

Tendulkar a step closer

CRICINFO, undated Sachin Tendulkar is one step closer to getting fit. He had a long batting session on Thursday at the Bandra Kurla cricket stadium...

Lalchand Rajput, the Mumbai coach, later said Tendulkar, who is recovering from a groin injury, looked good while batting and was hopeful his captain would be back soon.

Mumbai had a dismal start to their campaign after three straight losses but clinched their maiden victory, on Tuesday evening, against Kolkata Knight Riders in a rousing fashion at the Eden Gardens.

Dwayne Bravo, who starred in the seven-wicket victory with a handsome contribution of 64 not out, was a proud man today but said he was inspired by Tendulkar, the non-playing captain.

"In the meeting before the Kolkata match he told everybody that whenever you go in to bat with the back against the wall use it as an opportunity to be a hero," Bravo said.

Even if Tendulkar has missed all the matches so far, Bravo felt the important thing was he was always sharing his thoughts and opinions in the dressing room. And that proved to be a catalyst in not letting the team atmosphere deteriorate during the difficult times.

Bravo - who also grew up in Brian Lara's hometown, Santa Cruz, Trinidad - says even Lara, Bravo's hero, looked up to Tendulkar during his playing days.

According to Bravo, just observing the way the two legends, with whom he has been "fortunate" to share the dressing room with, is itself a big learning lesson.

It's just a

FROM PAGE 17 said a BFF staff seeking anonymity. "It is applicable for all the working members of the federation. Also, if anyone wishes not to work under this committee can resign, we have been told," he added.

It can be mentioned that Salahuddin's predecessor SA Sultan had sacked a few staff immediately after taking charge and was heavily criticised for the action. Even in the last week of his tenure, Sultan was reminded of this issue.

A number of the EC members said they have only heard it yesterday but there was no such discussion in their introductory meeting on Wednesday.

Meanwhile, Salahuddin and senior vice-president Abdus Salam Mursheedi yesterday went to see ailing former footballer Ching Hlang Maung Mari at the Square Hospital and handed over Tk 2 lakh for his treatment.

Sources said that former cricket board official Reazuddin Al Mamun also visited Mari and donated Tk 2.70 lakh.

Under-15s go

FROM PAGE 17 Naem adding 36. Earlier, the Bangladesh youngsters qualified to the semifinals after their five-wicket win over Ireland.

Before that they secured an emphatic 187-run win against Kenya in the second round league match after losing to hosts West Indies by 37 runs in the first round match at Queen's Park Oval in Port of Spain.



Parveen Akhter (L) of Ansars competes with Fatema Akhter for 1000m glory in yesterday's NCC Bank 32nd National Cycling Championships at the Paltan Maidan.

'Flintoff ready for Tests'

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Andrew Flintoff could make his Test comeback as part of a four-man attack against New Zealand at Lord's on May 15, after England's captain, Michael Vaughan, told The Times that he was in favour of throwing his all-round back into international cricket as a No. 7 batsman and out-and-out strike bowler.

Vaughan's preference is a significant change of tack from the last time the two played a Test together, back in 2005. That year, Flintoff was trusted as a top-six batsman and formed part of a five-man attack that proved instrumental in winning back the Ashes.

"For a long time I was a fan of five bowlers, but since we've had to do without Fred, I've realised that whilst five might be ideal, it is certainly possible to do with four in Test cricket," Vaughan told The Times. "That's the way I'm looking

right now. Most other Test teams have a No. 6 who averages 45 in Test cricket, so I'm looking at Flintoff at seven and four bowlers."

There are fears that Flintoff, who has already undergone four bouts of surgery on his troublesome left ankle, might struggle to maintain his fitness if required to shoulder a full quota of overs in a Test match. But he has wasted no time in re-establishing his bowling credentials, and against Somerset at Old Trafford last week, he put the wind up his old Ashes foe, Justin Langer, to such an extent that Langer bailed him as "the best fast bowler in the world" in his BBC column.

"If I was the sole selector of the England Test team, Andrew Flintoff could bat at No. 11 if it meant playing him," Langer wrote. "There have been whispers that he needs to score runs to scrape into the England line-up. But I have never known Curly Ambrose, Courtney Walsh or Glenn McGrath having to score runs to be selected."

