

Kapil warns of legal action

CRICINFO, undated

Kapil Dev, the Indian Cricket League (ICL) chairman, has said taking legal action will be the only option left if the International Cricket Council (ICC) doesn't respond to the league's bid for official recognition at its next board meeting, possibly in November.

The ICC had issued a letter to the ICL to convene a board meeting after the talks with the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) failed.

"I think we are on very good ground as far as a legal case goes," Kapil said. "Eventually we will do that [take legal action]. We are not the ones who are enforcing bans on players or umpires."

Subhash Chandra, chairman of the Essel Group, which owns the ICL, and Himanshu Mody, the league's business head, had met BCCI president Shashank Manohar and N Srinivasan, the board's secretary, in New Delhi but the talks barely lasted 15-20 minutes and they failed to arrive at a common ground.

Manohar met officials of the ICL for the first time since the league was set up in April 2007 after its request for recognition came up for discussion at the ICC board meeting in Dubai earlier this month. It was decided at that meeting that Manohar would provide a written report to the ICC board "in due course" after discussions with the ICL.

Kapil said he was unhappy with the way the talks were conducted. "I wasn't there but I believe they said 'you shut down the ICL then we will talk'. There is no point in talking after that. We will now wait for 21 days to decide our future plan of action."

Nagmi to quit

CRICINFO, undated

The administrative revamp of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) continues after Shafiq Naz Nagmi, an influential senior official from the previous regime, wanting to step down with a new chairman now in place.

Nagmi, the board's chief operating officer, joined the PCB as a seasoned governmental bureaucrat during the tenure of Nasim Ashraf in 2007 and quickly became a key figure in the board. When Ashraf resigned in August, Nagmi became, in effect, the de facto head of the board. But the arrival of Ijaz Butt, with whom he is believed to have a poor relationship, has prompted him to reconsider his future.

"I don't think I have much to contribute to this administration," Nagmi told Cricinfo. "Apparently a letter has been sent to the government from the board asking them to appoint me somewhere else. I came here because it is a game we all love in this country and I wanted to contribute to it."

There seems little doubt he will not go, especially in light of a statement made by Butt at his first press conference since becoming chairman. Responding to reports that senior officials had been trying to take away documents and files from the board's headquarters at Gaddafi Stadium, Butt seemingly singled out Nagmi. "Yesterday there was a man running out -- with due apologies it was the chief operating officer, who tried to take some files with him in his car."

Nadeem Akram, director HR and another key figure in the Ashraf administration, has been eased out, while reports suggest that Mansoor Suhail, director media, will also go the way of Nagmi, and back to a government posting.

The developments come swiftly on the heels of the resignation of Salahuddin Ahmed as chief selector and that of Talat Ali, the team's manager over the last two years. One official summed up the changes succinctly: "The board has apparently become a revenge house where each administration tries to eradicate everything and everyone from the previous one."

CHITS FROM CHITTAGONG

FROM PAGE 17

majority of Indian supporters couldn't stop feeding information from Cricinfo's live scorecard.

