

SPECIAL OLYMPICS BCB praises cricket team

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) congratulated the Bangladesh Special Olympics cricket team for winning the gold medal at the 2007 Special Olympics in Shanghai, China.

The board president and its members in a message sent their heartfelt felicitations to the captain, players and the team management of the triumphant side which beat India in the final.

The BCB also hailed the glorious performance of the Bangladeshi athletes in the event.

Rezaul cleared

FROM PAGE 21

and were instructed to rectify their bowling action in accordance with ICC guidelines, were videotaped by BCB High Performance Computer Analyst Mohammad Salahuddin at the Mirpur Indoor Centre on 20 September 2007. The video footages were then presented to the group.

Saifullah Khan, Imran Farveez, Kamrul Hasan, Waskom Ahmed, Sharifullah and Kamaluddin are considered bowlers with illegal actions.

They were allowed to bowl last season but were also recorded.

Discarded national players Faisal Hossain and Jamaluddin Babu, Resal Khan, Farhad Hossain, Ashraf Khan and Yasin Arafat were judged as 'under further observation' in Grade 1.

BCB further added that all Grade 1 bowlers will be allowed to bowl this season. However, this decision is flexible and a bowler can be banned for life if his bowling action is reported suspect again.

Gen Moeen

FROM PAGE 21

SM Shahidullah, managing director of construction firm Shahidullah Associates, was also present during the visit and the NSC boss asked him whether his organisation was competent to do the job.

Despite Shahidullah's answer being affirmative, the NSC chief vowed to bring the responsible under judgment.

Sources said that BUET's Bureau of Technology and Research Centre (BTRC) and NSC's then director of planning and development Nurul Haque Pradhan could be questioned regarding the matter.

Shamimuzzaman Basunia, representative of BTRC -- consultants of the venue renovation -- has also visited the site.

13-match ban

FROM PAGE 21

Afridi, the mercurial all-rounder, for provoking him into lashing out with a bat.

"The incident happened after Afridi used nasty words about my family which I couldn't tolerate and Asif came in between the matter," Akhtar said as he arrived at the hearing.

But he later said that he wanted to learn from the error of his ways.

"I have suffered a lot and there were lessons to be learnt from that mistake. I now want to move my career ahead -- I will be extra cautious and careful in future," Akhtar said.

Richards pledges

FROM PAGE 24

Richards described the reports linking him to Arsenal as "ridiculous."

He said: "This was in a magazine I spoke to once, a long time ago it's very old stuff. I've said when I was younger that I'd like to play for Arsenal one day and that was it. Now they're making a big thing about it."

Richards also rubbished suggestions that he has insisted on a buy-out clause in his new deal that would allow him to move to a Champions League club.

"It's certainly not the case that I want to move anywhere. I'm looking for a new house in Manchester, so why would I want to move anywhere now?"

"I'm enjoying my football week in, week out and I'm playing for England, so what more could I want at the moment?"

