Hollywood hitters fail to show

INTERNET, undated

The dream scenario was to have Russell Crowe firing down bouncers at Jude Law and Robbie Williams in the final over of the inaugural G'Day USA Hollywood Ashes cricket match in suburban Los Angeles.

But Crowe was a no-show to the game.

Law, Williams, Daniel "Harry Potter" Radcliffe had said they would play for the English team, but also did not turn up.

Oscar winner Mel Gibson did show, but opted to do the official coin toss and then retreat to the VIP tent sponsored by Qantas.

With or without A-List celebrity star wattage, organisers of one of the blue chip events of the Australia Week festival currently underway in the US did have a thriller ending to their 25-over celebrity cricket game between old rivals Australia, led by former test captain Steve Waugh, and England. SEE PAGE 18 COL 4

Brown suggest knighthood for Tendulkar

PTI, New Delhi

Cricketing greats from the Commonwealth nations such as Sachin Tendulkar should be considered for traditional British honours like the knighthood, Prime Minister Gordon Brown has said.

Noting that cricket is one of the great things that binds the Commonwealth together, he said there was a time when top cricketers from the countries in the grouping would be recognised by the British people through its honoured system.

"It used to be the case that great cricketers from the Commonwealth would be recognised by the British people through our honoured system -- we think of Sir Don Bradman or Sir Gary Sobers," Brown, who is on an official tour of India, told reporters here on Sunday.

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5



The first match to go on air on colour lelevision of the Wimbledon Championships was in 1967. It was a BBC production.





ShaneWarne

(Australian leg-spin legend) "I'm not becoming a pro player, just a former sportsman who has a SPORTS REPORTER passion for the game." Dismissing rumours that he's going to become a professional poker player.



STAR Sports

Australian Open Men's / Women's Quarterfinals Live from 6:00am Men's Singles Quarterfinals Live from 2:30pm ESPN

> Sportscenter India Sports News Live at 8:30pm



returns home

Chris Gayle, the West Indies captain,

will fly home to the Caribbean after

admitting that his injured thumb

and hamstring will not heal in time

for him to play in any of the four

sis that I will require at least

another two weeks of recovery

before I could even consider pick-

ing up a bat again - furthermore

being declared match fit - I have

been granted permission by the

WICB to return home to Jamaica to

The news, though not entirely

unexpected, is a blow to West

Indies who lost the first one-dayer

by six wickets in Centurion yester-

day. Gayle, who injured his thumb

Train stops

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5

concentrate on getting better,

Gayle wrote in his Cricinfo diary.

"Given the most recent progno-

remaining ODIs in South Africa.

CRICINFO, undated

Pakistan's debutant opener Nasir Jamshed plays an uppish cover-drive during his sparkling 61 against Zimbabwe in the day-night first one-day international at the Karachi National Stadium on Monday.

5 fifties power Pakistan Injured Gayle

Cricket

AFP, Karachi

A record five half-centuries in a single innings propelled Pakistan to a thumping 104-run win over Zimbabwe in the first one-day international here.

Skipper Shoaib Malik hit a 56ball 63 in Pakistan's mammoth total of 347-5 in 50 overs before capturing 3-34 with his off-spin to restrict the tourists to 243-7.

Opener Nasir Jamshed smashed a 48-ball 61 on his debut, while Younis Khan (79), Mohammad Yousuf (72) and Misbahul Haq (55 not out) made significant contributions after Pakistan were put into bat at Karachi's National Stadium.

It is the first time in one-day international history that five halfcenturies have been scored in an innings and eight in a match.

The total was always beyond Zimbabwe's reach despite a bright start for the tourists, with an open-

India's cricket selectors on Sunday

ignored Sourav Ganguly and Rahul

Dravid for next month's triangular

series in Australia, raising doubts

over the veteran batsmen's one-

Wicketkeeper-batsman

Mahendra Singh Dhoni will lead a

16-man squad in the tri-series, also

featuring World Cup runners-up

Sri Lanka, and a Twenty20 match

Dravid, both 35, are among seven

batsmen in the world to have com-

pleted 10,000 runs in the shorter

11,363 runs in 311 matches, played

his last one-dayer against Pakistan

Left-handed Ganguly, with

Former captains Ganguly and

Cricket

AFP, Mumbai

day careers.

against the hosts.

version of the game.

ing stand of 47.

