



Olympic superstar Michael Phelps of the USA swims on his way to winning the 200m butterfly during the XLII Santa Clara International Invitational meet in California on Friday.

## Musical boost for India

PTI, Noida

With defending champions India fighting it out in the ICC World Twenty20 in England, Music company Saregama has launched an album, "India Hai Meri Jaan", to impart new life to the Indian team's youngsters.

The album, released by World Cup Winning captain, Kapil Dev here on Thursday, has songs written, sung and composed by Padamjeet Sehrawat, a former national level player and ESPN commentator.

Virender Sehwag, who is nursing a shoulder injury in England, tele-launched the album with a message for his fans on the occasion.

## Rajib stays

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Abdullah Al Saif secured six points while GM Niaz Mursheed, who lost to Shreyansh Daulka of India, FM Khondoker Aminul Islam, FM Md. Hasan Parag, Debaraj Chatterjee and Mahtabuddin Ahmed bagged 5.5 points each after the ninth round games.

## Ashraful

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"Under my captaincy the team reached the second round in South Africa in the first Twenty20 World Cup and the praises had showered on me for my 27-ball 61 and now people are criticizing and there was a reason for that," Ashraful recalled adding that he also contributed with the bat during his captaincy.

Coach Jamie Siddons came hard on his charges after the defeat against Ireland and raised question about fitness, discipline and said that the players don't listen to him.

Ashraful however said that his coach had spoken out of frustration.

"This kind of questions didn't rise when we played good cricket in the practice matches and even against India in the first Group match. I think he told this out of frustration because it was really painful to accept the fact that we didn't qualify for the second round," explained Ashraful.

## Dhoni bucks

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sides losing so we're not worried too much about it.

"Even though we didn't bat well, we still had the firepower to make a game out of it and it ran until the second last over."

Dhoni, who admitted Bravo had "taken the game away from us", said India's batsmen had let the side down.

"On these sort of tracks it (your score) should be at least 160 because the wickets are nice."

"We still really fancied our chances with 153 on the board if we could contain them in the first six overs when Chris Gayle was batting because he can really take the game away from you."

"I think the bowlers did well to contain him but in the middle overs they batted really well and scored runs off the spinners."



## Did U Know?

Non-flying Dutchman Dennis Bergkamp's fear of flying caused him to miss many international and European games for Arsenal.

## Phelps flies to victory

### Swimming

AFP, Santa Clara

Olympic superstar Michael Phelps had a lot more trouble with the cold weather than with his competitors Friday at the Santa Clara International swim meet.

Phelps won the 200-meter butterfly by more than 5 1/2 seconds, racing away from the rest of the field to set a meet record of 1 minute, 54.31 seconds - fourth fastest in the world this year.

But then came the toughest part of his evening. Meet officials could not find his clothes, and the swimmer who captured eight gold medals at the Beijing Games last August stood shivering in the chilly air for several minutes with only a large white towel to protect him from the elements.

"It's cold out here, I'm freezing," Phelps said. "It's windy and chilly."

While the water is kept at a comfortable competition temperature, Phelps said he could feel the wind in his face during the last half of the race.

"I felt the wind the third 50 (meters)," he said. "Coming off the 100 wall I was feeling, 'Ooh, this is not good.'"

While Phelps had the most dominant victory Friday night, he was not the biggest winner.

That honor went to American Dana Vollmer, who won the women's 100m freestyle and the

100m butterfly, and then added her third gold medal of the evening by swimming the anchor leg on the winning 4x100m freestyle relay.

Australia's Meagen Nay won the 400m freestyle, took the bronze medal in the 100m freestyle and added a relay silver medal.

She has had a strong showing on the Australian team's US tour, with seven gold medals at a meeting in Arizona last weekend.

Her teammate Leisel Jones broke her own 2-year-old meet record with a winning performance of 2:23.92 in the 200m breaststroke.

Jones, a six-time Olympic medalist, is skipping the world championships this summer to focus on beauty school. She hopes to open her own salon later this year back home in Australia.

"Waxing, nails, massage, hair - it's a nice way to break up swimming. They're totally different people from athletes," she said of beauty school. "Australians love their day spas."

