His temper was as much a talking point as his fantastic run with the bat in 2008 but Indian opener Gautam Gambhir promises to be more responsible this year and has vowed to avoid a repeat of the 'elbow-hitting' incident that resulted in a one-Test ban last season.

"I have resolved to be more calm, more responsible and no more elbowing. Missing the Nagpur Test (against Australia after hitting all-rounder Shane Watson with the elbow) was the lowest point of my career," Gambhir said when asked about his new year resolutions.

"I don't want to get into any trouble of that sort and will be more responsible," he told a TV channel.

Enjoying a break from cricket after India cancelled its tour of Pakistan in the wake of Mumbai terror attacks, Gambhir said he desperately needed some time off after the gruelling playing schedule last

'It's a much deserved break. I am spending some time with my family. We had been playing continuously for so long that it (the break) is quite nice," said the left-handed opener.

## SA, NZ & Aus plan T20 league

CRICINFO, undated

Players' representatives from Australia, New Zealand and South Africa have begun talks on an IPL-style tri-nation Twenty20 league that will involve franchises from the three countries and begin from

Discussions between the representatives are being held in Australia on the sidelines of the ongoing series between South Africa and Australia, and are being seen as a significant step forward towards the formation of the league, which would follow the IPL, the Champions League and the ECB's proposed EPL.

"We can certainly confirm that we have been in discussions with the boards from Australia and South Africa and we are working towards the launch of the league in 2011, Justin Vaughan, chief executive of New Zealand Cricket (NZC), told Cricinfo. "But we are not at any stage to release details of

Vaughan said the three national boards hope that players from around the world would be able to participate in the league. "But it is probably too early to speculate on individuals," he said.

Discussions are still at an early stage but the tri-nation league may have three teams each from Australia and South Africa, and two from New Zealand. The collaboration among the three boards is understood to have been borne out of the realisation that it would be difficult for one country to sustain a league on the lines of the IPL, which is being run by the cash-rich BCCI. "The three boards thought there was benefit in collaborating," Vaughan said.

Officials from Australia, New Zealand and South Africa had begun discussions to join hands for an annual tri-nation tournament on the sidelines of the ICC annual conference in Dubai last year. Various models were discussed and subsequently it was felt that the best way forward was to adopt a franchise-based model that combined teams from the three countries.

#### Dhaka

FROM PAGE 17

wickets for Dhaka as they go on top of the points table with two wins out of two.

Here in Dhaka, Barisal suffered their second defeat after being bowled out for 95 runs in 35.3 overs in reply to Chittagong's 164.

Champa Chakma took five wickets for Chittagong.

# Barisal

FROM PAGE 17 Left-armer Sanjamul Islam took three for 30 while Saglain Sajib picked up two wickets.

**BRIEF SCORES** SYLHET: 188 all out in 41.3 overs (Imtiaz 65; Saju 3-42, Tariqul3-43).

BARISAL: 189-9 in 45 overs (Nasir 36; Sharif 3-25). Result: Barisal won by one

wicket. KHULNA: 146-9 in 25 overs (Amit 51; Mukhtar 4-22).

CHITTAGONG: 150-5 in 45 overs (Nafis 52\*; Murad 3-15). Result: Chittagong won by five wickets.

(Farhad 79; Elias 2-20). DHAKA: 144-9 in 32 overs (Shamsur 40; Sanjamul 3-30). Result: Rajshahi won by 11 runs.





BFF president Kazi Salahuddin awards a FIFA referee's badge to Abdul Hannan Miron (L) at the BFF Bhaban yesterday. Two other referees and six assistant referees also got their badges yesterday.

# Time for young talent

Cricket

PETER ROEBUCK

After a summer spent agonising over the fate of a veteran trying to revive his game, Australian cricket has restored its willingness to take a punt on younger blokes. Nor can the first flush be the last. Indeed the strategy ought to be extended to the Test team with Phillip Hughes taken to South

Africa. Nor is the wide brown land alone in its audacity. Jean-Paul Duminy has made his mark and an Indian lad called Cheteshwar Pujara has been collecting hundreds as a lesser man does pies. In Sri Lanka Ajantha Mendis is bemusing all with his carrom balls. It's exactly the injection the game needed.

David Warner was fun. His ability to whip the ball over mid-wicket was impressive but it was not all thrash and bash. His shot selection was smart lent. He read the bowler's mind and hit the ball without the the joys of freedom. One pro- ought to persuade selectors fessional batsman of yester- that fears of ruining techniques year dreaded going home are unfounded. The best way to their emergence is exciting.