Vusi Sibanda (59) and Chamu Chibhabha (52) added 56 for the second wicket but the tourists lost spinners.

Sean Williams was also among the runs, hitting an unbeaten 51, but the asking rate continued to climb and the task proved too much. Earlier, the foundations for

Pakistan's big total were laid by the 18-year-old left-hander Jamshed, who hit six boundaries and three towering sixes during his swashbuckling knock.

Jamshed, who broke into the team on the back of a brilliant 182 against the tourists in a four-day match here last week, made his more experienced partner Salman Butt (four) a mere spectator in a brisk 45-run stand for the first

Jamshed was finally caught off medium-pacer Chibhabha in the 15th over.

Younis and Yousuf then put on

Middle-order batsman Dravid

was axed for a second successive

one-day series. He played his last

match against Australia at home in

October before being dropped

against Pakistan. He has so far

Indian cricket board secretary

scored 10,585 runs in 333 matches.

Niranjan Shah said in a statement

the selection committee looked to

the future and provided youngsters

with a chance after their impressive

and the selectors wanted a young

fielding side for the series. That's

why there are a lot of youngsters in

returned to the one-day side after

nearly a year, while 19-year-old

paceman Ishant Sharma regained

his berth after an excellent display in

Sharma, who dismissed

Australia captain Ricky Ponting

the ongoing Test series in Australia.

Batsman Suresh Raina, 21,

the side," he said.

"The emphasis was on fielding

performances in domestic cricket.

113 for the third wicket to further punish the hapless tourists' attack. Younis hit seven boundaries

and a six off 68 balls, while Yousuf's their rhythm against Pakistan's 74-ball knock included five boundaries and a six.

Left-arm spinner Ray Price, who finished with 2-61, dismissed both Younis and Yousuf before Malik and Misbah gave the innings fresh impetus.

Malik, who completed 4,000 one-day runs when he reached 16, put on a brisk 99 runs for the fifth wicket with Misbah. Malik hit two sixes and a four before he became Chibhabha's second wicket. Misbah hit four boundaries and

a six in his 38-ball knock as Pakistan totted up 52 in the last five overs.

The second encounter in the five-match series will be played at Hyderabad on Thursday.

SCOREBOARD

Complete scoreboard of the first limited-overs day-night international between Pakistan and SEE PAGE 18 COL 1

twice during his team's impressive

72-run win in the third Test at Perth

on Saturday, has so far figured in

place after grabbing eight wickets in

one innings in the final of India's

premier first-class Ranji Trophy

tournament, which ended here on

Sreesanth was also named in the

squad after missing the current

Test series in Australia due to a

Mahendra Singh Dhoni (captain),

Yuvraj Singh (vice-captain), Sachin

Tendulkar, Virender Sehwag,

Harbhajan Singh, Robin Uthappa,

Gautam Gambhir, Irfan Pathan,

Shanthakumaran Sreesanth, Rudra

Pratap Singh, Ishant Sharma, Rohit

Sharma, Suresh Raina, Dinesh Karthik,

Piyush Chawla, Pravin Kumar.

Paceman Shanthakumaran

Saturday.

shoulder injury.

SQUAD

Fast bowler Pravin Kumar won a

just one one-day international.

as Sourav dropped No room for Ganguly

PTI, Kolkata

Train services in two sections of Eastern Railway were on Monday affected as irate supporters of Sourav Ganguly put up a blockade at Barasat in North 24 Parganas protesting against the cricketer's exclusion from the Indian team for the triangular tournament in Australia.

The protestors, comprising mainly young men, started the blockade at 10.05am, raising slogans demanding that Ganguly be reinducted into the team, according to an Eastern Railway spokesman.

"We want Dada back. It's a conspiracy," the protestors shouted. As a result, train services between

Barasat-Bongaon and Barasat-Hasnabad sections were affected.

The Indian selectors had on Sunday dropped Ganguly and also left out two other senior pros, Rahul Dravid and VVS Laxman, while announcing the squad for the tri-series which will also feature Australia and Sri Lanka.

