



Hoffenheim striker Demba Ba (top) is slide-tackled by Schalke defender Benedikt Hoewedes during their Bundesliga tie in Mannheim on Sunday.

Bolt eyes 400m WR

AFP, London

World record-holder over 100 and 200 metres, Usain Bolt says that he is tempted to have a go at the nine-year-old 400 metres record held by Michael Johnson.

Owen sets up Magpies

AFP, Portsmouth

A poor first touch took Owen away from goal but his second was sublime as he chipped the ball over onrushing England goalkeeper David James.

with Owen next week regarding a new contract. Owen is presently on a 103,000 pounds-a-week (153,969 dollars) deal which expires at the end of the current season.

Dravid given Grade A deal

CRICINFO, undated

Ishant Sharma, Rohit Sharma and Subramaniam Badrinath are the biggest gainers in the Board of Control for Cricket in India's (BCCI) new set of annual players' contracts, running up to September 30 2009.

Hoffenheim back on top

AFP, Berlin



Hoffenheim finish the year as league leaders after coming from behind to seal a 1-1 draw with nine-man Schalke 04 on Sunday as the village team from south-west Germany continue the Bundesliga fairy tale.

Chinedu Obasi. Hoffenheim's defence then had only themselves to blame when Schalke striker Halil Altintop slid a pass through to Asamoah and the ex-Germany forward smashed his shot past goalkeeper Daniel Haas on 40 minutes.

Hoffenheim then got the deserved equaliser when Teber curled in a superb free kick on 71 minutes. Schalke lost another man when Engelaar was shown his second yellow on 80 minutes for yet another heavy challenge.

While Ajit Agarkar and Ramesh Powar no longer figure on the new list of 37 players, a notable drop is that of fast bowler Shanthakumaran Sreesanth, who slipped from Group B to Group C, after missing most of the season due to injury.

A superb second-half direct freekick from midfielder Selim Teber cancelled out a first-half strike from Schalke's Gerald Asamoah to put Hoffenheim back on top in their first season in Germany's top flight.

The home side squandered a string of chances to equalise, but the game degenerated after the break with a flurry of yellow cards.

The result means Hoffenheim ended Bayern's temporary reign as league leaders after they drew 2-2 at Stuttgart when midfielder Sami Khedira hit an injury-time equaliser to seal the draw for the home side.

Appeal for space for Afro-Asia Cup

CRICINFO, undated

The off-on-off Afro-Asia Cup was raised at last week's International Cricket Council (ICC) chief executives' meeting in Cape Town, with a request from Cassim Suliman, the chairman of the African Cricket Association, for major boards to find space for its to be staged.

Draw at Dunedin

FROM PAGE 17 likely to feature in the second Test.

However, what could have been an interesting final day at the University Oval turned out to be a damp squib. Heavy overnight rain and then persistent drizzle through the morning led to the match being abandoned at lunch, although such was the state of the outfield that decision had long been little more than a formality.

NEW ZEALAND: First innings 365 (Flynn 95, Ryder 89; Powell 3-63, Edwards 3-91, Gayle 3-42) and second innings 44 for 2 WEST INDIES: First innings 340 (Taylor 106, Chanderpaul 76, Gayle 74; Vettori 6-56, Mills 3-34) Result: Match drawn.

Bradman cap fails to sell!

AFP, Sydney

The baggy green cap worn by Australian cricket legend Donald Bradman in his final Test Monday failed to sell at an auction in Melbourne despite generating global media interest.

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The single point was enough for Hoffenheim to take over from Bayern Munich as league leaders and having only been promoted last year, the home side enter the winter break as leaders.

Jones then allowed his suspect temper to get the better of him when he hacked down Hoffenheim substitute Luiz Gustavo Dias on 59 minutes and was shown his second yellow card and the automatic.

On Friday night, Borussia Dortmund moved up to sixth in the league after their 2-1 win over the league's bottom side Borussia Moenchengladbach.

Munshiganj cricket

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Munshiganj

Munshiganj Press Club became champions in the Victory Day Twenty20 cricket tournament when they beat Munshiganj Pourashava by four wickets at the local stadium yesterday.

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Munshiganj. The cap, Bradman's when he captained the 1948 Australian 'Invincibles' on their Ashes tour of England, had been expected to fetch more than 600,000 dollars (400,000 US) at the Charles Leski Auction.

But not a single offer was made at auction. Leski said the item was "the most valuable item to come on the market in the sporting memorabilia field in Australia".