A similar thought process seems to have taken hold in the England set-up. "He hasn't played (at No. 6) for a long time, and for Fred, his bowling rhythm comes much more naturally than his batting," said Vaughan, who remains convinced

that the runs will start to flow once again. "The only problem with four bowlers is that it asks a lot of his fitness, which we'll find out about over the next few months, and it asks more of Monty Panesar, who might have to bowl, say, 25 overs on a first-day pitch, but I've got no worries about him."

Part of Vaughan's urgency stems from his desire to equip his team with a genuine fast bowler ahead of what promises to be a high-octane clash with South Africa later in the summer. In Dale Steyn and Morne Morkel, the South Africans have two of the fastest and most exciting bowlers in the game today, and for all the strides made by Sidebottom and Stuart Broad in New Zealand, England currently lack a cutting edge to match.

That is especially true given the enduring shortcomings of Steve Harmison, and Vaughan didn't give the impression that a comeback would be on the cards in the near future. "It's unbelievably frustrating from a captain's point of view," he said. "I've had him when he's been the best bowler in the world, and I've had him when he's been... (not the best). I just don't want to see that talent go to waste."

Marsh pilots Punjab

FROM PAGE 17 For all that, though, it was still a below-par total that Punjab had to chase down and Marsh got them off to a confident start with a couple of sweetly-timed boundaries in the first over. Laxman shuffled the bowlers around and managed to stifle the runs but it needed a stroke of luck for the breakthrough. With the score on 41 in the sixth over, Marsh lashed a Sanjay Bangar delivery straight back and the bowler managed to get a hand on it as it crashed into the stumps with non-striker Ramnaresh Sarwan out of his crease. Sangakkara fell soon after but Marsh and Yuvraj were involved in a 41-run stand off four overs to keep the target well in sight.

Marsh remained unruffled even after Yuvraj's dismissal and was

joined by the cool-headed Jayawardene, who smashed three boundaries off his first five balls. The only time they looked in trouble was when Bangar sent down a tight 14th over and the required run-rate crept over nine. The response from Punjab was swift -- Jayawardene played a couple of scoops and an extra-cover drive as 19 runs came off the next over.

Besides scoring heavily square of the wicket on the off-side Marsh - who was a replacement for Simon Katich, Punjab's matchwinner in their previous game -- also unleashed some lovely on-drives. There were a few streaky shots towards the end before he clubbed Zoysa for a straight six, his first of the match. Jayawardene brought up the victory with another classy

extra-cover drive, as Punjab continued their resurgence after losing their first two games.

SCORES IN BRIEF DECCAN CHARGERS: 164 for 8 in 20 overs (Gilchrist 6, Laxman 48, Gibbs 7, Sharma 76 not out, Afridi 13, Venugopal 1, Bangar 3, Zoysa 1, Kalyankrishna 3, RP Singh 2 not out; Sreesanth 1-33, Pathan 2-30, Chawla 3-28, Gagandeep 1-37) KINGS XI PUNJAB: 167 for 3 in 18.5 overs (Marsh 84 not out, Sarwan 15, Sangakkara 3, Yuvraj 14, Jayawardene 45 not out; Zoysa 1-32, Kalyankrishna 1-34) Result: Kings XI Punjab won by 7 wickets. Man-of-the-match: Shaun Marsh. Umpires: BR Doctrove (West Indies) and RB Tiffin (Zimbabwe) Toss: Kings XI Punjab.

Rajasthan win big

FROM PAGE 17 Yusuf, who also got to his fifty off 29 balls, added 53 with Asnodkar. He went after David Hussey's insipid spin and Agarkar's short-of-length deliveries and helped Rajasthan score 53 between overs 10 and 15. Yusuf got most of his runs by waiting on the back foot and hitting it powerfully to either side of the stumps. He reached his fifty with a massive six driven straight on to the roof. Ravindra Jadeja's cameo -- 33 off 19 balls -- helped Rajasthan to a competitive score.

With the pitch being flat, Rajasthan's bowlers strove to maintain their line and length. Salman Butt was bowled when he inside-edged one from Sohail Tanvir that stayed low and came in. Agarkar, promoted to No. 3, was caught behind as he tried to cut a straight delivery from Shane Watson. Brad Hodge was run out at the non-striker's end after Siddharth Trivedi got a finger on to the ball off Sourav Ganguly's drive

straight, and helped the ball onto the stumps.

