

Three 50s keep SL at bay

CRICINFO, undated

Half-centuries from Chamu Chibhabha, Hamilton Masakadza and Stuart Matsikenyeri ensured the four-day contest between Zimbabwe Select XI and the Sri Lankans ended in a draw at the Queens Sport Club in Bulawayo.

Their opening bowlers, though, failed to make early inroads, and it was only wickets from Ajantha Mendis that kept the visitors interested.

However, they failed to convert the fifties into centuries; both departed having made 70s. Matsikenyeri was out for 71, caught and bowled by Mathews, and wicketkeeper Regis Chakabva was dismissed for a duck by Mendis in the next over.

The Sri Lankans will play Zimbabwe A in a one-day game on Monday, before the five-ODI series in Harare, which starts on November 20.

BRIEF SCORES ZIMBABWE SELECT XI: 159 and 238-5 (Masakadza 72, Matsikenyeri 71, Chibhabha 59; Mendis 4-86) SRI LANKANS: First innings 567-4 dec. (Sangakkara 174, Kapugedera 150, Tharanga 88, Udawatte 55, Kandamby 55; Uteyaya 3-133). Result: Match drawn.

Much to learn

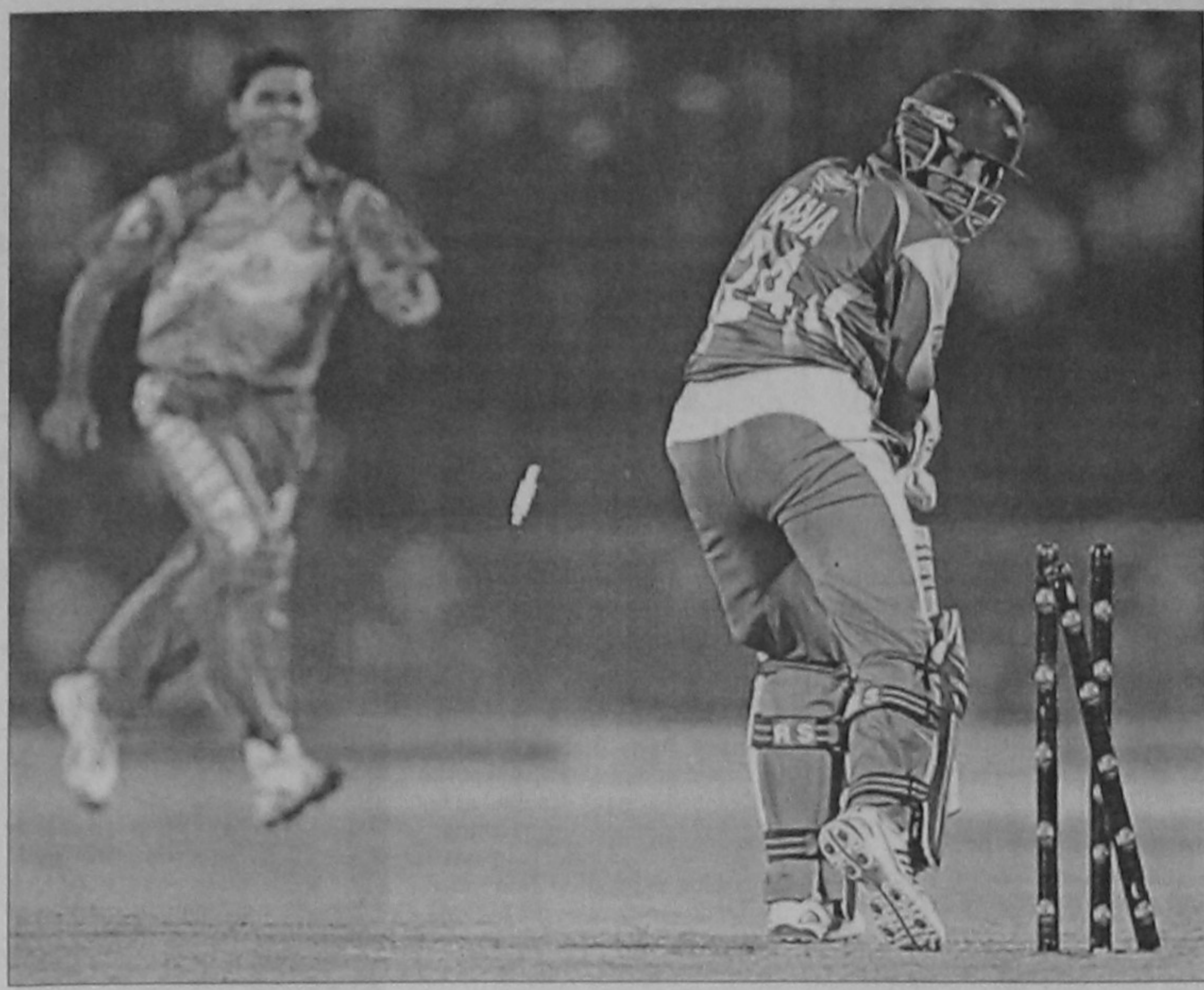
FROM PAGE 17 involved the sponsors in all their activities and Brian proudly said that a diamond company, De Beers, has been sponsoring everything in Northern Cape cricket.

