

Ricky coming to India

CRICINFO, undated

Ricky Ponting will remain with the Australian squad for the seven-ODI tour of India beginning in the last week of September even though he was ruled out of the remainder of the ICC World Twenty20 Championship with a hamstring strain.

Ponting strained his hamstring while running between the wickets in Australia's Super Eights' match against Pakistan and completed his innings with the help of a runner. Alex Kountouris, the physio, said that Ponting's recovery was progressing well and was hopeful that he would take some part during the one-day series in India.

"Ricky Ponting is making excellent progress following his hamstring strain in the game against Pakistan on Tuesday. Ricky will be coming on the tour of India and will resume playing as soon as he is medically cleared," national selection panel chairman, Andrew Hilditch said.

"Brad Haddin has been added to the touring squad and will take part in the Indian tour until such time as Ricky recovers. Although Ricky's injury is very disappointing it gives us an opportunity to recognise the outstanding performances of Brad Haddin domestically and in his limited opportunities for Australia in the past 12 months."

Shane Watson was another injury concern for Australia after he left the field with a sore hamstring during their Super Eights' clash against Sri Lanka. Watson had come into the match as a replacement for Ponting.

"Shane felt some soreness in the left hamstring during today's game and we will continue to assess this over the next 48 hours before any decision is made regarding his availability," Kountouris said.

Australia are scheduled to leave South Africa for India on September 25 and would play the first ODI on September 29 in Bangalore.

Div 3 cricket qualifiers

SPORTS REPORTER

Dhanmondi Cricket Academy will take on Battalion Boys Club in the opening match of the 3rd Division Qualifying Cricket League at the Dhaka University Ground tomorrow.

Former National Cricket Coach Syed Altaf Hossain will declare the meet open as chief guest of the inaugural opening.



Did U Know?

Some unique research discovered that four out of every five boxers have sustained brain damage.



Paul Collingwood

(England cricket captain)  
"I made a mistake, that's what it comes down to. The friends that I was with were not massively close friends, to be honest, and they took me to the bar. I realise it was inappropriate and I'm disappointed with myself."

Regretting his visit to a lap-dancing club in South Africa a couple of nights back. He was subsequently fined 1,000



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DEBUTANT'S DELIGHT: Bangladesh opener Zunaed Siddique acknowledges the crowd's applause after reaching his maiden half-century during the ICC Twenty20 Super Eights match against Pakistan at Newlands yesterday.

Flintoff out of SL ODIs

AFP, Johannesburg

Andrew Flintoff has been ruled out of England's upcoming one-day series against Sri Lanka for further tests on his long-standing ankle problem, the England and Wales Cricket Board said Thursday.

The star allrounder, currently in South Africa where England have been taking part in the World Twenty20 championships, would return home later in the day to receive an assessment by a specialist on his troubled left ankle, the ECB said.

"As a result he will not take part in England's forthcoming One-Day series in Sri Lanka," the ECB statement added.

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FOR THOSE WHO MISSED THE SIX-BALL THUNDER: (L-R) India's Yuvraj Singh launches over mid-wicket, flicks it nonchalantly over square-leg, smashes the ball over cover, steers over deep point, mistimes one that still carries over mid-wicket and then goes for the maximum over wide mid-on at Kingsmead in Durban on Wednesday night. England seamer Chris Broad bowled that fateful 19th over in the Indian innings that yielded a perfect 36.

Inventors never win

AFP, Johannesburg

England, pioneers of Twenty20 cricket, made a familiar early exit from the inaugural world championships after failing to beat a major team and making headlines once again for all the wrong reasons.

Skipper Paul Collingwood, fined for a late-night visit to a lap dancing club, was forced to acknowledge his team were off the pace after they went down to an 18-run defeat at the hands of India in Durban on Wednesday night -- their fourth straight loss against the Test playing nations.

"I'm disappointed we haven't won enough games in the tournament. We've always been 10 percent off the pace," said Collingwood, who was captaining the side in his first overseas foray.

England's campaign was highlighted by a tactical naivety that belied the fact they have been playing the slam-bang form of the game for longer than any other team.

Twenty20 has been pulling in the crowds in domestic English cricket since 2003 and Collingwood's team

was packed with specialists such as Darren Maddy, Chris Schofield and Vikram Solanki who have long been discarded by the selectors in other forms of the game.

Top Test performers such as Monty Panesar, Matthew Hoggard, Alastair Cook and Ian Bell were all left at home but after an initial victory against the minnows of Zimbabwe, their replacements slumped to defeat against Australia, South Africa, New Zealand and then India.

Potential match-winning situations were squandered in all the games, particularly against New Zealand where England lost three wickets in the space of five balls while seemingly cruising to victory. Naively also shone through in their defeat to India when Stuart Broad was slapped for six sixes in the penultimate over by Yuvraj Singh, the youngster clearly shell-shocked by the experience.

Given their relative experience in comparison to their rivals, England had been quietly confident of their chances in the tournament which came immediately after a one-day series over India which hinted at a new steeliness to their short-form cricket.

