



GP-BCB National Cricket Academy batsman Suvagata Hom connects a slog sweep during his enterprising 40 in the second innings against Sri Lanka Cricket Development team at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium yesterday.

Visitors romp to huge win

SPORTS REPORTER

Sri Lanka Cricket Development team took just three days to register a nine-wicket victory over GP-BCB National Cricket Academy who were woeful with the bat at the Chittagong Divisional Stadium yesterday.

Set only 79 runs for the win, the visitors completed the task in 16.3 overs, losing only Mahela Udawatte for 24. Kanchana Gunawardene (27) and Lahiru Thirimanne (17) remained unbeaten to take their team home.

The home side had another debacle with the bat, being bowled out for just 207 runs in the second innings.

Only newcomer Suvagata Hom offered some challenge with his enterprising 40 off 63 balls that had six boundaries. For the tourists, Chanaka Welagedera picked up three wickets.

Earlier in the day, the Lankans were bowled out for 385 in their first innings.

Zia 3rd in Mumbai Open

SPORTS REPORTER

Grand Master Ziaur Rahman of Bangladesh Biman earned six points to share the third position along with 19 others in the Second Mumbai Mayor's Cup Open International Chess Tournament in India yesterday.

In the eighth round games, Zia drew with Himanshu Sharma of India and GM Niaz Mursheed also drew with India's Shiven Khosla. In the seventh round games, Zia drew with GM Tejas Bakre.

Dress rehearsal

FROM PAGE 17 has joined the squad for Thursday's game and is tipped to play.

"It's going to be an exciting time in the new stadium here and I know the guys always look forward, whether it's been a long tour or not, to a bit of fun in a Twenty20 match," said Haddin.

"I don't think it's that important to do with our preparation. After this game we've got a couple weeks to freshen up," he said.

"We've been on the road a long time, so we've got the opportunity now to have a break. I think we just take Thursday night for what it is."

TEAMS

PAKISTAN (from): Younus Khan (captain), Salman Butt, Ahmed Shahzad, Shoaib Malik, Misbahul Haq, Shahid Afridi, Kamran Akmal, Fawad Alam, Shoaib Akhtar, Sohail Tanvir, Umar Gul, Rao Iftikhar, Yasir Arafat, Saeed Aijmal.

AUSTRALIA (from): Brad Haddin (captain), Nathan Bracken, Callum Ferguson, Brett Lee, Nathan Hauritz, Ben Hilfenhaus, James Hopes, David Hussey, Ben Laughlin, Doug Bollinger, Andrew Symonds, Shane Watson, Marcus North, Stuart Clark.

ECB's offer to PCB



CRICINFO, undated

Discussions between the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) and Cricket Australia (CA) are at an advanced stage as the three parties try and find a way of rescheduling Pakistan's 'home' series against Australia in England next summer.

Australia were due to tour Pakistan for a full series in March 2008 but pulled out because of security concerns. The tour was postponed, but after the terrorist attacks on the Sri Lankan team in March this year and the subsequent ICC move to take the 2011 World Cup away from Pakistan, international cricket within Pakistan is all but ruled out for the next few years.

The ECB, therefore, is looking for ways to minimise the impact on its FTP and is actively looking at neutral venues where it can stage future home commitments.

Abu Dhabi and Dubai, where Pakistan just played an ODI series against Australia, is one option but England has always been another, ever since Giles Clarke, the ECB chairman, floated the idea last year.

"There is a lot of discussion going on between the three parties," an official involved in the negotiations told Cricinfo. "Nothing has been finalised just yet but we are getting closer to the possibility that Pakistan plays its Tests against Australia in England next year."

There are obstacles still in the way before any agreement is reached. The first is the itinerary: CA wants to play two Tests and two Twenty20 internationals, while the Pakistan board is

keen on a three-Test and three-ODI series. Whichever schedule is settled upon, it will have to be worked in between three international series in the English summer: Bangladesh are touring in May-June for a Test and ODI series and West Indies in July and August. Additionally, in June, Australia are due to play a five-match ODI series with England. Further complication may come in the form of the P20, the ECB's answer to the IPL, which begins from next summer and may involve international players.

