



England players enjoy a game of rugby during a training session on the eve of the first one-day international at the Dambulla International Stadium on Sunday.

## Matuail notches easy win

SPORTS REPORTER

Bokul slammed a hat-trick as Matuail notched up a 3-0 victory over Spandan in the Third Division Football Super League at the Bir Shreshtha Shaheed Sepoy Mohammad Mostafa Stadium at Kamalapur yesterday.

Bokul scored in the 45th, 76th and 79th minute respectively.

In the day's other match at the same venue, Uro Famous Club edged past Lalbagh SC by a lone goal, scored by Akbar in the 15th minute.

## Henry hits

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slump, crashing to their third successive league defeat with a 2-0 reverse at Real Zaragoza on Saturday.

Argentine Andres D'Alessandro broke the deadlock on 53 minutes and Sergio Garcia struck late on to condemn Sevilla to a fourth straight defeat in all competitions.

"There is a long way to go yet and other teams have been in this situation before," said Sevilla forward Frederic Kanoute.

"Real Madrid were in a similar situation and ended up winning the league last year."

After winning their first two league matches Sevilla have lost 3-0 at Arsenal in the Champions League and have consequently fallen against Barcelona, Espanyol and now Zaragoza.

The UEFA Cup holders are now eight points behind leaders Barcelona and need to regroup for Slavia Prague in the Champions League on Tuesday.

## BCB sets

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a short time to start the work of our academy," he informed.

Talks were also held on age-level cricket, with the members deciding in principle to arrange a two-day semifinal and three-day final in the age-group competitions.

They will also arrange a special clinic for these young cricketers, brining in former international cricketers like Arjuna Ranatunga, Romesh Kaluwitharana, Aquib Javed and Iqbal Sikander.

The Shaun Williams issue also came under discussion.

"We will consider him (Shaun Williams) as an A team and Academy coach but definitely not as an interim national coach," Ishmaque said.

He was given the responsibility to form a committee to have a look at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

## Change

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bounce and is consistent."

That is nearly that. To the ingredients of new eras, new names and spin, must be added the weather, hopefully combining to produce a corker. Smith said that temperatures in the high thirties would play a role at some stage.

"It's very hot and there isn't much of a breeze in the middle, but we have to manage that as best we can."

## TEAMS

PAKISTAN (probable): Salman Butt, Mohammad Hafeez, Younis Khan, Mohammad Yousuf, Shoaib Malik (captain), Misbahul Haq, Kamran Akmal, Abdur Rehman, Umar Gul, Danish Kaneria, Mohammad Asif.

SOUTH AFRICA (probable): Graeme Smith (captain), Herschelle Gibbs, Jacques Kallis, Hashim Amla, Ashwell Prince, AB de Villiers, Mark Boucher, Andre Nel, Makhaya Ntini, Dale Steyn, Paul Harris.

# No Freddie amuses Mahela

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Sri Lankan captain Mahela Jayawardene has said that his side will look to capitalise on Andrew Flintoff's absence when they take on England in the five-match one-day series starting at the Rangiri Dambulla Stadium on October 1.

Flintoff was forced to pull out of the series due to a troublesome left ankle. He also missed the last bilateral one-day series between the two teams in 2006 where England were walloped 5-0 at home.

"Andrew is a top-class allrounder," Jayawardene told The Nation, a Colombo-based daily. "England have a more balanced attack with him in their side because he is a batting allrounder who bowls really well. He is a matchwinner and his absence is obviously a disadvantage for us."

Jayawardene indicated that the

England one-day side was stronger than the one they faced last year. "They have got some really good allrounders coming through," he said. "We met them in the World Cup and it was a very close game. England will be a good challenge for us. It's a big season ahead and we need to make sure we start on a very good note."

"They also have some quality batsmen who play different roles, some we haven't seen. We need to understand what those are and try to counter-attack them."

Commenting on the Sri Lankan squad, Jayawardene said it was a tough call for the selectors to pick allrounder Kausar Lokuarachchi ahead of fellow legspinner Malinga Bandara.

