

Injury worry over Smith

GRAEME SMITH, the Rajasthan Royals' opener, is likely to miss their next match against the Mumbai Indians on Monday after pulling a hamstring during the Chennai game, said captain Shane Warne.

"We have good depth and we can make it up for Smith's loss and send (Kamran) Akmal up the order," Warne said. "We will continue with our experimentation and try out a few new things."

Smith scored 91 and added 127 with Swapnil Asnodkar as Rajasthan totalled 214 and beat the Chennai Super Kings by 10 runs. Warne was happy that despite resting four key players, Rajasthan had managed to win.

"Youngsters showed good coordination. Smith, Asnodkar set the tone for our innings and Akmal, who was like dynamite, made good use of a perfect batting condition. Sohail Tanvir was exceptionally good as he bowled well through out and took two vital wickets in the end overs."

But till a third of Chennai's innings, it had looked like they would chase Rajasthan's formidable total. "At one stage we thought Chennai will win with an over to spare. Parthiv Patel's wicket turned the tide in our favour," Warne said, adding that Rajasthan's strategy against Mahendra Singh Dhoni was to keep a fielder at backward point and bowl short and wide.

"Just before he got out, we brought the mid-off up and he lofted a slower delivery to be out."

Rajasthan have qualified for the semifinals along with Kings XI Punjab but Chennai will now have to beat the Deccan Chargers on Tuesday to make it to the final four. Dhoni said they had to keep the Delhi-Mumbai result in mind as well. "The match would have gone our way but we missed it in the last one over when we had our chance," Dhoni said of Saturday's defeat.

"I batted and fielded well but our bowling was not up to the mark excepting in the last four or five overs. Generally, I am happy with my bowling attack. At least we have a settled attack now and they have to improve a lot. I am seeing signs of their improvement."

Samuels disputes ban

THE TWO LAWYERS that represented Marlon Samuels at the West Indies Cricket Board's disciplinary hearing to determine his links with an alleged Indian bookmaker intend to challenge his two-year suspension from the game.

Jamaican attorneys Churchill Neita and Delano Harrison believe that an application for judicial review stands a realistic chance of success and they intend to pursue it actively.

"From the outset, we wish to make it clear that we proposed to challenge the findings of the majority (3-1) by way of judicial enquiry, as we believe a most grave injustice has been done by their finding of our client's liability of one of the International Cricket Council's disciplinary offences," the two lawyers said in a news release on Saturday.

Samuels was charged with receiving the benefit of the provision of hotel accommodation to the value of 1,238.00 dollars from a suspected bookie Mukesh Kochhar or his associates which could bring him or the game of cricket into disrepute under the ICC's Code of Conduct.

But he was cleared of another charge of passing confidential team information regarding the West Indies opening bowlers in the first One-day International against India which was played on January 21 last year at Nagpur to the bookie.

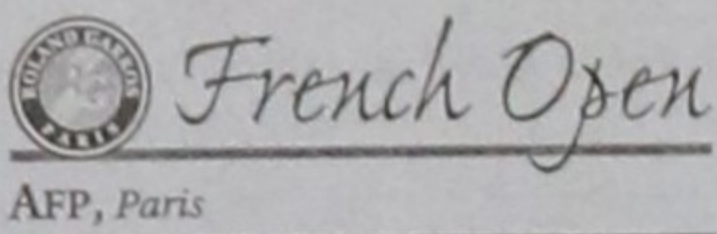
The lawyers noted there was a need to clarify "many misunderstandings and misconceptions" that arose from Samuels' hearing before the WICB's disciplinary committee, headed by Justice Adrian Saunders, a leading Caribbean jurist, in St. Lucia on May 9.

The lawyers indicated the evidence in the hearing was that the hotel bill paid for Samuels was a loan which was to be repaid to someone Samuels considered a friend and father figure.



Serbian star Ana Ivanovic makes a forehand return against Swedish opponent Sofia Arvidsson during their French Open first round match at Roland Garros yesterday.

Serbian duo struggles



Serbian duo Novak Djokovic and Ana Ivanovic, both tipped as potential Roland Garros champions, endured struggling starts to the French Open on Sunday.

Third seed Djokovic, the Australian Open champion and Rome Masters winner, needed four sets to see off Germany's world number 64 Denis Gremelmayer 4-6, 6-3, 7-5, 6-2.

Women's second seed Ivanovic, who crumbled to defeat in the 2007 final against Justine Henin, took a first nervous step towards erasing that heartbreaking memory by seeing off Sweden's Sofia Arvidsson 6-2, 7-5.