Transfers from Feb 3 Hossain, Abdur Razzak, Syed Rasel, Shakib Al Hasan, Mushfigur

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

The Cricket Committee of Dhaka Metropolis (CCDM) has decided to commence the inter-club players' transfer of the Premier and First Division Cricket League from February 3 to 5.

CCDM, which came into action since Brothers Union withdrew their case against the board last week, has taken the decision after a meeting with representatives of the participating club, except Brothers, at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. They didn't fix any definite date

the Premier Division Twenty20 Cricket League will start on or before February 13 while the Premier Division Cricket League will kick-off on, or before, March 1.

During the meeting, the 21member national pool including the wicketkeepers were also finalised on the basis of who played for the national team during the period of May 1 to October 31, 2007 and each club can register a maximum of three players from the list.

The selected players of the pool are Mohammad Ashraful, Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, Habibul Bashar, Aftab Ahmed, Shahadat

Rahim, Tamim Iqbal, Shahriar Nafees, Khaled Mashud, Javed Omar, Mohammad Rafique, Tushar Imran, Forhad Reza, Enamul Haque, Mehrab Hossain Jr, Rajin Saleh, Mahmudullah Riyad and Mohammad Sharif.

Sharif is the only player who is not in the board's payroll while two payroll players, paceman Nazmul Hossain and opener Zunaed Siddiqui, has been spared as Twenty20 cricket was not considered before the selection of the pool.

There is however hardly any chance for the national players to be available for the first few rounds as South Africa are scheduled to of the league's commencement, as arrive on February 14 for a monthlong tour to play two Tests League will begin on February 15. and three one-day internationals besides a three-day and a limitedover warm-up game.

"It is unlikely that the clubs will get the service of the national players before March 22. This time we gave the clubs the full calendar of the coming season including the squads and schedules of under-19 so that they pick the players accordingly," said Gazi Ashraf Hossain Lipu, chairman of CCDM, which is in line for a restructure very soon.

"But we ensured them that the national squad for the upcoming home series against South Africa

would be as small as possible," he added. "We also informed the clubs that we may arrange a longerversion tournament for them in May," he said.

Apart from South Africa, ICC associate member Ireland is scheduled to tour Bangladesh in the last week of March to play two four-day matches against BCB XI. The BCB XI will be formed with the cricketers from the Under-19 and GP-BCB National Cricket Academy squad.

As per decision, each club can register three foreign players maximum but only one will be eligible to play in the Premier Division Cricket League but no foreign players will be allowed to play in the Twenty20 League. The First Division Cricket

"The First Division clubs has

agreed to play some matches outside Dhaka if we ensure the facilities," informed Lipu. The Premier League matches

will take places in Fatullah Cricket Stadium, Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium and BKSP.

Lipu also said that the Corporate Cricket League will be held after the Premier Division League but not before May while the Indo-Bangla Cricket Series will be held between Premier Division Twenty20 Cricket League and Premier Division Cricket League.

ANA PLOTS REVENGE

Favourites gather steam

The Grand Slam of Asia Pacific

AFP, Melbourne

It was back to business as usual for Roger Federer on Monday as he clinically moved into an Australian Open quarter-final against James Blake, with Venus Williams also working up a head of steam.

The world number one rebounded from his uncharacteristic five-set scare in the third round to resume his sprint towards a 13th Grand Slam title with a 6-4, 7-6 (9/7), 6-3 win over Czech Tomas Berdych.

Any concerns over his physical state quickly disappeared despite being behind in the second set tiebreaker against the 13th seed, who beat him at the 2004 Athens Olympics.

"I'm quite pleased with the result pulling up from a tough match against (Janko) Tipsarevic who played a fantastic match," Federer said.

"Tomas has been playing well and he's always a dangerous guy on any surface and it's unfortunate for him, but I'm very happy and hope to keep going."

The Swiss top seed now plays American 12th seed Blake who had an equally convincing win over unseeded Croatian Marin Cilic, 6-3, 6-4, 6-4. "I'll give my best shot against

Roger. Janko (Tipsarevic) took him to 10-8 in the fifth and no matter who you are he has showed you can take Roger to the limit, and I plan to cause him some trouble," said an upbeat Blake. But it was curtains for

Australia's last hope Lleyton Hewitt, who was crushed by Serbian third seed Novak Djokovic 7-5, 6-3, 6-3.