"Loku's been performing really well in one-day internationals. We know what Bandara is capable of doing. Thinking of the future, you never know how long Sanath (Jayasuriya) is going to continue playing. We might have to fit in a

spinning allrounder in the middle of our batting line-up. It's good for us to try a few things right now, see what Loku has to offer and how we can have different combinations going forward."

On Muttiah Muralidaran, Jayawardene doubted whether he would be fit for the series. Muralidaran is recovering from a strained right bicep which he sustained while bowling long spells during his county stint with Lancashire.

"It's good to have Murali around but the reality is that he won't be around for a long time. He won't be playing all the matches. We need to give him adequate rest. Even the workload on (Chaminda) Vaas must be limited. When opportunities arise we have to try out new blood. There are a few guys we have earmarked. We will bring slowly into the system."

Chamika Wijekandara, Mahela Udawatte and Dilruwan Perera are some of the players in the shortlist.

# Clarke feels 'at home'

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Two familiar trends gained momentum at the Chinnaswamy Stadium on Saturday as Michael Clarke's second hundred here bailed Australia out of danger and India failed to kill off a faltering opposition. In the absence of Ricky Ponting and Michael Hussey, and with the dangerous opening pair not quite coming off, Clarke played a classy innings that showed off the depth in Australian cricket.

Clarke had managed three runs in two innings at the World Twenty20 but he was his natural self once back in the one-day format. As with Shaun Pollock on this same ground in the Afro-Asia Cup opener earlier this year, Clarke stuck to the basics and delighted the purists with some old-fashioned shots and good, simple cricket.

"I'd definitely say I'm at home here," said Clarke when asked which form of the game he preferred. "I faced four balls in the Twenty20 tournament. The advantage for me was that I had time to bat out a lot of overs; actually I had no choice. I had to spend as much time out there as possible because I hadn't had much time in the centre."

Time was indeed something he had plenty of on Saturday. Adam Gilchrist fell cheaply, Brad Hodge went for a duck and Matthew Hayden didn't convert his start. Walking in at 18 for 2, Clarke took time to settle. The first delivery he received was clocked at 147kph and he did well to leave it alone. There were more leaves mixed with tight defence -- he middled the ball very well early on -- as Sreesanth's threat was seen off, at least at one end.

He then had two lives, both in the 22nd over; the first was a very close shout for leg before, the second when Mahendra Singh Dhoni couldn't hit the stumps after he called for the single and was well out of the crease.

"I certainly had a bit of luck and things went my way and I enjoyed it out there," he said. "I think I faced 140 balls (it was 132) so that was certainly something I thought I needed."

Those lives didn't go to waste as Clarke, nimble-footed, chipped deliveries into the gaps and pushed the field, gnawing away at India's Sreesanth-induced advantage. He worked the singles with the feisty Brad Haddin -- who he

said played "brilliantly" -- and kept the run rate at above five all through their fifth-wicket stand of 144. And all this without a chancy stroke or a whiff of frustration.

He reached his century with a pull over deep midwicket off a Ramesh Powar lollypop, then raised his arms and soaked in the moment. He'd been here, done this in Test cricket. "It's obviously a great place to come back to after making my debut in Test cricket. It's disappointing we didn't get a result tonight but good to score a hundred."

All this while India watched the advantage -- gained with four early wickets -- slipping away from them. It was a familiar one-day of failing to go for the kill.

Sreesanth, after his very impressive first spell, couldn't deliver at the death, while RP Singh and Irfan Pathan looked pedestrian, pitching the ball all over the place. There was no semblance of the discipline that marked their bowling in the

Twenty20. Powar, back in the side after missing out on the Twenty20 tournament, served up too many full tosses.

Perhaps India simply hadn't switched gears from the Twenty20 game but they had no excuse. Dhoni's life to Clarke aside, the fielding wasn't as sharp as it was in South Africa, testament to the fact that the longer the format, the more the demands.