Their South African flop carried

clear echoes of their disappointing performance in the 50-over World Cup in the Caribbean earlier this year when they failed to beat any other major side apart from the struggling West Indians in a last-match dead rubber.

Squad indiscipline also reared its head with Andrew Flintoff paying the price for a boozy night out, which ended up with him being rescued out to sea on a pedalo, by losing the vice-captaincy.

Collingwood managed to keep his job after apologising for his antics on the eve of the crunch match in Cape Town against South Africa.

Albie Morkel's match-winning sixes onslaught at Newlands came shortly after he had been dropped by the normally ultra-sharp Collingwood.

"Obviously I'm disappointed from my side of things, and hopefully it won't happen again," said a shame-faced Collingwood after the defeat, referring to his visit to the Mavericks Revue bar.

The same match also saw South African-born Kevin Pietersen, desperate to ram traitor taunts down the throats of the home supporters, run out for just 15 at a

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Aussies storm into semis

AFP, Cape Town



Australia's pace bowlers sent Sri Lanka crashing out of the World Twenty20 championships at Newlands Thursday.

"We're rising to the occasion," said stand-in Australian captain Adam Gilchrist. "We are more experienced in the big games." Sri Lanka tumbled to 101 all out in 19.3 overs after being sent in.

Australian opening batsmen Adam Gilchrist and Matthew Hayden needed only 10.2 overs to take their side racing to a ten-wicket win in a Super Eights match that was effectively a knockout encounter.

Australia made sure of joining Pakistan in the semi-finals while Sri Lanka were eliminated.

Gilchrist admitted there may have been a feeling of injustice in the Australian camp going in to the 20-overs tournament.

"As a team who have dominated the other two forms of the game for a long while it could have been a feeling that it was not right that teams were brought closer to us,"

he said of the short format.

But Gilchrist said that if any such feelings existed they had been quickly removed. "We're not owed anything in cricket. It's a very real part of cricket now and I think we have made that adjustment as the tournament has gone on."

"There was some juice in the wicket," said Sri Lankan captain Mahela Jayawardene. "The first six or seven overs were very vital but we didn't have the application to adapt."

Jayawardene said the tournament had been a valuable experience.

"This is something new for us. Most of the national cricketers haven't played Twenty20 cricket. If this is going to be a part of international cricket we will have to look seriously at ways of improving."

The match was effectively decided in the first few overs after Australia's stand-in captain, Adam Gilchrist, won the toss.

Stuart Clark took four for 20, the best figures by an Australian bowler in Twenty20 internationals.

Clark built on early breakthroughs by Brett Lee and Nathan Bracken, who took advantage of

early life in the pitch. The first three wickets fell for 11 runs in the first three overs.

Clark took over as Sri Lanka crashed to 43 for seven before Jehan Mubarak and Chaminda Vaas put on 40 for the eighth wicket.

Mubarak made top score of 28 before lofting a catch to extra cover off all-rounder Shane Watson, playing in his first match of the tournament.

But Watson had to leave the field after bowling two balls of his fourth over, clutching the left hamstring that had kept him out of action.

Watson replaced Australian captain Ricky Ponting, who was ruled out of the rest of the tournament because of a hamstring injury suffered during his team's defeat against Pakistan in Johannesburg Tuesday.

Gilchrist and Hayden snuffed out any chance of Sri Lanka fighting their way back into the match with aggressive batting.

Hayden hit his third half-century of the tournament, making 58 not out off 38 balls with seven fours and two sixes.

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Yuvraj no Sir Gary

AFP, Durban



Yuvraj Singh on Thursday dismissed comparisons with West Indian legend Gary Sobers after his six sixes in an over kept India alive in the ICC World Twenty20 Championship.

"A lot of people tell me I bat like him (Sobers), but I'm not even halfway there," the left-hander said. "But it's a great feeling when people tell you that."

Yuvraj smashed English fast bowler Stuart Broad for 36 runs in an over at the Kingsmead here on Wednesday night as India romped home by 18 runs in a match they had to win to remain in the semi-final race.

India must now beat South Africa in the last Super Eights match here on Thursday night to join the hosts and New Zealand with two wins each in group E, the three-way tie to be broken by net run-rates.

India, who enjoy a superior run-rate (0.20) to New Zealand's 0.05, need only to beat the formidable South Africans (0.76) to clinch one of the two semi-final places from the group.

Yuvraj, toasted by millions in his cricket-mad nation, said beating South Africa in their own back yard was not an improbable dream.

"The only Twenty20 game we had played before the world championship was against South Africa in Johannesburg last year and we won that. So it is not impossible," the Indian vice-captain said.

"If we play as well as we did against England we can win. We are positive."

Yuvraj's six sixes' feat in the 19th over gave him the fastest 50 in the tournament off just 12 balls, eight deliveries less than what Bangladesh captain Mohammad Ashraful achieved against the West Indies.

Broad's first two balls were swung over fine leg, the third over long-off, the fourth cut over point, the fifth pulled to mid-wicket and

the last into the stands at long-on.

