

India stay atop

SPORTS REPORTER

The Junior South Asian Tennis Championship concludes today at the Ramna Tennis Complex with India playing Pakistan and Bangladesh...

India, who blanked Nepal 3-0 yesterday, have won all their three matches so far to top the table.

In the other match of the day, Pakistan were tied with Sri Lanka 1-1 with the doubles match yet to be finished till filing of this report.

Powerplay interests Dhoni

CRICINFO, undated

Mahendra Singh Dhoni, the Indian captain, has said the new Powerplay rules, where the batting side decides five overs that will be part of the fielding restrictions...



England allrounder Andrew Flintoff engages in a tiff with India bowling coach Venkatesh Prasad (R) during a training session in Rajkot yesterday.

Flintoff, Prasad clash at nets

INTERNET, undated

England have dismissed a disagreement between themselves and India as the two sides practised in the build-up to Friday's opening match of the one-day series.

The tourists were annoyed when a ball was hit from the Indian nets into their net area, narrowly missing batting coach Andy Flower as he supervised the session at the Madhavrao Scindia Cricket Ground.

All-rounder Andrew Flintoff walked over to the Indian squad and remonstrated with bowling coach Venkatesh Prasad before England coach Peter Moores walked over, shook counterpart Gary Kirsten by the hand and discussed the issue further.

But captain Kevin Pietersen, who was batting in the nets at the time of the incident and also clipped a switch-hit shot into the India nets, played down the incident.

"I haven't got a clue what happened because I was batting at the time," he explained. "I heard something was going on but I was concentrating on my batting."

"I don't think too much needs to be read into it -- if a guy is practising his shots, he's practising his shots, so there's nothing to read into it."

India captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni also shrugged off the disagreement, claiming: "There are big hitters on both the sides and I believe that was the reason why the ball kept flying around -- there is no problem."

Thursday's incident followed a bad-tempered Test series between the two countries in England in 2007, but Pietersen insists there is no animosity between the sides as they prepare for the start of the seven-match series.

"I think India plays its cricket tough, we play our cricket tough so do Australia and South Africa -- nations play with pride and passion, which is fantastic," he said.

Rony back

CRICINFO, undated

Andrew Symonds could make his return to Test cricket next week after being named in Australia's 13-man squad to take on New Zealand in the first Test in Brisbane.

Symonds has been included alongside Jason Krejza, the offspinner who took 12 wickets on debut in Nagpur, and the Victoria fast bowler Peter Siddle.

But there was no place for Cameron White, the legspinning allrounder who played all four Tests in India. White was the preferred slow bowler for the first three Tests but he finished the series with only five wickets and Krejza's success has bumped him down the list.

White was the only man who played in the India Tests who has not retained his place for the Gabba match. However, the selectors still have a couple of tough calls to make with Shane Watson, the allrounder who replaced Symonds at No. 6, performing solidly in India.

Watson made 170 runs at 24.28 but his seam bowling was particularly useful and among the Australians only Krejza and Mitchell Johnson collected more than Watson's ten wickets at 32.10. Symonds has hardly been in convincing form at state level and in the semifinals, Army drubbed Bangladesh Air Force 12-3 while Navy routed Bangladesh Police 10-1. The bronze went to Air Force who edged Police 4-3 in the play-off.

Momentum with India

First ODI against England today

Cricket

AFP, Rajkot

Buoyant India hope to build on their impressive Test success over Australia by defeating England in a seven-match one-day series starting on Friday.

Mahendra Dhoni's home team takes the field for the first match here just four days after beating world champions Australia 2-0 in a high-profile Test series to take the Border-Gavaskar Trophy.

Dhoni said he was confident his team would take the sudden switch to limited-overs cricket in its stride and was relying on fresh legs to see India through in a gruelling 19-day series across the country.

"Modern schedules demand that we switch quickly from Tests to one-dayers and we have to adjust fast and keep up the momentum," the Indian captain said.

"Besides, not all players in our one-day squad took part in the Tests and they will be fresh and raring to go."

Only five Indians -- Dhoni, Virender Sehwag, Gautam Gambhir, Harbhajan Singh, and Zaheer Khan -- who turned out for the Test series

will play the opening match.

One-day cricket's leading batsman Sachin Tendulkar opted to rest for the first three matches, while in-form fast bowler Ishant Sharma has been sidelined for Friday's clash because of a sprained ankle.

England's left-arm seamer Ryan Sidebottom was ruled out of the first match with an Achilles tendon problem, but paceman Stuart Broad will play, having been declared fit following an earlier knee injury.

England on Thursday named left-arm spinner Samit Patel in their playing XI, which also includes seamer James Anderson at the expense of a second slow bowler in Graeme Swann.

England, who have not won a one-day series in India since 1984-85, will bank on inspirational captain Kevin Pietersen to lift the side after crashing for 98 in a practice match in Mumbai on Tuesday.

England also lost the Stanford millions to the West Indies in the winner-take-all game in Antigua on November 1, but coach Peter Moores said he was confident of taking advantage of India's untimely switch to one-day cricket.

