

Australia, China take beach v'ball titles

UNB, Cox's Bazar

Australia clinched the men's title of the 2nd Asian Beach Volleyball tournament...

China lifted the women's crown defeating Thailand by the same margin.

The men's and women's champions each received 1100 dollars as prize money...

Sri Lanka B team finished third in the men's group beating Sri Lanka A while Nepal was in third place in the women's group...

State Minister for Youth and Sports Ahad Ali Sarker was the chief guest at the final and distributed prizes.

Ponting waits on old rivals

AFP, London

Ricky Ponting believes his Australia side are likely to be facing both Michael Vaughan and Steve Harmison in the upcoming Ashes series...

Vaughan, who captained England to Ashes glory in 2005, and pace bowler Harmison, who was one of the stars of that series...

Madan asks for ICL release



England captain Andrew Strauss deals with a short ball in the nets at the Riverside Stadium in Chester-Le-Street yesterday.

Madan asks for ICL release

Cricket CricInfo, undated

Madan Lal, the former India allrounder and coach, has applied for a release from the ICL in what is the first official known response from the unauthorised league's players...

had a meeting with Himanshu Mody [ICL business head] and Kiran More [ICL board member], Ghavri told CricInfo. "We told them about our issues including no cricket being played from November 2007 and also about the salaries not being paid after that."

the 1983 World Cup-winning squad, said. "But now I feel it's the right time to move on professionally. There are many other ICL players and support staff who think similarly."

The BCCI had announced on April 30 that ICL players and support staff who wished to return to the official fold should do so by May 31. These players would be immediately allowed to play domestic cricket, including the IPL, and will become eligible for international cricket after a 'cooling period' of one year.

Fahad

Fahad was able to hit the stump consistently in sudden death and was adjudged the winner.

Star all-rounder Shakib Al Hasan presented Fahad with the air ticket to England while the other four top contestants earned the opportunity to have dinner with players from the Bangladesh national team.

Tejinder Khurana, country manager of PepsiCo International, and general manager of Transcom Beverages Limited Khurshid Irfan Chowdhury were also present at the event.

Indian bench

Roy a chance to play in the next match, he added.

Bangladesh has had a disastrous tournament so far, losing 5-0 to Japan, 7-1 to hosts Malaysia and 9-0 to South Korea.

Ashgabat-SL

Team spokesperson for Ashgabat, Taganmamedova Bahar said the team is going into the match with full strength and there are no injury concerns.

She also played down the weather saying the high temperatures are not going to be a problem as back home they experience a similar sort of weather.

"We will be fielding our strongest side and although the players in training found the weather to be a little hot it's pretty much the same back home during summer. I strongly believe we are in a position to win and a victory will put us in better contention to qualify for the third and final match," said Bahar.

Sri Lanka Army team trained at the Navy Ground in Kurmitola yesterday.

Ashgabat will play their last match against Abahani on Saturday at the same venue.



Did U Know?

A modern table tennis match at the elite level lasts on the average about 30 minutes. Top players often smash the ball at speeds exceeding 100 miles per hour.

'Last Test before Ashes'

Cricket AFP, Chester-le-Street

Andrew Strauss, the England captain, may be reluctant to talk about the Ashes ahead of the start of the second Test against the West Indies but that has not stopped Paul Collingwood.

The Durham all-rounder, set to play in front of his home crowd when the final Test of this brief series starts at the Riverside here on Thursday, is well aware that a strong showing following England's 10-wicket first Test win at Lord's, will help cement players' places ahead of the Ashes.

This is England's last Test before their series opener with Australia in Cardiff on July 8.

Collingwood, a bit-part player when England won the Ashes on home soil in 2005, was a regular when the Australians got them back in 2006/07 with a 5-0 thrashing of their oldest foes.

England will regain the Wisden Trophy they lost earlier this year in the Caribbean if they avoid defeat at the Riverside.

But Collingwood could not help looking ahead to what all-English cricketers regard as the biggest prize of the lot.