That brought together Ganguly and David Hussey, and though the two were out there long enough to build a partnership that could have set the platform for the chase, they found it hard to pierce the field. In the first four overs they batted together, Hussey and Ganguly hit one six each, but no fours. Ganguly was lucky to get off twice -- a pull nearly caught at midwicket and a catch by Graeme Smith that was given not out after the third umpire, Asad Rauf, ruled that it might not have been taken cleanly -- but fell when he tried to break loose. His 68-run partnership with Hussey was the only one of consequence in the Kolkata innings.

Among the bowlers, Gul, playing his first game, was disciplined early on, bowling successive yorkers -- his first two overs yielded two wickets for 15 runs. Ishant Sharma bowled straight and full, and didn't allow the Rajasthan batsmen to

take too many liberties. Ganguly used seven bowlers, including himself, but was not always backed up in the field. Twice in the innings, the ball went past fielders who were in the process of collecting it.

SCORES IN BRIEF RAJASTHAN ROYALS: 196 for 7 in 20 overs (Smith 2, Asnodkar 60, Kaif 21, Pathan 55, Jadeja 33, Warner 7, Tanvir 3 not out, Rawat 1 not out; Shama 1-26, Agarkar 1-46, Gul 3-31, Shukla 1-16) KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS: 151 all out in 19.1 overs (Salman 7, Ganguly 51, Agarkar 20, Hodge 1, Hussey 42, Shukla 2, Das 11, Saha 1, Gul 2; Watson 2-22, Tanvir 2-30, Trivedi 2-31, Warner 1-20) Result: Rajasthan Royals won by 45 runs. Man-of-the-match: Swapnil Asnodkar. Umpires: RE Koertzen and GA Pratapkumar Toss: Rajasthan Royals.

IPL undecided on Shoaib ban

CRICINFO, undated The Indian Premier League is yet to finalise its position on barring Shoaib Akhtar, the banned Pakistan fast bowler, from playing in the inaugural season of the tournament.

The IPL is waiting for the Pakistan Cricket Board to forward the court papers that upheld Shoaib's five-year ban on Wednesday, and is also considering a personal request from PCB chairman Nasim Ashraf, to let Shoaib play in the Twenty20 event, IS Bindra, a member of the IPL governing council, told Cricinfo.

"We are yet to finalise our position because we will first have to examine what the court papers relating to the ban says," Bindra said. "We can arrive at a decision only after that. There is no time-limit to this as the PCB has to obtain these papers first, and then forward them to IPL."

Bindra also said the IPL was seriously "considering a personal request" from Ashraf to let Shoaib play so that he could "earn his livelihood". Shoaib was signed up by Kolkata Knight Riders for US\$ 425,000 but was barred from appearing in the tournament by the IPL council "in the interests of international discipline" after the PCB banned him on disciplinary grounds last month.

On Wednesday, a three-member appellate tribunal headed by retired judge Aftab Farkuh, which was set up to hear Shoaib's appeal against the PCB's decision, upheld the ban. Minutes after the tribunal announced its decision, an IPL spokesperson had told Cricinfo that their position on barring the player from the tournament remained the same, but Bindra suggested on Thursday that Ashraf's request has prompted a rethink.

A Kolkata spokesperson said that the franchise would abide by whatever decision the IPL council took on the issue but would "obviously be pleased" if Shoaib was cleared to play.

McGrath takes four



CRICINFO, undated

Gautam Gambhir and Shikhar Dhawan laid out the carpet and Glenn McGrath, returning the best figures in the IPL's brief history, walked over it as the Delhi Daredevils got themselves back on track after a blip in their last game. It wasn't a comfortable win, as the Bangalore Royal Challengers kept them to 191 for 5 when 205 seemed an easy total and later when Jacques Kallis and Rahul Dravid threatened to chase it down, but another choke from the visiting side - who for the third game running left Misbahul Haq on the bench - put Delhi at second in the points table.

The Feroz Shah Kotla track wasn't known for any major assistance to seam or swing and Dravid's decision to field on a sluggish surface with variable bounce ultimately turned out to be a mistake. After a quiet first over, Gambhir waded into the Bangalore attack in stunning fashion. First he took Zaheer Khan for three fours, a delectable square cut tucked between two shots off the pads, and then hit Dale Steyn for a couple more. Virender Sehwag hit a few lousy shots before he was run out for a 12-ball 24, but Gambhir applied himself excellently.

Scoring wasn't easy given the low bounce but shuffling and waiting for the ball to come onto him - there were certain shots that had to be checked as the ball stopped on him - he slashed boundaries backward of point and pulled through the infield.