Match-fixers

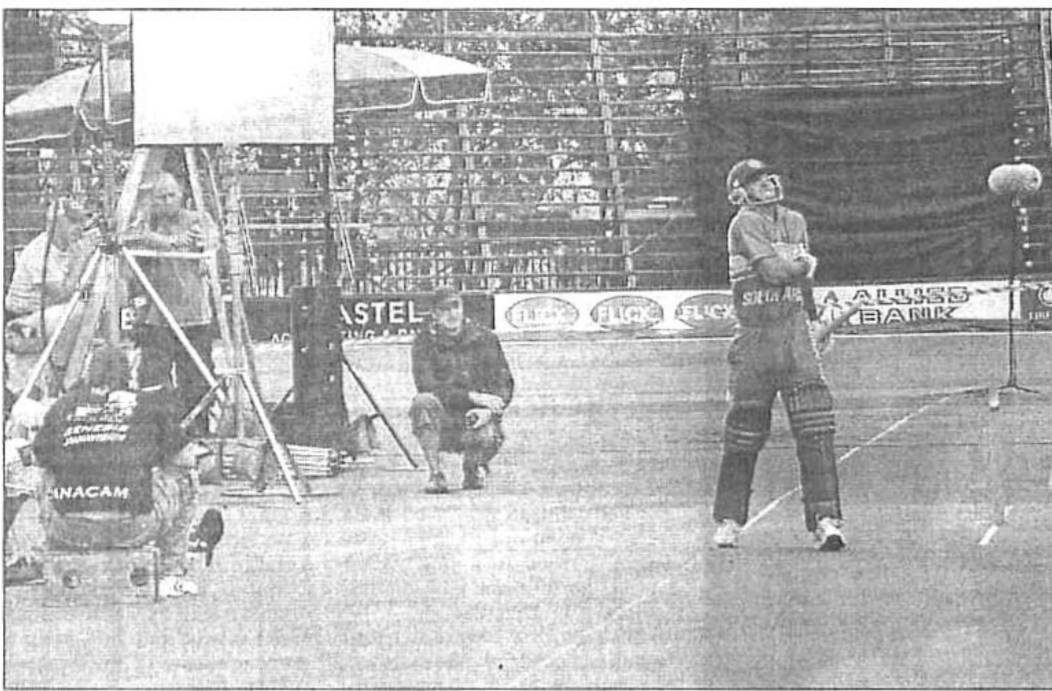
FROM PAGE 24

The latest judgement also increased some of the fines, with the largest penalty imposed on the former owner of FC Synot, Ivo Valenta, rising to 350,000 koruna.

The club's sporting manager Jaroslav Hastik was arrested at the beginning of May 2004, after police overheard conversations about match fixing.

The content of the conversations sparked an enormous corruption scandal in which around 30 football officials and referees were implicated, including the vice president of the Czech football federation (CMFS), Milan Brabec, who was at the same time the head of the referees' committee.

The latest sentences can still be appealed.



South African actor Frank Rautenbach performs a scene from the movie on the life of late Hansie Cronje at the Wanderers in Johannesburg on Monday.

Cronje movie underway

Cricket

AFP, Johannesburg

Aussie spin king Shane Warne is smashed for six by South Africa cricket captain Hansie Cronje as the crowd roars its approval at a rising star who would later shame the nation and the game.

Five years after his death in a plane crash, a new biopic on Cronje that has begun filming will likely reignite the debate over the man who was once revered as a national hero but later became synonymous with the murky world of match-fixing.

The match against Australia at the Wanderers stadium in Johannesburg, with Cronje look-alike Francois Rautenbach playing the role of the late Proteas skipper, will form the opening scene of the movie, before it all went wrong.

"This is where Hansie scored his 100 here at Wanderers in 1994, it was still under the old South African flag," explains his older brother Frans Cronje, who owns the production company that is making the movie.

"It was the first one-day international where Shane Warne didn't take a wicket and Hansie hit them to pieces here, and that was really kind of the establishment of Hansie as a national hero of South Africa."

Years later, the verdict is more equivocal, with some seeing him as a tragic hero, and others as the man who soiled the image of the gentleman's game.

At the time of his death in June 2002, the Natal Witness wrote that it brought "the finality of a Greek tragedy to the saga of a flawed hero... who fell from grace because of a fatal love of money."

Frans Cronje says the aim of the movie is not to vindicate his brother,

but to tell the story "as it was".

"When Hansie was still alive I told him we should do something like this and he always said 'you can't do it until the story is finished', and when he died I knew the story is ready to be told," he said.

Three years ago, he started doing research for the film, which included interviews with more than 40 people who were close to Hansie.

"It's an inner journey, it's not primarily a cricket story although there is some cricket in it, but the cricket merely forms the background to the story," said Frans Cronje of the movie which has a \$5 million and (8 million dollar, 5.7 million euro) budget.

His brother "represented the new South African hero, he could speak to black and white, old and young, rich and poor... and make everyone feel special."

Only the second South African captain in the post-apartheid era, Cronje's exposure in a match-fixing scandal left the cricket world aghast.

The King Commission, set up to probe the involvement of Cronje and other South African cricketers in match-fixing during a five game one-day series in India, ended in him being banned from the game for life.

After Cronje died, former South Africa coach Bob Woolmer -- whose death during the World Cup this year sparked a new round of speculation about match-fixing -- called Hansie "a real leader of men."

"They would have walked off Table Mountain for him. He was a man destined for greatness," Woolmer said.

But as South African batting great Barry Richards said, "he will obviously be remembered for all the wrong reasons."

