

Arendse angry, blames Mali

CRICINFO, undated

Cricket South Africa's president Norman Arendse is facing moves to oust him according to media reports, even though he has two years of his term still to serve.

Arendse, who has had a turbulent year, is set to be opposed by Gauteng's president Mutuzeli Nyoka at a special meeting called by the provinces on September 26.

Arendse told the Beeld newspaper that he was particularly disappointed to learn that Ray Mali was linked with the group standing against him and had been nominated for the vice-president post.

"When Mali became president of the ICC and people told him he wouldn't make it because he didn't have the experience, I was the one who stood by him and defended him," Arendse said. "I can't tell you how shocked I was when I heard in Dubai last week that he is now in the camp of those who want to get rid of me."

The opportunity to force change has come about because CSA is undergoing a restructuring for tax reasons and it will become a non-profit-making company. That process, Arendse claimed, was still in progress, but he was confident that he would be able to survive any challenges.

"It would appear ... the status quo will be maintained with regard to the office-bearers, who will serve for two years from the time the company is established. I was elected president at a meeting last year and that should be valid for three years. Now there are suddenly people who are going back on that which was agreed on."

'Security still a worry'

AFP, Canberra

Security concerns in the wake of a series of bomb attacks could still scupper the Australian cricket team's upcoming tour of India, captain Ricky Ponting indicated Wednesday.

The team and officials will constantly monitor the situation with the assistance of the Australian government ahead of their scheduled departure this weekend, Ponting said.

"Anything could happen tomorrow, things change very quickly in the world right at the moment," he told reporters in Canberra.

"Cricket Australia will continue to be in touch and the government will continue to be in touch, and Cricket Australia will keep us players and the players' association in the loop on a daily, if not hourly basis."

Adviosroy

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assistant district councillors, police superiors, FA presidents and general secretaries of the District Sports Association (DSA), the government organisation which used to run the game in the past.

The BFF officials believed that it would also solve the existing conflicts between DFAs and the DSAs.

BFF president Kazi Salahuddin, who attended the meeting, has also offered financial helps to the FAs.

Rakib named

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sports during the year.

The other winners are Shakib Al Hasan (cricket), Ziaur Rahman (kabaddi), Shafiqur Rahman (organiser), Abdus Sattar (special contribution to sports), Rajshahi District Sports Association (active association) and United Insurance Company Limited (sponsor).

The awards will be distributed later.

Chelsea cruise

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"After half-time I thought it would improve as my players are capable of better than that," he said.

"But we got rattled, and it became even harder. The problem is as much physical as mental."

The faces of Barcelona's players expressed relief for a victory which Samuel Eto'o, who scored with a penalty, admitted did not come without a few nervy moments.

"It was nice to score with the penalty but winning was the most important thing," said Eto'o.

"We needed a victory after the difficult league start because otherwise the nerves can start to creep in. We had to get some confidence."

Aleto'o was far more convincing with Argentine Sergio Agüero especially impressive as he scored two of their goals - the only down-side to the evening was an injury to Uruguayan star Diego Forlan.

Aleto'o's Mexican coach Javier Aguirre was in seventh heaven.

"Obviously I'm delighted about the result, especially coming away from home. It's fantastic," said Aguirre.

His PSV counterpart Huub Stevens tried to take the defeat on the chin.

"3-0, is obviously a huge slap in the face," said Stevens.

"Morale-wise it is not a great thing to happen. But I prefer to lose 3-0 than to lose 1-0 three times."



Dinara Safina of Russia makes a forehand return against Dominika Cibulkova of Slovakia during their second round match of the Pan Pacific Open in Tokyo on Wednesday.

Safina reaches quarters

Tennis

AFP, Tokyo

Russian fourth seed Dinara Safina became the first player to reach the quarterfinals when she whipped Dominika Cibulkova of Slovakia in the Pan Pacific Open on Wednesday.

The Beijing Olympic silver medalist, making her Tokyo debut after receiving a first-round bye, struggled with her serve, hitting eight double faults before scoring a 6-3, 6-4 second round victory in 95 minutes.

Safina hit a double fault on break point to lose the fifth game of the first set, but she was never in serious danger throughout the match.

Cibulkova, who eliminated 2006 Wimbledon champion Amelie Mauresmo on Tuesday, broke back once in the sixth game of the second set, but that was all she could do as Safina sealed her quarterfinal place with her ninth ace.

