

Pawar rules out two IPLs

CRICINFO, undated

Indian board president Sharad Pawar has ruled out the possibility of executing Lalit Modi's idea of two IPL tournaments a year, saying the ICC calendar offers no such scope.

"We have just got one window from the ICC per year," Pawar said in a television interview. "The calendar is ready for next seven years, so there is no scope," Modi, the IPL commissioner, had earlier proposed two editions of the league from 2011.

The idea is not very popular with players as well. While Rahul Dravid, the Bangalore Royal Challengers captain, said it was a "difficult" proposition and that he would hate to see a dilution of Test cricket to fit in Twenty20 games, Virender Sehwag, the captain of the Delhi Daredevils, who have qualified for the IPL semi-finals, felt two tournaments a year may trigger premature retirements.

However IPL organisers are working with other national boards to see if a Champions League -- involving the top two domestic Twenty20 teams from five countries -- can be played later this year.

Dharmadasa fined over share prices

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka's former cricket chief Jayantha Dharmadasa was on Friday fined 31,000 dollars by the securities regulator over his alleged role in manipulating share prices.

Dharmadasa, who headed the cricket board from 2005 to January 2008, his son and seven others were charged with illegally boosting the share price of Nawaloka Hospitals, in which they hold a majority stake.

The Securities Exchange Commission of Sri Lanka (SEC) filed a case in 2006 against all nine for alleged "acts to create a false and misleading appearance of an active share market."

"Taking account of all the attendant circumstances, it was decided by the Members of the Commission to allow the compounding of the offence upon payment of 3.3 million rupees," the SEC said, adding that Dharmadasa had paid the fine. Dharmadasa's family controls the Nawaloka Group, which has investments in construction, plastic, timber, trading and heavy machinery. The family took the hospital unit public in 2004.

DPMS clinch Div I title

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Dashara Polli Samity (DPMS) clinched the Colonel Malek Smriti First Division Cricket League title with a massive 128-run victory over Sewta Uday Sena (SUS) at the Shahid Miraj-Tapan Stadium here yesterday.

DPMS made 221 runs in 44.1 overs with Sakib scoring 59. Prince added 46 runs. Jamil claimed three wickets.

In reply SUS were bundled out for only 93 in 30.2 overs. Obaidur picked up three wickets while Lal and Shahin took two wickets each.

Australia 70/1

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spell, but he bowled raggedly in his five overs that cost 22 runs.

Australia were coasting along, when Dwayne Bravo made the breakthrough, when Phil Jaques was adjudged lbw to the bowler's third ball for 17, when he played back and across to a full-length delivery to leave Australia 37 for one.

Ponting came to the wicket and immediately played in his typically forthright manner, and runs started to flow for Australia.

The Aussies made one change to their line-up, when Michael Clarke replaced Brad Hodge, and West Indies made two switches, Xavier Marshall and Jerome Taylor replacing Brenton Parchment and Amit Jaggernauth.

West Indies captain Chris Gayle was ruled out of the Test just prior to the start because he has still not fully recovered from his groin injury.

FIFA endorses

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He told the Congress that he hoped to introduce the system from 2010 with a minimum of four home players, going up to five in 2011 and the full six by 2012.

Platini, who spoke in favour of the motion, acknowledged it was a difficult issue.

He said although he did not have full agreement at UEFA, the European governing body, because of the risk of it being overturned in court, he had decided to "unanimously" support the resolution.

"The 30 European associations are in a difficult situation as they run the risk of being taken to court over this thorny issue," Platini told the Congress.

In other decisions, FIFA ratified an agreement with the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) to fight drugs in football and approved changes to laws covering players' eligibility to play for national teams.

Congress also approved the principle of promotion and relegation, to ensure teams can only be promoted on the basis of their sporting achievements and not for monetary reasons.



Participants of the Grameenphone President's Cup Golf Tournament pose with chief guest Chief of Naval Staff Vice Admiral Sarwar Jahan Nizam during the inaugural ceremony at the Kurmitola Golf Club yesterday.