At the Rose Bowl this summer, India had England at 43 for 1 but let Ian Bell and Alastair Cook cut loose and add 178. India only managed two wickets in 50 overs. At The Oval, they allowed England to recover from 83 for 4 to 316, taking just two wickets in the process, at 137 and 243.

Rain robbed this match of a result but there was still time for Clarke, possibly a future leader of the team, to deliver a statement of intent. India will need to find one of their own in Kochi.



Double Olympic champion Haile Gebrselassie of Ethiopia is joyous as he crosses the finish line of the 34th Berlin Marathon yesterday. He set the world record with a time of 2 hours 4 minutes and 26 seconds.

## Anand clinches world chess title

AFP, Mexico City

India's Vishwanathan Anand was crowned world champion of chess Saturday as he won the marathon tournament in Mexico City that brought together eight of the game's best players.

Known as the "Tiger from Madras, Anand, 37, replaced Vladimir Kramnik of Russia as champion, winning the tournament on points after tying a match with Hungarian Peter Leko on the 14th day of the contest, which he dominated from the start.

"I enjoy this new feeling of being world champion," he told AFP.

"I had a couple of difficult games, nothing too worrying for this kind of tournament," said Anand, who was ranked world number one going into the tournament.

Kramnik, who saw the championship slip from his grasp on Friday after a tie, finished in second followed by Israeli Boris Gelfand.

Eight of the world's top chess brains met in Mexico for the competition. Prominent players such as world number two, Veselin Topalov of Bulgaria, did not make it through the championship's complex qualification process.

Anand played at a clearly superior level throughout the 17-day tournament but came close to defeat on Friday. He managed to tie his five-hour, 73-move game with another Russian, Alexander Grischuk.

He would have won the tournament immediately if he had beaten Grischuk, who has been focusing on a poker career.

The Indian, who learned to play chess at the age of six, had previously won the world championship in 2000, but the achievement was valued less since at the time the chess world was split between two rival world titles.

Anand said both victories were equally sweet. "For me it is not different or more important than the 2000 title, for me they are both lovely memories," he said Saturday.

Anand distinguished himself as a youth for his chess acumen. At the age of 13, he won the junior title in India, and at 16, the senior chess title.

As champion he gets a prize of 390,000 dollars, while the runner-up will go home with 260,000 dollars and third place gets 180,000.

Anand may have to fend off a tough challenge to his newly-won title next year from Kramnik in a duel of the 2006 and 2007 champions.

He said he planned to keep a light playing schedule for the rest of the year but anticipated tough matches upon his return.

## Rajshahi last to reach Super Six

SPORTS REPORTER

Rajshahi DSA became the last team to reach the Super Six stage of the Araf Apparels 21st National Youth Hockey competition after they crushed neighbours Dinaipur 5-0 at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium yesterday.

They joined BKSP, Dhaka, Munshiganj, Mymensingh and Faridpur in the second phase.

Kawser and Lemon scored two goals each while Sabir netted the other in the crucial group phase match.

Sylhet DSA beat Panchagarh 2-1 with Rajan and Ashraf scoring in between De Costa's equalizer for the northern district.

Meanwhile, the Super Six begins today defending champions BKSP taking on Mymensingh while Dhaka DSA faces Faridpur in the other match.

## Gebrselassie sets new world marathon mark

AFP, Berlin

Double Olympic champion Haile Gebrselassie broke the world marathon record with an official time of 2hr 4min 26sec to win the 34th Berlin Marathon on Sunday.

The 34-year-old Ethiopian, who won 10,000m gold at Atlanta in 1996 and at Sydney four years later, bettered Kenyan Paul Tergat's record of 2hr 4min and 55sec set in 2003 also in the German capital.

"Don't ask me how proud I am, words can't describe," said the breathless new world record holder who picks up the 50,000 winner's cheque on top of his 250,000 fee for competing. "It's something really special."

"I just want to thank all the German people who helped me on the course, their support made a huge difference. There were perfect conditions out there, it was a bit windy, but otherwise perfect."

"I had said I wanted to do 2 hours 3 minutes, but that didn't happen."

