



Pakistan all-rounder Shahid Afridi, who smashed a half-century, is in full swing against South Africa during their ICC World Twenty20 semifinal at Trent Bridge in Nottingham yesterday.



Did U Know?
Jack Nicklaus of the United States was honoured with the PGA's Golfer of the Century Award in 1988.



Gennaro Gattuso
(AC Milan midfielder)
"Chelsea are a big, big team but working with (Carlo) Ancelotti is a good feeling. We have worked together for eight years and he is for me a second father. He is a great person, and a great manager." While considering a move to Chelsea.



BTV & STAR Cricket
ICC World T20 (SECOND SEMIFINAL)
Sri Lanka v West Indies
Live from 10:30pm

TODAY'S T20 MATCH

(SECOND SEMIFINAL)
Sri Lanka v West Indies
Venue: The Oval
Time: 10:30pm

Edwards scare for Windies

AFP, London

West Indies face an anxious wait over the fitness of fast bowler Fidel Edwards before finalising their side to play in Friday's World Twenty20 semifinal against Sri Lanka here at The Oval.

Edwards withdrew with a back problem shortly before the start of their five-wicket win over England at the Oval on Monday that saw them West Indies into the last four.

And a West Indies team spokesman told reporters at

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5

2ND SEMIFINAL: SRI LANKA V WEST INDIES

Chasers v defenders

AFP, London



West Indies are confident of chasing nearly any total in this event; Sri Lanka believe there is no score they can't defend. Clearly, something will have to

give in their World Twenty20 semifinal.

Friday's match at the Oval sees two exciting sides up against one another and, while Sri Lanka will start favourites, the West Indies have shown that they are not to be underestimated.

Sri Lanka, who have an admirably well balanced side for cricket's shortest format, have yet to lose a match at this tournament.

In Sanath Jayasuriya, the man for whom the phrase 'explosive opener' might have been created, and the inventive Tillakaratne Dilshan, who every time he plays the 'Dilscoop' delights spectators and infuriates opponents in equal measure, they have a first-wicket partnership that can score rapidly.

Behind them come the likes of captain and wicketkeeper Kumar Sangakkara and Mahela Jayawardene, a pair of class batsmen.

But it is their bowling attack which has really proved a problem for most of their opponents at this tournament.

For years now batsmen around the world have found that scoring quickly against off-

spinner Muttiah Muralitharan is easier said than done.

But he has now been joined by Ajantha Mendis, a spinner who flicks the ball out of his fingers in a way not seen in international cricket since Australia's John Gleeson in the early 1970s and whose 'carrom ball' has left countless batsmen bemused.

"Murali can turn the ball on any surface," Jayawardene said of the star off-spinner, who is the world's highest wicket-taker in both Tests and one-day cricket. "And if Ajantha sticks to his plans, we have a fairly good chance of going all the way."

That bowlers are restricted to four overs each in this tournament works in Mendis's favour in that by the time batsmen have evolved some sort of plan to combat him, his spell is over.

He took three for nine against New Zealand at Trent Bridge on Tuesday in a match Sri Lanka won by 48 runs to secure their last four spot.

"Ajantha was brilliant," said Sangakkara. "He is very difficult to read and he has an attacking mindset. It's a great ability to have."

But it was at The Oval, a happy hunting ground for West Indies down the decades, that the men from the Caribbean beat Australia by seven wickets in their tournament opener.

That victory owed much to a quite brilliant 88 from West Indies captain Chris Gayle, the

SEE PAGE 18 COL 2

PCB calls off

U-19 tour of Bangladesh

CRICINFO, undated

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has scrapped an under-19 tour of Bangladesh, scheduled for October, on security grounds.

The decision has been conveyed to the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB), a PCB statement said.

In March, the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) halted all tours by foreign teams, including a scheduled visit by the Pakistan team, as it could not guarantee them adequate security in the aftermath of a mutiny by Bangladesh Rifles personnel.

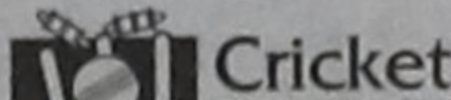
The BCB, however, has expressed disappointment over Pakistan's decision and called it "unfortunate".

"I have not been officially informed about their position but if they have taken such a decision, then it is very unfortunate," Mohammad Jalal Yunus,

SEE PAGE 18 COL 4

Ashraful hits back

Unrest at Tigers camp



SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammad Ashraful came out fighting as he hit back at the board officials who on Wednesday heavily criticised the Tigers skipper by saying that there is no reason to keep him at the helm.

