

Gautam, Saleha take TT titles

SPORTS REPORTER

Gautam of Bagerhat clinched the men's singles title by default in the AB Bank 29th National Table Tennis Championships at the NSC gymnasium yesterday.

His cakewalk was completed when Hamlet of Biman, his opponent in the final, pulled out through an injury.

In another final, Saleha of Ansar beat compatriot Soma 11-4, 4-11, 11-2, 11-8, 11-6 to lift the ladies' singles title.

Dhaka's Palash became the boys' champion while Turbina of Gaibandha took the girls' trophy.

AB Bank president and managing director Kaiser A Chowdhury distributed prizes among the winners.



Women's singles winner Saleha (R) of Ansar and Gautam (L) of Bagerhat lift the AB Bank 29th National Table Tennis Championships titles at the NSC gymnasium yesterday.

Ponting fined for dissent

REUTERS, New Delhi

Australian skipper Ricky Ponting has been fined 30 per cent of his match fee for dissent during Friday's second one-day international against West Indies.

An International Cricket Council (ICC) statement said Ponting appeared to make a comment to the umpire after he had turned down a caught-behind appeal against Patrick Browne.

Although Ponting pleaded not guilty at the post-match hearing, ICC match referee Roshan Mahanama punished the player after viewing video footage of the incident.

Australia won the rain-hit game in Grenada by 63 runs, taking a 2-0 lead in the five-match series.

Chingoka writes to ICC members

CRICINFO, undated

Zimbabwe Cricket chairman Peter Chingoka has written to all the members of the International Cricket Council (ICC) executive claiming that any move to ban Zimbabwe would be made for political and not cricketing reasons.

Chingoka, who faces a motion to discuss Zimbabwe's status tabled by his friend and ICC president Ray Mali, pointed out that there were no moves to ban Zimbabwe from other international sporting events or organisations.

He maintained what he has always said, that Zimbabwe Cricket was an apolitical organisation that could not be held responsible for the political turmoil inside the country.

Earlier this week Cricket South Africa suspended all bilateral agreements with Zimbabwe Cricket, and England cancelled the proposed tour by Zimbabwe due in May 2009.

Chingoka's claims were attacked by a former senior administrator who worked closely with him on the board but did not want to be named for fear of his safety. "The reality is that nobody survives inside Zimbabwe on Saturday unless they are linked to the ruling elite, especially in an organisation with access to precious foreign currency. The board are heavily politicised and anyone who suggests otherwise is blind. Chingoka and his cronies are desperate to portray an image of a brave souls standing up for cricket against tremendous odds. The reality is the quite the opposite."

And a former Zimbabwe Test player, who also requested anonymity, was equally forthright. "The board has destroyed grass-roots cricket here and all that is left is a paper-thin veneer of normality. These guys have caused the world game, not to mention the ICC, no end of embarrassment and they've not even done so in defence of cricket. It's all about self interest. Nobody wants to play us, nobody wants to tour here. What's the point of maintaining this charade?"

No spokesman from Zimbabwe Cricket was prepared to speak to Cricinfo.

Injury forces Haddin home

AFP, Sydney

Wicketkeeper Brad Haddin will return home from Australia's tour to the West Indies after not recovering sufficiently from a broken finger, Cricket Australia said Saturday.

Haddin broke the ring finger on his right hand during the first Test of Australia's tour and played on with the injury through the final two Test matches and the first one-day international.

CA said Haddin will leave Grenada on Friday to continue his recovery in Australia.

Luke Ronchi, who made his international debut in Australia's Twenty20 game against the West Indies last week in Barbados, will remain with the squad until the end of the tour, CA said.

'No doubt over Colly'

AFP, London

Geoff Miller, England's national selector, said Friday there was no reason why Paul Collingwood should not return as captain of the England one-day team after his four-game ban.

That International Cricket Council (ICC) suspension, for being in charge of an England team that was twice slow with its over-rate during the past 12 months, starts with Saturday's ODI series finale against New Zealand at Lord's.

