



Juan Martin Del Potro of Argentina celebrates after winning a point against world number one Rafael Nadal of Spain during the Sony Ericsson Open quarterfinals at the Crandon Park Tennis Centre in Florida on Thursday.

Pak pacers impress in camp

INTERNET, undated

Pacers Shoab Akhtar, Sohail Tanvir, Umar Gul, Yasir Arafat and Rao Iftikhar, all first choices for making Pakistan's fast bowling attack in the forthcoming series against Australia from April 22, remained impressive in the first phase of the physical fitness test conducted at the National Cricket Academy (NCA) in Lahore.

They will be appearing for a test again on Friday and Saturday along with 14 more cricketers. Sources said that the team trainer David Dwyer, who tested the cricketers for physical fitness and NCA doctor Sohail Salim, who tested them for muscular strength and skill by making them run and sprint, were satisfied with the results.

As many as 10 cricketers were to appear for the test on Thursday but middle-order batsman Umar Amin twisted his ankle before the start of the procedure. He will be appearing for the test later now. Saeed Ajmal, Ahmed Shahzad, Nasir Jamshed and Sohail Khan also appeared.

Asad, Jesmin

FROM PAGE 17
In the day's 14 events, Bangladesh Army bagged five gold, six silver and four bronze medals to take lead in the medal table. They were followed by Bangladesh Ansar and VDP (3-2-2), Navy (2-1-4), Bangladesh Police (1-1-0) and BJMC, Daffodil International University and Bangladesh Athletics Federation with one gold each.

Earlier, State Minister for Youth and Sports Ahad Ali Sarkar declared the two-day meet open.

Following are the gold winners of Day 1:

MEN'S: 20km walk: Shafiqul Islam (Navy), 1500m: Selim Mia (Army), discuss throw: Azharul Islam (Army), triple jump: Abdur Rahman (Army), javelin throw: Kabir (Police), 200m: Masudul Karim (Army), 110m hurdles: Asadul Islam (Bangladesh Athletics Federation), 400m: Azharul Islam (Army), long jump: Al Amin (Army).

WOMEN'S: 1500m: Rawshan Ara Putul (Ansar), high jump: Sathi Parveen (DIU), 100m hurdles: Jesmin Akhter (Ansar), 200m: Nazmunnahar Beauty (BJMC), 400m: Rawshan Ara Putul (Ansar).

Sachin

FROM PAGE 17
"I played against Sachin on his tour here in 1990 when he got that 80 or 90-odd at the McLean Park in Napier. You could see then as a youngster he was a player of immense ability and talent."

"We didn't see at that time and you cannot visualise 20 years down the track what the player is likely to do in the context of the history of the game. He clearly he has been phenomenal," said the 57-year-old, arguably one of the finest all-rounders of all time.

Justifying his high regard for the Indian, Hadlee said, "When you score as many runs as he has in Test and one-day cricket and score as many centuries and half centuries as he has done, it makes him arguably the greatest player ever in the history of the game. Statistics speak volumes of his contribution to Indian and world cricket. He is a phenomenal player."

Del Potro stuns Nadal

Tennis

AFP, Miami

Juan Martin del Potro shocked world number one Rafael Nadal in the quarterfinals of the Miami ATP Masters 1000 Thursday, downing the top-seeded Spaniard 6-4, 3-6, 7-6 (7/3).

In the semifinals, the sixth-seeded Argentinian will face world number four Andy Murray of Britain, who beat eighth-seeded Spaniard Fernando Verdasco 6-1, 6-2.

Nadal, who won his sixth Grand Slam title at the Australian Open, also won the first Masters 1000 crown of the year at Indian Wells in March.

He had won all four of his previous meetings with del Potro without dropping a set - including a quarterfinal victory at Indian Wells.

But before a raucous, largely pro-del Potro crowd the Argentinian fought back from 0-3 down in the third set to prevail in the tiebreaker.

"Today, I did everything," del Potro said. "I served very good, and hit with my forehand with big confidence."

"To beat Rafa, you have to be in good shape in every part of your game, and today I did a great job."

Nadal saved three match points in the 12th game of the final set - two of them with aces - to force the tiebreaker.

But del Potro was not to be denied, winning the final five points of the decider to advance.

Del Potro hit three straight winners to give himself three more match points at 6-3 in the tiebreaker. Nadal fired a backhand into the net on the first of them, sending the fans into a frenzy.