"India will be very buoyant and very up, but they will be able to get

down quick enough to be able to deliver in Friday's game?" Moores asked reporters.

"There is also quite a big turnover in personnel and they have quite a few different players coming in."

"We have got the advantage that we are fresh and though Tuesday's practice match was disappointing, it is not going to knock our confidence as a team."

"We are very confident as a one-day team, we have a clear formula of how we are going to play and we want to go and test it out in different conditions in India."

England will also play two Test matches after the one-day series ends on December 2.

TEAMS

ENGLAND: Kevin Pietersen (capt), Ian Bell, Matt Prior, Paul Collingwood, Andrew Flintoff, Owais Shah, Ravi Bopara, James Anderson, Stuart Broad, Stephen Harmison, Samit Patel.

INDIA (from): Mahendra Dhoni (capt), Virender Sehwag, Gautam Gambhir, Suresh Raina, Yuvraj Singh, Rohit Sharma, Yusuf Pathan, Harbhajan Singh, Zaheer Khan, Munaf Patel, Pragnan Ojha, Rudra Pratap Singh, Virat Kohli, Murali Vijay.

WI hurt by loss

Cricket

AFP, Abu Dhabi

The West Indies need to put the unexpected last over defeat behind them and press hard for victory in the second one-day match against Pakistan here on Friday, captain Chris Gayle said.

West Indies snatched defeat from the jaws of victory when their frontline paceman Jerome Taylor conceded 17 off the 50th over to allow Pakistan to sneak a four-wicket win in the first match on Wednesday.

Wicketkeeper batsman Kamran Akmal was Pakistan's hero, hitting Taylor for two sixes to help his team chase a daunting 295-run target set by the West Indies, aided by an aggressive 113 from Gayle.

Despite the disappointment, Gayle hoped the West Indies would do their best to level the three-match series.

"We are positive despite being hurt, because we have two games

left and need to come up with a better plan for a victory," said Gayle on Thursday.

It was the West Indian skipper who set the platform for a big total with a 125-run opening stand with Sevarine Chattergeon, who made 33.

Pakistan rode on half centuries from opener Khuram Manzoor (69), Shoaib Malik (66) and Younus Khan (56) before Akmal (24) and Fawad Alam (26) pulled off an unlikely win.

Gayle said his team did nothing wrong but an unfortunate last over let the match slip.

"Our bowlers bowled well, especially the debutant (Lionel) Baker did well under pressure," said Gayle of the 24-year-old paceman, who took 3-47 to nearly derail Pakistan.

Gayle justified bowling Taylor at the end.

"What happened was that I bowled one over and Taylor was supposed to come and replace me, but I bowled a good 47th over so I continued and he was left to bowl

the last over. It was unfortunate for him that he conceded 17 runs."

Pakistani bowlers too struggled against a rampaging Gayle, who hit 11 boundaries and five sixes during his 17th one-day hundred.

Assistant coach Aaqib Javed said it was tough when Gayle was in full flow.

"It's tough to bowl when Gayle is on," said Javed, himself a former paceman. "But I think our batsmen were focused and did not give until the end and we now look for a 3-0 win."

Pakistan were left waiting on the fitness of frontline paceman Shoaib Akhtar, who missed the first match due to a calf muscle injury.

Javed said Akhtar was recovering well.

"He (Akhtar) bowled seven overs in two spells on Thursday but it's an internal injury and only Akhtar himself knows how he is feeling. We will wait until Friday morning to reassess his fitness," said Javed.

The third and final match is on Sunday.

Down but

FROM PAGE 17

Parvez came in for captain Matur Munna but Bangladesh failed to reduce the arrears. They rather survived two late chances, with in-form Aminul parrying opposition efforts in the 68 and 83 minutes.

"We did not play well in the second half as Bangladesh attacked many times. If we play like this, it would be very difficult for us to win against Myanmar," Indonesian coach Benny Dolo said after the match.

"The fixture is very short and matches are very close, which is very difficult for our players," he added.

"Indonesia had seen our match against Myanmar and planned accordingly. But we couldn't see them before today. My players tried their level best to score but finally failed," said Bangladesh coach Manik.

The fixture is also not in favour of Bangladesh as Myanmar came to Myanmar after a 12-hour journey and got little time to rest, which made them really tired," told Manik.

Bangladesh team: Aminul, Zahid, Suján, Rajani, Waly (Mishu 46), Arman Aziz, Sharif, Matur Munna (Zahed Parvez 81), Emily and Alfaz (Robin 65).

Ricky ordinary, says Bhajji

Cricket

INTERNET, undated

India off-spinner Harbhajan Singh has slammed Australia skipper Ricky Ponting, calling him a "very average captain" and attributing his winning record to the great players he had as teammates.

Ponting has been severely criticised for his tactics in the recent Border-Gavaskar series which India won 2-0.

Former Australia players have accused Ponting of putting his individual concerns ahead of his team by using part-time bowlers at

a critical stage of the fourth and final Test in Nagpur to keep up with the overrate.