We are talking about decentralisation of cricket in the country and while this issue is set to be given more emphasis in the new constitution, at the moment it is still a far cry.

Not only from the administrative point of view, but the atmosphere itself is totally different from Bangladesh as are the players mentality.

While our players and officials show huge interest about what's happening inside the board, here the cricketers, in whatever level, are hardly bothered about who runs the show on the table or who are behind the scenes.

The South African players showed hardly any interest to talk about any administrative matters rather they were just concerned about some specific policies or the members of the selection committee.



Hyderabad Heroes allrounder Abdur Razaq clean bowls Lahore Badshahs' Navedul Hasan during the second final of ICL at the Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel Stadium in Ahmedabad on Saturday.

Heroes level finals

CRICINFO, undated

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Drama. Farce. Jangling nerves. A great catch. Controversy. A run out. Phew. Game over. Hyderabad Heroes won a thrilling eight-run victory to push the ICL championship into the third final.

Shahid Yousuf created some momentum with a brisk innings. He hit Razaq for three boundaries in the fifth over and slammed four boundaries that included one big six over long-on off Stuart Binny.

Lahore needed 27 runs from 14 balls when the catch was taken. Mohammad Sami swung to left of long-off where Justin Kemp twisted his body, stretched his right hand out, dived, plucked the ball, held his balance, and fell inside the boundary line.

The game wasn't over, yet, though. Saqlain picked 12 runs off Razaq in the 19th over with a six and a four and the equation reduced to nine runs from six balls.

The end only reflected what a strange match it was. Lahore appeared to have got one hand on the trophy when they restricted Hyderabad to 158 but stumbled badly in the chase. The spirited duo

of Sami and Saqlain got them close in the end but the chase lacked firepower at the start.

Razaq harassed Imran Nazir with length deliveries that shaped away before ending his misery with an in dipper. He struck again almost immediately removing Navedul Hasan with the one that straightened off a length to hit the off stump.

Harris tightened the noose further by luring Mohammad Yousuf to hole out to the cow corner and Shahid Yousuf to feather a catch down the leg side. And when Inzamam swept Inder Shekhar Reddy straight to long-leg, it was all but over. Lahore needed 72 from 44 balls and the lower order, especially Sami and Saqlain, tried their best but couldn't finish it.

Earlier, Saqlain and Shahid Nazir had triggered Lahore's comeback after Jimmy Maher had got Hyderabad to a flier. It was a fine little innings from Maher who hit through the line repeatedly against the new ball. Mohammad Sami was lifted over mid-on and mid-off, Azhar Mahmood was hit through wide mid-on and midwicket and Naved was hit to long-on and cut over point. The shot of his innings, though, was a disdainful swat past mid-on off Shahid Nazir.