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Simon Katich, the Australia

opener, will drop down the

order for New South Wales to

allow Phil Jaques and Phillip

Hughes to have the best chance

of enhancing their claims to

partner him in the Test side.

Hughes, Jaques and Victoria's

Chris Rogers are the leading

contenders to replace Matthew

Hayden, who retired on

Tuesday, and each batsman

will have one Sheffield Shield

game to impress ahead of the

announcement of the squad

New South Wales play

Tasmania in Newcastle on

January 30 while Victoria host

South Australia in Melbourne.

for South Africa.

proud young man who'd dared to be himself in front of tens of thousands of people and on the greatest day of his sporting life. Next morning his manager and club secretary sent a message saying "our 520 juniors will be jumping out of their skin to get same elsewhere.

should have played in the SCG Test. He has batted superbly all summer and outdid himself in the shield match in Hobart. Australia ought not to be scared to play him. By all accounts he well constructed game. He concentrates on filling his boots as opposed to his pockets and to that end intends to emerging. Australians are play county cricket for Durham. He is hoping for a call to higher things. Australia may leap a generation.

Duminy was not far behind Warner at the MCG, and he had to rebuild the innings and deal with Shaun Tait's thunderbolts and Ben Hilfenhaus' swingers (the Tasmanian must go to are bamboozling batsmen, South Africa and England). His ability to switch styles was slightest hesitation. Such are typical of his age group and inclined to ask, "Nipped back them. South Africa might as the Melbourne Age website)

ent itself and I would be happy

to do that," the captain Katich

told the Sydney Morning

Herald about allowing Hughes

and Jaques to open. "Hughes

has been great there for us all

season, and that's obviously

where Jaques bats. Hopefully,

both guys can score some big

runs and help us climb the

should get chosen for South

you are picking a batsman, it's

all about runs and it doesn't

tion would disrupt his prepara-

tion for South Africa, where he

will be the senior opener. "It's

not like I'm dropping from

opener to No.6," he said. "I will

still be at the top of the order

and see the new ball. The way I

view things, that will have the

Katich did not feel his demo-

matterhowyou get them."

Sheffield Shield ladder.

well save Jaques Kallis and Here was an intrepid and Mark Boucher for the fivedayers.

Pujara has been scoring a stack of runs in the Ranji Trophy. The 22-year-old from Rajkot burst into his provincial team this year and scored triple hundred and two centuries. According to Cricinfo his to practice next week!" It's the dad taught him the game by rolling the ball along the Hughes must be next. He ground. And he has been raised to think aggressively, as a contemporary cricketer and Indian. His coach once told him, "When you score a hundred ask yourself if you were good enough to score 150 in the is a capable young man with a same number of balls." Pujara is jumping the queue to replace Rahul Dravid.

Young bowlers are also familiar with Ishant Sharma, who has survived the immediate challenges of fame and fortune. Now comes Mendis, a Sri Lankan tweaker as hard to read as a Bulgarian novel. A year or so ago Mendis was playing second division cricket for the police. Now his flickers including the senior Indians.

Watching these blokes develop is going to be lot of fun. Cricket needed them. They will have their ups and downs but because his better half was handle youngsters is to pick (Peter Roebuck wrote this on

Simon lets hopefuls open year I batted at No. 4 and hav ing batted all around, I am comfortable moving down the order."

Jaques, who scored a century in his last Test for Australia in the West Indies, is due to return from back surgery in a Sydney club game on the weekend. Hughes, who is carrying a leg injury, and Rogers, who "It's pretty simple (as to who played for Australia in Perth last year, have each scored Africa), it's about runs. When three Sheffield Shield centuries

this season. Mark Waugh has pushed for Hughes to be promoted because he is the youngest at 20. "Jaques hasn't played a lot of Tests and hasn't done any thing wrong, but I would be inclined to take the gamble and pick Hughes," Waugh told the Daily Telegraph.

"He looks a young tough player who puts a high price on his wicket and can score runs in realise that scenario will pres- Those two obviously open, last tough conditions."

BANGLADESH (from): Tamim Iqbal, Zunaed Siddiqui

Kumar Sangakkara (Wicketkeeper), Mahela Jayawardene (Captain) Angelo Mathews, Chamara Kapugedera, Jehan Mubarak, Farveez Maharoof, Nuwan Muralidaran, Ajantha Mendis, Thilina Kandamby, Dilhara Fernando, Dhammika Prasad and Thilina Thushara

### Saif shares lead with 4

SPORTS REPORTER

Defending national subjunior champion Abdullah Al Saif shared the lead with four other players at the end of four rounds of the 29th National Sub-junior Ches Championships yesterday.

