



Swiss superstar world number one Roger Federer stretches to make a return against Marc Gicquel of France during their third round match of the Wimbledon Championships at the All England Club in London yesterday.

## Inter-services football title Army's

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Army lifted the Inter-services football title with a 2-1 extra-time victory against Bangladesh Air Force in the final at the BAF Base Matiur Rahman in Jessor on Thursday.

The regulation period ended in a 1-1 draw.

SM Shamsuddin Babu was adjudged the player of the team.

Jessore Area Commander Rafiqul Islam distributed trophies after the final as chief guest.

## New tie-breaker

**FROM PAGE 17**  
Dubai on Sunday, the chief executives' committee will discuss the possibility of replacing the bowl-out with a one-over eliminator in the case of a tied game.

Under the rules for the new tie-breaker, each team will nominate three batsmen and one bowler. Each side bats one over, with the innings being declared closed if it loses two wickets. If the teams finish tied on runs scored in that one over, the side with the higher number of sixes in its full innings and in the one-over eliminator will declare the winner. If the teams are still tied, the one with the higher number of fours in both innings will win.

This tie-breaker has already been introduced in the ongoing Asia Cup in Pakistan, and will come into play if the final of the tournament ends in a tie. If approved, it will also be applicable in the semi-finals and final of the Champions Trophy later this year and the World Twenty20 in England next year.

## Spanish fans

**FROM PAGE 17**  
The paper said in an inside page.

"Spain blows away Europe" said Spain's newspaper of record, El País.

It noted that Spain has reached the final of the European championship for a third time, after beating Russia in Madrid in 1964 and losing to France in Paris in 1984.

"Just one step from glory," said the centre-right daily El Mundo.

"If on Sunday against the tough Germans, they can repeat some parts of the symphony they performed in Vienna against Russia," they will be European champions again, it said.

The Catalan daily La Vanguardia hailed "marvellous Spain" which "crushed Russia with great football."

Beyond the hyperbole, some papers advised caution.

"La Roja (the reds) are indisputably the best, but be careful, because we haven't won yet," warned Marca.

## What is Malik's role?

### Cricket

OSMAN SAMIUDIN

When Imran Khan pontificates, people still listen. He's not wrong as often as his critics claim or right as often as his supporters do, but take note they all do. So when he writes a column, part of which robustly questions Shoaib Malik's credentials as player and captain, ripples are inevitable.

"A captain can only earn respect if he is doing his bit as a player," Imran wrote in Wednesday's Hindustan Times. "Shoaib (Malik) is a good cricketer and seems to have a sensible head. However, the question is, does he automatically select himself as a batsman? Unfortunately, the answer is no, and till he changes that he cannot lead with authority."

It is unlikely Malik read the column before he went out to open on Thursday against India. But as the beginnings of a response, his wasn't half bad. Malik as a top-order batsman is a different beast altogether to Malik anywhere else. Indeed, part of the problem through his career, why people never think him a certain starter, is that he has never made one spot his own. Instead he has batted here, there and everywhere.

Why this is so is unclear. The 58

ODIs in his career where he has batted in the top four, he averages nearly 44 from. All his centuries and nearly half his fifties have come from here. More than all these stats, he looks more authoritative up there, able to run the singles and take advantage of fielding restrictions, as he did here.

His sixth hundred was a fine hand, controlled and always up-tempo. It gave Pakistan just the base they wanted, though it ended just when it shouldn't have. Yet as captain, in 28 matches, he has batted in the top four only four times. Younis Khan and Mohammad Yousfat at three and four are accomplished batsmen, but not immovable from their spots: if Malik is not going to impose himself as captain, when will he? "We always look for the right combination in our batting," Malik said later. "It's not that every time you open you score a hundred."

Perhaps on an evening lit up by Suresh Raina and Sehwag, none of it might have mattered anyway. But how many can deny that Pakistan under Malik, Kirti Cup or not, have been, not just uninspiring, but unsure of themselves?

Little wonder, when the captain is not only unsure of where to bat, but also apparently unwilling to fulfil his all-round role. He has to decide on one spot in the order, he has to stick to it and perform. Either he is an allrounder or he isn't. A surely press conference later, where he inadvertently re-lit a simmering selectorial debate, wasn't the ideal way to finish off a demanding night. More results like this and this time Imran Khan may well be proven correct.

(Osman Samiuddin is Pakistan editor of Cricinfo).