The game swung around with the introduction of Saqlain. Maher had charged to Hyderabad 63 for 0 in six overs when Saqlain started the stranglehold. He got quite a few to

turn in, got some to go straight on and broke a few of the other way. Shahid Nazir produced a swinging yorker to remove Maher and hurled a bouncer that forced Ibrahim Khaleel to retire hurt. The two acts were enough to send Hyderabad in a spin. Saqlain squeezed the runs and the seamers returned to pick up wickets.

At the end of the 11th over the score read 102 for 1 but they added only 56 in the next nine overs as Hyderabad lost the plot. But they regrouped really well to register a dramatic victory.

Yuvraj doubtful

FROM PAGE 17 Pietersen's men were capable of turning the corner after suffering their third-biggest one-day defeat in Rajkot.

"We have had some knockbacks, but that's part of what international sport is about," the coach said.

"You are judged by how well you take those knockbacks and how you react to it as a team, and we're in that place at the moment."

"There is a long way to go in the series, still six games to go. We had a great one-day scrap with India in England a couple of years ago, when we won the first one quite convincingly and they bounced straight back."

"We would like to do the same."

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.

Dhoni & co break rule

CRICINFO, undated

The presence of three members of India's one-day squad -- the captain, Mahendra Singh Dhoni, Zaheer Khan and RP Singh -- at a private function in a Maharashtra town on Saturday has raised eyebrows over its clear departure from practice.

There were also concerns over their security. PTI reported the cricketers played with locals, resulting in crowdsurges.

The academy is named after the father of union civil aviation minister Praful Patel, who belongs to the same political party as Sharad Pawar, the former BCCI president.

"There is nothing wrong in attending such a programme," Rajiv Shukla, the BCCI's finance committee chairman, told PTI. "It was for a charitable cause. They had taken prior permission and enough security measures were in place. The academy is for rural children and it should not be blown out of proportion since there was no practice session on Sunday."

The decision was criticised by Chetan Chauhan, the former Indian opener. "How were they allowed to go without ascertaining the security arrangements," he was quoted as saying by PTI. "How were they allowed to go when a series is on?"

Originally Yuvraj Singh and Irfan Pathan, too, had confirmed their participation, but Pathan opted out a few days back and Yuvraj could not make it due to the back injury he had sustained while batting on Friday.

The players will rejoin the team ahead of the second ODI in Indore on Monday.

We'll bounce

FROM PAGE 17 "Everyone in that line-up is a proven player, and now we'll back them. We've got the belief in all the players and we hope the players will go out and perform."

He also confirmed that -- although England's players are yet to sign their central contracts as the ECB negotiate with the BCCI about a reciprocal agreement for the release of players for the Indian Premier League and the English Premier League -- he does not believe it is a major issue.

"We haven't signed our contracts yet -- and to be honest, I don't know why we haven't," he said.

"I think that's an issue between the PCA (Professional Cricketers' Association) and the ECB. "Last year we didn't sign our contracts until January, so I don't think there are any issues with the IPL or anything like that. The PCA organises our contracts and negotiates them for us, and we just haven't signed them yet."

Djokovic Shanghai Master

Tennis

AFP, Shanghai

World number three Novak Djokovic thrashed Russia's Nikolay Davydenko 6-1, 7-5 in the Masters Cup final on Sunday to lift his second major trophy this year.

The Australian Open champion fished through most of the match at a packed Qi Zhong Stadium and snuffed out a late revival as he ended a six-month title drought at the lucrative season finale.

Djokovic, who becomes the first Serbian year-end winner and takes home 1.24 million dollars in prize money, also moves to within just 10 points of Roger Federer's second rankings spot.

"I feel very happy, I didn't manage to win a couple of finals this year but I've done it now and I'm ending the season the way I started, with a win in a big event," he said.

With defending champion Federer knocked out and top-ranked Rafael Nadal injured, it was up to Djokovic to add a dash of class to the final and he duly delivered in a clinical first set.

The 21-year-old Serb was immediately spraying backhands past Davydenko and he broke at the first attempt when the Russian netted. Davydenko was soon in deep trouble when he mis-hit a backhand to go 4-0 down.