'A grand vision'

CRICINFO, undated



The Indian Premier League, which will wrap up its inaugural season on June 1, is just the first step of a "grand vision" that will eventually lead to the birth of a network of similar franchise-based models across the major cricket-playing nations culminating in the annual Champions League that will rival its football counterpart in terms of quality, money and glamour, a top IPL official has said.

England is working on developing their Twenty20 model; South Africa is convinced by the success of IPL and is already reviewing their current franchise format; Cricket Australia may launch their IPL version as soon as next year, and even Pakistan is thinking seriously about starting their edition of IPL.

"This is the grand vision," IS Bindra, an influential member of the IPL governing council, told Cricinfo. "The vision is to move cricket to the next level, and get each league in each country to resemble the English Premier League with an exciting mix of international and national players. And then you have the grand Champions League, like the UEFA model which has taken football to such heights."

The immediate task is to start the Champions League as planned from this year. Officials of the

Why is CA quiet?

INTERNET, undated

While Cricket Australia opted not to attack the Indian Premier League on Wednesday, its silence is a bit like ignoring the elephant in the room.

Australia's decision to send Hayden home from the West Indies has raised eyebrows in the game. Not because there's any doubt about the legitimacy of the injury.

Hayden is -- or was -- a cricketer ironman, and has played at times more on than fitness.

What is concerning is that this serious Achilles tendon -- a long-time issue -- flared while playing for the Chennai Super Kings in the IPL.

A Twenty20 tournament that may have transformed player payments, and be all the rage in India, but one that very few people are talking about in Australia.

A tournament that, here at least, no one really cares who wins.

Even the most ardent of cricket supporters would struggle to name the four semi-finalists, let alone know that West Australian Shaun Marsh is the leading run-scorer.

CA had little choice but to appease the almighty Board of Control for Cricket in India and allow its superstars to take part --

Time to focus on planning

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appoint a general secretary and the joint-secretaries once he returns from the FIFA Congress, which ended in Sydney yesterday.

Talking to The Daily Star from Sydney on phone on conclusion of the Congress, Salahuddin told that attending the Congress was a special experience.

"But most of all, it was fruitful for my federation as we had a meeting with FIFA president Sepp Blatter," said the former national footballer.

"It was an excellent meeting and I thank Hammam for arranging it," he said adding that the three-member BFF delegation had to rush for the meeting immediately after their arrival in the Australian

BCCI-backed IPL are understood to be meeting a team from Cricket Australia in Mumbai on May 30 to explore whether the event, involving the top two domestic Twenty20 teams from five countries, can be held in England between September 28, when the ICC Champions Trophy in Pakistan ends, and October 9, when India's home Test series against Australia starts.

"The problem is the four-day practice match on October 2-5. We will try to work out a solution with Cricket Australia because the IPL franchisees who will be part of the Champions League will want to have their best players available," Bindra said.

Bindra, who recently returned from a trip to Melbourne where he briefed the directors of Cricket Australia on the mechanics of organising a franchise-based league there, said one of his focus areas after taking over as the principal advisor to ICC in July would be to "ensure that cricket moves to the next level in world sport" in this direction.

The concept, Bindra said, is backed by senior officials of the major cricket boards. Giles Clarke, chairman of the English and Wales Cricket Board (ECB), "has expressed interest in the model" after being briefed by Lalit Modi, the IPL chairman, last month; James Sutherland, the chief executive of Cricket Australia, has confirmed interest in staging an IPL-style competition the following season; and Nasim Ashraf, the

chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), is "very keen to launch a similar tournament there" after having deputed two representatives to participate in the planning stages of the IPL last year and "learn from the process".

In fact, Cricket Australia had invited Bindra last month to brief its board of directors on the concept at a resort near Melbourne on May 7-12. "There was a formal brainstorming session and an informal briefing, and the concept generated a lot of interest among the audience which included former cricketers like Allan Border and Mark Taylor. What I had suggested was a franchise model similar to IPL. But there might have to be some local adjustments."