Katie Hoff, who won three medals for the US at the Beijing Games, pulled out of the 400m freestyle final with a bad cough and her coach, Bob Bowman, said she would skip the final two days of the meet.

Other swimmers might be coughing soon, too, after an unseasonably cold, windy evening.

"It was tough, especially with the wind," said Australia's Brenton Rickard, who won the men's 100m breaststroke. "It kind of slaps you in the face with every breath you take."

The meeting continues on Saturday.

## Bravo IPL

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Friday's late game at Lord's they will find themselves in action again in the earlier of two fixtures across London at the Oval on Saturday.

By contrast, tournament favourites South Africa had a day off Friday.

"It would be nice if we could have another evening game," said Gayle.

"We'll just have to set our minds, put this behind us and focus on tomorrow. It's difficult. You might look at it and say it's Twenty20 but this format of the game is draining mentally."

"We will just have to switch on as quickly as possible."

Medium-pacer Bravo took four for 38 after fast bowler Fidel Edwards had put India on the backfoot with early wickets on his way to fine figures of three for 24.

Hearteningly for the West Indies, this match also showed they could win matches in this format without a major contribution from opening batsman Gayle, dismissed for 22 against India.

Bravo added: "It's nice to see someone actually put up their hand, take the game into their own hands."

"Yes we depend on Chris to get a good start but this is cricket, it doesn't happen all the time. He's in good form and we know before this tournament is over he's going to come good again."

"Our captain had the confidence to shuffle the batting order and we still got the job done. It doesn't matter what number I bat."

Gayle, who hammered 88 in the group win over Australia, said the sometimes wayward

Edwards had played a crucial role.

"We had that tremendous start from Fidel Edwards, picking up wickets at the top of the order made it difficult for them to get off to a flyer."

There was also a marked improvement in West Indies' fielding. Not only did Lendl Simmons, who later weighed in with 44, take a brilliant catch running backwards to get rid of Gautam Gambhir, but West Indies' ground fielding was impressive too.

"We have had a discussion about our fielding," Gayle revealed. "We did more catching drills during our warm-up. It's not like we are not working on our fielding, we know it's our downfall. We just have to keep working."

## Glamour back at Real

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would be another sizeable fee. Real were also looking to raid Valencia for David Silva and Raul Albiol, with the latter appearing the more likely to move as the club from the Mestalla claim Silva is non-transferable.

Especially with the poor state of the defence last season it will be interesting to see whether Perez, a second time round, will pay more attention to the backline, with a replacement for Fabio Cannavaro at centre-half a priority.

The reaction from treble winners Barcelona has been incredulity at the amount of money spent and the possibility that Perez could take his sum-

mer spending up to 300 million euros.

The big question is where is he getting the money from?

"I don't know where this amount of money which Florentino Perez plans to spend on players is coming from, he says he will recover it by selling shirts but that means he will have to sell 30 million shirts," said Barca director Xavier Salas Martin.

"We would never pay 65 million for a player you can be sure, for that amount of money you could have bought the whole of the side which won the Champions League in Rome."

Now there is a suspicion that Perez, the owner of a major construction company in Spain, has now similarly found another way to bring in finance.

## Asians have extra motivation

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"We have a mission beyond football - we want to make our people, who are suffering war and conflict, happy."

"That's why physically and mentally we're prepared to help Iraq - that's our weapon and we wish god will help us achieve this task."

"Our country is changing for the better, we want to help our people's pain."

Akram, who has just signed a three year contract with Dutch club FC Twente, making him only the second Iraqi to play in Europe, added: "What's important is for the

Iraqi team to represent all our people and communities regardless of their affiliations."

"We not only have Sunnis and Shi'ites on the team, but Christians and Kurds too."

More importantly, on the footballing plain at least, is the presence of seven of the players who helped Iraq take their continental crown.

In Milutinovic, who was appointed only in April, they have a vastly experienced coach who has taken five different teams to the World Cup finals. He paid tribute to his squad: "It's a privilege to be the

## Sharapova sent packing

AFP, Birmingham

Maria Sharapova's Wimbledon build-up suffered a setback on Saturday when she was knocked out of the Birmingham grasscourt event 6-4, 6-4 by China's Li Na.