"There's been a real progression, the players feel that and we realise this is the last Test match before the Ashes," middle-order batsman Collingwood told reporters here on Tuesday.

"We can't get away from the fact that it is and we want to put a big performance in and win this trophy back -- it hurt us when we got beaten by the West Indies out there and we want to get it back."

"We just want to keep progressing all the time and get into a position where we can win those Ashes," he said.

England have added batsman Ian Bell and left-arm quick Ryan Sidebottom to their squad. But they are likely to be unchanged after wrapping up victory inside three days at Lord's against an undercooked West Indies on the back of fine individual displays from some of their least experienced players.

Ravi Bopara, in his first Test at No 3 made

143, off-spinner Graeme Swann won the man-of-the-match award for his maiden Test fifty and six wickets while Collingwood's Durham colleague Graham Onions took seven wickets on his debut with some well-directed fast bowling.

"The atmosphere we've created in the dressing room is very relaxed at the moment," Collingwood said.

"The new guys that have come in have pointed out it's a very enjoyable place to be and that has made it easier to go out and perform."

One reason why England won so quickly at Lord's was that Swann, who turns the ball away from left-handers, removed Shivnarine Chanderpaul for a golden duck and then a second ball-out.

Chanderpaul, who up until that match was ranked as the world's number one batsman, was all but impregnable when West Indies last toured England two years ago, batting for nearly seven hours during the corresponding Riverside Test while making an unbeaten century.

He may not have been unduly concerned by his own Lord's failure but, with the West Indies having four left-handers in their top six, Chanderpaul admitted Swann was a real threat.

"It puts all our left-handers in the firing line. He's got all of us out so far, so we have to make sure we go out and find a way to deal with it."

England though would be well advised not to get too far ahead of themselves. Had not West Indies dropped six catches in the final session of the first day to undo some of the good work of fast bowler Fidel Edwards, England's first innings total might have been considerably less than 377.

And the chances of both West Indies captain Chris Gayle and Chanderpaul, who played at the Riverside for Durham, failing for two matches in a row are slim.

"We just have to put Lord's behind us, come out here and play as well as we know we can," Chanderpaul said. "We're one down already, so the only way to save the Wisden Trophy is to win this game."

Cricket becomes Asian Games discipline

AFP, Singapore

Cricket officially became an Asian Games sport Wednesday when it was approved by the Olympic Council of Asia, with India and Pakistan pledging to send their best available teams.

It will make its debut in Guangzhou next year.

Both men's and women's teams will participate in a Twenty20 format contest, with India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh automatically qualifying, along with host nation China.

Other countries will have to play a qualifying round to fight for three additional spots.

"India and Pakistan were the drivers. Pakistan and India will come with their best teams because it will be a big competition," said OCA president Sheikh Ahmad Al-Sabah after the organisation's general assembly.

"Asia's four Test-playing nations have committed to sending their best available teams," he added.

The 2010 Asian Games will take place from November 12-27 in the southern Chinese city.

India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka are all scheduled to play Test and one-day series that month, but the OCA said once a schedule for Guangzhou was in place "truly the best players for that format will be available".

Cricket was last seen at a major multi-sport event at the 1998 Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur, but was dropped for the next two editions in England and Australia.

PCB sues

FROM PAGE 17 decided to strip Pakistan of its matches, was not entitled to do so.

"The IDI gave the World Cup to four countries... so the ICC Executive Board was not entitled to take a decision on a World Cup move, only the annual general meeting can take such a decision," said Rizvi.

Rizvi said until an ICC dispute committee or the Swiss-based Court of Arbitration for Sports resolve the case, the World Cup secretariat cannot be moved out of Pakistan.

"Pakistan can also claim a relief on the relocation of the secretariat," said the legal adviser.

Pakistan's already dented reputation as a safe sporting venue was left in tatters after attacks by gunmen on the Sri Lankan cricket team bus in Lahore on March 3 left seven Sri Lankan players and their assistant coach wounded and eight policemen dead.