GRADE A (60 lakh rupees): Rahul Dravid, Sachin Tendulkar, Mahendra Singh Dhoni, Zaheer Khan, VVS Laxman, Harbhajan Singh, Gautam Gambhir, Virender Sehwag, Yuvraj Singh.

Safety a major issue

AFP, Tokyo



South Africa's alarming crime rate and the threat of terrorist attacks are the number one priority of 2010 World Cup organisers, but they insisted Monday fans need not worry.

there had not been any incidents. "Security for any major event is the most important aspect," he said at a press conference here with FIFA President Sepp Blatter on the sidelines of the Club World Cup, where South Africa's preparedness was the top topic.

atrocities during the World Cup were not a major concern. "Mumbai was unfortunate but that is the kind of world we live in," he said, adding that organisers were liaising with Interpol on all aspects of security.

GRADE B (40 lakh rupees): Rudra Pratap Singh, Munaf Patel, Suresh Raina, Rohit Sharma, Ishant Sharma, Subramaniam Badrinath, Irfan Pathan.

South Africa will deploy 41,000 police officers specifically for the World Cup, all of whom will be sent for specialised training in crowd control.

Blatter insisted that despite its high crime rate, South Africa should not be singled out as a dangerous country. "Security is one of the biggest problems we have but it is not only in one city and one country," he said.

Even in Switzerland (where FIFA is headquartered), we have problems. We trust the government of South Africa to create an event where security is handled as in the last World Cups and at the Olympics in Beijing.

Pepsi V-Day

FROM PAGE 17 In the day's other match, Bangladesh Army outplayed Bangladesh Air Force also by 3-0.

And following the Mumbai attacks earlier this month, there have also been jitters about safety from terrorist groups.

Danny Jordaan, head of the South African organising committee, said that over the past 14 years South Africa had hosted 11 major events and

The World Cup will be held in 10 stadiums across the country.

Nayeem

FROM PAGE 17 return catch to Arafat.

BRIEF SCORES KHULNA: First Innings 355 and Second Innings 146-5 in 38 overs (Sadat 26, Kayes 14, Sahajir 19, Tushar 35, Shakib 34 not out, Nahidul 0, Anas 17 not out, extra 1; Shahadat 1-35, Mahubul 1-38, Arafat 1-21, Riyad 1-10, Marshal 1-22).

Ton-dulkar topples England

FROM PAGE 17 by wicketkeeper Matt Prior for four.

Dravid, a veteran of 130 Tests at an average of 52.12, may find the selectors lose patience with him after managing just 32 runs in his past four Tests.

spinner Swann to Ian Bell at short-leg soon after lunch. The second Test starts in the northern town of Mohali on Friday.

night 131-1) Gambhir c Collingwood b Anderson 66 Sehwag lbw b Swann 83 Dravid c Prior b Flintoff 4 Tendulkar not out 103 Laxman c Bell b Swann 26 Yuvraj not out 85 Extras: (b-2, lb-14, nb-4) 20 Total: (For 4 wks in 98.3 overs) 387 Fall of wickets: 1-117, 2-141, 3-183, 4-224

Did U Know?

American swimmer Michael Phelps holds the world record for most gold medals, eight, at a single Olympics.

Bitter pill for Kevin

FROM PAGE 17 "Sehwag obviously started the innings fantastically well last night and then the little master from Mumbai (Tendulkar) came in.

Pakistan, but today Sachin finished the job," he said. "The ball was turning and bouncing but Sachin and Yuvraj batted brilliantly.

Sachin ton FROM PAGE 17 "The game-plan was to get opportunity for scoring more and more runs because the wicket was such and we could not be bogged down by that.

As a skipper and a bowling unit you try and set a field to a magician like that, and it is pretty difficult.

India's Mahendra Singh Dhoni, who has now won all his four Tests as captain, praised his team for fighting back from a difficult position.

While the terrorist attacks in Mumbai earlier this month that left 172 dead were a worry, Jordaan said fears of similar

"I remember that loss to match. "We have seen over the years in India that on the fourth and fifth day the game changes a lot and it changes very quickly. "We raised our standards. We can't forget Virender Sehwag... his innings gave Sachin and Yuvraj the opportunity to win. Sachin was brilliant and Yuvraj amazing because there was a lot of pressure on the final day. Sehwag, named man-of-the-match, said he was reminded of the 1999 Test against Wasim Akram's Pakistan at the same ground, which India lost by 12 runs despite a century from Tendulkar. "I remember that loss to

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CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer. Includes a crossword puzzle grid and a list of clues for both across and down directions.



ESP Sportscenter India Sports News Live from 8:30pm