India went on to win the Test and inflict Australia's first series defeat since the 2005 Ashes series.

"Ponting was winning matches because he had great players like (Adam) Gilchrist, (Shane) Warne and (Glenn) McGrath," Harbhajan told DNA.

"They won him matches and he took the credit. Now that they are gone, we can see that he is not an inspirational leader."

"He made mistakes in the Border-Gavaskar series. He is a very average captain. And he is a very average player too, especially here

in India."

Ponting made a century in the first Test in Bangalore which ended in a draw, but made little impact with the bat in the rest of the series.

Harbhajan said Ponting, who managed 277 runs from seven innings at an average of 38.0, needed to learn how to play spinners.

"Ponting had a lot to say about our players and about the way we play our cricket," added Harbhajan.

"In fact, it is Ponting who first needs to go and learn to bat against spin bowling."

"He got a hundred in the first Test match in Bangalore but I don't think that is enough, he needs to come back and score more before he can claim to be a complete batsman."

Akmal steals Gayle

FROM PAGE 17

And I had full confidence that he can do something extraordinary. He snatched a win from the jaws of defeat," said Malik.

Gayle said the narrow defeat was hard to take.

"We made 294 so there were no complaints, then they batted well until the end and it didn't just come good for Taylor in the last over," said Gayle.

The West Indies were indebted to Gayle who scored his 17th one-day century and put his team a solid footing with a 125-run opening stand with Sevarine Chattergeon (33) after winning the toss and electing to bat.

Ramnaresh Sarwan (55 off 61 balls) and Shivnarine Chanderpaul (36 off 33) also punished the lacklustre Pakistan bowling.

SCOREBOARD

Final scoreboard of the first day-night one-day international between Pakistan and West Indies at Sheikh Zayed Stadium in Abu Dhabi on Wednesday.

WEST INDIES: Gayle c Afridi b Gul Chattergeon c Manzoor b Malik 33 Sarwan c Akmal b Afridi 55 Chanderpaul c Butt b Tanveer 36 Marshall b Gul 26 Baugh c Malik b Gul 5 Nash run out 9 Taylor b Tanveer 3 Powell b Tanveer 0 Miller not out 0 Extras: (lb-6, nb-2, w-6) 14 Total: (For nine wks in 50 overs) 294 Did not bat: L. Baker

Bowler O M R W Tanveer 10 1 42 3 Rauf 9 0 77 0 Gul 10 0 66 3 Malik 10 0 43 1 Afridi 10 0 45 1 Alam 1 0 15 0

Man-of-the-match: Chris Gayle

Man-of-the-match: Chris Gayle (West Indies)

Back where

FROM PAGE 17

Country manager of Bangladesh Pepsi Company International Tejinder Khurana in a post-match ceremony handed over the trophy to the champion team as chief guest. Executive Director CEO of Transcom Beverage Golam Kuddus Babu, general manager Khurshid Irfan Chowdhury, ex-president of Bangladesh Cricket Board Rais Uddin Ahmed, DRU president Parvej Khan, general secretary Illius Khan, sports secretary Kamruzzaman Hiru and tournament committee chairman Monwar Haq were also present.

Earlier, in the semifinal The Daily Star crushed The Independent by 41 runs. Independent batsmen failed to show any competition chasing a massive 88 runs scored by The Daily Star with Azad again smashing 30, Jim Chippid in with 24 while Shaquif finished with 18.

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CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 36 Over-throws 1 Rocky 16 Pinocle tactic segment 37 In two home 19 On the bay at the moon once? 2 Id count-terp 20 "Get lost!" 8 Disappear gradually 40 Shapely legs 21 Humdinger 12 Past 41 Gloomy in rubber 22 Abruptly refuses paper pg motor-cycle 5 Medley 23 Gaelic 15 Overhead item in a TV studio 6 Stir-fry skillet 27 Former general 17 Second-hand e.g. 47 Condo, 28 Undergoes recession star 18 Trial recording tidbit holiday 30 Skewer 19 Sports venue away 9 Basilica 33 Prejudiced 20 With cunning glimpse of the Food Network 36 Splitful 37 Big number-1 51 Big Apple letters 11 Icelandic tales 38 --

Solution time: 25 mins.

CRYPTOQUIP

H N H Z O J S P J Z I O G P P Q S C K Q I B H I P J S J Z I Q S P R P K J Q Z N R Z Z J I O R S T Q S C D Q S I Q I S R T R G D P B Q V Q S C K Q I S H Q V I Today's Cryptoquip: IF YOU PURCHASE IMPERFECT MERCHANDISE YOU OUGHT TO GET A REFUND -- OR SOMETHING TO THAT DEFECT. Today's Cryptoquip Clue: C equals G

Advertisement for 'জরুরী বিজ্ঞপ্তি' (Urgent Notice) regarding water supply. Text includes 'অবিলম্বে বকেয়াসহ চালনাগাদ পানি ও পর্যাপ্ত বিল পরিশোধ করুন'. It details a meeting on 11/11/08 and lists water charges for various blocks.