While questions remain as to whether all the truth had emerged, with reports of secret bank accounts, numerous properties and funds secreted away, the older Cronje is adamant these accusations are mere speculation.

"If people want to speculate, they can speculate. As far as the movie goes we don't try and dig up anyone, we don't try and point fingers at anybody."

Rautenbach spent a year preparing for the role, being coached in cricket and spending time with the family.

"Every now and then he looks so much like Hansie. It's the mannerisms more than the look I suppose," says Frans, adding it was difficult filming some of the scenes.

Rautenbach said that some of the scenes were emotionally draining.

"The King Commission was really tough. Hansie was exceptionally tired, there was a lot of emotions and he goes to a back-room and weeps in his father's arms," he said.

Rautenbach has run the gamut of emotions Hansie experienced in admitting his guilt, and trying to "find a purpose again while at the same time deal with being ostracised."

"At the end of the day we are not making a movie to vindicate him because he did wrong. We are trying to tell a story of redemption. He had more than his fair share of punishment."

American actress Sarah Thompson, who has had roles in the television series 7th Heaven and Angel, plays the role of Cronje's wife Bertha.

The 10-week shoot has taken the cast across South Africa and they are scheduled to shoot scenes in London and Mumbai.

The movie is scheduled for release in September next year.

Asif in doubt for SA ODIs

AFP, Lahore

Pakistan bowler Mohammad Asif is a doubt for next week's one-day matches against South Africa, an official said Thursday.

"Asif had pain in his elbow and the scans show he has inflammation in his elbow and the doctor has advised a week's rest," team manager Talat Ali said.

"He should be okay but it will depend on his progress," he told reporters.

Pakistan play South Africa in five one-day internationals which follow the two-Test series that Pakistan trails 1-0.

The first two one-dayers are scheduled here on October 18 and 20.

The remaining matches will be held in Faisalabad on October 23, Multan three days later and Karachi on October 29.

Salman fined

FROM PAGE 21

The decision was referred to television umpire Riazuddin who ruled Butt out.

"The third umpire gave me out when it was a bounce catch," said Butt, who also criticised decision against Pakistan's ace batsman Mohammad Yousuf in the first innings of the second Test.

"I don't think Yousuf was out. When you lose your premier batsman like that, one decision can make a lot of difference to the team," said Butt of Yousuf's leg-before decision off paceman Dale Steyn on Tuesday.

Pakistan, chasing a mammoth 457 to level the two-Test series, were 108-1 on the fourth day -- needing another 349 runs to win or bat out 90 overs on Friday. South Africa won the first Test in Karachi by 160 runs.

Frings to captain

FROM PAGE 24

"Torsten has missed a lot of football, but he has worked hard in practice and he is really enjoying himself in training, he is very important to us," said Loew.

Frings will be in midfield alongside Bayern Munich's Bastian Schweinsteiger with Bremen teammate Clemens Fritz and Real Betis's David Odonkor fighting for the other place in the starting team.

Loew said he has not decided who will partner Schalke 04's Kevin Kuranyi up front with Germany's player of the year Mario Gomez and Lukas Podolski in contention with first-choice Klose out with a knee injury.

And Jens Lehmann has been confirmed as Loew's preferred choice as goalkeeper despite not having played since the 2-0 win over Wales in Cardiff more than a month ago and losing his place in Arsenal's first team.

"Jens is our number one," said Loew.

"I have no reason to question it and he will be back in the Arsenal team soon."

And it is experienced players like Lehmann, who will win his 49th cap against Ireland, who Loew says have given Germany a harder mental edge.

"For the moment we are strong, but we have to maintain that," said the 47-year-old Loew.

Adebayor

FROM PAGE 24

Benin triumphed 2-0 at home to Sierra Leone and their hopes of making it to the Nations Cup for only the second time could be boosted by the Leone Stars having to play a World Cup qualifier against Guinea Bissau next Wednesday.

Defending champions Egypt, penalty shootout conquerors of Ivory Coast after a goalless 2006 final in Cairo, need a point from a home fixture against lowly Botswana Saturday to top Group 2 and secure a place in Ghana.

However, a shock win for Botswana coupled with a victory for Burundi in Mauritania would leave the minnows level on points and head-to-head records, and goal difference would decide who finishes first.