Djokovic lifted a perfect lob over Davydenko, who managed just six points in the first five games before finally holding serve 5-1. The Serb briefly wobbled as he served for the set, saving two break points before going ahead.

The fifth-ranked Davydenko unfroze at the start of the second set and he won a peach of a point with a savage approach shot and tightly angled backhand volley.

But the Russian's shoulders slumped again as he hit an easy smash wide and was broken again as the backhand volley failed him. He saved two match points on serve and then, as Djokovic served for the win, broke for the first time.

However, Djokovic broke back for 6-5 and made no mistake at his second attempt to serve it out, sinking to his knees in celebration as Davydenko netted a return at 40-0.

"It's difficult to be positive when you're losing 5-0 and you see you have no chance," Davydenko said. "When you feel 100 per cent like you're going to lose, it's very difficult to be positive. Normally I play very fast and with good control, and today I didn't."

Djokovic had already beaten Davydenko in the group stage here along with Juan Martin del Potro and downed Gilles Simon in the semifinals. He lost all three group matches on his debut last year.

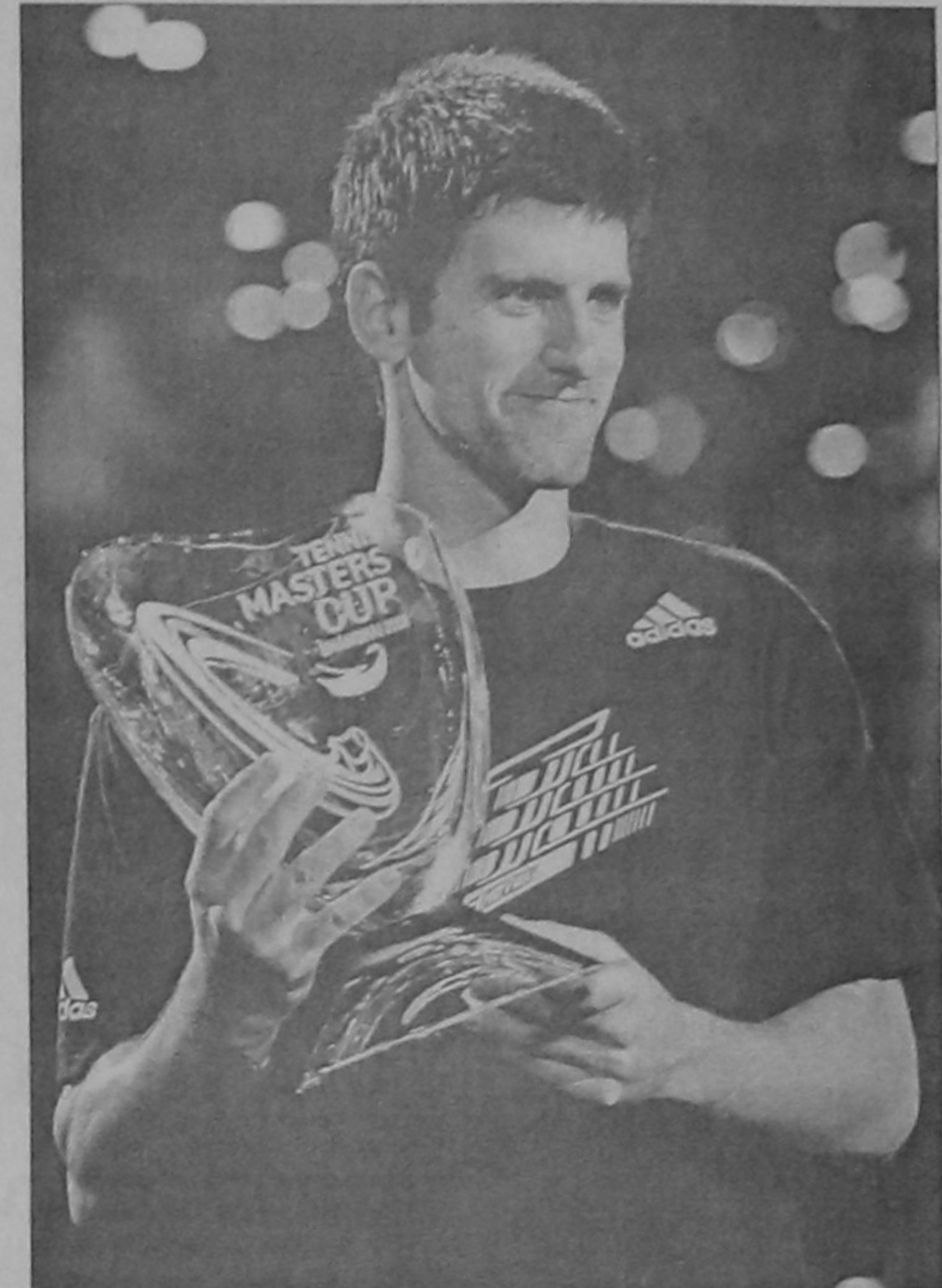
After the Australian Open, Djokovic won Masters events in Indian Wells and Rome but had not claimed a title since May. He joins an honour roll which includes such greats as Federer, Bjorn Borg, John McEnroe and Pete Sampras.