"He surprised me a little bit. He was aggressive, took his chances and went for his shots. He deserved to win the first set," said Djokovic, a semi-finalist here in 2007, and the best player on the tour this year.

"I was ahead 5-1 in the third set, he came back to 5-5. I lost my focus so hopefully that will be the end of it."

Djokovic will now face Spanish qualifier Miguel Angel Lopez Jaen for a place in the third round. Gremelmayer, a semi-finalist on clay in Estoril and Barcelona, took the first set after racing into a 4-0 lead before the 21-year-old Serbian levelled the tie courtesy of a break in the eighth game of the second set.

Djokovic raced to a 5-1 lead in

the third set but the 26-year-old German hit back to level at 5-5 before the Serb broke back in the 11th game and then served it out.

The world number three cruised to victory with breaks in the third and fifth games of the fourth set.

World number two Ivanovic became Serbia's first Grand Slam finalist here in 2007 beating Svetlana Kuznetsova and Maria Sharapova before she fell to pieces in the final against Henin, going down 6-1, 6-2.

Since then she has also finished runner-up to Sharapova at the Australian Open. But it wasn't 20-year-old Ivanovic's most convincing display on Sunday.

After easing through the first set, she then had to save break points in the fifth, seventh and ninth games of the second before seeing off the 24-year-old Swede whom she had also defeated at the same stage here last year.

"If I reach the final again I'll perform a lot better than I did last year. That was a great experience and I don't regret it," said Ivanovic whose build-up to Paris wasn't helped by a shock first round defeat in Rome where she was top seed.

"This year I'm in a different position to last year. Then I had only just broken into the world top 10 and there was less pressure. Now I am number two in the world so I have more expectations."

Ivanovic will now face the Czech Republic's Lucie Safarova

for a place in the third round. However, another Czech was already packing her bags after 15th seed Nicole Pietrangeli, a semi-finalist in 2006, slumped to a 7-6 (7/2), 6-1 defeat to compatriot, and best friend, Iveta Benesova.

Vaidisova's defeat was her sixth in a row this year leaving her without a win since the first round in Dubai three months ago.

Meanwhile, Argentinian sixth seed David Nalbandian, widely regarded as one of the few players capable of shattering triple champion Rafael Nadal's pursuit of a fourth successive title, saw off compatriot Carlos Berlocq 6-2, 6-4, 6-1.

Nalbandian, a semi-finalist in 2004 and 2006, holds a 2-0 career record over Nadal and could meet the Spaniard in the quarter-finals.

He next faces French wildcard Jeremy Chardy. American seventh seed James Blake, who has never got beyond the third round, saw off German veteran Rainer Schuettler 6-4, 6-1, 7-6 (7/3) and will tackle either Simon Greul of Germany or Ernests Gulbis of Latvia.

Later Sunday, former triple champion Gustavo Kuerten, whose career has been devastated by a chronic hip injury, will play what will probably be his final ever match when he returns to his beloved Philippe Chatrier Court to take on French 18th seed Paul-Henri Mathieu.

Women's 2002 champion Serena Williams is also due on court to face fellow American Ashley Harkleroad.

Abahani women make good start

UNB, Cox's Bazar

Abahani beat Jawlakhel Sports Club of Nepal in straight sets in the opening match of the International Beach Volleyball tournament (women's section) at Laboni Point.

In the men's section, India defeated Bangladesh Power Development Board, also via straight sets.

Earlier, Army Chief and National Sports Council (NSC) Chairman General Moeen U Ahmed formally inaugurated the competition as chief guest.

Deputy commissioner of Cox's Bazar Sajjadul Hasan, Bangladesh Volleyball Federation president Golam Qudus Chowdhury and Federation officials were present on the occasion.

Speaking briefly at the inaugural function, Gen Moeen said volleyball is the most popular game in the world after football. "We've to arrange more tournaments to further popularise the game in the country," he added.

Fifteen teams including eight men's and seven women's are participating in the competition.

Flynn cleared of concussion

AFP, Manchester

New Zealand batsman Daniel Flynn was cleared of concussion by a neurosurgeon Saturday after being hit on the head 24 hours earlier in the second Test against England here at Old Trafford.

Flynn, retired hurt Friday on four after missing a hook off a James Anderson bouncer which led to two of his teeth being removed.

He didn't bat again Saturday as New Zealand, nine wickets down, were bowled out for 381.