It was only the fourth instance in top cricket that six sixes were hit in an over after Sobers and Ravi Shastri did it in first-class cricket and Herschelle Gibbs in the World Cup earlier this year.

Yuvraj revealed the fifth six was a mishit. "The first one was the longest one. Second one was, I think, square; third one was long-off; fourth was over point; fifth was a mishit over midwicket and sixth was again to long-on," he said.

The left-hander said he thought about six sixes only after the fifth one sailed over the boundary.

"After the fourth six I thought, if I use the crease much better, I'm sure I can hit one more," he said. "After the fifth I thought that I had to go for the sixth. It's a great feeling."

Yuvraj said he was reminded of the five sixes England's Dimitri Mascarenhas hit off his bowling during the sixth one-day international at the Oval in London earlier this month.

"I got more phone calls after

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'Bowl more, Yuvi'

PTI, Chandigarh

After his blitzkrieg against England in the ICC World Twenty20 Championship match in Durban, Yuvraj Singh now also wants to concentrate on his bowling.

"I called him up early this morning and congratulated him for his heroic innings. Apart from wanting to continue his fine touch which he has rediscovered now, Yuvraj is also keen to improve his bowling," Yuvraj's father and former cricketer Yograj Singh told PTI here.

He said once Yuvraj returned to Chandigarh, he will work towards improving his bowling.

"We have decided that we will work together on his bowling. He has got a good height and there is no reason why India should not get a genuine left-arm bowler as well," he said.

He said that 25-year-old Yuvraj had been "feeling down a bit" after being hit for five sixes in a row by Dimitri Mascarenhas in the sixth ODI against England earlier this month at The Oval.

Just before last night's Super Eights match, the left-handed batsman had called up his father and expressed his desire to play a big innings.

"He telephoned me and said 'Dad, I have been getting out to wrong shots'. He also said that he was not feeling good about being hit for five sixes."

"He said he wanted to win for the country and play a big innings," said Yograj, who himself once donned the India cap.

U-19 camp begins

UNB, Dhaka

The residential camp of the under-19 national booters began yesterday morning at the Bangabandhu National Stadium in preparation for the 2nd Indo-Bangladesh Bangla Games.

All the 35 booters, including five standbys, made some warm-up practice on the opening day under assistant coach Ujjal Chakrabarty Shibu in absence of head coach Hasanuzzaman Babloo, who is expected to join the camp on Saturday.

B'DESH-PAK SCOREBOARD

Final scoreboard in the ICC World Twenty20 Championship Super Eights match between Bangladesh and Pakistan at Newlands in Cape Town on Thursday:

BANGLADESH				
Iqbal run out (Hafeez)	3			
Zunaed c Misbah b Malik	71			
Aftab st Akmal b Hafeez	15			
Ashraf ul b b Afridi	5			
Shakib c and b Hafeez	1			
Nadif c Akmal b Malik	12			
Riyad run out (Gul)	1			
Mashrafe b Asif	11			
Rahim not out	6			
Razzak run out (Asif)	0			
Rasel b Gul	1			
Extras: (lb-3, nb-4, w-7)	14			
Total: (All out in 19.4 overs)	140			
Fall of wickets: 1-16, 2-79, 3-84, 4-86, 5-112, 6-119, 7-122, 8-137, 9-137				
PAKISTAN				
Nazir not out	27			
Afridi c Rahim b Razzaq	39			
Hafeez c Iqbal b Rasel	23			
Butt run out (Rahim)	21			

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Nayeemuddin cleared



SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh's Indian coach Syed Nayeemuddin did not take much time to clear himself from allegations of using banned drugs on the footballers.

The ex-India international and coach, who arrived Dhaka yesterday, was due to leave the capital for Cox's Bazar last night to join the residential camp after quickly putting an end to the row over the allegations against him.

The Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF), which called back the coach to discuss the news published by a few national dailies that had blamed the 60-year-old of using illegal drugs on players during last month's Nehru Cup held in New Delhi, was happy to see a happy end to the debate.

"The misunderstanding is over. It happened because of a few press reports. Now we know that everything is okay and we will work together for the betterment of the game," told BFF acting general secretary Manzoor Hossain Malu yesterday following an executive

meeting at the BFF Bhaban.

Nayeem faced the BFF bosses in the emergency meeting to clear himself from the allegations.

"We have no allegations against him (Nayeem). We only wanted to know what actually happened," Malu added.

While replying to a question, Malu said that the BFF has not imposed any condition on the coach but suggested that a physician should handle the medical side by from now on.

He, however, did not say whether the federation would send

any physician to the camp, which only has a physiotherapist.

"Everything will fall into places," said Malu before hurriedly ending the briefing.

Nayeem, who had thrown a challenge by saying earlier that players should be tested for drugs, has convinced the BFF which cleared him as innocent without going through the strenuous dope tests.

He gave multi-vitamin injections Neurobion Forte -- a combination of combinations of vitamin B1, B6 and B12 -- to the players in

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