"It was a pretty good match. She (Cibulkova) is not an easy oppo-

nent, and I think I played really solid today. I struggled a little bit in the second set, but I'm really happy that I put out in two sets," said Safina, 22.

When she was asked about her eight double faults, she replied: "I just tried to focus on the next point. There is not much time to think about it."

In the first round, Russian fifth seed Svetlana Kuznetsova avenged her loss at the Beijing Olympics to Li Na by eliminating the Chinese star.

The 2004 US Open champion, who bowed to eventual semifinalist Li in the round of 64 in Beijing last month, took advantage of a raft of double faults to score a 6-2, 1-6, 6-3 victory.

The 26-year-old Li, the first Chinese to have won a WTA Tour title at Guangzhou in 2004, seemed to recover her form in the second set by taking six games in a row from the second game.

But a double fault on the crucial break point in the second game of the final set eventually cost her the match.

Overall, Li hit seven aces but also nine double faults -- two of

them on break points, while Kuznetsova hit two and four.

"I'm very happy with the result, especially since I was not expecting to play that well. I didn't play that well in the second set, but the match was good," said Kuznetsova, ranked seventh in the world against Li's 31.

"I'm happy to do this, because coming from Europe (Fed Cup), they played on clay, and today a tough match in the first round. It's great for me."

"I worked hard after the Olympics, and now I feel much fitter, playing better and much more confident. The result shows it. Hopefully, I can keep going and come back to my normal level," she added.

Kuznetsova will next face Japan's Ayumi Morita.

In other first round action, Slovenia's Katarina Srebotnik breezed past Caroline Wozniacki of Denmark 6-1, 6-2, while Russia's Nadia Petrova defeated Aravane Rezaei of France 7-5, 6-2.

Virginie Razzano of France outclassed top local hope, veteran Ai Sugiyama, 6-3, 6-2.

Hick denied farewell

Cricket

AFP, London

Graeme Hick's cricket career came to an abrupt end Wednesday as his final season before retirement was cut short by injury.

The Worcestershire faithful will miss the chance to say one last goodbye to their favourite adopted son after the 42-year-old Zimbabwe-born Hick confirmed he would not appear in the Midlands county's final two matches this season after the recurrence of an elbow injury during a one-day match against Middlesex last weekend.

The former England batsman, missing from the team for the four-day County Championship clash, also against Middlesex, which started on Wednesday, said he would not be fit either for Sunday's Pro40 play-off away to Glamorgan.

"Unfortunately with my elbow not being right, I didn't really enjoy the fielding side of it," Hick told Setanta Sports News. "I don't feel like I did my job properly on Sunday."

"I'm not 100 percent. I made my decision as if it were mid-season and whether or not I felt I would do myself, and the rest of the guys, justice on the field," he added.

"The decision was made without the added emotion of it being my last game."

A prolific performer at county level, Hick's tally of 136 first-class centuries puts him eighth on the all-time list and is unlikely to be exceeded by any current player.

Earlier this season, Hick surpassed former England captain Graham Gooch's record for most runs in all senior cricket, and now has 64,372 to his name, but he was unable to take that form into the international arena.

Born in what was then Salisbury, Rhodesia (now Harare, Zimbabwe), Hick had to serve a seven-year qualification period before making his England debut in 1991, during which time he was repeatedly touted as the saviour of the team.

Had he gone into the side in his early 20s, when expectations were not so high, he might have been treated more kindly by selectors and supporters alike.

Hick, who endured a stop-start 65 Test career which yielded 3,383 runs at a modest average of 31.32 - compared to a first-class figure of 52.23 - with six hundreds, admitted: "If I have anything that I'd like to change, it would be to have been more consistent for England and to actually have a period in the side when I wasn't dropped."

"In the end I was in and out of the side every year."

However, something Hick said he wouldn't miss was modern warm-up routines. "They need to be done but they're an absolute bind."

"Damian D'Oliveira and I used to walk out, he'd have a fag, and

we'd have a few throw downs, have a few slip catches and walk back in. That was it."

"Nowadays it's all laps and cones."

Hick, who 20 years ago compiled Worcestershire's first-class record score of 405 not out, against Somerset at Taunton, was wistfully branded a "flat-track bully" by former New Zealand coach John Bracewell.

His placid nature led to one of celebrated umpire Dickie Bird's more famous rebukes when the batsman was on the receiving end of a volley of verbal abuse from Merv Hughes.