"Wonderful for the crowd, terrible for me," said Nadal, although he said he enjoyed the excitement surrounding the three-hour duel.

"That's good for tennis, to have a crowd like this. It was a really good atmosphere."

Nadal, who also reached the final in Rotterdam in February as his 2009 campaign got off to a sizzling start, said he didn't play well, but he praised his rival.

"I have no excuses. Juan Martin played better than I did," Nadal said.

Even so, Nadal said the whole match was a struggle for him.

"I think I played really bad all the time," Nadal said. "When I have 3-0 in the third I played worse. It was amazing disaster."

Nadal said he never felt at home in Miami, even though he arrived fresh from his California triumph.

"I didn't adapt well to this tournament this time," he said, adding that he would take a few days off then start his preparations for the clay court season.

The defeat means Nadal leaves Miami empty-handed again. He has never lifted the trophy here, with runner-up finishes in 2005 and last year his best showings.

Murray, who has been closing in on the world number three spot now occupied by Novak Djokovic, made quick work of Verdasco, who was injured early in the match.

Murray broke the Spaniard five times and saved seven of eight break points he faced.

"I saw him get a bit frustrated early in the match," said Murray, who is closing in on the world number three ranking of Novak Djokovic. "I stayed on top of him throughout. Didn't give him too many chances."

"There was a big game early in the second set when I was down love-40 on my serve. Once I won that, I felt very comfortable," the Scot added.

Murray said he wouldn't be counting on del Potro having a let-down after beating Nadal, but he said the fact that the Argentinian's match was such a bruising affair had to be in his own favour.

"I'm sure he's in good physical shape," Murray said. "But it was a pretty brutal match today and a lot of long points. Both guys did a lot of running. You know, obviously better for me the longer the match went."

"Mine was a quick one, so in that respect that's obviously an advantage to me. But, you know, he's obviously still going to be very dangerous."

Rokibul piles season's best

FROM PAGE 17
Tareq Aziz dismissed Fahad-ul-Haq for 13 while fellow pacerman Sajidul Islam got Shafiqul Alam with the score on 42-2.

Tigers keeper Mushfiqur Rahim and one down Tariq Ahmed were in an 85-run partnership for the third wicket which took the Partex score to 127 by the 22nd over. Runs continued to come freely for Partex as Mushfiqur and Tariq both went on to reach their half centuries with Mushfiqur making 81 before being trapped in front by spinner Murad Khan. Murad eventually picked up a four-wicket haul to enfold Partex's innings for 235 with six more overs to go.

GAZI TANK-SURJO TORUN

Ashraf kept his good form unabated scoring his fourth consecutive fifty and also picking up four wickets to stop

mediocre Surjo Torun's dream run of wins.

Ashraf followed up his four for 41 with a 72-ball 67 that contained four boundaries and two sixes before being stumped off Rajin Saleh as Gazi Tank reached the target of 197 for five in reply to Torun's 196 all out.

Another national colour Imrul Kayes played down the order instead of his permanent opening spot and the left-hander hit second team highest 37 off 59 balls that saw two fours and a six.

The tankers were already strong contenders for victory at that stage with only 41 required of 90 deliveries.

Nayem Islam and Mahmudul Hasan ultimately did the honours for Gazi in the 48th over with five wickets to spare.

Earlier on a hot sunny morning, Torun won the toss

and batted first but failed to reach even 200. Skipper Khaled Mashud's top score of 39 along with some useful contributions down the order enabled the Dhanmondi unit to finish at 196 for all wickets in 49 overs.

BRIEF SCORES

MOHAMMEDAN: 289-6 in 50 overs (Rokibul 171 not out, Shamsur 41, extras 19; Shirhan Sarif 3-46)

PARTEX: 235 all out in 44.3 overs (Mushfiqur 81, Tariq 64, extras 9; Murad 4-35, Tareq 2-30, Sajidul 2-52)

Result: Mohammedan won by 54 runs.

SURJO TORUN: 196 all out in 49 overs (Khaled 39, extras 9; Ashraf 4-41)

GAZI TANK: 197-5 in 47.4 overs (Ashraf 67, Imrul 37, extras 20; Rajin 2-19, Sanjamul 2-19)

Result: Gazi Tank won by 5 wickets.

India fight back

FROM PAGE 17
while Tim Southee and Iain O'Brien took two wickets each.

India got off to a flying start through a quickfire 48 from Virender Sehwag and the "Little Master" Tendulkar appeared set to take the attack apart before his dismissal for 62.