This was Gebrselassie's second consecutive win in Berlin since he quit track racing after the 2004 Olympics to concentrate on the marathon.

# Kumble for Test job

Cricket

PETER ROEBUCK

Anil Kumble is the best man to lead the Indian Test team on its forthcoming expedition to Australia. He could forge a strong alliance with Mahendra Singh Dhoni, the obvious man for the T20 and ODI teams down under.

Between them these sturdy cricketers have the qualities needed to coax fine performances from veterans and to instil confidence in youth. Probably it won't happen because selectors and officials are otherwise inclined but it'd be worth a go.

More likely a more fashionable player will be given a second or third tilt at the pot.

Almost alone amongst the senior men, Kumble has not been given a chance to take charge of the Indian team. Over the last few years he has been the most constant, most probing of the Indian players yet he is seldom mentioned as a contender for the captaincy.

Instead he has served with unstinting effort. Always he has put the team first.

His loyalty is to India and his comrades, and his own interests are pushed to the back of his mind, an uncommon occurrence

amongst cricketers.

From time to time he may have been beaten but he has never been broken. Kumble has set a towering example. Neither the glamour nor clamour of the age has distracted him from his task.

Captains scanning the field in search of someone still wanting to bowl with the sun scorching, the batsmen dominating and the scoreboard rattling, need not look past him.

Others might appear discouraged but Kumble would stride to the crease, his hope intact, his intentions plain.

Nor does he berate a fieldsmen after a catch had been dropped, or not for long anyhow (for he is only human). He can glare but he forgives readily and then tries to make amends. His appetite for wickets has never been satiated. Are not these exceptional qualities? Here is an underestimated man.

As a cricketer, Kumble has surpassed expectations. It might be the same as a tactician and leader. On the rare occasions this unsmiling tweaker has directed operations he has shown the sort of flexibility and aggression supposedly absent in contemplative types.

But then Kumble merely resembles a librarian. At heart he is a lion. And he can still roar, continues to take wickets and has even scored

his first Test century, an innings that reminded observers that he had started as a batsman.

Certainly he has a couple more years left in him in Test cricket. Moreover he does not expect to play in the one-day matches and is therefore perfectly placed to form a partnership with Dhoni, a young cricketer with plenty on his plate.

Dhoni was superb in South Africa and is clearly capable of inspiring younger players. That does not mean he ought forthwith to be put in charge of a successful Test side full of older hands. Nor does success in T20 necessarily mean that the same players will prosper in the Test arena. Indeed Yuvraj, the most explosive batsmen in the tournament, has been exposed in Tests as a batsman with a dubious back foot game.

Dhoni can take charge of the Test team in two years, when his proteges, including the splendidly fertile Gautam Gambhir, Uthappa, Chawla and those contrasting pacemen, RP Singh and Sreesanth (the ice and the fire), are ready to replace the fading champions.

Till then it'd be wise to let him work on his own game whilst widening his experience of captaincy in one-day matches. Let us not kill the golden goose after a single egg has been laid.

# Sree lands film offer

Cricket

PTI, Kochi

His on-field antics have made Sreesanth a hit with the fans and in an attempt to cash in on his massive popularity, a filmmaker down south has offered the flamboyant Indian pacer a movie alongside Malayalam megastar Mammootty.

The quickie has not consented to the project, but if he agrees Sreesanth will not have to do any major homework on his role as he will be playing a cricketer, director of the film Aashiq Abu told here.

"I am waiting for Sreesanth's confirmation. The film is in the preliminary stages. I had met him after his return from South Africa. The story was also read to him," the debutant director said.

"I hope to start the shooting once I get confirmation from Sreesanth. I know he is very busy. Lots of cricket is coming after the current Future Cup one-day series against Australia," Abu, who is currently working as an assistant to renowned Malayalam film Director Kamal, added.

The work on the script is in the final stages, he revealed, adding that the dialogues in the film will be written by his friend Bipin Chandran.

Abu said Sreesanth's role would be more than just a cameo.