Other hurdles are TV rights and the costs involved. Sky Television has the rights to England's home Tests but this covers those contests where England are the hosts. As the rights holder to Pakistan's home contests, Ten Sports are likely to be the broadcaster. "The TV rights are a pressing question," the official said. "It is crucial for the PCB to continue to benefit from broadcasting rights and Ten Sports and Sky will have to come up with some kind of compromise to ensure that happens. It shouldn't be a problem."

As the PCB found in the series against Australia in the UAE, the costs involved in hosting a 'home' series at a neutral venue are prohibitive. Cash-strapped already - though perhaps not as much as initially thought - the cost of holding a series in England will have to be weighed up seriously. "As it was in Dubai, the costs in the UK will be very high," a PCB official said. "That is something we really have to look at, in terms of how much revenue we will be able to generate."

The venues for the series are yet to be decided though cities such as Manchester, Leeds and Birmingham - traditionally home to large British Asian populations - are likely to be any shortlist.

PCB reviving WC issue

PTI, Karachi

After failing to stop the International Cricket Council (ICC) from shifting the 2011 World Cup matches out of the country, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has now promised more straight-forward approach to revive the issue at the annual ICC meeting in June.

The media reports said that the PCB has decided to adopt a tougher approach as Pakistan still remains upset that the World Cup matches were moved without their consent although ICC Chief Executive Haroon Lorgat had claimed it a unanimous decision.

"The Chairman will also take up the issue of Pakistan's hosting rights and fees at the coming meeting," the report said.

United sail

FROM PAGE 17

When Van Persie fouled Ronaldo way out on the right flank, there appeared little danger.

But Almunia had reckoned without Ronaldo's flair for the unexpected. Ronaldo had scored from 40 yards to beat Porto in the last round and, from a similar distance, he took aim and launched a thunderous strike towards Almunia, who appeared to lose sight of the ball as it flashed past him at the nearest post.

Wenger sat ash-faced on the bench as Arsenal's proud record of 27 home European matches without defeat fell apart, and the match had barely begun.

United were rampant and it took a superb finger-tip save from Almunia to stop Wayne Rooney curling in a third goal.

The visitors continued to counter-attack imperiously after half-time and in the 61st minute Ronaldo capped a

sublime break in clinical style.

He started the move with a backheel to Park, who cleverly spread play wide to Rooney on the left. Rooney's cross was perfectly weighted for Ronaldo to drive past Almunia.

Game over, and Ferguson could even afford the luxury of substituting Rooney and Patrice Evra to ensure the duo didn't earn a booking which would have ruled them out of the final.

But Fletcher will miss the final after the Scotland midfielder was sent off in the 76th minute for bringing down Fabregas in the penalty area.

Italian referee Roberto Rosetti ruled the Scotland midfielder had made contact with Fabregas before the ball, although replays suggested otherwise.

Van Persie stepped up to smash home the penalty but it was way too little, too late for Arsenal.

Sharma

FROM PAGE 17

attempted sweep on the first ball of the 18th over to seal Mumbai's fate.

Earlier Adam Gilchrist's decision to bat was motivated by a hard, dry surface which he felt would last out the day, but Deccan did have to contend with an out-of-touch Gibbs who was sucked in by an away-swing from Dhawal to edge a catch to slip, and finish with two ducks in three innings.

Rohit was restrained by some tight Mumbai bowling, patching together a laboured innings which only picked up pace when joined by Venugopal Rao, who showed some spunk towards the end with a brisk 28 to take his team to what, in the end, proved an adequate total.

A target of 146 would raise Mumbai's hopes of breaking into the top four but a suicidal rush by their middle order has now made that task significantly tougher, leaving them in seventh place.