His departure in the 42nd over signalled a mini-collapse after he put on 90 runs with Rahul Dravid for the third wicket.

Four wickets fell for the addition of 39 runs as India slid from 165 for two.

Sehwag and partner Gautam Gambhir earlier put on 73 runs in the first 15 overs as Vettori's strategy of bowling first appeared to backfire, with 20-year-old Southee hit for 48 runs from his first seven overs.

O'Brien dismissed Sehwag in his second over, tempting the batsman to jab at a short ball outside the off stump, with wicketkeeper Brendon McCullum taking a comfortable catch.

The replacement of Martin by Franklin at the other end in

the next over also paid off immediately, with Gambhir trapped lbw for 23 on the final ball of the new bowler's opening over.

Tendulkar passed 50 for the 95th time in Tests in his innings, hitting 11 fours, including his trademark drives and cuts, bringing up his half century with a beautifully timed square cut off O'Brien after lunch in the 38th over.

His dismissal for the day's top score of 62 brought on a mini-collapse with VVS Laxman and Yuvraj Singh soon departing.

Martin's second victim was Rahul Dravid, who mistimed a pull shot to Franklin at square leg to leave India six down.

Martin was unlucky 24 runs later when Martin Gupta hit down a difficult but ultimately costly chance at gully when Harbhajan was on 14.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at close of the first day of the third and final Test between New Zealand and India at the Basin Reserve in Wellington on Friday:

INDIA:	First Innings	23		
Gambhir lbw b Franklin	23			
Sehwag c McCullum b O'Brien	48			
Dravid c Franklin b Martin	35			
Tendulkar c McCullum b Martin	62			
Laxman c McIntosh b Southee	4			
Yuvraj lbw b Ryder	9			
Dhoni c O'Brien b Southee	52			
Harbhajan c Vettori b Martin	60			
Zaheer c McCullum b O'Brien	33			
Sharma not out	15			
Patel not out	14			
Extras: (b-2, lb-8, w-3, nb-7)	20			
Total: (For 9 wks in 90 overs)	375			
Fall of wickets: 1-73, 2-75, 3-165, 4-173, 5-182, 6-204, 7-283, 8-315, 9-347.				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Martin	24	3	95	3
Southee	18	1	94	2
O'Brien	21	3	88	2
Franklin	14	4	38	1
Vettori	9	1	47	0
Ryder	4	2	3	1

NEW ZEALAND: McIntosh, Gupta, Flynn, Taylor, Ryder, Franklin, McCullum, Vettori, Southee, O'Brien, Martin. **Toss:** New Zealand. **Umpires:** Daryl Harper (AUS), Simon Taufel (AUS). **Match referee:** Alan Hurst (AUS)

LOCAL SNIPPETS

SPORTS REPORTER

M Taibur Rahman and Jamal Ahmed took joint lead in the preliminary phase of the Mercantile Bank 35th National Chess Championship with eight points after the 10th round at the chess federation hall room yesterday.

Fide Masters Abu Sufian Shakil and Mehdi Hasan Parag, Sheikh Nasir Ahmed and Aminul Islam Palash, Golam Mostafa Bhuiyan are following the leaders closely with 7.5 points each.

In the 10th round, Taibur beat Mostafa, Jamal beat Debaraj, Shakil drew with Nasir, Parag drew with Palash, Amin drew with Javed, Younus drew with Monir, Ali beat Anisuzzaman Jewel, Emon beat Uten, Robin beat Mohammad Shamim and Nazrana beat Shafiq Ahmed.

The 11th and last round matches start will be held.

VOLLEYBALL

Sajjat Smriti Sangsad reached the final defeating Sunrise Sporting Club 3-1 in the first semifinal of the Rang's National Volleyball League at the Gaibandha Stadium.

Sajjat SS will meet Jubo Sangsad, who ousted Nabarun Krira Chakra 3-2 in the second semifinal, in the final.

De Saram finds place in SL T20 squad

INTERNET, undated

Batsman Indika de Saram has forced his way into the Sri Lanka ICC World Twenty20 squad with some outstanding performances for Ruhuna in the ongoing Inter-Provincial Twenty20 tournament.

de Saram was included by the national selectors along with four other players - Tissera Perera, Gayan Wijekoon, Milinda Siriwardene and Lahiru Thirimanne - expanding the squad's strength to 30.

de Saram was surprisingly left out of the provisional squad of 25 picked by the selectors prior to the Twenty20 tournament last month, but performed exceptionally well to earn a recall to the national squad.