"For instance, when we discussed the IPL within the BCCI, the question was whether the teams should be owned by the local state associations or private franchises. Some of us strongly suggested the franchise model because only then can you acquire top players for the teams and make the competition truly global. But the BCCI is a non-profit body and has to look after the state associations, too. So a compromise was arrived at, and we have IPL teams owned by franchisees and run in collaboration with state associations. But Australia would have lesser problems since they have a corporate model of governance and have much fewer associations -- six, I believe, compared to 30 in India," Bindra said.

IPL tournament that requires plenty of high-stress activity for a 36-year-old such as Hayden, when batting and in the field.

It's a move that has backfired -- badly.

Just last week team physiotherapist Alex Kountouris said "at least half" of the Australian squad had tendon problems.

Just who he was referring to wasn't divulged. But would that have still been the case had -- like Michael Clarke -- all players taken a two-month rest after what was a gruelling home summer?

CA spokesman Peter Young believes that the risks of releasing players to the IPL are the same as the once-traditional pilgrimage to England every winter.

The one difference, though, is that Hayden had no interest in packing his woollies for a stint of county cricket.

"Matthew has had Achilles tendinitis for quite a long while and people are used to him packing it with ice," Young said.

"If he had stayed home cooling his heels, the medics say there is still a chance that he could still have had exactly the same outcome."

Perhaps, perhaps not. But had he remained at home, Hayden -- and CA -- would not have found themselves in this ugly position.

IPL's England

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Nor could the cricket at the Oval be screened by ESPN Star Sports, the Asian broadcaster, which through the ECB has the rights to show Pro40 cricket in India.

Badale would not comment on whether this was an attempt to bring the IPL to England but, for Surrey, it was an opportunity to raise money for the Prince's Charities and Chance to Shine. "We have an arrangement with the ECB to run charity matches and part of our mission is to fill up the Oval," Paul Sheldon, the Surrey chief executive, said. "We have tried very hard to put the match on and are disappointed that there is no prospect of broadcasting rights, but we quite understand the contractual situation between the ECB and Sky."

LOCAL SNIPPETS

SPORTS REPORTER

India became champions in the men's section while Indonesia clinched the women's title of the International Beach Volleyball tournament at Cox's Bazar yesterday.

In the men's final, India secured 25-23, 21-16 victory over Nepal Police. Bahadur of the runners-up was adjudged best player.

Indonesia however dashed India's hope of a double crown as they won the women's final 21-12, 21-16.

Bangladesh Volleyball Federation (BVF) vice-president and Ibad Group chairman Itekhkar Ahmed distributed prizes among the winners.

BVF president Golam Qaddus Chowdhury, general secretary Anisur Rahman, treasurer AMM Rashiduddin and tournament committee secretary Tariqul Anwar Khan were also present in the prize distributing ceremony.

PIONEER FOOTBALL

East End Juniors registered a thumping 5-0 victory over Commissioner Safiuddin Smriti Sangsad in an East Zone match of the Pioneer Football League at the Jagannath University ground.

Lalu struck twice while Shafin, Dhila and Jamal scored one goal each for East End.

Central Zone: Swadhinata Krira Chakra thrashed Nasirabad Udayan Samaj Kalyan Sangsad 5-1 at the Basabo Tarun Sangha Club ground.

Sohel scored two goals while Sharif, Shaob and Sayem netted one goal apiece for the winners.

South Zone: At the Mohammadpur Eidgah ground, Mukta Jibon Football Club blanked Bedel Powell SC 2-0 with Selim and Raju scoring for the winners.

West Zone: Labagh Tarun Sangha beat RND Krira Chakra 2-1 at the Outer Stadium.

Zakir struck twice for the winners while Dulal pulled one back for the losers.

North Zone: At the T&T ground at Mohakhali, Tejaon Naba Taranga Krira Sangha secured a solitary goal victory over Rampura KC.

Mukul netted the all-important goal.

GP GOLF

The Grameenphone President's Cup Golf Tournament got underway at the Kurmitola Golf Club.