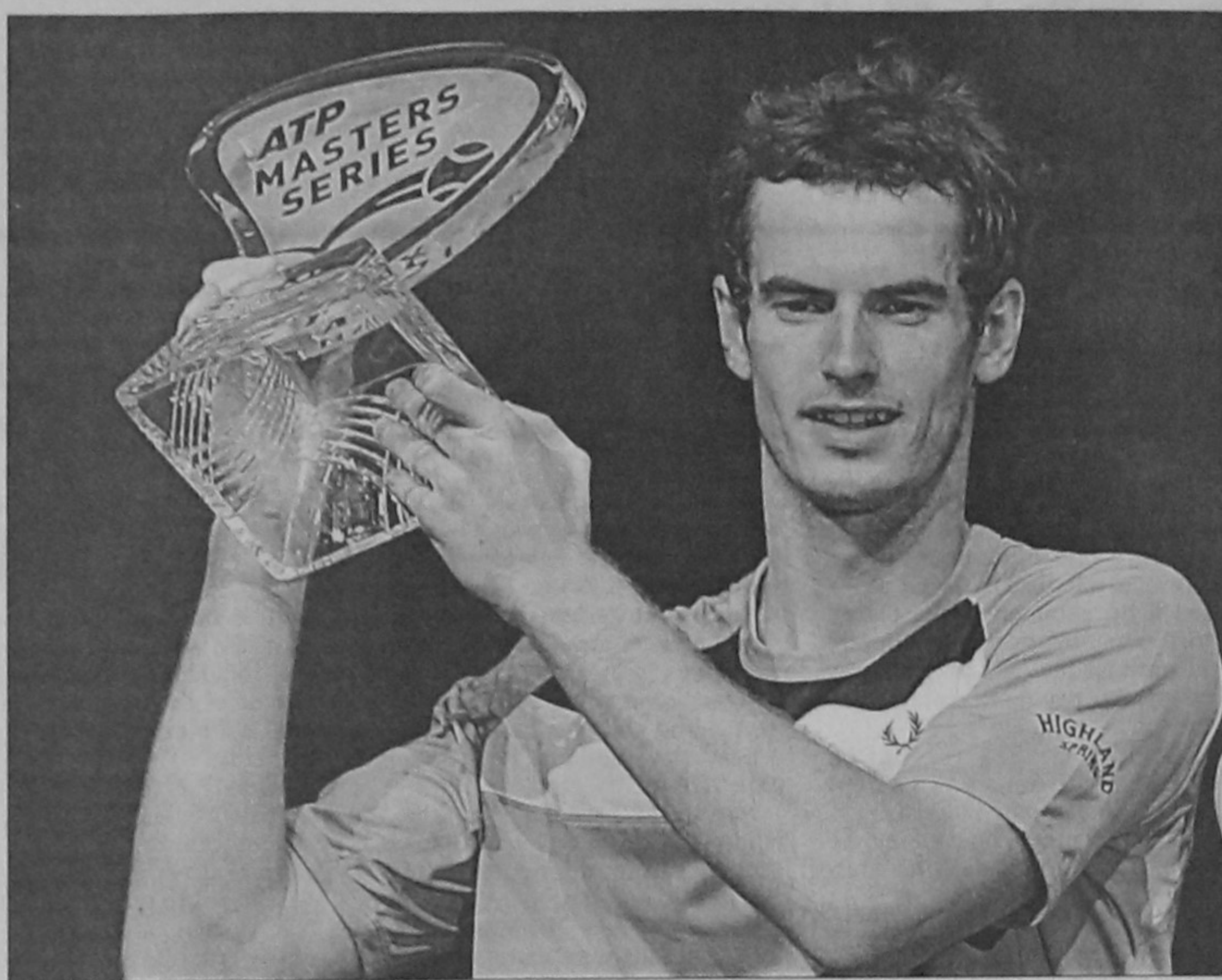
Some Pakistani fans sympathised but the second innings collapse in Mohali was a bitter pill to swallow for the Aussie faithful.

The two trans-Tasman rivals have been having a bad week in the sub-continent to say the least.



Did U Know?

Bangladesh all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan took seven wickets in an innings on third day of the first Test against New Zealand on Sunday and recorded the best performance by a Bangladeshi player.



Britain's Andy Murray shows the winner's trophy after beating France's Gilles Simon in the final of the Madrid Masters on Sunday.

Murray wants consistency

Tennis

AFP, Madrid

Andy Murray insisted on Monday that despite winning successive Masters titles, he is still far behind the big three elite of the men's game.

"I've beaten Federer, Nadal and Djokovic, but I'm still a long way behind the top three," Murray said after mulling to the Madrid Masters title with a 6-4, 7-6 (8/6) title victory over France's Gilles Simon on Sunday.

"I've played great the past three months," added the losing US Open finalist to Federer, whom he defeated in the Madrid semis.

"But those guys have been unbelievably the past couple of years. They are so consistent on every surface. They've been awesome and I'm not close. I've got a lot of work to do."

Murray, who has now won four titles this year and clinched the Cincinnati Masters in the summer, said that his weekend win over

Federer extracted a big emotional toll.

"After playing Saturday it was tough for me, I was mentally tired," said the world number four.

"My legs felt a bit heavier today, due in part to the situation I was in. The lactic acid builds up."

"I didn't come here expecting to win the tournament. I'd practised very well but there is a difference between that and playing well. But now I'm building some more confidence."

The victory in just over 90 minutes turned on the big serve of the Scot, who fired ten aces and became the first British player to win four ATP titles in the same season.

His Madrid success occurred just three months after he won the first Masters shield of his career at Cincinnati. He also claimed the 2008 titles in Doha and Marseille.

Despite living in Spain as a teenager for more than a year Murray had to apologise to the crowd.

"I was here but I never learned proper Spanish. I promise that if I have to stand up here next year, I'll

make the victory speech in Spanish," he said.