Davydenko was appearing at his fourth straight end-of-year tournament after another busy season when he won more than 50 matches including titles at the Miami Masters, Poertschach and Warsaw.

The Russian, who beat Britain's Andy Murray in the last four, is left waiting for his first top-level title after four Grand Slam semis and nearly three-and-a-half years in the top 10.

Belgrade-born Canadian Daniel Nestor and Serbia's Nenad Zimonjic earlier won the doubles title, beating US twins Bob and Mike Bryan 7-6 (7/3), 6-2 in the final.

The 4.45-million-dollar end-of-season event is making a final appearance in Shanghai before moving to London as the World Tour Final.



Serbia star Novak Djokovic poses with the winner's trophy after his victory over Nikolay Davydenko of Russia in the Shanghai Masters final on Sunday.

Rahim, Kayes fine-tuned

FROM PAGE 17 of Shezi, out for a 32-ball 19.

Nayeem Islam then joined Mushfiqur Rahim and it was nice to see the way two young batsmen batted throughout the second session before the former was dismissed for 33 runs which came from 60 deliveries and included three fours and a six as Bangladesh scored 253 for seven at tea.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh team management is hopeful that pace spearhead Mashrafe Bin Mortaza will be available for first Test as he put aside the pain and returned to training yesterday.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard on the second day of the two-day warm up match between SAA Challenge XI and Bangladesh at the De Beers Diamond Oval in Kimberley on Sunday.

SAA CHALLENGE XI: First innings 265 (Van Wyk 87, Seymour 75, Zondo 25; Shahadat 3-33, Mehrab 3-43)

BANGLADESH: First innings

(overnight 93-2) Tamim b Shezi 34 Kayes c Swan b Shezi 86 Zunaed c Bossenger b Shezi 0 Ashraf ul c Bossenger b Mbane 48 Mehrab c Swan b Shezi 8 Nayeem c Seymour b Pietersen 19 Mushfiqur lbw b Pietersen 89 Nayeem c Zondo b Swan 33

Rokibul run out 12 Shahadat c Mbane b Carolus 14 Mahbulul not out 0 Extras: (b-5, lb-13, w-3, nb-11) 32 Total: (All out in 83.3 overs) 375 To bat: Nazmul Hossain

Fall of wickets: 1-51, 2-51, 3-164, 4-174, 5-199, 6-220, 7-336, 8-361, 9-375, 10-375.

Table with columns: Bowler, O, M, R, W. Rows include Pietersen, Carolus, Shezi, Swanepoel, Mbane, Adams, Swan.

SAA CHALLENGE XI: Second innings

Van Wyk c Mushfiqur b Shahadat 27 Beukes not out 23 Zondo c Mehrab b Shahadat 0 Seymour not out 14 Extras: (b-4, lb-6) 10 Total: (For 2 wks in 19 overs) 74 Did not bat: Swan, Bossenger, Pietersen, Swanepoel, Mbane, Carolus, Shezi, Adams.