Forced to back up from a controversial 4.33am finish to his third round match on Sunday, Hewitt was too tired and was ungunned by a better player.

Football

The struggling football clubs of the

city would welcome the second

edition of the B. League even under

financial crisis if the Bangladesh

Football Federation (BFF)

announces a transfer date in its

they haven't made most of the

SPORTS REPORTER

meeting this week.

the capital were absent.

"The first set was luck and afterwards I relaxed and tried to be aggressive and take control of the match which I did," said Djokovic.

"He made a couple of unforced errors and he was very tired and exhausted from the Baghdatis match a few nights ago, so I used my opportunity.

In the other fourth round match, fifth seed David Ferrer won

the all-Spanish battle with 22nd seed Juan Carlos Ferrero 7-5, 3-6, 6-4, 6-1 and will now play Djokovic. Rafael Nadal, Jarkko Nieminen, Mikhail Youzhny and Jo-Wilfried

Tsonga are already through. Venus Williams ensured her sixth Australian Open quarter-final appearance after seeing off an unexpectedly strong-challenge

SEE PAGE 18 COL 2



Serbian star Ana Ivanovic celebrates after winning a game against Danish Caroline Wozniacki during their fourth round match at the Australian Open in Melbourne on Monday.

Media cricket title ATN's

at home two months ago.

ATN Bangla lifted the Pepsi Media Cup Cricket title defeating Channel 1 by one wicket in a thrilling final at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium yesterday.

In reply to Channel 1's challenging 86-2 in the stipulated six overs, ATN reached 88-4 with one ball remaining.

Tushar, who smashed five sixes and one four in a scintillating 34, was adjudged the man of the final. The all-TV channel semifinals were also held yesterday morning.

three wickets and Channel 1 (93-2) edged Channel i (89-5) by four runs in the last four. Latifur Rahman, Chairman and Managing Director of sponsor Transcom Group, distributed

ATN (43-2) ousted RTV (41-5) by

prizes as chief guest. Ex-national cricket captain Pepsi Media Cup cricket tournament to ATN Bangla captain Rajib and manager Hannan Khan at the Maulana Bhasani



National Hockey Stadium yesterday. Former national captain Habibul Bashar (2nd from L) is also seen.

demanded the BFF to announce this season's calendar first. PHOTO: STAR Latifur Rahman (3rd from L), Chairman and Managing Director of Transcom Group, hands over the winners' trophy of Having played just one tournament last season, the clubs feel that

BFF gets green signal players' contracts as they sat idle Otherwise, it would be difficult to

for about five months. This year, they want to make the contracts according to the sched-

ule and number of tournaments. The meeting, however, was hurried because of the footballers' threat to boycott all tournaments in demand of announcing transfers for the season and the calendar by

January 24, on a day when the BFF

is now expected to disclose its

plans for year 2008. The B. League committee on "We are working on a calendar Sunday had a meeting with the and hope to place it before the eight Dhaka clubs about the fate of executive committee for approval this year's professional leagues in our next meeting," said Manzoor although the three teams outside Hossain Malu, acting general After the discussion, the two secretary of BFF.

The clubs, who did not make parties settled for a mid-February transfer but the clubs have much financial benefit of the inaugural professional league, also wanted financial assistance from the federation.

"The federation has to be more active and find a sponsor first.

run the competition," said Brothers Union manager Amer "Not only the clubs but the

players also sacrificed last year for the pro league because only the players of the few top clubs were paid well last season.

"This time, the clubs will not take responsibility if the league is not held. We have told the BFF to set the dates because it is the guardian of the game. They should take the initial steps. We will go accordingly," Amer said.

"Like us, clubs old clubs like Farashganj and Rahmatganj are also suffering. So it is understandable how difficult it would be for the teams outside Dhaka.

"We are prepared to sacrifice again, may be the players too because it is their bread."

Like Brothers, big shots SEE PAGE 18 COL