But it was not England's sub-standard over-rate at The Oval on Wednesday, where New Zealand won a dramatic one-wicket victory off the last ball that placed a question mark against Collingwood's captaincy.

The Durham all-rounder's failure to recall Grant Elliott, run-out after a collision with England quick Ryan Sidebottom, led to

widespread criticism although Collingwood did admit after the match he had made a mistake.

However, former England off-spinner Miller told Sky Sports he expected Collingwood would resume the captaincy of the one-day side when his ban expired. "I don't think there is any uncertainty whatsoever."

"We have to wait to see how things progress." England play four Tests against South Africa, games for which the 32-year-old Collingwood remains eligible, before he is obliged to sit out August's one-off ODI against Scotland and the lone Twenty20 and first ODI with the Proteas.

"He (Collingwood) is a quality player, will be involved in the Test arena and will come back into the equation when we start talking about the one-dayers," Miller said.

"I see no reason why he shouldn't come back as captain but we will have to assess things when the time arises." "Colly was captain of the one-day (team), he is not allowed to play

in the next four so we will cross the bridge when we come to it. It is all ifs and buts. We will discuss that when the time comes."

Turning to the run-out controversy, Miller said this would not be held against Collingwood.

"He had to make a split-second decision. He made a decision and in the cold light of day realised it might have been the wrong decision. He has accepted that and has apologised so hopefully that issue is now closed."

Kevin Pietersen, who will captain in Collingwood's absence at Lord's, in a match England must win to end the series level at 2-2, said Friday: "We should have helped the skipper out, there's no way Colly should have 'gone down'. It's all our fault."

But he added match referee Javagal Srinath, the former India fast bowler, had little choice but to impose a four-game ban.

"That's the rules, there's nothing Javagal could have done. We should have helped Colly out a lot more."

Solo effort from Clarke

AFP, St George's

Michael Clarke enhanced his reputation with a handy all-round performance that gave Australia a 2-0 lead in their five-match one-day international series with West Indies, when they won the rain-affected second match by 63 runs on Friday.

The Australia vice-captain followed up a vital innings of 56 from 98 balls with three wickets for 26 runs from six overs, as the visitors successfully defended a revised victory target under the Duckworth-Lewis Method of 204 from 41 overs.

Clarke earned the man-of-the-match award, as the Australians restricted West Indies to 140 for eight from their allocation of 41 overs. Shivnarine Chanderpaul's 45

not out from 77 balls was the top score for West Indies, but no other West Indies batsman suggested substance or stability.

Australia won the opening match by 84 runs last Tuesday at the Arnos Vale Sports Complex just outside the St. Vincent and the Grenadines capital of Kingstown.

The third ODI in the series will be contested on Saturday also at the Queen's Park Stadium.

Clarke, bowling his uncomplicated left-arm spin, snuffed the life out of any idles West Indies had of a fightback, after they subsided to 49 for four in the 21st over.

He removed Patrick Browne for one, Kieron Pollard for a duck, and Darren Sammy for nine either side of a near hour-long stoppage for rain to leave West Indies 74 for seven in the 31st over.

Australia had set West Indies back from the very first ball of the innings, when Brett Lee had Xavier Marshall caught behind for a duck.

SCOREBOARD

Table with columns for Team, Player, O, M, R, W. Includes sub-tables for West Indies and Australia.

Sanath sees no reason to retire

REUTERS, Karachi

Swashbuckling Sri Lankan batsman Sanath Jayasuriya celebrates his 39th birthday on Monday with no retirement plans in sight.

Sri Lanka's highest Test scorer and the second most capped player in one-day internationals, Jayasuriya demonstrated he had lost none of his flair by smashing 72 against Bangladesh in the Asia Cup on Wednesday.

"I don't think about my future plans," he told reporters. "As long as I am fit I will keep on going."

The stocky left-hander retired from Test cricket last December but continues to play in one-dayers, a form of the game that made him a hero in his country and a feared opponent.