"What's that nice Mr Hick ever done to you?" a bemused Bird asked the Australia quick.

Perhaps the truth about Hick was that rather than being unfilled, his career went as far as his talent and mentality allowed, only the distance wasn't as far as both his supporters and detractors would have liked.

"My kids watched my retirement being announced on the news and my son just said, 'That's my dad!'" Hick told Tuesday's Guardian newspaper. "And he came over and sat next to me and he held me."

"I sat there thinking, 'Of course I would have liked to have scored 30 Test hundreds but I might not be the person I am if I'd done that.' And, looking down at my boy, I just felt very proud and very happy."

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Brothers survive in a draw

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many minutes and broke the rules by sitting at the side bench till the final whistle as the fourth official failed to make the player leave.

Earlier, Chittagong Mohammedan rushed early blood before their Guinean forward Raphael Sagnio opened the scoring in the 34th minute. Nigerian striker Michael Oniya's spectacular goal cancelled the lead within ten minutes to give Wasim Iqbal a side one point.

Visiting skipper Kaiser, who limped out of the ground shortly before the break, created the first chance in the 19th minute when his powerful drive came out off Brothers keeper Shakil's grip.

A lurking Raphael was a simple touch away from scoring on rebound but Brothers captain Shuvra made a timely clearance.

Raphael, however, did not have to wait long to score on his B. League debut when the tall striker coolly side-footed in a waist-high ball after overlapping defender Pradip Barua chipped a long cross above the rival backline.

Camara, the other Guinean in the port city side who had a memorable performance in the inaugural

B. League last season, then set up Ridon with a chance in the 42nd minute but the latter finished wide from the top of the box.

The Gopibagh outfit, with three average foreign recruits -- two from Nigeria and one from Ghana -- in the side, depended mostly on the flanks and Arup was inspirational with his darting runs. His crosses put tremendous pressure on the rival goal and Mithu picked up one only to see his low shot parried by Mamun Khan's legwork under the bar.

The resulting corner produced Brothers' equaliser after Shakil's across-the-pitch picked up Arup at the right side of the box. The full-back attempted a diving header which went low to Oniya, waiting with his back towards the goal, who stunningly back-heeled the ball into the roof of the net.

The only real chance of the second half fell to Raphael after Camara and Liberian Anthony Doe combined to set a chance in the 64th minute but Raphael's powerful volley was shielded by Nigerian defender Divine.

"We came here to win here but I am not unhappy after the draw against a strong side," said

Chittagong Mohammedan manager Mohammed Yusuf.

"We were under pressure because our coach Nazrul Islam could not make the trip due to illness. But the players have done their job," he added.

"It was a bad decision," said Brothers coach Wasim who was unhappy about Mithu's red card.

"I had players like Masud Rana, Mithu Munna and goalkeeper Zia injured though Munna played with a bandage on his head. That's why I had to pick up three foreigners," he said when asked why he ignored players like Abdullah Parvez, Tapu and Zahid in the starting lineup.

Red card: Mithu (Brothers)

Yellow cards: Ariful (Brothers) and Pradip, Lincoln, Camara, Sharif (Chittagong Mohammedan)

TEAMS

BROTHERS: MN Shakil, Ariful, Ashraf, Shuvra, Arup, Divine, Mithu, Matur Munna (Manju), Shakil (Parvez), Henry (Zahid) and Oniya.

CTG MOHAMMEDAN: Mamun, Sharif, Dhiman, Shawkat, Pradip, Lincoln (Sanwar), Daulat, Kaiser (Doe), Camara, Raphael (Chowmrin) and Ridon.

Gilchrist expects from new side

CRICINFO, undated

Adam Gilchrist expects Australia's new-look team to remain a competitive force, starting with next month's Test series against India. Since Australia conquered their final frontier by winning the Border-Gavaskar Trophy in 2004, their losses have included Gilchrist, Shane Warne, Glenn McGrath, Damien Martyn, Justin Langer and Jason Gillespie.

Andrew Symonds will also miss the four Tests and Matthew Hayden is under an injury cloud, but Gilchrist remains confident of Australia's prospects. "There's no doubt the Australian team is inexperienced in regards to what we have had for the last ten years," Gilchrist said in Mumbai. "We've always had a very experienced team."