With Dhawan very solid at one end, and consciously playing the ball along the ground, Gambhir

backed his judgment of the track to slash boundaries backward of square both sides. Bangalore pulled back the scoring for a couple overs but Sunil Joshi, replacing Anil Kumble, had a torrid first over that went for 19 as both batsmen picked up sixes. Dhawan, upright and packing his drives with power, scored at a very healthy clip. A massive slog off Kallis took him to 49, and he looked set to press on after his fifty but a stunning catch from Dravid at midwicket cut him short.

Steyn and Kallis rattled the stumps to check Delhi's middle order and, having lost strike for a brief while, Gambhir slogged Zaheer to midwicket for 86 from 54 balls. Delhi were on target for over 200 but those strikes left them short. They may have been a tad disappointed by not going further but with McGrath leading a tidy pace they backed themselves. The maestro, bowling as metronomically as he did in his pomp, needed five deliveries to remove Praveen Kumar, flicking to midwicket, but his double-wicket third over was massive: Ross Taylor's gung-ho approach ended in a top-edge to deep midwicket and Wasim Jaffer did the same to mid-on.

From 48 for 3 after five overs Dravid and Kallis, with near 20,000 Test runs between them, added 87 in 10.3 overs. Yo Mahesh and Rajat Bhatia went for 26 in two overs through classy, low-risk shots before pumped sixes lowered the asking rate further. Kallis went past his previous IPL best, mostly with shuffled flicks, and Bangalore needed 58 with seven wickets and 30 balls remaining. That's when Sehwag tossed the ball back to McGrath. Three balls later Dravid was walking back for 38, his slog into the stony night setting into Sehwag's palms at mid-on. McGrath finished with 4 for 29, a special and memorable effort. Kallis thumped himself past

fifty but a fourth miserly over from another one-day international master, Daniel Vettori, effectively killed all hopes. Vettori allowed just five singles and cleaned up Kallis with a quick arm ball off the sixth. That left Bangalore with 30 to win from six balls and it proved too much for Mark Boucher, who still hit two sixes and a four.

Eleven out of 16 matches have been won by sides chasing but Bangalore failed to master two crafty bowlers when it mattered most. Delhi, despite the departure of Vettori, remain one of the better sides in the tournament.

SCORES IN BRIEF DELHI DAREDEVILS: 191 for 5 in 20 overs (Gambhir 86, Sehwag 24, Dhawan 50, Malik 6, Karthik 2, Tiwary 11 not out, Bhatia 8 not out; Steyn 1-29, Zaheer 1-42, Kallis 2-39) BANGALORE ROYAL CHALLENGERS: 181 for 5 in 20 overs (Kumar 6, Jaffer 10, Taylor 29, Kallis 54, Dravid 38, Boucher 31 not out, Kohli 1 not out; McGrath 4-29, Vettori 1-19) Result: Delhi Daredevils won by 10 runs. Man-of-the-match: Glenn McGrath. Umpires: Aleem Dar (Pakistan) and I Shivram Toss: Bangalore Royal Challengers.

Booters off

FROM PAGE 17 defenders: Viacheslav Amin, Davron Askarov, Sergey Knyazev, Igor Kudrenko, Bakytbek Mamatov, Artem Mul'djanov, Talant Samsaliev, Ruslan Sydykov, Timur Valiev; midfielders: Roman Ablakimov, Valery Berezovskiy, Aibek Bokoev, Ruslan Djamshidov, Cholponbek Esenkul Uulu, Sergey Kaleutin, Pavel Sidorenko, Rustamjan Zakirov; forwards: Ildar Amirov, Roman Kornilov, Hurshid Lutfulaev, Almazbek Mirzaliev.



Punjab's Australian opener Shaun Marsh cracks a square-cut while compatriot Adam Gilchrist, playing for Hyderabad, looks on during their Indian Premier League tie at the Rajiv Gandhi International Stadium in Hyderabad on Friday.

Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh

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Applications with an updated CV are invited from the citizens of Bangladesh for the following positions:

Table with 3 columns: Sl No., Position, Working period. Contains 6 job listings for consultancy services in poverty indicators, communication, statistical publication, government consumption, and road transport.

The interested candidates may send their CV along with a cover letter to the following address on or before 15 May 2008. Applications received after this deadline will not be considered. An electronic copy of application and Curriculum Vitae should also be e-mailed at bbsnaw@banqla.net.

Details of the qualification, experience and key responsibilities for the above positions are available on the webpage (www.bbs.gov.bd) of the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS).

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