Saif, who defeated Tisha at the Chess Federation hallroom, have four points with an all-win record. The others to have four points are Iqramul Haque Siam, Shariatullah, Zoar Haque Pradhan and Ahely Sarker.

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Deaf Cricket Zealand respectively.

A match will be held on conclusion of the 11-day camp to be held in association with Dhaka Deaf Sports Sangha. About 60 cricketers from different districts are expected to take part in the

# Eng-Scot T20 tie?

AFP, London

A cricket match between Scotland and England looks set to be played as England prepare for the summer ICC World Twenty20 competition, the England and Wales Cricket board said on Wednesday.

ECB chairman Giles Clarke said the match was likely to be included in England's pretournament programme in the run-up to hosting the event which kicks off on June

"Almost certainly, Scotland will have a warm-up game with England, probably at Trent Bridge," Clarke told the Edinburgh Evening News. "I'd expect a big travelling support for the Scots."

England and Scotland me for the first time in August, but their one-day international was abandoned after bad weather.

## ICC queries PCB on Asif

AFP, Karachi

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has asked officials in Pakistan to explain what action it plans to take against troubled fast bowler Mohammad Asif after his drugs arrest, an official said Thursday.

The 26-year-old paceman was detained in June for nearly three weeks for possession of opium as he was returning to Pakistan after playing in the Indian Premier League (IPL).

Dubai police deported him without charge, saying the quantity of illegal drugs found was insufficient, but he was barred from the United Arab Emirates for life.

A group of Pakistani lawmakers have recommended that Asif be banned for life over the Dubai drugs case, the latest in a series of troubles for the cricketer.

"We have received an email from ICC chief executive Haroon Lorgat accompanied by the Dubai detention report, the Pakistan Cricket Board's chief operating officer Salim Altaftold AFP. "This is the first time we

have seen this report and our lawyer is looking into it and soon we will form a committee to take action on it," he said. Altaf said the PCB would

follow the normal course taken for a discipline violation after receiving the ICC's query, explaining that the process had been delayed due to a change in leadership at the PCB. Asif is also facing a possible

two-year ban after failing a drugs screening test during the inaugural IPL season last year. He was due to appear before the IPL doping tribunal on January 24. Altaf, himself a former

paceman for Pakistan's national team, said the PCB would not rush to conclusions over what he termed a "sensitive case".

"We are talking about a player's career," he said.

Asif and fellow paceman Shoaib Akhtar failed drugs tests in 2006. A PCB tribunal banned Akhtar for two years and Asif for one year but that decision was overturned on appeal in a move criticised by the ICC.

Asif has played 11 Tests and 31 one-day matches for Pakistan since making his debut in Australia in early 2005.

# Elena dumps Serena

"I'm just playing with lots

of confidence, which is great."

February was a major career

winning in Dubai in the begin-

ning of the year, beating lots of

good players on this tourna-

Beijing Olympics was a big

step in my career, and just a

and 40 minute struggle with

Danish teenager Caroline

Wozniacki late Wednesday,

before prevailing in a third-set

wanted to today," Williams

said. "I gave it away more than

anything. I made a lot of errors

and made her look like a

champ, really. I just pretty

ing to improve on her lamen-

much gave her the match."

Williams fought a 2 hour

"From then on, I just

"The first big change was...

lot confidence.

turning point.

ment," she said.

big goal to achieve."

tie-breaker.

Tennis

Thursday.

nant straight-sets victory over

a subdued Serena Williams to

reach the final of the Sydney

WTA International on

pounded away the winners,

only dropped her serve once,

and gave the tournament top

seed no way out in reeling off a

The victory set up a

rematch of last year's Beijing

Olympics gold medal final

against second seed Dinara

Safina in an all-Russian

matched the blistering heat as

the Olympic champion sent

the nine-time grand slam

winner crashing out, breaking

Williams's serve five times for

Dementieva was coming

"I've done a lot of good

work," Dementieva said. "I

Dementieva's form

6-3, 6-1 win in 68 minutes.