Chief of Naval Staff Vice Admiral Sarwar Jahan Nizam inaugurated the competition as chief guest, while Rubaba Dowla, marketing director of Grameenphone, was the special guest on the occasion.

Local and expatriate members of the club and other golfers are taking part in the prestigious tournament.

U-16 DIVID CRICKET

Dhaka Metro (Blue) made a disastrous start in the Under-16 National Divisional Cricket competition against Sylhet on the first day of a two-day match at the Khulna District Stadium.

They were reduced to 22-6 in their first innings with causing the major damage by claiming five wickets for only four runs.

Sylhet earlier posted 192 in their first innings with Rijvi contributing 56. Moin made 47 while Sentu and Sumit captured three wickets each.

In another semifinal at Khulna Divisional Stadium, the hosts scored 252-9 in their first innings against Barisal. Imran hit 50 and Faruque added 45.

In reply, Barisal lost one wicket for 22 before bats were drawn for the day.

Rajasthan

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Watson was intent on spoiling his rhythm -- going down on one knee, he slog-swept him over midwicket, a technique that Yusuf was to pick up later.

Such a commanding total wouldn't have been possible without the final flourish. Yusuf celebrated his recall to the one-day squad with a blistering 21-ball 45, an innings where four mighty sixes dripped off his bat. Without the Watson back-lift, without too much initial movement, he showed what brute force could do, blasting over long-on and midwicket. He spotted slower balls too, smearing McGrath over midwicket for the shot of the evening.

Watson's job wasn't done yet. Up against one of the most formidable opening combinations in the IPL, he cranked up his pace. Sehwag was done in by the extra bounce, holing out to deep point, Gambhir was frustrated into slashing in the air and Dhawan pulled straight to square leg. Every wicket was accompanied by an ecstatic expression -- one that indicated the triumph of a well-laid plan.

Tillakaratne Dilshan's furious swinging was never going to be enough against a constantly mounting asking-rate and he kept losing partners who misread the bounce in the track. Manoj Tiwary top-edged a bouncer from Munaf Patel and Yo Mahesh struggled against a short one directed at the shoulder. The rest were clueless against Warne's fizzers.

He admitted he would have bowled first if he had won the toss but would have been pleasantly surprised at the surface offered. He toyed with the tailenders, mixing legbreaks and sliders as if this was a Test, and he could afford to wear an impish smile through the spell, considering how the match was long gone.

Ambrose called up

CRICINFO, undated

Tim Ambrose has been called up to England's one-day squad for the series against New Zealand. Ambrose, who took over from Matt Prior in the Test side earlier in the year, replaces Phil Mustard and is the only uncapped player in a 14-man squad.

Ambrose made his mark for England during the Test series in New Zealand, when he produced a maiden century in his second appearance at Wellington, to turn the tide of a series that England eventually won 2-1. He has now been given his opportunity at one-day level as well, despite managing only three runs in two innings in the current Test series.

Mustard has been omitted after averaging 22.8 in his ten appearances in Sri Lanka and New Zealand last winter. He performed fitfully in his pinch-hitting role at the top of the order, often starting with a flurry of pulls and drives only to play one shot too many, although he did make an impres-

sive 83 from 74 balls in his penultimate appearance, the tied ODI in Napier.

"Tim Ambrose has already shown that he has the temperament and the ability required to succeed in Test cricket and his selection reflects our desire to use the same wicket-keeper in both the long and short forms of the game," Geoff Miller, England's national selector, said. "Phil Mustard will, of course, be disappointed not to have been selected on this occasion but he remains a player of terrific potential and we will continue to monitor his performances closely along with a number of other wicketkeepers in domestic cricket."

Another player who will feel unlucky to have missed out is Matt Prior, whom Ambrose replaced in the Test side, but whose forceful performances for Sussex have since powered him to the top of the first-class averages. He, however, will have to wait his turn for a little while longer. "We're aware of the need to identify a player who can take over the opener's role from Phil," said Miller, "and play in a positive manner at the start of the

innings." The offspinner, James Tredwell, also misses out from the party that toured New Zealand in February, while the selectors did not consider a recall for Andrew Flintoff, whose comeback for Lancashire has been hampered by a side strain that will keep him on the international sidelines at least until the arrival of South Africa in July.