Even before the attacks, foreign teams had refused to tour Pakistan over security fears in a country locked in an increasingly bloody conflict with Taliban and Al-Qaeda extremists.

Siriwardena

FROM PAGE 17 Pradeep and Thisara Perera.

Only Nasiruddin Faruque held firm as the left-handed batter for more than three hours to score 45 runs from 145 balls.

The tourists also won the first four-day game by ten wickets.

Umps' review from Oct

Cricket CricInfo, undated

This summer's Ashes series will be one of the last in which the umpire's decision is final, after the ICC confirmed that its controversial Umpire Decision Review System (UDRS) is set to be introduced permanently into the game on the basis of a 'phased roll-out' from October 2009.

The ICC chief executive, Haroon Lorgat, confirmed the plans at a press conference at Lord's, following a two-day meeting in which the results of nine months' worth of trials were assessed by the ICC's cricket committee.

A final decision on whether the new system will become a permanent feature of Test cricket will be taken by the ICC's chief executives committee and their main board, whose next meetings are due to take place during their annual conference at Lord's from June 22-26.

"I'm excited that the committee concluded the umpire decision review system had a positive effect on the game," said Lorgat. "It reduced the number of incorrect decisions and also cut down on instances of player dissent."

"We will seek [provided the ICC chief executives and board agree] to roll out the system from October 2009. The time ahead of that date will allow us to firm up the playing conditions, technical

specifications and protocols, ensure additional training for match officials and further brief the players so that the process can be successfully implemented."

Though designed to reduce controversy, the new system -- which gives players the opportunity to request a review by the third umpire of a decision made by the on-field umpire they believed was wrong -- has so far muddied the waters in several instances, not least during the Jamaica Test between England and West Indies in February.

"The protocols were clear, maybe the application was not so good," said Lorgat. "It's the really bad errors we want to eliminate. We had a fair amount of feedback from players and most of it was positive. They accept the fundamental thing that we want to get decisions right."

The cricket committee, chaired by the former West Indies captain Clive Lloyd, said it believed the new system, for all its faults, would reduce instances of bad decisions.

The committee also looked into the possibility of playing day/night Test cricket, and staging a trial five-day game under lights in 2010. But first they said more research was needed on finding a suitable ball, with the standard red one unsuitable for floodlit cricket, while Lloyd pointed out the effect of early evening dew would also have to be considered. Trials with light green and pink balls are currently

taking place.

The committee also said there was no need to alter the present format of 50-overs international cricket, amid concerns the format was becoming jaded in the Twenty20 era, and that there was not a need to impose weight restrictions on bats.

It also said it had no problems with double-sided bats and confirmed that the switch-hit, as pioneered by Kevin Pietersen, should remain legal.

The committee also called for stricter enforcement of rules on over-rates, and the doubling of fines for slow play, so as to cut down time-wasting by both batting and bowling sides. Lorgat said it was vital Test match over-rates were maintained or improved so the five-day game could continue to "engage" with spectators.

BUET, JU

FROM PAGE 17 Jahangirnagar University ground.

Half-centuries from Zahidul Islam and Mahfuzul Ahmed made sure BUET reached 261-7 and while Khulna University responded well to score 160-3 from 34 overs, rain intervened.

Kazi Nazrul Islam University (108 all out) found life difficult against the likes of Ali Hossain and Foyaz Ahmed who took three wickets each before Jahangirnagar University reached the target in just 14.1 overs.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down words. Includes a solution time of 27 mins and a small word search at the bottom.

Cryptoquip puzzle grid with letters and numbers for solving words.

CRYPTOQUIP

X G U R A W E G L M M G Z Q W K G
URIMRXF SPG PWK MPA MGNF
G J M P A R Z P G L F A F E O G S Q
G J J : " Z G G J O A F F N A G N O A "
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: SINCE HE REPEATEDLY SPRINGS INTO THE AIR WHILE TAKING STRIDES, COULD YOU SAY HE'S LEAPWALKING?
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: N equals P