SCORES IN BRIEF  
DECCAN CHARGERS: 145-6 in 20 overs (Gilchrist 25, Suman 20, Sharma 38, Rao 28, extras 9; Malinga 1-24, Kulkarni 1-21, Bravo 1-16, Rajee 1-25, Jayasuriya 1-31).  
MUMBAI INDIANS: 126-8 in 20 overs (Jayasuriya 5, Tendulkar 2, Shah 29, Duminy 52, Bravo 13, extras 3; Singh 2-19, Suman 2-14, Sharma 4-6).  
RESULT: Deccan Chargers won by 19 runs

Two move

FROM PAGE 17

Gua Kholi (Chandpur), Top Sports Noakhali, Nazrul Pathagar (Barisal), National Cricket Club (Nilphamari), Shamsuzzoha Smriti XI (Narayanganj) and Mukti Sangha (Rajshahi) in the final round.



Did U Know?

Novak Djokovic became the first player representing Serbia to win a Grand Slam (Australian Open in 2008) singles title and the youngest player in the open era to have reached the semifinals of all four Grand Slam events.



Andrew Strauss

(England cricket captain)  
"This is the second time I have won this award, and I regard it as a great honour to be named Vodafone England Player-of-the-Year."

Gambling on Lee?

CRICINFO, undated



CRICINFO, undated

Australia's chairman of selectors, Andrew Hilditch, admits the selection of Brett Lee in the 15-man World Twenty20 squad represents a sizeable gamble, but was hopeful the fast bowler's forthcoming stint in the IPL will go some way to improving his match fitness.

Lee has not played a match at any level since hobbling from the field during the Boxing Day Test against South Africa, but is poised to make his return in Thursday's 20-over match against Pakistan in Dubai. With his surgically-repaired foot now able to withstand the rigours of net training, Hilditch said Lee was a risk worth taking ahead of the World Twenty20.

"There is no doubt we spent a lot of time thinking about what the best way would be for Brett to come back," Hilditch told Cricinfo. "We did not want to take any chances with the key objective, which is getting him ready for the Ashes. He has looked extremely fit and has been training now for a few months. He has obviously missed a fair bit of bowling, but he will start with Dubai and then probably need a few more Twenty20 games to get himself going. There is still a month to go before [the World Twenty20], so there is time."

"It is somewhat of a risk. One of the big advantages in getting him over to the UAE was so we could have a good look at him in training and gauge how far he has progressed. He probably isn't quite ready, but with a few more games he will get there. I understand that he will go from the Pakistan series to the IPL, and from there to our player camp."

Lee is one of five pacemen named in Australia's 15-man squad along with Mitchell Johnson, Nathan Bracken, Ben Hilfenhaus and Peter Siddle. That left no room for Twenty20 specialist Shaun Tait, who is recovering from hamstring tendonitis and had hoped to make a late selection charge.

"By the time the tournament starts there is a

possibility that he could be fully fit," Hilditch said of Tait. "At the moment he is about 80% and bowling in the indoor nets. He tried to put his name forward for consideration for the Twenty20 squad, but there was some concern that with Brett Lee already representing somewhat of an injury risk, we could not afford to have two fast bowlers in that sort of situation. It was too big a risk."

Like Lee, Watson is scheduled to make his return to competitive bowling in the series finale against Pakistan on Thursday. Watson averaged 90.33 in his batsman-only role in the five ODI series, and is likely to resume all-round duties with Rajasthan Royals in the coming weeks.

Despite a series of behavioural infractions, Symonds retained the backing of selectors and his captain, Ricky Ponting, and will figure prominently in Australia's planning for the World Twenty20. He is set to join Deccan Chargers at the conclusion of Australia's limited overs tour of the UAE. "Andrew Symonds is one of the best Twenty20 players in the world when he is at his best," Hilditch said.

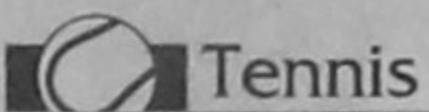
Michael Hussey retained his place in the side despite indifferent form of late, and along with his brother David, squeezed the impressive Callum Ferguson out of the World Twenty20 squad. James Hopes successfully retained the third allrounder's berth, while Nathan Hauritz was preferred as the team's specialist spinner over Cameron White.