"But that doesn't mean that these guys haven't played in these conditions before. Australia has been sending A teams and youth teams over here for a number of years to educate our players on the conditions and the facilities. The team will definitely draw on that experience and will be very, very competitive."

Australia played two first-class games against India A over the past two weeks, with Simon Katich, Peter Siddie, Bryce McGain and Jason Krejza taking part in the tour. They are in the 15-man squad for the Tests, which start in Bangalore on October 9.

Gilchrist said the contest was shaping up as a "fantastic series". "It seems like every time the two nations have locked horns in the last ten to 12 years, it's lived up to what I think has become an iconic series," Gilchrist said. "In Australia, everyone knows the focus historically has been the Ashes, but this has grown its own iconic status."

PCB confirms Toronto T20

AFP, Karachi

Pakistan will meet hosts Canada and Sri Lanka will play Zimbabwe in the opening round of an inaugural four-way Twenty20 tournament in Toronto, Pakistan-based organisers announced Wednesday.

The tournament, scheduled to run from October 10-13, will give the cricket-starved Pakistan team some much-needed playing time after the Champions Trophy was postponed over security fears here last month.

"In a league format all four teams will play each other once and the top two teams will play the final," Nauman Nabi, chairman of the organising company Sports International Marketing, told AFP.

There will be a play-off for third position before the final on October 13, he added.

The tournament in Canada, originally scheduled for August, was delayed because the West Indies team was not available. The Caribbean side will miss out anyway after they demanded a further two-week delay.

"We have top teams in the tournament and hope that it will be a great success," said Nabi.

Pakistan finished runners-up to India in the Twenty20 World Cup held in South Africa last year. Sri Lanka were runners-up to Australia in the 50-over World Cup in the West Indies last year.

Nabi hopes to make the Canada event an annual fixture.

"We are trying to make this event an annual fixture because there is a vast majority of South Asian expatriates who want to watch cricket in Canada. The game is progressing by leaps and bounds in that part of the world," said Nabi.

FIXTURE

Oct 10: Sri Lanka v Zimbabwe, Canada v Pakistan

Oct 11: Canada v Zimbabwe, Sri Lanka v Pakistan

Oct 12: Pakistan v Zimbabwe, Canada v Sri Lanka

Oct 13: Play off and Final

'Lily-livered cowards'

PTI, Melbourne

Pakistan's anger over Australia's decision to proceed with its Indian tour despite the serial blasts in New Delhi was so seething that a PCB official called the Aussies "lily-livered cowards", according to a report.

"To talk simply of double-standards would be to understate what we feel. My personal view is that your people are a bunch of lily-livered cowards," a senior PCB official was quoted as saying by "The Australian".

"You use one set of rules when it comes to poor Pakistan and another when it comes to India and the rich pickings to be made from the Board of Control for Cricket in India and playing in the Indian Premier League," he fumed.

PCB Chief Operating Officer Shafiqat Naghi had also accused Cricket Australia of "double standards" by deciding to proceed with the India tour while cancelling their Test tour to Pakistan early this year and objecting to Champions Trophy due to security reasons in Pakistan.

Ponting wants Roy, coach not yet

Cricket

AGENCIES, Canberra/Melbourne

Australian cricket captain Ricky Ponting Wednesday said he wanted Andrew Symonds back in the team "sooner rather than later" and there were positive signs the troubled all-rounder would return.

Symonds was dropped from Australia's upcoming tour of India after he went fishing rather than attend a compulsory team meeting during the one-day series against Bangladesh last month and has been considering his future in international cricket.

Ponting said Symonds' comments to the media on Tuesday, during which he expressed remorse and admitted he needed to change, were welcome.

"I actually think there were some really positive signs over the last couple of days with Andrew," Ponting told reporters in Canberra.

"He's actually fronted the media and admitted that there's some room for improvement in certain parts of his life."

The captain said Symonds would be missed during the India tour.

"He's a terrific player and his Test record and one-day record over the last couple of years for Australia has been outstanding," Ponting said.

"Hopefully, for him as a person, if he can get those things sorted out, then we'll have him back in the team."

"I'd love to have him back in the side sooner rather than later."

The 33-year-old Symonds Tuesday spoke about the difficulties he had coping with his rise from state cricketer to international sports star and admitted he needed to show more responsibility.

"Hopefully, I can come out of this a better person and won't make these mistakes in the future," he said.