Murray admitted that the 2009 transformation of the indoor event into an outdoor spectacular on clay for men and women, which will be played in the run-up to the French Open in May, might limit his future title chances at a new venue in the city.

"I'm not much of a clay-court player so I'm not sure if I will be up here again," he confessed. "I will certainly make it my business to try and improve."

Murray will play next week in St Petersburg in the defence of his 2007 title while Simon said he might rest instead of playing in Lyon, saving his final run for a possible spot in the Masters Cup for the Paris Masters one-week later.

"My tough (semifinals) against Rafa was one reason I lost," said the provisional 11th place man for one of four remaining vacant spots in Shanghai at the season wrap-up.

"I was really tired today. Andy knew it, he just wanted to make me run, right-left."

Dhaka, Rajshahi

FROM PAGE 17

Dhaka were bundled out for 254 to concede an 89-run first-innings lead but after the day's play, the visitors were 169 runs away from victory with all the wickets intact.

Chasing a winning target of 203, Dhaka scored 34 in the second innings before stumps were drawn for the day.

Earlier, overnight pair Marshal Ayub and Nazmul Hossain completed their half centuries but the last four made ducks to confirm their team's first innings deficit.

Rashedur Rahman claimed five wickets for 38 while his new ball partner Nazmul took three wickets.

BARISAL-KHULNA Barisal batted throughout the third day after resuming the day on 2-0 but managed only 169-9 that gave them an overall lead of 247.

Imran Ahmed occupied the crease for three hours to make team highest 34 off 130 balls that saw three boundaries.

Robiul Islam claimed three wickets for 34 and Murad Khan 3-51.

SCORES IN BRIEF

RAJSHAH: First Innings 438-9dec CHITTAGONG: First Innings 120 all out (overnight 54-3) (Salahuddin 12, Nafis 43, Masum 0, Tariq 2, Yasir 11, Younis 1, Moktar 0, extras 25; Shuvo 5-34, Farhad 1-34, Alamgir 2-28, Shafiq 2-12) and second Innings 207-7 (Salahuddin 78, Nafis 3, Masum 10, Tariq 49, Faisal 47, Hasan 2, Yasir 0, Nadimuddin 3, Younis 1*, extras 14; Shafiq 1-24, Shuvo 2-98, Farhad 4-72).

SYLHET: First Innings 343 and second Innings 113 all out (Rahman 24, Imtiaz 8, Saikat 27, Mithun 17, Kamrul 4, Shafiullah 0, Ejaz 4, Nabil 3, Tapash 11, Nazmul 0, Rashedur 3*).

DHAKA: First Innings 254 all out (overnight 183-5) (Javed 4, Anwar 5, Shamsur 76, Nadif 0, Riyad 44, Marshal 59, Nazmul 54, extras 10; Nazmul 3-49, Rashedur 5-38, Nabil 1-104) and second Innings 34-0 (Javed 23*, Anwar 10*, extras 11).

BARISAL: First Innings 288 and second Innings 169-9 (Uttam 3, Hannan 6, Faruque 24, Imran 34, Nasir 19, Ronu 9, Arafat 20, Shaheen 8, Sajedul 6*, Talha 15, Tariq 10*, extras 25; Robiul 3-34, Zia 1-15, Murad 3-51, Nazmus 2-20).

KHULNA: First Innings 210.

Nazimuddin

FROM PAGE 17

He completed his first 50 in the tournament with an eye-pleasing six straight back over bowler's head. Nazimuddin also struck five fours with three down to the cover-point boundary. Shahriar, who looked unconvincing against pace, scored a handy 30 off 27 balls that contained six fours.

Alok Kapali, who smashed a magnificent 100 against Hyderabad Heroes in their last game, looked in ominous form again scoring 34 off 25 balls. He also shared 46 runs with his captain Habibul Bashar for the fourth wicket in no time before mistiming an attempted pull at mid-on. After no shows in the first two games Bashar also came to the party with a 23-ball 28 not out that featured a sweetly timed six in the last over.

The Worries lost their first two games against Chennai and Hyderabad in the eight-team ball bashing competition.

Kallis asks for Fletcher tips

AFP, Johannesburg

South African all-rounder Jacques Kallis has turned to former England coach Duncan Fletcher as he tries to end a batting slump before facing bitter rivals Australia in an end-of-year Test series.

Kallis averaged just 14.85 runs during the series triumph in England and his poor form continued this weekend in the national championship with the Eastern Cape Warriors.

He was bowled for just 17 and 12 as the Port Elizabeth-based franchise slipped to a 196-run loss against former champions Northern Titans Sunday in a third-round fixture.