Flynn then didn't take the field, with twelfth man Jeetan Patel on in his place, as England slumped to 152 four, a deficit of 229, at stumps.

"He's back at the hotel and won't play," team spokesman John Durning told reporters after Saturday's play.

"Before he comes back he'll have to do some gym work just to see how pressure affects him. If he's not right he won't bat. There's not any reason to suggest he won't be able to bat. But we thought we had him right before lunch but then he got a bit queasy."

"During added: 'He's had a scan and that was all-clear and that's the main thing, so he's got no damage.' Left-hander Flynn, 23, playing in only his second Test, had felt nauseous and vomited overnight. He fell ill again Saturday and, although concussion had initially been ruled out, team officials decided he should see a specialist.

Northern Districts batsman Flynn had to endure two hours of dental work Friday after being hit by Anderson and retiring hurt on four. Although he was wearing a helmet, the ball appeared to force the grille into his face with his side then 136 for four.

A top front tooth was knocked out by the initial impact and a badly cracked bottom tooth was also removed Friday.

Usha's 9 out

FROM PAGE 17 Playing for the first time in the sky-blue colours, Zahid showed his nerve when he stopped a weak attempt by Habul but a weaker clearance went straight to Pakistani player Tarik Aziz who tapped in.

Jimmy set up Modasser who only found the pads of Shakil from close but the pressure told on the hour when Modasser, taking a pass from Rana, missed 3-2.

A goal by Rajan was disallowed after Abahani players protested the decision vehemently but there was no respite for Mahbud Harun's side who conceded a penalty stroke two minutes from time.

Akhter kept calm and extended Zahid's misery by slotting his second goal of the match to seal a remarkable victory. Abahani coach Harun admitted that his side flopped in all departments.

"Our defensive weaknesses were exposed badly. The goalkeeper also faltered but still we would have won had our attackers not missed a number of chances," said Harun.

"The difference between the two teams was in finishing. Also, squandering the stroke proved vital as I feel it destroyed our moral."

"If Usha loses two matches, we will have a chance. We can beat them and so can Mohammedan. Similar thing happened to us last season as we threw away a five-point lead to share the trophy with Usha," added the former international midfielder after consoling Abahani captain Rana, who was in tears after their title hope was heavily dashed.

Pace reminds of past

Cricket

REUTERS, Kingston

For an hour on Saturday at Sabina Park, West Indies cricket took a step back in time.

Fidel Edwards and Daren Powell bowled with real hostility to take two wickets each as Australia slumped to 17 for four on the third day of the first Test.

Racing in accompanied by roars from the crowd and hurling down deliveries with accuracy and aggression, it was impossible not to recall another era when fast bowlers from the Caribbean dominated the game.

Wes Hall and Charlie Griffith, Andy Roberts and Michael Holding, Joel Garner and Malcolm Marshall, and Courtney Walsh and Curtly Ambrose - each great West Indian team had a fearsome pace attack.

Batsmen were apprehensive about tours of West Indies knowing full well that they would face a near non-stop onslaught of pace and a barrage of bouncers.

Since Walsh and Ambrose retired, West Indies have lacked a really potent attack and that has been a major factor behind the decline of cricket in the Caribbean.

But now with Edwards, Powell and Jerome Taylor, who is missing this Test with a back injury, local fans at last have bowlers they can appreciate - even if they have yet to replicate the exploits of earlier generations.

"From our point of view we saw the best spell of fast bowling that two bowlers have produced together for quite some time. It was a spectacular end to the day," West Indies' Australian coach John Dyson said.

Edwards has been in excellent form, following up his five-wicket display against Sri Lanka in Trinidad with another five-wicket haul.

The Barbadian has removed Australia's openers cheaply in both innings and produced some of the fastest and most accurate bowling of his career.

But what was more surprising in Saturday's hour of hell for Australia's batsmen was the performance of Powell.

The Jamaican has rarely been able to turn his pace into real effective wicket-taking and his 67 Test victims have come at an average of 46.05, disappointing statistics for someone who has been a regular feature in the side.

But Powell has always had ability and on Saturday he produced a pearl of a delivery which left the batsman late to get the prized wicket of Australia captain Ricky Ponting and another to bowl Michael Hussey.

"I think that's the best spell I've seen him bowl since I've been here," said Dyson. "Darren bowls some great stuff and I've felt over the last few matches he's bowled unkindly, he's bowled some really good balls that bounces have just missed or somehow just missed the stumps."