Sharapova, the champion here in 2004 and 2005, is still feeling her way back on tour after over 10 months out with a shoulder injury and she showed signs of a quick revival by reaching the French Open quarterfinals.

But the unseeded Russian was plagued by errors on Saturday, suffering six breaks of serve in her 90-minute defeat.

Li, the fourth seed, will face either Slovakian 13th seed Magdalena Rybarikova or India's Sania Mirza in Sunday's final.

"In every single game we've had trouble with our start," Younus told reporters. "Today was a crucial game and we had back-to-back no-balls in the first over, but Tanvir is struggling."

"We also struggled with our batting and we only had one good partnership but in a match like this you have to go all the way and not just score 20s and things like that."

Pakistan conceded 20 extras and Younus added: "We had 20 extras and we lost by 19 runs so that's crucial in this form of cricket."

Pakistan could call up all-rounder Abdul Razzaq, a replacement for the injured Yasir Arafat, for Saturday's match against New Zealand at The Oval.

## Younus blames start

AFP, London

Pakistan captain Younus Khan bemoaned yet another poor start at the World Twenty20 after his side lost their opening Super Eights match against Sri Lanka by 19 runs at Lord's on Friday.

Pace bowler Sohail Tanvir conceded 29 runs in his first two overs, including several no-balls and wides while Pakistan were equally slack when they batted, collapsing to 35 for three.

Younus tried to repair the damage with a well-made score of 50 before another flurry of wickets put the game beyond his side's reach.

What made this defeat worse for Pakistan was that their spinners had got them back into the game by helping restrict Sri Lanka, who had been 81 without loss, to 150 for seven.

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But a coy Younus added: "He is here and training at the moment, but we'll decide tomorrow if he is playing or not."

Sri Lanka were given an excellent platform thanks to a typically brisk 46 from Tilakaratne Dilshan which featured the opener's now trademark scoop shot over his head for four.

"The first time I played it was two months ago in the IPL in South Africa. I have confidence now and I trust myself that I can play that shot," Dilshan said.

"I could play a paddle shot against a yoker and then if the ball is a good length, the ball can go behind the wicketkeeper."

Sri Lanka spinners Muttiah Muralidaran and Ajantha Mendis put the brakes on the Pakistan innings and Dilshan said that, with those two bowlers in the side, his team were confident of defending seemingly low totals.

"We are playing very good cricket, we know with Mendis and Murali we can defend 160 against any team."

This was the first match between the Asian nations since Sri Lanka's team bus was attacked by armed militants in Lahore in March, an incident that led to the suspension of all international cricket in Pakistan.

Before Friday's match players from both sides lined up alongside one another for the respective national anthems and Younus said: "It was a good gesture actually especially after what happened in Lahore."

"Pakistan and Sri Lanka have always had a good relationship. When I was battoning against Murali we were chatting with each other."

## Murray storms into final

### Tennis

AFP, London

Top seed Andy Murray swept into his first Queen's final with a ruthless 6-2, 6-4 win over Juan Carlos Ferrero on Saturday.

Murray is bidding to become the first Briton to win the pre-Wimbledon warm-up event since Bunny Austin in 1938.

Queen's was the venue for Murray's first Tour victory in a singles match four years ago and the 22-year-old has once again been right at home on the grass courts of west London.

The world number three, who plays James Blake in Sunday's final, hasn't dropped a set in four matches and, in reaching his fifth ATP Tour final this year, he also became the first British finalist here since Tim Henman in 2002.

"I felt it was a good match. I started well but the second set was very close," Murray said. "I'm obviously happy to win in two sets. I was very happy with the way I played all round."

"I didn't have the easiest draw so it's been a good week all around and hopefully I can finish it off on Sunday."

Murray will be up against an opponent with previous experience of a Queen's final after Blake went through to his second showpiece here thanks to Andy Roddick's retirement with the score at 4-4 in the first set.

"I felt it was a good match. I started well but the second set