RAJSHAH FOOTBALL LEAGUE

Easy win for Abahani

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Top-level football returned to Rajshahi after a long time with the DSA Cup Premier and First Division leagues kicking off at the north-Bengal headquarters.

Abahani Krira Chakra recorded a comfortable 3-1 victory against Shiroil Colony Sporting Club in the Premiership yesterday with a brace from Payel in the seven and 55 minutes at the Rajshahi Stadium. Bulu added the other for the winners in the 18th minute while Babu reduced the arrears for Shiroil in the 68th.

In First Division, Nasir slotted a hat-trick to help Upashahar SC beat Aleef-Lam-Meem 5-3. Nasir scored four goals while Minhaj also got on the scoresheet for the winners. Sohul struck twice and Imran one for the losers.

Baderganj off to winning start

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rangpur

Baderganj upazila defeated Pirganj 2-1 in the Inter-upazila football tournament which began here at the Rangpur Zila School ground yesterday.

Rangpur District Football Association (DFA) is organising the eight-team meet, sponsored by Rangpur Dental College.

Commander of joint forces of Rangpur Lt Col Kazi Kaisar Hossain declared the tournament open. DFA president Mostafa Azad Chowdhury and secretary Monjur Ahmed Azad were also present.

Identical wins for IBAIS, AUAP

SPORTS REPORTER

IBAIS and Asian University of Asia Pacific (AUAP) recorded identical 3-0 wins in the Inter-private university football tournament at the Army Stadium yesterday.

Kibria, Rajib and Aldrich scored one goal each to help IBAIS beat Gono Bishwabidyalaya while AUAP rode on strikes by Munim, Manzoor and Shakil to blank Asian University of Bangladesh.

First session

FROM PAGE 17

favourite to win the game) because the game is evenly poised. The first session is going to be crucial, and how we approach it," said the Otago batsman.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at close on the fourth day of the first Test between Bangladesh and New Zealand at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium on Monday.

BANGLADESH: First Innings 245 (Mehrab 83, Mushfiqur 79, Vettori 5-59)

NEW ZEALAND: First Innings 171 (Vettori 55 not out; Shakib 7-36)

BANGLADESH: Second Innings (overnight 188-8)

Tamim-e-b Vettori 33
Zunaid c Redmond b Mills 6
Rajib lbw b Patel 6
Ashraf c Redmond b Vettori 0
Mehrab c Mills b Patel 6
Mushfiqur b O'Brien 32
Shakib c Taylor b Vettori 71
Naem lbw b Vettori 19
Mashrafe st McCullum b Redmond 44
Razzak c Taylor b O'Brien 18
Shahadat not out 0
Extras: (b-4, lb-1, nb-2) 7

Total: (All out in 107.3 overs) 242

Fall of wickets: 1-24, 2-36, 3-37, 4-49, 5-71, 6-127, 7-175, 8-180, 9-220.

Bowler O M R W
Mills 18 2 55 1
O'Brien 17 7 28 2
Vettori 42 13 74 4
Patel 20 7 53 2
Oram 8 2 19 0
Redmond 2.3 1 8 1

NEW ZEALAND: Second Innings

How b Razzak 36
Redmond not out 62
Ryder run out 38
Vettori not out 0
Extras: (b-5, lb-3, w-1) 9

Total: (For two wickets in 64 overs) 145

To bat: Taylor, McCullum, Flynn, Oram, Mills, O'Brien, Patel.

Fall of wickets: 1-55, 2-145.

Bowler O M R W
Mashrafe 6 2 16 0
Shahadat 9 1 32 0
Razzak 19 6 33 1
Shakib 22 9 34 0
Mehrab 2 0 6 0
Nayem 5 1 7 0
Ashraf 1 0 9 0

Batter O M R W
Mashrafe 6 2 16 0
Shahadat 9 1 32 0
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Simmo not in for Jaques

Cricket

AFP, Sydney

Australia will resist the temptation to fast-track Andrew Symonds' return from exile and send him to India to bolster the struggling Australian team, reports said Monday.

Cricket Australia (CA) chief executive James Sutherland, in Mohali watching the second Test, said the troubled all-rounder remained off limits to the selectors as they consider a replacement for injured reserve batsman Phil Jaques.

Opening batsman Jaques is being sent home from the Indian tour because of a back injury.

"It's not an issue for the selectors at this stage," Sutherland told The Sydney Morning Herald.

"There are medical and other related issues that are being worked through as part of the

process. There is a staged process that Andrew has got to go through.