"Andrew is still recovering from a side strain and we would prefer to wait until he is 100 per cent fit before considering him for selection," said Miller. "We will be guided by the England medical team as to when the best time would be for him to return to international cricket. His rehabilitation is progressing well at present and we are optimistic that he will be available for selection later in the summer."

SQUAD

Paul Collingwood (capt), Tim Ambrose, James Anderson, Ian Bell, Ravi Bopara, Stuart Broad, Alastair Cook, Dimitri Mascarenhas, Kevin Pietersen, Owais Shah, Ryan Sidebottom, Graeme Swann, Chris Tremlett, Luke Wright.

Strauss stands firm

CRICINFO, undated

DUNCAN FLETCHER

Michael Vaughan was right: that win has to be very close to being one of his best as captain. I know the Old Trafford pitch eased up on the fourth day, but there was still something in it for the bowlers, so to get 294 was a huge effort. Monty Panesar bowled very well to set things up, and I'd like to congratulate Andrew Strauss on his century. He has not had an easy time of it in the past year, but it was a reminder that it's very difficult to find people of that character. I like to call them solid citizens.

When you have them, you must keep them, which is why I was surprised England did not take him to Sri Lanka. People said he needed a break, but last winter wasn't like the previous one where there was non-stop cricket. For a proud man like Strauss, it must have been a huge embarrassment to be dropped, and this innings should give him the confidence to have another long run in the side. Forget the fact that he doesn't always set the run-rate alight; every side needs its backbone, a Justin Langer or a Gary Kirsten.

I believe he did very little wrong in Australia 18 months ago, when the runs began to dry up. He would just get going then he would cop a rough decision, and that can eat away at you. But he always sticks at it, whereas some fair players just throw in the towel. With Strauss, there are no ifs. He has his method-

ology, his determination and he's a great man in the dressing room: intelligent, popular, and with a sharp line in banter if people try to take the mickey.

Strauss and Panesar, who bowled with beautiful control, were the obvious reasons England won this Test, but there were two other crucial moments that might have gone unnoticed. One was the partnership between Vaughan and Strauss on Monday morning. The first hour was very important, but they went out there, took control and sent a message to New Zealand that England were not rolling over.

The second moment was Stuart Broad's 30 in the first innings, when England were struggling to avoid the follow-on. Had they followed on, the wicket would still have been spicy and England would not have had the benefit of the heavy roller on day four. And by being positive, Broad made it look easy: the dressing room would have started to think, "Hold on, we can do this!"

It was very noticeable that New Zealand don't like being the hot-shot favourites. It's strange territory for them, and you could see it in their body language. On the third evening and fourth morning they were a different side, as if they didn't know how to handle the situation. You've got to learn how to win from the front, which can be trickier than people imagine.

If they hadn't lost Daniel Flynn, and if Jacob Oram had been fitter, they might have got another 40 or 50 runs and that could have made the difference. But part of their

Clarke annoys counties

CRICINFO, undated

INTERNET, undated

Unrest is growing among the first-class counties about the secrecy of negotiations between the England and Wales Cricket Board and broadcasters over the future of the domestic game. The ECB board met at Lord's on Thursday to consider initial feedback from broadcasters concerning the structure of county cricket from 2010 but the counties themselves are increasingly dismayed that they have been left in the dark with no formal opportunity to present their views.

Yorkshire and Surrey are just two leading counties who feel it is time for their views to be heard as the first sign of dissatisfaction rears its head over the autocratic style of the ECB chairman, Giles Clarke.

Clarke masterminded the latest TV deal, which unapologetically removed live Test cricket from terrestrial TV, and whereas the small counties trust that he will somehow ensure their survival in the shake-up of the domestic game, the most powerful counties are increasingly impatient at the lack of consultation.