The world number four

AFP, Sydney Russian Elena Dementieva stretched her winning streak to nine matches with a domi-

### Deaf cricketers' camp Jan 5-16

Association (BDCA) will decider on Friday night. organise a training camp from January 5-16 for Bangladesh's participation in the 2nd Deaf Asia Cup and the 3rd Deaf World Cup cricket tournaments in Pakistan and New

her third win over the American in seven meetings. off a tournament victory in last week's Auckland Classic, where she did not drop a set in five matches and beat compatriot Elena Vesnina in the final.

# Extra Test, T20 for India in NZ

Cricket

AFP, Wellington

New Zealand has agreed to add a third Test and an extra Twenty20 match to India's tour starting next month.

India asked earlier this month to play an extra Test during the tour to help offset losses after the cancellation of matches against England and

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) and New Zealand Cricket announced the extended schedule Thursday after the host country had worked to reschedule other matches.

India will arrive in New Zealand on February 20, eight days earlier than originally scheduled, with the first tour match being an additional Christchurch on February 25.

An extra Test will be played in Napier on top of the originally scheduled two Tests in Hamilton and Wellington.

After the Twenty20 matches on February 25 and 27, the two teams will play five one-day internationals starting from March 3.

The first Test in Hamilton will start on March 18, followed by the Napier Test from March 26 and the final match will start on April 3 in Wellington. India said on Tuesday it

would also play five one-dayers and a Twenty20 game against hosts Sri Lanka next month to help fill the gap created by their cancelled tour of Pakistan.

The BCCI said earlier this month it lost around 25 million dollars after two one-day internationals against England and this month's tour of Pakistan were cancelled in the Twenty20 match in wake of the terror attacks in Mumbai in November.

think all these big results from pion Williams is expected to go into the year's first grand slam last year have really given me a as the women's favourite.

Safina meanwhile battled through intense heat and the resistance of Japan's Ai She said wins over Ana Sugiyama to reach her first Ivanovic and Svetlana Sydney final at the fourth Kuznetsova on the way to taking the Dubai title last attempt.

The Russian world number three spent one hour and 45 minutes battling the 29thranked Sugiyama in 42 degree Celsius (108 Fahrenheit) heat before clinching a 6-4, 7-6 (7/3) victory.

Safina will be bidding for her 10th career WTA title started to play much better. For sure the big win at the against Dementieva.

The semi-finalists did not have the sanctuary of the extreme heat policy implemented at the Australian Open, where play for women's matches is suspended once the temperature reaches 35 Celsius (95 Fahrenheit). saving three match points

"I don't know when it was worse, yesterday or today. It "I wasn't moving as I was pretty hot even (when) I was warming up before the match outside of the court." Safina said.

"I was just standing there. and I was like, I cannot move. But it's not an excuse, because it's (as) hot for her and for me."

While Dementieva is look-Safina, last year's French table record in the Australian Open runner-up, is enjoying Open, where she hasn't got her best results in an past the fourth round in 10 Australian campaign and has attempts, three-time chamyet to drop a set this week.

### A rare

FROM PAGE 17

and his assistance was in charge and that's why we boarded a double-decker bus," explained Sri Lanka skipper Mahela Jayawardene with a smile.

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) however had a different explanation and they also apologised to the Sri Lanka team for the incident.

"The driver didn't turn up on time therefore an alternative driver was arranged but the bus carrying the Sri Lanka team experienced mechanical problem on the way and had to stop. The security personal escorting the team buss arranged an alternative transport so that team could arrive at training on time," explained BCB's media manager Rabeed

"The BCB has taken the matter very seriously and the measure has been taken against the bus driver and the concerned people. BCB apologised to the Sri Lanka team management and they have been very understanding," he added.

# Start of a new era

FROM PAGE 17

plenty of experience to some of these younger guys before the World Cup comes around."

It's not only the Australian line-up that is changing. South Africa are also looking ahead and will blood some new men in the ODI series. They will be hoping for a smoother effort than in their two Twenty20 losses, when the stand-in captain Johan Botha at times seemed to be struggling to maintain control in the field. Ponting said it was natural that the team would lose some of

"Smith's been their leader for such a long time now," Ponting said. "That's always going to happen when somethat long, and probably commands the respect that he does from his team and from the public, that that will hap-

its solidity without Graeme

Smith at the helm.

that. Even more so at the end where there seemed to be three or four skippers out on the ground up in Brisbane,

CROSSWORD

for them to worry about."

Point made and point taken. Botha said South Africa had addressed the captaincy issue following the Twenty20 games, when he was in charge of a side that included Mark Boucher and Jacques Kallis, who have both led South Africa in the past, and the experienced domestic skipper Neil McKenzie.