"He is back playing cricket, which is good, but there is a whole lot of other things that need to be satisfied before we get to a stage for the selectors to have an interest in it."

Symonds was axed from Australia's team after opting to go flying rather than attend a compulsory team meeting during their one-day series against Bangladesh in Darwin in August.

It was the latest drama to engulf him during the past year.

He was involved in an on-field dispute with Indian spinner Harbhajan Singh in Sydney last January, upset Australian officials by declaring he would not play in Pakistan and was fined for missing a team bus in the West Indies.

Sutherland said he has taken an interest in the rehabilitation of Symonds and was confident the 33-year-old would play again for his country.

"I have spent some time with him and I know others have, and the thing I am pleased about is that he knows what he wants to do and perhaps there have been times in the course of the last year when he hasn't really known what is important to him," Sutherland said.

"I am satisfied that he is working in the right direction to play cricket for Australia again."

ANDREW SYMONDS

'Empty stands a worry'

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

In a week of surprising, distressing events -- turbulence in the airline industry, the crash of the stock market and the collapse of a flyover in Delhi -- the one foreseeable positive was Sachin Tendulkar becoming the world's leading run-getter in Tests. Yet when he got it the response at the ground was underwhelming -- because the stands were largely empty.

There are various reasons put forward but IS Bindra, the Punjab Cricket Association chief, conceded the paying public has been "short-changed" in most Indian grounds and he promised to improve conditions in Mohali.

The poor turnout had people wondering if Test cricket still retains its popularity, for the same venue was sold out for the IPL and last year's one-dayer between India and Pakistan. IS Bindra, the Punjab Cricket Association president, said one of the reasons for the disappointing numbers could be the number of matches Mohali hosted last year. "We had 13 matches last year... Mohali, with a population of 1 million, cannot sustain in terms of crowd response," Bindra said.

"That's what our research says," Chandigarh, the big city where the

teams stay during matches in Mohali, may have a fraction more.

Another reason for the poor turnout could be the mental demands of watching Test cricket, which is different to watching ODIs and Twenty20s, offering fewer moments of obvious excitement and requiring far more concentration.

Perhaps the most significant factor, and one which Bindra himself conceded, is the poor spectator facilities -- ironic, because Mohali's facilities are unmatched in India -- and the stringent security measures. Getting to the ground is hard enough -- the police don't allow anyone other than VIPs to bring their cars within a kilometre of the stadium. One of the most ridiculous security procedures was to force people down a 200-metre path when there was another, more direct route a quarter of the length. "That route is meant only for VIPs," a security official said.

Having reached the ground, the spectator is faced with restrictions on carrying water bottles and umbrellas. The only covered stands are those for members; non-members sit through the day under the sun, on plastic chairs that can get very uncomfortable in temperatures touching 30 degrees Celsius. Why walk a kilometre, then spend seven hours under the sun when you can watch it all on TV?

It's a point Bindra readily concedes. "If you can watch Test-match cricket for five days in the air-conditioned comfort of your own home, here you spend two hours getting into the stadium, going through the police," Bindra said.

"The TRP ratings (for Tests) are very high, but it is essential to have people at the ground. We have to make our grounds spectator-friendly. We have been short-changing the public (in most Indian grounds) so far, the public will start short-changing us unless we improve."

Bindra said the association was "badly affected" by the lack of spectators for the Test. "It's the pride of the ground, and we take it very seriously. It's a challenge we must accept, and take it very seriously." He said the PCA planned two new international centres, in Bathinda and Jalandhar. "So if we rotate the matches, the novelty will still be there. Money is not everything. Money is not an end in itself. It's good so far as it goes into the game. There's no atmosphere without the people."

There is a photograph of the stadium during the 2004-05 Ranji Trophy final between Railways and Punjab. The wide shot takes in the empty stands, where only two people sit watching the champion-ship match. If the PCA doesn't want similar photos taken during Tests, it must act fast. Otherwise, as Bindra said, the public will short-change it.

T20 cricket in 2010 Asiad?

AFP, Sanur, Indonesia

The Olympics might not want it, but the 2010 Asian Games is ready to embrace Twenty20 cricket as one of five new sports making their debut in the Chinese city of Guangzhou.

International Olympic Committee chief Jacques Rogge last week rejected growing demands from the cricket community to include the popular game at the 2016 Summer Games.

But China, where the sport has no history, believes it will add a new dimension to the already massively popular Asian Games and help China understand a discipline that is huge in South Asia.

"The Olympic movement in Asia has made great progress and sport is becoming