Egypt will lack injured midfielder Mohamed Barakat and striker Ahmed 'Mido' Hossain and suspended midfielder and captain Ahmed Hassan while yet another midfielder star, Mohamed Aboutraika, faces a fitness test on a knee.

But Hassan Shehata, a Nations Cup winner as a player and a coach, will welcome back midfielder Mohamed Shawky, a recent Midlandsrough signing from African champions Al-Ahly, and Germany-based striker Mohamed Zidan.

Ten Cate Blues

FROM PAGE 24

Ballack's desire to stay at Stamford Bridge is matched by Ivorian striker Didier Drogba who felt Mourinho's departure more than most. Drogba was very close to the Portuguese coach who left the club by mutual consent last month.

Even though he has been linked with a move to Milan, Drogba was quick to dispel the rumours. Drogba said: "Chelsea is my destiny today. I do not want the adventure to change. Milan? What a good club. But I have spoken to nobody."

Peaking at right time

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

The Mitchell Johnson ball that dismissed Mahendra Singh Dhoni was an ideal delivery to a left-hander -- it pitched on an awkward length, moved away off the seam and drew the batsman into a stroke. Unfortunately Dhoni is a right-hander. It didn't matter; Dhoni tried to fend the ball to the leg side and feathered it to Adam Gilchrist. Johnson's third wicket had come with one of his least dangerous balls of the innings. Sometimes it's just your day.

And that is fair enough, as Johnson has endured plenty of occasions when it hasn't been his day. He was no more than a footnote in Australia's Ashes and World Cup triumphs; now he seems intent on writing his own chapter in Australian cricket's future. His 5 for 26 on what most experts tipped as a belter at Vadodra confirmed what good judges have been saying for years -- Johnson is a star on the rise.

He hurtled through the Indian middle order after two wickets fell in Brett Lee's opening over and finished with the best figures by an

Australian in an ODI in India. He bowled quick, although the slowish pitch didn't let him reach top speed, but it was his control and single-minded objective to keep collecting victims that impressed the most.

Johnson shone in the ICC World Twenty20 and used the opening four games in India to build to this crescendo. The timing of his form spike is impeccable. Australia's home campaign begins in less than a month with a Test against Sri Lanka at Brisbane. Johnson knows the 'Gabbra well and he has a compelling argument for a home Test debut, especially with Shaun Tait still recovering from elbow surgery.

Should the selectors agree, Johnson will at least be familiar with the process. He spent all five Ashes Tests last summer as Australia's 12th man, watching as Lee, Glenn McGrath and Stuart Clark carried the pace attack in the whitewash. That was followed by an extended holiday in the Caribbean as he became a spectator in another whitewash, over-looked for every match.

Least anyone mistake him for one of the support staff due to his permanent place in the dressing-room, Johnson took another overseas trip during Australia's off-

season to bolster his armoury at the MRF Pace Foundation in Chennai. The work began to pay off in South Africa, where he took eight economical Twenty20 wickets.

The challenge will be to transfer his form into the Test arena if the opportunity arises. While Tait and Clark have both been used at Test level, the selectors for a long time kept Johnson ahead of that handy pair in the ODI squad. His first limited-overs five-wicket haul has shown there was reason behind their faith. Johnson was especially troubling against India's left-handers, controlling his outswing and subtle movement off the pitch and enticing edges behind from Yuvraj Singh, Irfan Pathan and Murali Kartik.

His simple system also worked against the right-handers, as Robin Uthappa found when he was trapped lbw by a ball that angled across him and straightened sharply. Johnson's dominance was especially impressive on a red, dusty pitch that wouldn't have looked out of place in the Australian outback. His speed was still lively -- he hovered in the low 140kph region -- and he persistently banged the ball hard in the right areas.

Pakistan fight

FROM PAGE 21

before bad light ended play.

Earlier, Pakistan had all but squandered any chances of leveling the series in the morning session when they failed to dislodge Smith and Kallis after the tourists resumed at 154-2.

The confident pair were untroubled to consolidate their team's lead during a record stand of 203 for the third wicket.

Smith, 75 overnight, became cautious after entering the 90s before he pushed part-time bowler Younis Khan for several runs in the last over before the interval to complete his century -- his first in 17 Tests.