Meanwhile, Australian coach Tim Nielsen has praised Andrew Symonds for realising his mistake but ruled out the volatile all-rounder's quick return to the national side, saying such a move would undermine his teammates' position.

Nielsen said Symonds has done a great job by pledging to behave "responsibly" in future but his comeback to the national team would take time.

"At the moment, Symonds'

selection is something I don't want to think about it. It would only undermine the players that are there," Nielsen was quoted as saying by "Sydney Morning Herald".

"It's brilliant that he has got to this stage and put out a positive message, but I don't even want to start speculating about when he might return," he said.

Cricket Australia Chairman of selectors, Andrew Hilditch had also said Symonds will be monitored for a while before considering his inclusion in national squad.

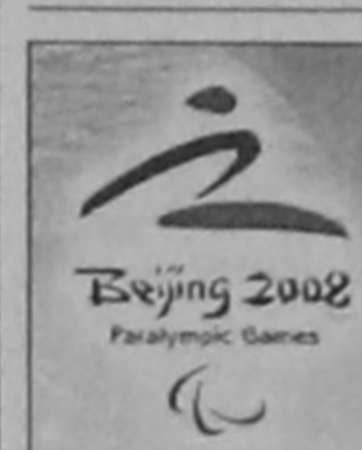
"We have to see whether the all-rounder is fully committed to all of the things needed for a cricketer to be a member of the world's number one team," Hilditch had said.

Symonds, who has apologised for his "irresponsibly" and pledged a better conduct, is expected to make a comeback in competitive cricket with his grade side, the Gold Coast Dolphins, over the next fortnight.

After that he is due to feature in a few Twenty20 matches for Queensland and three Sheffield Shield and four domestic one-dayers to prove himself for a possible call-up in the home Test against New Zealand in November.

Greatest Games end

AFP, Beijing



Wednesday, ending a spectacular summer of sport in Beijing.

Countless red maple leaves symbolising respect for the athletes drifted from the stadium roof in the show to end the 12-day extravaganza, which followed the Olympic Games here.

"These are the greatest Paralympic Games ever," said International Paralympic Committee President Philip Craven as he declared the Games closed.

China dominated the medals table here with 89 golds and 211 medals overall, enjoying particular success in athletics, swimming and table tennis.

Britain, which chased China

hard in the early part of the Games, finished with 42 golds and 102 medals, ahead of the United States in third place with 36 golds and 99 medals.

"Team China has performed extremely well this time," China's chief de mission Wang Xinxian told reporters.

"The good result itself is the greatest encouragement for the athletes. Both the central and local governments will reward the excellent performance of our athletes."

China's performance mirrored its efforts at last month's Olympics, where the host nation finished top of the medals table and won similar praise from organisers for staging a well-run and spectacular event.

The Paralympic Games were lit up by Canadian wheelchair racer Chantal Petitclerc, South Africa's Olympic swimmer Natalie du Toit and Australian swimmer Matthew Cowdrey, all of whom won five golds.

South Africa's sprint sensation Oscar "Blade Runner" Pistorius also grabbed his share of headlines

with a track sprint treble that was completed on Tuesday with gold in the 400 metres.

The Games have been widely praised for their organisation and the huge crowds that turned out to watch about 4,000 athletes from around 150 countries compete.

Du Toit, due to receive a special achievement award in the packed stadium, hailed the Paralympics as "amazing," a sentiment echoed by her compatriot, Pistorius.

China has also sought to use the Paralympics to improve the plight of its 83 million disabled, and President Hu Jintao Wednesday pledged more efforts to promote their well-being.

"The Chinese government and people will build on the success of the Beijing Paralympic Games to carry forward the humanitarian spirit, and advance in an all-round way the well-being of people with a disability in China," he said, according to the state-run Xinhua news agency.

VOX POP: Readers speak out

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I think it is totally wrong to call them traitors or by any other bad names. They are simply being professional. Working for more money is the 21st century system and it is not bad. They have families to take care of and the people who are saying bad things about them, especially former cricketers, are just jealous.

One can only say that players like Shahriar Nafees, Aftab, Kapali, Dhiman and Farhad don't have enough sense to work out that they have reputations and it is lost forever.

They live through cricket and they are not educated enough to do anything else. We should leave them alone.

-Shourab, Lalmitia.

I do not understand where is the problem with ICL. Why they are called illegal? No doubt they have introduced the though of modern version of Twenty20. But they are overlooked. If IPL is okay then ICL is also okay.