"It will not be a guest role, but certainly an important role, which will have its influence on the story," he asserted.

Abu said Mammootty would play a Police Officer. Among other major actors, who are expected to be included are Kalabhavan Mani, Indrajit and Innocent, he said.

"I was planning to make the official announcement after October 1, after getting confirmation and dates from both Mammootty and Sreesanth," he said.

"Once I get the confirmation, I hope to start the work from next year," he added.

Sreesanth's family, however, has refused to say anything on the matter.

"Sreesanth is concentrating on the one-day series," a family member said.

Sreesanth has had his brush with the entertainment industry when he penned a song 'Jago India', which was sung by his

brother-in-law and renowned playback singer Madhu Balakrishnan for an album 'Desh'.

Meanwhile, Sreesanth wants to emulate Sachin Tendulkar and come up with a five-wicket haul on his home ground when India take on Australia in the second cricket one-day international at the Jawaharlal Nehru stadium here Tuesday.

Sreesanth, who arrived here this morning and drove straight to the stadium to see some friends said he wanted to achieve a five-for in front of his home crowd.

"My ambition is to take five wickets in the match in my home ground where I did my training all through."

"Sachin bhai has achieved it here twice. I would love to achieve the same," Sreesanth told reporters here today.

On whether he would again target Australian opener Matthew Hayden, whom he had dismissed in the Twenty20 World Cup semifinal and in the first one-dayer yesterday, Sreesanth said all the Aussie batsmen would pose a tough challenge for the Indian bowlers.



Action from yesterday's Araf Apparels 21st National Youth Hockey Championship match between Panchagarh and Sylhet at the Maulana Bhasani National Stadium.

# Hamilton closer

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see that it's very hard to recover six points per race," said Alonso.

"It means winning the two remaining races and expecting him to finish fifth or sixth, so realistically it's very complicated and we'll need a retirement from him and he hasn't had any this year, but maybe it will come in the last two races."

It was the first time since Brazil in 2003 that a race had to be started under the safety car because of the atrocious conditions, with heavy rain hitting the track and Mount Fuji covered in fog.

The drivers were forced to drive carefully through the spray and puddles in around two minutes 13 seconds a lap -- some 40 seconds slower than the pole winning time set by Hamilton in qualifying.

The Ferraris of Raikkonen and Felipe Massa had a nightmare time in the opening laps after neither started on full wets despite a ruling all drivers should because the race began behind the safety car.

Massa slid off on the second lap and pitted at the end of the lap for full wets while Raikkonen came in next time round and dropped down to 21st, one place behind his

teammate.

The safety car was recalled after 19 laps, just as the first F1 race at the Fuji track in 30 years was threatening to turn into a washout.

The conditions had not improved and Williams driver Alex Wurz did not make it past the first corner before sliding off and clipping Massa as he returned to the track.

Alonso was the first to make a pit-stop at the end of lap 27, with Hamilton stopping one lap later leaving Vettel, who had qualified a career-best ninth, leading a race for the first time from Webber.

Double champion Alonso slid off on lap 29 and although he managed to get back on the track he lost several more seconds to his teammate.

But Hamilton was then taken off the track by Robert Kubica in the other BMW. The Pole picked up a drive through penalty as Hamilton dropped to fourth.

Hamilton regained the lead on lap 40 as the others pitted before a thrilling championship battle took another twist on lap 42 when Alonso crashed out.

## No Arsenal

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profits, we're running it from generated cash, without people having to put extra money in every year, and we're running it very profitably."

"If you're investing in a club you want to make a return on your investment."

Edelman added: "A lot of clubs look attractive because they're big world brands, but if you're investing and you want to see a return on your money then you want it to be profitable."

"Arsenal is profitable, Chelsea is not profitable at this juncture."

## Rajib qualifies

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other top players. Unfortunately he narrowly missed his third Grand Master norm only for just half point.

Rajib returned home via a Singapore Airlines flight last night. Federation officials and chess players received him at the airport.

A total of 128 top chess players from all around the world will compete in the world meet.