His explosive style of batting helped Sri Lanka win the 1996 World Cup and changed the way many batsmen approached one-day matches.

"I don't think age is a factor with Sanath," Sri Lanka captain Mahela Jayawardene told Reuters. "As long as he is hungry to perform, I am sure he will keep on going."

Jayasuriya was axed from Sri Lanka's one-day squad for the tour of the West Indies in April before being recalled for the six-nation Asia Cup.

"Sanath went through a bit of a rough period last year or so after the World Cup," said Jayawardene. "People asked questions about him but I thought he worked really very hard. I think he needed to prove something and he provided it."

With 12,382 runs and 309 wickets in 412 one-day internationals and having retired after 110 Tests with 6,973 runs many feel, the all-rounder has nothing more to prove.

"I love this game and I still feel great after a good performance or seeing the team win," Jayasuriya said.

Styris powers

FROM PAGE 17 Germany coach Joachim Loew and many of the players have repeatedly said the images of the frenzied fans back home have given the team an important long-distance lift.

"Thanks!" Loew wrote to fans on page one of the Bild newspaper on Saturday. "You've carried us up the mountain with your unbridled enthusiasm. Now there's only one step left and we're going to take that together on Sunday."

Another capacity crowd of 500,000 -- the biggest gathering in Europe -- is expected to jam the central "fan mile" in Berlin set up on a closed-off boulevard between the Brandenburg Gate and the

'I wasn't prepared'

AFP, London



Ana Ivanovic admitted her decision to take time off after winning the French Open had backfired as she was dumped out of Wimbledon by Chinese wildcard Zheng Jie.

"I don't think about my future plans," she told reporters. "As long as I am fit I will keep on going."

The Serbian world number one conceded she was completely under-prepared for the grasscourt season, leading to Friday's shock 6-1, 6-4 third round defeat to an opponent ranked 132 places below her.

"I didn't have as good preparation as I hoped for because I had to have some time off, so I didn't have too much time to practice and to do all these little specific movements and things you need to in order to adjust to the grass," Ivanovic said.

"It's been a very emotional past couple of weeks for me. It took a toll on me. So with my coaches we try to cut the practices to a minimum just to have time to recover a little bit and have some time for myself."

"Obviously it was tough because from the first match on, I tried to find my game, but I felt like I was struggling a little bit."

"It took time to adjust to the grass because, especially after clay, it's a completely different game."

Just three weeks after being installed as the world number one following her first Grand Slam success, Ivanovic has crashed back down to earth.

She admitted it has been a struggle to adapt to her new position as the leading woman, especially since her status has made a prize scalp for relatively unknown players like Zheng.

"Obviously I felt the extra pressure a little bit in the beginning," she said. "Everyone's going to be so pumped against you and they're going to try to perform the best they can."

"I think in my previous matches, Sometimes you need a punch to realize what you have to work on."

She had been lucky to avoid defeat against Nathalie Dechy in the previous round after a netcord helped her save two match points. On Friday, there was no escape. But she admitted Zheng deserved all the credit for a superb



Ana Ivanovic of Serbia speaks at a press conference after being defeated by Jie Zheng of China in the third round match of the Wimbledon Championships in London on Friday.

as well as today, you know, they had nothing to lose. Really I think they played some of their best tennis."

"It's something you have to accept. Also with the time you learn to deal with it."

"Trust me, it's not easy to lose. Every loss is disappointing but you also have to realize that the world won't end."

"I'm still so young and have many tournaments in front of me. These things make you learn that you still have room to improve."

performance that made a mockery of her low ranking.

"She's a good player and she plays well on grass," Ivanovic said. "She has very powerful shot. She stays very low, so the balls are coming much faster through the air."

"I had a little bit of a tough time to adjust to the balls with the timing. I think grass suits her very well with her."

"She was reading my serves very well. Even when I tried to kick it and bounce the ball high, she was still there on the ball."

Alok stamps his class

FROM PAGE 17

also the fastest by a Bangladeshi and it was also the first hundred against India by any Bangladeshi batsman. But there were more than only the statistics to cheer the innings.