He is the leading batsman in the tournament with 232 runs at an average of 58 and a strike rate of 147.77. He has also hit the most number of sixes (12) and fours (18) in the tournament so far with a top score of 94.

He made his debut for Sri Lanka at home against the Australians in 1999. However, he was in the sidelines for nearly eight years before he was recalled for the Twenty20 international against India this February.

SQUAD

Kumar Sangakkara (captain), Muttiah Muralidaran (vice-captain), Sanath Jayasuriya, Tillakaratne Dilshan, Mahela Jayawardene, Chamara Kapugedera, Jehan Mubarak, Chamara Silva, Angelo Mathews, Farveez Maharoof, Nuwan Kulasekara, Thilan Thushara, Lasith Malinga, Chaminda Vaas, Ajantha Mendis, Kaushal Weeraratne, Upul Tharanga, Isuru Udana, Dilhara Lokuhettige, Chintaka Jayasinghe, Nuwan Zoysa, Gihan Rupasinghe, Thilina Kandamby, Malinga Bandara, Dilhara Fernando, Indika de Saram, Thisara Perera, Gayan Wijekoon, Milinda Siriwardene, Lahiru Thirimanne

Masud eyes

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turned sprinter's 48th gold medal in nationals.

"I want to win the 4x100m relay and the 100m tomorrow. It would be a half-century of medals for me," said Masud, who also missed the 2005 national athletics when he was abroad on a mission.

"I have won all the 200m races since 2002 except in 2005 and 2008," said Masud who won five medals in a single championships four times.

With 100m champion Abu Abdullah and last year's 200m winner Shamsuddin deserting the country last month, Masud will lead Bangladesh's sprint team in next year's South Asian Games.

"The world never stops for someone's absence," he said referring to the two runaways.

"When the final preparation begins for the SAG, we will know what our situation is. I feel that we need foreign training if we have to win a 100m gold in the SAG," he added.

Former champion sprinter Golam Ambia had 41 national gold medals to his name.

The women's 200m gold went to BJMC's Nazmunnahar Beauty who won her fifth consecutive title in the event.

"I have not attended the SAG camps due to my (degree) exams but I came back to the track to prove I am not finished yet," said Beauty after touching the line in 24.70s.

"Now I am concentrating on the 100m."

ICC TWENTY20 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

Symonds selected

Cricket

AFP, Sydney

Andrew Symonds and three uncapped players were included Friday in Australia's preliminary 30-man squad for the ICC Twenty20 World Championship in England in June.

Symonds may get another chance to play for his country after a wretched season, blighted by injury, poor form and controversy in addition to undergoing counselling for personal problems.

The controversial allrounder has not played for Australia since the Boxing Day Test against South Africa in Melbourne but was included in the squad, along with recalled batsman Brad Hodge, recovering fast bowler Brett Lee, spinner Jason Krejza and speedster Shaun Tait.

The three uncapped players are Western Australian spinner Aaron Heal, Victoria batsman Rob Quiney and South Australian wicketkeeper Graham Manou.

"I'm grateful that I've got the chance to get back to playing for Australia again," Symonds said in a statement released by Queensland Cricket.

"Hopefully, the boys go well in South Africa tonight (Friday) and for the rest of the series because I'd love to be back in the rooms with them again sometime down the track."

Cricket Australia Chief Executive James Sutherland said the selectors had been advised Symonds had reached a point in his counselling where it was appropriate to consider him for international selection, subject to fitness and form.

"Cricket Australia and Andrew have been speaking, as have members of the team leadership group, and we are satisfied he is commit-

ted to doing the things needed of an Australian international cricketer," Sutherland said in a CA statement.

Chairman of selectors, Andrew Hilditch, said: "At his best Andrew is one of the most dynamic Twenty20 players in the world and his progress will be monitored leading up to the selection of the final 15."

Hilditch said selectors had recognised the form of squad newcomers Heal, Quiney and Manou.

"Most of the players chosen already have international experience, but the squad does include Heal, who has bowled particularly well in one-day cricket this year for Western Australia," Hilditch said.

"Heal's inclusion is recognition of the significant impact spinners are having in Twenty20 cricket worldwide."

"We have also chosen Manou as a second wicket-keeper. Graham has had an outstanding season and was named as the wicket-keeper in the Australian Cricketers' Association teams of the year in all three forms of the game."