While Clarke concerns himself with the broadcasters and the ITT document -- the Invitation To Tender for TV rights beginning in 2010 -- he increasingly needs to be aware of the dangers of the ITR, the Invitation To Rebel among counties who historically provide most of England's players.

Paul Sheldon, Surrey's chief executive, said with a sigh on Thursday: "I am completely in the dark as to what they might propose. All I know about is what I've read in the press." Sheldon wants big-city

'Better than money'

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I also didn't have too much to do in India so it was quite boring at times," reflected Razzak who added that the best part was the training sessions with his teammates and the most fun he had was during their football match while warming up.

He enjoyed the IPL buzz which according to his words, "must be seen to be believed".

But it was not all fun and games for the Bangalore franchise that had trouble on and off the field, notably the row involving owner Vijay Mallya, captain Dravid and CEO Charu Sharma.

Razzak claims that nothing was wrong between the owner and Dravid but Mallya had a run-in with the CEO.

"Actually the whole issue was between Mallya and the CEO. But I believe that once you are paid so much, you have to perform," was Razzak's simple reply.

Razzak would have an instant chance to use all the wealth of

problem was that the Old Trafford wicket lost its bite, maybe because of the heavy roller. The spin was still there, but the pitch was slower in the fourth innings, so the batters had more time to adjust, especially off the back foot.

England did well to get themselves out of trouble, but I'd still like to see their bowlers assessing the situation a bit better. Why, for example, did it take them so long to bowl bouncers to New Zealand's openers on the first morning? Even when Ross Taylor was batting so well later on, they didn't push him on to the back foot enough. Sure, you don't want to get carried away with the bounce, but the bowlers still have to think on their feet more quickly.

It's sad for England that they won't be taking on Australia in Manchester next year, especially if the Aussies don't have a spinner. From a cricketing point of view it was always very enjoyable playing there because it suited our style of play, especially with Andrew Flintoff and Steve Harmison in the side.

But I can't believe a city the size of Manchester can't get the money to maintain a Test match and keep the ground and the stands up to date. The administrators there should have produced a proper cricket stadium, but now they won't be hosting a game until 2012 at the earliest. It's a real shame.

(Former England coach Duncan Fletcher wrote this piece for Guardian website).

cricket to spearhead a new Twenty20 competition, an idea which Clarke has already ridiculed at a meeting of the counties.

Clarke's authority is bolstered by two things: first, the counties yearned for leadership, so they can hardly complain now that they have got it; second, the Test-match counties are not in agreement about the way forward.

Disarray is growing, however, at talk of what most see as wild and unworkable ideas, far removed from what they see as the priority -- the future of Twenty20. The list, growing longer by the day, includes: a reduced championship split into three conferences; a return to three-day championship cricket; a Twenty20 league (the mooted English Premier League beginning in 2010) which would include three invited overseas sides, so reducing the counties' chance to sign overseas players; and a 40-overs competition which would consist of two innings apiece, each of 20 overs.

Stewart Regan, Yorkshire's chief executive, would prefer a more traditional format that mirrors the international schedule: retention of a four-day championship; retention of the 50-overs competition as long as it is played at international level; and the scrapping of 40-overs cricket to make room for an expanded Twenty20 programme.

Regan's background as a former director of the Football League Championship gives him specialist knowledge, but he said: "All we have heard is what we have read in the papers. Let's cut out the rumours, consult and move forward. All the counties have a right to be consulted in a major structural review."

The counties have brought some of this on themselves. The proposal to return to three-day cricket, for instance, is not the result of a marketing exercise but has been floated by Jack Simmons, a former Lancashire off-spinner and chairman and now the 67-year-old chairman of the ECB cricket committee -- a man they voted for.

SAFF squad

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strong side, who have eight Thai internationals.

The management also thought that this draw would boost the team's confidence ahead of their SAFF opener against Bhutan on June 4 in Colombo.

Bangladesh, who play Afghanistan and co-hosts Sri Lanka on June 6 and 8 respectively, were expected to land in the Sri Lankan capital in early hours today.

Bangladesh's first preparation match in Bangkok was postponed due to heavy rain.