His innings marked with eye-catching shots on both sides of the wicket and featured ten sweetly timed boundaries and five astutely hit sixes. Anybody who has the misfortune of missing it perhaps missed arguably the best one-day knock by a Bangladeshi in the one-day version of the game.

It was fantastic to watch the way a front-footed down-the-track shot against left-arm pacer RP Singh disappeared to wide long-on, a late cut by the 24-year-old racing down to the point boundary, a deft roll of the wrist that turned into a four down to mid-wicket when the experts thought it could bring only a single. Then the imperious slog sweep that saw the ball hoisted to the gallery on several occasions.

Kapali reached his fifty also by hitting the massive slog sweep against spinner Yusuf Pathan.

He reached his hundred with a single off Ishant Sharma to third man. Bangladesh skipper Mohammad Ashraful had the previous best of 100 in 100 balls against Australia at Cardiff in 2005.

The stunning innings came to an end with just one ball remaining in the Bangladesh innings and it needed an outstanding catch by

Pragyan Ojha off Manpreet Gony at deep mid-wicket. But by that time Kapali had made sure that it would not be another meek surrender against the high-flying Indians.

**SCOREBOARD** Scoreboard of Bangladesh's innings in the Asia Cup Super League match against India at the National Stadium in Karachi on Saturday.

Table with columns for Player, O, M, R, W. Includes BANGLADESH and INDIA players.

**INDIA:** Mahendra Singh Dhoni, Gautam Gambhir, Robin Uthappa, Yuvraj Singh, Rohit Sharma, Suresh Raina, Yusuf Pathan, Pragyan Ojha, Manpreet Gony, Rudra Pratap Singh, Ishant Sharma

**Toss:** Bangladesh **Umpires:** Simon Taufel (AUS), Brian Jerling (RSA) **Match referee:** Alan Hurst (AUS)

Champions Trophy Pakistan need to up security

AFP, Karachi

An expert said Saturday that security in Pakistan for the biennial Champions Trophy needed to be fine-tuned, with several foreign players expressing concerns about touring the troubled nation.

Reg Dickason, a security expert hired by Cricket Australia (CA), completed his assessment of southern port city Karachi following the strong reaction of Australian players about competing in Pakistan.

"It's a reasonable start," Dickason said of his inquiry. "Some fine-tuning needs to be done and everyone acknowledges that. In time, the security situation will be enhanced."

Pakistan hosts the elite eight-nation event from September 11-28. Sri Lanka is the alternate if the International Cricket Council (ICC) deems Pakistan unsuitable to host the event.

With Sri Lanka in the midst of heavy fighting between government forces and rebels, South Africa was also selected as possible hosts, an ICC source told AFP on Friday.

The ICC will discuss an independent security assessment -- done last month -- during its meetings in Dubai starting Sunday, before making a final decision.

Bangladesh A

FROM PAGE 17 BRIEF SCORES IRELAND: 161-6 in 20 overs (Botha 61, Strydom 30, Nazmul 1-25, Mahbul 1-37, Sunny 1-24; Nayeem 3-33).

BANGLADESH A: 79 all out in 16.1 overs (Zunaid 13, Nayeem 20, Dhiman 20; McCallan 3-6, Cusack 1-2, Botha 1-6). Result: Ireland won by 82 runs.



New Zealand batsman Scott Styris drives Stuart Broad through the covers during the fifth and final one-day international against England at Lord's in London yesterday.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down. Includes solution time: 25 mins.

Cryptokuip puzzle grid with letters and numbers.

CRYPTOQUIP QXTITGQDPL NGX CAGTTEFC NGXA IZJIEF IRDEF GP ORF MFZUR IRZO UGXEC ORF AFQXEO MF? QZPCN FLLG Yesterday's Cryptokuip: FOR A CLASSIC DELICIOUS MEAL, MIGHT AN INSECT-LOVING CREATURE HAVE SOME MACARONI AND FLEAS? Today's Cryptokuip Clue: L equals G