Hilditch said the squad also includes Tait, Watson, Lee and Marsh, who are all recovering from injuries.

The final squad will be halved to 15 by May 5, Cricket Australia said.

SQUAD

Nathan Bracken, Michael Clarke, Callum Ferguson, Brett Geves, Brad Haddin, Ryan Harris, Shane Harwood, Nathan Hauritz, Aaron Heal, Moises Henriques, Ben Hilfenhaus, Brad Hodge, James Hopes, David Hussey, Mike Hussey, Mitchell Johnson, Jason Krejza, Ben Laughlin, Brett Lee, Graham Manou, Shaun Marsh, Ricky Ponting, Robert Quiney, Peter Siddle, Andrew Symonds, Shaun Tait, Adam Voges, David Warner, Shane Watson, Cameron White.

Hussey won't play in IPL

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Michael Hussey will become the latest Australian to withdraw from this year's IPL in an effort to reinvestigate himself ahead of the Ashes. Hussey is one of only two Australians, along with Brad Haddin, to have played in all 12 Tests and 10 one-day internationals since last year's tour of India, and was due to join the Chennai Super Kings after the limited-overs series against Pakistan next month.

Hussey is mired in the deepest trough of his international career - he reached 50 once in the six Tests against South Africa - and is desperate to rediscover peak form in time for the Ashes. In addition to the IPL, he is also believed to be considering standing down from Australia's six matches against Pakistan in the United Arab Emirates as he seeks to rejuvenate both body and mind. He will play the one-day series in South Africa, which begins in Durban on Friday.

Hussey could have travelled to South Africa for the last fortnight of the IPL, but will instead follow the lead of his national captain, Ricky

Ponting, in standing down from the tournament. Mitchell Johnson and Michael Clarke did not nominate for the 2009 IPL auction, citing their desire to focus on international cricket.

"We haven't got any official intimation from Hussey yet," VB Chandrasekhar, the Super Kings' cricket operations director, told Cricinfo. "It's a big disappointment for us, but we have got to respect his need to take rest. No doubt, we will miss him a lot. He was expected to play from the ninth game onwards and play a crucial role. (Andrew) Flintoff leaves by then and we thought, even if the bowling gets weakened a bit, our batting would have got stronger."

In the IPL's inaugural season, Hussey posted the tournament's third highest score (116 not out) and the fourth highest batting average (84.00) in his four-game stint for the Super Kings. But he has struggled for form of late, averaging just 23.00 in eight Tests since the start of the Australian summer.

"I just spoke to the franchise and asked for the time off to be with family as my playing schedule has been very busy and they were very understanding," Hussey told AAP. "But I am available if we make the semi-finals (on May 22 and 23) and final."



Myanmar's Aung Kyaw Naing plays a forehand against Eziz Davietov (not in picture) of Turkmenistan during their Davis Cup Asia/Oceania Zone Group-IV match at the National Tennis Complex in Ramna yesterday.

Poldi fined 5,000 euros for slapping Ballack

Football

AFP, Frankfurt

Germany striker Lukas Podolski has agreed to pay 5,000 euros to the German Football Federation (DFB) by way of reparation for slapping national captain Michael Ballack, the DFB announced on Friday.

The DFB said, however, that they did not believe the Bayern Munich forward would be punished for his actions by football's world governing body FIFA.

"Up until now, FIFA have not intervened," a DFB spokesperson explained. "We are working on the principle that the referee for the game saw what happened and decided not to punish him."

Podolski could theoretically have been sent off following the confrontation with Ballack, which took place during Germany's 2-0 victory over Wales in a World Cup 2010 qualifier in Cardiff on Wednesday.

The altercation continued to make headlines in Germany two days after the event, despite the German management team deciding not to punish Podolski for his actions.

Podolski, named best young player at the 2006 World Cup, admitted that he had "overreacted".

"It was a bad reaction and I apologise," he said.

"Prince Poldi", as he is known in Germany, came in for strong criticism in the German media on Friday, with popular tabloid Bild speaking of a "scandal" and a "slap in the face for (national coach) Joachim Low and the whole of German football".

In an attempt to dampen the furore, the DFB announced on Friday that Podolski would contribute 5,000 euros towards a fair play initiative organised by the federation.

"It's a fair decision after an unacceptable piece of behaviour," said DFB president Theo Zwanziger.