"That was probably the hardest selection of them all, if I'm to be quite frank," Hilditch said of Ferguson. "He is a young kid who has taken all the opportunities that have come his way and done exceptionally well. He is desperately unlucky not to be in the squad. In reality, this is the first time in some months that, with the exception of Shaun Marsh, we've been back at full strength."

"[Hauritz] has made great progress in limited-overs cricket to become a regular member of the side during series' in South Africa and the UAE. Spin is having a significant impact on T20 cricket worldwide and Nathan is well placed to play a significant role in this tournament."

David Warner, meanwhile, retained his place at the top of the order and will hope for more game time with the Delhi Daredevils in the IPL to sharpen his skills ahead of the World Twenty20.

Radwanska stuns Ivanovic



AFP, Rome

French Open champion Ana Ivanovic produced a fractured display as she was stunned by Poland's Agnieszka Radwanska 6-1, 3-6, 6-4 at the WTA Rome claycourt International on Wednesday.

Fifth seed Ivanovic had a disastrous start but she regrouped and seemed to be cruising into the quarterfinals at 4-0 up in the third set after a run of winning 10 out of 13 games.

But just as her first set play had been terribly inconsistent, so her demons returned and 10th seed Radwanska reeled off the final six games to clinch the match.

It was another remarkable turn-around for the Pole who had trailed 5-2 in a third set tie-break against France's Aravane Rezaï late on Tuesday night before scraping into the third round.

Ivanovic, who has struggled with injury and form since her success at Roland Garros last June, has not won a tournament this year and reached only one final.

And this performance was typical of her erratic recent form, poor to begin with, then back in the swing before losing her touch again at the end.

Meanwhile reigning two-time champion Jelena Jankovic barely had to break sweat as she coasted into the quarterfinals when Kateryna Bondarenko retired with an illness.

Their third round match had

been uncompetitive before the Ukrainian's retirement with third seed Jankovic charging to a 6-1, 1-0 lead before the end came.

It was a far cry from the Serbian's clash against Argentine clay specialist Gisela Dulko the previous day which lasted almost two hours.

World number four Jankovic will play seventh seed Svetlana Kuznetsova next after the Russian defeated home hope and 12th seed Flavia Pennetta 6-3, 3-6, 6-0.

Jankovic said she didn't want the match to finish that way but was looking forward to hitting the shops on her afternoon off.

"I would have loved to finish the match because I was playing pretty well in that first set," she said.

"I felt the ball really well and I had good timing so it was a good set, a good game for me."

"But, unfortunately my opponent was sick and there's nothing you can do about that."

Nat'l hockey

FROM PAGE 17 Bangladesh will play a practice match in Malaysia later today against Malaysia U-21 side in Kuantan.

In the last Asia Cup Hockey Championship held in Chennai, India in 2007 Bangladesh finished eighth among 11 participants.

SQUAD

- Russell Mahmud Jimmy (captain), Mamun Ur Rahman Chayan (vice captain), Rafiqul Islam, Mahub Ullah Chowdhury, Sheikh Nannu, Mohammad Ashiquzzaman, Musharaf Hossain Kuti, Zahidul Islam, Pushkor Khisa, Zahid Bin Talib, Krishna Kumar, Moshirur Rahman Biplob, AKM Shamsuddin, AHM Quamruzzaman, Asaduzzaman Chandan, Rimon Kumar Ghosh, Iqbal Nadir and Taposh Barman.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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24 Kyoto 25 "Imagine that!" 26 Plead 27 D.C. figure 28 Chowded down 29 Symbol of intrigue 31 Realm 32 Kill bill? 34 Feathery accessory 35 Kine 36 Flock in flight 37 Tinsel-town bestowal 38 Space-craft com-partments 39 Help hoods 40 Pop choice 41 Modern-day money 42 Got up 43 "My Name Is —" 44 Read briefly

Solution time: 27 mins.

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CRYPTOQUIP

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KSUK T BUIH ZEH KSN LYHTN.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: SINCE I HAVE DONATED A CERTAIN VITAL ORGAN, I GUESS YOU MIGHT SAY I AM DE-LIVERED.  
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: B equals P