is effective playing with Michael Owen. It is great to have that option coming back."

Underpinning England's fine performance on Saturday was a string of partnerships that worked well: Owen and Heskey in attack, Steven Gerrard and Gareth Barry in central midfield, the two Coles, Ashley and Joe, down the left, and Micah Richards and Shaun Wright-Phillips on the right.

McClaren added: "There is a lot of confidence, a lot of self-belief in the team. We need to keep that, bottle it and take it into the Russia

game."

McClaren echoed Terry's warning about England's limited room for error against opponents who have conceded only one goal in eight games in the group.

"This is coming to the nitty gritty. We can't afford any slip-ups and the players know that."

He added: "Russia will be very difficult to break down, they have an excellent defensive record. We will treat them with respect but it is about England and how we perform."

Real turned

FROM PAGE 20
Los Merengues have stormed to the top of the fledgling Liga table with consecutive wins, over Atletico Madrid and Villarreal, scoring seven goals and conceding just one.

Calderon added: "Right now Real Madrid have the best team in Europe. We may not have the best players, but we do have the best team on the continent."

North Korea

FROM PAGE 20
the damage for the European powerhouse in the 50th minute, only for Nigeria to come roaring back in the dying stages.

The Africans never gave up and Cynthia Uwak, who plies her skills in Europe, made no mistake when Sweden failed to clear in the penalty area with eight minutes to go, firing into the net from close range.

In a dramatic match in Shanghai, midfielder Kelly Smith scored two goals in the last 10 minutes for what looked like an English victory, only for Japan to spoil their party with just five seconds left on the clock.

They had Aya Miyama to thank for salvaging a 2-2 draw, stepping up as the seconds ticked down to smash a free-kick into the top left corner from 30 metres past the outstretched arms of Rachel Brown in the England goal.

The outcome of the match was crucial to deciding who would progress into the next round from the group alongside favourites Germany, who beat Argentina 11-00 on Monday.

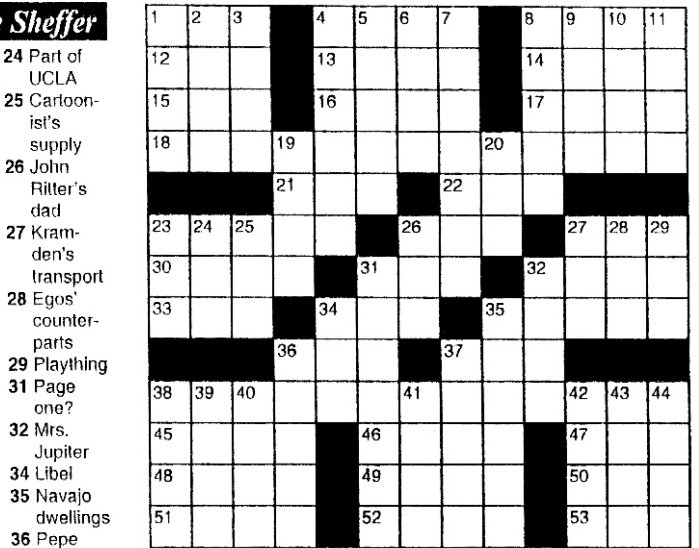
The draw means that the group is still wide open.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
1 Exercise site
4 Information
8 Incite to action
12 Thiller
13 Beyond control
14 Aesopian runner-up
15 "To be or —"
16 "Frasier" actress
17 October birthstone
18 Cautioner of calamity
21 Football filler
22 Privy
23 Straighten
26 Perfect score
27 Morsel
30 Skeletal piece
31 Lustrous black
32 Marital art
33 Send out invitations
34 Upper limit

DOWN
1 Harmonization
2 Milne
3 Nay sayer
4 Serviette
5 Arab chieftain
6 In need of patching
7 Pan
8 Pic
9 En-grossed
10 Evangelist
11 Take out of context?
19 Zoo structure
20 Charged bit
23 Lawyers' org.
24 Part of UCLA
25 Cartoonist's supply
26 John F. Kennedy's dad
27 Kramden's transport
28 Egos' counterparts
29 Plaything
31 Page one?
32 Mrs. Jupiter
34 Libel
35 Navajo dwellings
36 Pepe Le Pew, for one
37 Coil of yarn
38 Skilled
39 Addict
40 Give a hoot
41 Algonquian language
42 Amorous glance
43 Drench
44 Advantage

Solution time: 27 mins.
GARDEN SUE
LIPS RIV
VIA SQUA
EEL TUR
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DAYONE
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ROBERTS
OWEN
HORN
SWAK
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CRYPTOQUIP
O I J C L P C D P Q P A P H C J H F Z W
F S V D K A P K O H F Y O F D G O P J,
Z C V Y K S P L F W P H S P
Y P F D O D N H C Q P A C I G O X X F ?
Yesterday's Cryptquip: WHEN COURTROOM WORKERS GET HUNGRY, I EXPECT THAT THEY PROBABLY SNACK ON TRIAL MIX.
Today's Cryptquip Clue: X equals Z