## CHAMPIONS TROPHY

## South Korea stun Holland

### Hockey

AFP, Rotterdam

Australia moved atop the table of the men's field hockey Champions Trophy alongside Spain and Argentina after notching up a 3-1 win over Germany here on Thursday.

In the day's other game, South Korea scored a shock 4-3 win over the Netherlands.

Australia effectively shut Germany out of their match with a moving press which stymied most counter-attacks.

Australian Jamie Dwyer was in top form, scoring his side's first early in the opening period by deflecting a quickly taken free hit outside the circle into the goal.

Germany's Florian Keller became the tournament's leading scorer with six goals by converting his side's third penalty corner.

The Germans were unable to capitalise on the separate yellow-cards of Australian duo Luke Doerner and Eddie Ockenden.

Dwyer then had a goal disallowed by the video umpire but Australia responded with breaks through midfield to rip apart Germany's defence and create four chances with

only the goalkeeper to beat.

Fergus Kavanagh and Ockenden scored from two of the chances set up by Mark Knowles and Dwyer while Travis Brooks fluffed his chance, failing to get a shot on goal.

Australian coach Barry Dancer saw three positives in Australia's performance: "Our defence, our pressing and our counter-attacks were good for us but we need to improve our finishing when we have the only goalkeeper to beat."

"Although we had one player in suspension for 15 minutes we responded well as a team in terms of the collective effort and I was pleased with our structure and organisation during that time," Dancer said.

Dancer's German counterpart Markus Weise said his team lost because they had not followed his tactical plan.

"The first half was really bad for us as the players did not stick to the tactical plan and we did not play well against Australia's moving press," Weise said.

"The second half was a little better but we did not have the mental ability to react to Australia or to capitalise on the suspensions they incurred. The score could have been 5-2 against us with all the

chances Australia had."

South Korea's first win of the tournament was based on a fast-moving second half that wore the Dutch down.

Teun de Nooijer deflected in Netherlands first goal and Korea replied with a penalty corner by Jong Hyun Jang late in the first half, followed within minutes by a field goal to Korea captain Jong Hio Seo.

Roderick Weusthof's penalty corner conversion got the Dutch back in the match and Ronald Brouwer's field goal of a pass from his cousin Matthijs had the hosts 3-2 up in the second half.

But Korea exploited the tiring Dutchmen by putting on an extra striker, forced a penalty stroke, converted with a looping scoop into the top of the net by Woon Kon Yeo.

Korea forced a penalty corner in the last minutes and Jang converted for the winner.

"I'm not pleased with the performance of the team," fumed Dutch coach Roelant Oltmans. "We will have to play better if we are not to be left playing off for last place."

Korea coach Myung Jun Cho was delighted to have a win in the tournament: "We tried to show the Dutch public that we can beat Netherlands and we are thrilled to have done that."

"We are carrying two points forward with us and that is a very big advantage for any side," he said.

India go into tomorrow's match still unsure about the fitness of Irfan Pathan, who has not played in the last two matches due to a side strain.

Among the other super-four qualifiers, Pakistan is likely to be without top pacer Umar Gul, who bowled just eight deliveries against India before limping off with a rib cage injury.

"We had good work-outs but there is still hard work ahead. The expectations are high as defending champions but we are capable of doing well and realise how important it will be to win all the matches," said Jayawardene.

Indian field hockey official Aslam Sher Khan said he had not been contacted by either the International Hockey Federation (FIH) or the Malaysian authorities in regard to the allegations.

"We have got nothing to do with it," said Khan. "It is quite clear that India or Indian players are (in) no way involved with whatever the allegations are."

Malaysian players wagered between 1,000 ringgit (313 dollars) and 10,000 ringgit on the outcome of the match.

Bansal, whose young Indian team went on to play the final, said he was surprised at the allegations and refused to believe hockey matches could be fixed.

"When we played Malaysia, they had already lost three games and it was expected we would win the match," Bansal told local media.

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## AZLAN SHAH HOCKEY

## Coach denies fixing claims

AFP, New Delhi

India's field hockey coach Ajay Bansal on Thursday played down reports that Malaysia deliberately lost a recent international, saying his team had won fair and square.

Malaysian police are investigating allegations that India's 2-1 win during the Azlan Shah tournament in Ipoh in May was fixed following online betting by some members of the Malaysian team.

The Malay Mail newspaper said earlier this week that up to six

their players were underperforming. I don't think anybody would play to lose a hockey match for the sake of money," he added.

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## Gul ruled

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