"I've got some input back from them," Botha said. "We've spoken about it, not to have too many guys say too many things on the field because it does get a bit crazy at times. We've definitely spoken about that. In the one-day series that will be sorted out." The constant on-field

discussions contributed to one that's been around for South Africa being fined for a slow over rate in both Twenty20 matches, although Botha was confident that would not be copied in the 50over format. It is a hard task for "Yeah, I think we did notice a man who was not part of the Test joys and has captained his of the game the other night side only six times in Twenty20 or ODI matches.

> "I've picked up a bit of experience," Botha said. "I

myself a bit better, not show so much emotion on the field. So far it's been good and I've really enjoyed it.

"Replacing (Smith) makes it a huge thing. It does make it quite difficult, the guys had something good going and it's difficult just to carry on. You've got to almost start the tour again and then see it as a second part of the tour."

After their Twenty20 struggles, he might prefer to see this as the beginning of the third part of their trip. Whatever the case, Friday's game represents change -- for Australia, for South Africa, and for the Australian cricket public.

TEAMS

AUSTRALIA: Shaun Marsh, Michael Clarke, Ricky Ponting (captain), Michael Hussey, David Hussey, Cameron White, Brad Haddin, James Hopes, Nathan Bracken, Ben Hilfenhaus, Shaun Tait.

SOUTH AFRICA: Herschelle Gibbs, Hashim Amla, Jacques Kallis, AB de Villiers, Jean-Paul Duminy, Vaughn van Jaarsveld, Mark Boucher, Albie Morkel, Morne Morkel, Johan trying to control things. That's have to probably handle Botha (captain), Dale Steyn.

#### By Eugene Sheffer ACROSS 34 Contacted 53 Urban 9 Fashion 5 Spiked 10 Cupid's carrier club 54 X rating alter 55 Pianist 9 Kitten's ego under the Dame 11 Departed comment Муга 20 Starbucks 12 Enjoying table 37 Tokyo's 56 Maze order some 22 Mediold time off 13 Black, in name cated DOWN 24 - truly verse 38 Immi-14 Galena, 1 New 25 Snitch grant's Zealander 26 Hearty e.g. (Abbr.) 2 Mid-15 Get off the brew 39 Flex 27 Kibosh bottle? month 29 Gist 42 Needle-16 Priestly date fish 3 Verve 30 Rage 17 Announcer 44 Pinnacle 31 Conclu-Pardo sion

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CRYPTOQUIP

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Yesterday's Cryptoquip: TV INTERVIEW

PROGRAM ON WHICH THE GUESTS TRAUMATIZE AND CONFOUND PEOPLE: "FAZE THE NATION." Today's Cryptoquip Clue: N equals C

#### Opportunity beckons FROM PAGE 17 need to make sure that if one **TEAMS** two consecutive big matches of the top three gets set then he but it doesn't necessarily

"Just having looked at it, I least disruption on the team.

mean it will not happen forever," said a confident Ashraful in a pre-match press conference. "It is a good opportunity for

us as we are in the final. Our confidence was down a bit after the first match but we have bounced back with the win against Sri Lanka. If the eleven of us bring our best cricket in the match and do well in all three departments then we can surely hope for a positive result," he added.

He also echoed his coach's sentiment that their top order RAJSHAHI: 155-7 in 32 overs | needs to come out from the poor showing.

ment in the top-order. So far know that in that case they we have not managed a start have to prove that they are also which is very important. We 'consistent' sometimes.

should bat as long as possible. A good start makes the job easier for the next batsmen coming in," Ashraful observed.

"Irrespective of the opposition we play every game to win. We realize that tomorrow we have a genuine chance if we do the process right and stick to the game plan. All of us want this year to be a big year for Bangladesh cricket. We want to compete well with the big teams and get positive results. Tomorrow is an opportunity for us to win a trophy and we

are aware of that," he said. It will be a new history if Kulasekera, Muttiah Bangladesh can lift the trophy "We have to show improve- but the Bangladesh captain

Mohammad Ashraful (captain), Rokibul Hassan, Shakib Al Hasan, Mushfigur Rahim (Wicketkeeper), Naeem Islam, Mahmudullah Riyad Mashrafe Bin Mortaza Mahbubul Alam, Rubel Hossain, Nazmul Hossain SRI LANKA (From): Sanath Jayasuriya, Upul Tharanga,

Mirando