"In almost all that he's bowled a bit of rubbish as well, but he does bowl some extremely good quick deliveries. Here he didn't bowl any rubbish, he bowled with good pace and he got the results," added the coach.

"He always puts it in. Darren puts it in training and in the matches, so you feel happy for him that he's got a few wickets."

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Chief of Army Staff and National Sports Council chairman General Moeen U Ahmed (2nd R) releases balloons to inaugurate the International Beach Volleyball tournament at Cox's Bazar yesterday.

WI spark collapse

FROM PAGE 17

Indies wicketkeeper/batsman too, drove loosely outside the off-stump. Mitchell Johnson bowled with pace, but little accuracy, and he too, was struggling to find his first wicket until Sammy whipped an over-pitched delivery on leg-stump and was caught at mid-wicket.

Lee then had the sight that all fast bowlers relish, when he bowled Powell for three with a well-directed yorker that extracted the middle-stump.

This carnage was in stark contrast to what transpired before lunch, when West Indies strode confidently to 197 for four at the interval.

Australia failed to make much headway in the morning period, as Runako Morton and Chanderpaul batted with enterprise to add 128 for the fourth wicket.

But Australia scalped Morton in the last 10 minutes before lunch, after he and Chanderpaul breathed life into the West Indies with contrasting half-centuries.

The Aussies made batting difficult throughout for the two West Indies batsmen, in particular, and Chanderpaul remained steadfast to give the home team hope of staying competitive in the match.

Lee worked up a decent head of steam and gave a stern examination to Morton's technique with little success. Lee peppered Morton with a number of short, rising deliveries which the batsman either evaded or took on the body.

Clark, whose three wickets the previous evening had put the skids on West Indies, opened the bowling from the other end, and induced an edge past second slip for four from Chanderpaul early in the period.

But the Australians continued to bowl good lines and lengths, but Morton eventually reached his 50, when he lofted MacGill for a straight

four, shortly before Chanderpaul turned Johnson behind square leg for a single to reach his milestone.

Scoreboard Scoreboard on the third day of the first Test between West Indies and Australia at Sabina Park on Saturday.

AUSTRALIA: First Innings 431 (Ponting 158, Edwards 5-104) WEST INDIES: First Innings (over-115 for three)

Table with columns: Smith b Clark, Parchment c Haddin b Clark, Sarwan c Haddin b Clark, Morton c Clark b MacGill, Chanderpaul c Hussey b MacGill, Ramdin c Katich b Lee, Ravo c Haddin b Lee, Sammy c Jacques b Johnson, Powell b Lee, Edwards c Haddin b Johnson, Jaggernauth not out, Extras: (b-2, lb-10, w-3, nb-14), Total: (All out in 106 overs), Fall of wickets: 1-47, 2-62, 3-68, 4-196, 5-260, 6-262, 7-263, 8-268, 9-298.

Table with columns: Bowler, O, M, R, W. Lee: 28, 7, 63, 3; Johnson: 26, 6, 63, 2; Clark: 19, 2, 59, 3; MacGill: 22, 2, 100, 2; Symonds: 11, 4, 15, 0.

AUSTRALIA: Second Innings Jacques c Ramdin b Edwards, Katich lbw b Edwards, Ponting c Bravo b Powell, Hussey b Powell, Johnson not out, Hodge not out, Extras: (lb-1, nb-1), Total: (For 4 wks in 10 overs), Fall of wickets: 1-5, 2-10, 3-12, 4-12.

Table with columns: Bowler, O, M, R, W. Powell: 5, 4, 4, 2; Edwards: 5, 1, 12, 2.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 36 Political realocator 37 Saw precursor 38 Trejans' sch. 39 One of the Three Bears 42 The pack 44 Part of the foot? 48 Historic period 49 Lotion additive 50 Pearl locale 51 S dispenser 52 Teller's partner 53 Fairy-tale grace preposi- tion 21 That guy pal 23 Parisian 25 Wages 28 Firetruck necessarily 32 Phant- tom's blackbird 33 Pale yellow 34 "I'll get you, my -!"

Cryptogram puzzle grid with letters B V STL MC SX VSDH DCEC ETHRCY AS ARC RSHLUABM ASYBI. BLLBECGAMI ARCI HTXXCECY TYYCE XBUMTEC. Yesterday's Cryptogram: I TAKE IT THAT AFTER THE INK IS FINALLY DRY ON NEWSPRINT YOU END UP WITH PERMANENT PRESS. Today's Cryptogram Clue: C equals E