Fall of wickets: 1-46, 2-46.

Table with columns: Bowler, O, M, R, W. Rows include Shahadat, Mahbulul, Nazmul, Zunaed, Nayeem, Mehrab.

Result: Match drawn.

Taibu unsure for ODIs

CRICINFO, Harare

Zimbabwe's selectors are sweating on the availability of former captain Tatenda Taibu for the five-ODI series against Sri Lanka starting in Harare on Thursday.

The squad is due to be named after the four-day match between Zimbabwe Select XI and Sri Lanka, which ends Sunday at Queens Sports Club in Bulawayo. The team will then fly to Harare for training with Zimbabwe A, who are set to play the tourists in a warm-up match at Queens Sports Club on Monday.

Taibu, an experienced top-order batsman and wicketkeeper, was left out of the team for the current game after selectors said he was not in the right frame of mind to play.

A very reliable source within the Zimbabwe camp said the chances of Taibu being available were slim. "He has issues with the board and at the same time in his private life, he is really going through a difficult time, it would not be a surprise if he is not available to play against Sri Lanka," the source said. If Taibu is absent, Regis Chakabva, another diminutive wicketkeeper, will be given the duties.

Veteran left-arm spinner Ray Price, who was omitted for the four-day match, is expected to be named in a squad which is again woefully short of experience.

Advertisement for Bangladesh government services, including a table with columns for name, address, and phone number.

Younis ton powers Pak

FROM PAGE 17 Pakistan won the toss and batted.

Pakistan lost opener Salman Butt (nought) in the first over, caught in the slip off paceman Daren Powell. Younis and Khurram Manzoor had to initially earn runs against some tight West Indian bowling.

Manzoor (30) fell to West Indian skipper Chris Gayle, but Younis found an able ally in Misbahul Haq as both upheld the tempo.

Younis reached his sixth one-day hundred with a sharp single off Powell but two balls later he attempted a reverse sweep off spinner Nikita Miller and was bowled.

Captain Shoaib Malik made 13 and Shahid Afridi managed just six. Haq continued his good work, hitting three boundaries and a six and added an invaluable 40 for the sixth wicket with Kamran Akmal who was bowled off the final delivery for 21.

Pakistan led the three-match series 2-0. They won the first match by four wickets on Wednesday and the second by 24 runs on Friday.

Pakistan kept an unchanged side, meaning paceman Shoaib Akhtar missed all three matches due to calf muscle injury. West Indies brought in Brendan Nash in place of Carlton Baugh.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the Pakistan innings in the third and final one-day international against the West Indies at Sheikh Zayed Stadium on Sunday.

PAKISTAN: Butt c Findlay b Powell 0 Manzoor c Nash b Gayle 30 Younis b Miller 101 Misbahul not out 79 Malik b Taylor 13 Afridi c Chanderpaul b Baker 6 Akmal b Taylor 21 Extras: (b-1, lb-2, w-20) 23 Total: (For six wks in 50 overs) 273 Did not bat: Tanveer, Gul, Anjum,

Dhoni slams Hayden

PTI, Indore

Unamused by Matthew Hayden's 'Third World' remark, India captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni on Sunday hit back at the Australian opener and said the Aussies are always slow in going through their overs, no matter which part of the world they play.

"The Australians have played all over the world and their over-rate has been slow all over the world," was Dhoni's sarcastic comment at the pre-match media conference before Monday's second one-day international against England.

Back home after the 2-0 defeat in the Test series against India, Hayden spoke about, what he perceived, poor ground conditions and inordinate delays during the matches "that happen in Third World countries".

"They (opposition batsmen) are very difficult to get to face up," Hayden said.

"Often we find ourselves with hands on hips waiting for someone to either face up or someone in the sight board to move away; all the little frustrations that happen in Third World countries and the heat as well," he had said.

Crossword puzzle and Cryptquip section. Includes 'CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer' with across and down clues, and 'CRYPTOQUIP' with a grid and clues.