Smith's last Test hundred came against the West Indies at Antigua in May 2005.

Pakistan's problems were compounded by the absence of frontline paceman Mohammad Asif who aggravated an elbow injury on Wednesday.

Scans revealed Asif has inflammation in his elbow and needs a week's rest to recover, ruling out any chances of him bowling in this match. He bowled just four overs in South Africa's second innings.

Asif's new-ball partner Umar Gul, who took one wicket, also had to return to the dressing room due to fatigue.

Captain Shoaib Malik was forced to operate with leg-spinner

Danish Kaneria and left-arm spinner Abdul Rehman after taking the second new-ball -- something unseen in Pakistan cricket.

To add to Pakistan's woes, Malik dropped a skier off Kallis when the batsman was on 47 -- denting Pakistan's hopes of a breakthrough.

Kaneria finally broke the stand when Smith miscued a sweep and was caught at point. Smith's 296-ball knock had 17 boundaries.

Kallis reached his hundred in 336 minutes, hitting seven boundaries and taking his tally for the series to 421.

He improved his own South African record for a short two-match series of 388 which he made against Zimbabwe six years ago.

Rehman then bowled Ashwell Prince for 11 to finish with 2-112. AB de Villiers was unbeaten on eight when the Proteas declared.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the fourth day of the second Test between Pakistan and South Africa at the Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore on Thursday:

SOUTH AFRICA: First innings 357 (Prince 63, Kallis 59, Boucher 54; Kaneria 4-114)

PAKISTAN: First innings 206 (Akmal 52; Ntini 3-42, Harris 3-57)

SOUTH AFRICA: Second innings (overnight 154-2)

Smith c sub (Hameed) b Kaneria 133

Gibbs c Akmal b Gul 16

Amla b Rehman 17

Kallis not out 107

Prince b Rehman 11

de Villiers not out 8

Extras: (b-12, nb-1) 13

Total: (For 4 wickets in 110.3 overs decl.) 305

Fall of wickets: 1-34, 2-66, 3-273, 4-290

Did not bat: Boucher, Nel, Harris, Steyn and Ntini

Bowler O M R W

Asif 4 1 14 0

Gul 16 3 48 1

Kaneria 44.3 11 99 1

Rehman 42 7 112 2

Younis 4 0 20 0

PAKISTAN: Second innings

Butt c Pollock b Ntini 6

Akmal not out 49

Younis not out 48

Extras: (b-2, lb-3) 5

Total: (For 1 wicket in 31 overs) 108

Fall of wicket: 1-15

To bat: Younis, Inzamamul, Misbah, Malik, Rehman, Gul, Asif, Kaneria

Bowler O M R W

Steyn 7 2 25 0

Ntini 6 2 24 1

Kallis 2 0 5 0

Nel 6 1 27 0

Harris 10 5 12 0

England clinch

FROM PAGE 24

The wicketkeeper-batsman reached his 41st fifty in one day internationals with a single off Bopara while Silva followed suit before falling to Broad for a 101-ball 67, including five fours.

Silva tried to play an uppercut to a wide bouncer, only for Bopara to take a fine running catch near the third man boundary.

Sangakkara fell to the same combination, with Bopara this time taking the catch near the square-leg fence. His 102-ball innings included four fours.

The last match of the series will be played at the same venue on Saturday.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the fourth one-day international between Sri Lanka and England at the Premadasa Stadium in Colombo on Wednesday:

SRI LANKA

Tharanga c Shah b Sidebottom 4

Jayasuriya c Pietersen b Anderson 3

Sangakkara c Bopara b Broad 69

Yajwardene c Broad b Anderson 0

Silva c Bopara b Broad 67

Lokuarachchi lbw b Collingwood 9

Dilshan lbw b Anderson 17

Mubarak b Sidebottom 20

Vaas c Pietersen b Sidebottom 2

Fernando not out 3

Malinga not out 3

Extras: (lb-3, w-11) 14

Total: (For 9 wickets in 50 overs) 211

Fall of wickets: 1-7, 2-16, 3-20, 4-146, 5-158, 6-166, 7-190, 8-195, 9-206

Bowler O M R W

Anderson 10 1 33 3

Sidebottom 10 2 27 3

Broad 10 0 54 2

Collingwood 6 0 28 1