"When the general people and media expressed their anger it's acceptable but it's not right when board officials speak like that publicly from a responsible position," was Ashraful's curt response to BCB director Gazi Ashraf Hossain and Jalal Yunus' comments.

"If I am not to be retained as the captain then the board should have let me know before anyone else. And it's really painful to get to know this through newspapers in the morning," he said expressing his disappointment.

While Ashraful fumed, other members of the national team now training for the West Indies tour at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur looked upset at the board official's outburst in which they lambasted the players, the coaching staff, the

selectors and the team management.

Although no other player wanted to make any comments, it was learnt that initially there was talk about refraining from practice in protest of the comments. Besides, the players were even contemplating not to continue practice on its resumption on Saturday unless board officials and former national skipper Gazi Ashraf Hossain apologized for his scathing remarks.

The players however later changed their stance.

Gazi Ashraf on Wednesday said that Ashraful should be sent to 'rehabilitation program' while referring to his inexplicable shot against Ireland in the ICC World Twenty20 in England in a match that Bangladesh lost by six wickets.

But Ashraful himself confessed to be satisfied with the team's performance under his leadership.

"One can't give judgment considering the performance. I think the team has been shaping up well under my

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1



Chief selector Rafiqul Alam (R) discusses a point with Bangladesh players Tamim Iqbal (C) and Shakib Al Hasan at the Sher-e-Bangla Stadium in Mirpur yesterday.

Brazil belittle USA

AFP, Pretoria



Brazil cruised to a 3-0 win over the United States, who for the second game running finished with 10 men, here on Thursday to all but seal their place in the Confederations Cup semifinals.

Felipe Melo, Robinho and Maicon secured the three points that lift Dunga's men to the top of Group B with Italy, in action against Egypt in Thursday's other game, to come on Saturday.

Dunga made four changes to the side that edged Egypt 4-3 in their opener, with defenders Daniel Alves, Juan and Kleber making way for Andre Santos, Maicon and Miranda and in midfield Ramires coming in for Elano.

On the US front, midfielders Marcus DaBeasley and Sacha Kljestan were called up by coach Bob Bradley in place of Ricardo Clark, red-carded in the 3-1 loss to Italy, and Benny Feilhaber.

The clash of champions from the Americas was only seven minutes old when Brazil went ahead.

Maicon floated a perfectly weighted 35-yard free-kick into the box for Melo who out-jumped his marker, West Ham United defender Jonathan Spector, to head past Tim Howard.

Kaka then had what seemed like most of North America on his tail as he set sail for the US goalline with the ball glued to his feet only for his dash towards Howard's end to come to nothing as he shot into the side netting.

Down at the other end, US captain Landon Donovan, who scored the penalty against Italy, tapped a corner to DaBeasley but the Rangers midfielder quickly lost possession.

Brazil turned defence into attack in the blink of an eye, with newly-signed Benfica midfielder Ramires bursting through the heart of the US defence and outfoxing Spector before squaring for Robinho to sweep home.

To celebrate the Manchester City striker, perhaps in a world first, cheekily ran over to the advertising hoarding to give a brief interview to a Brazilian television crew - a question of shoot first, answer questions later.

With the US almost in a daze from the Latin onslaught Dunga's army attacked seemingly at will as Robinho again, Luis Fabiano and Kaka all took pot shots at Howard.

The US came out for the second period only to be subjected to more of the same with Howard forced to pull off a quick reflex save to tip a Kaka shot wide on 56 minutes.

Bradley's men were finding the going tough but they made it even tougher when Kljestan was sent off for a reckless tackle on Ramires,

SEE PAGE 18 COL 8

WOMEN'S SCHOOL FOOTBALL

BIT ride on Lubaba

SPORTS REPORTER

BIT's Lubaba scored a brilliant hat-trick to guide her team to their first win against Islambagh Ashraf Ali High School by 5-0 in the Citycell Dhaka Metropolitan Women's School Football Championship at the Sultana Kamal Sports Complex at Dhanmondi yesterday.

Lubaba scored a total of four goals including the hat-trick while Ashna netted the other goal for the victors. Arshiya of BIT was adjudged the player of the match.

Viqarunnissa Noon Girls School and Dholaipar High School also won their opening matches to register their first win in the meet.

Viqarunnissa Noon Girls

SEE PAGE 18 COL 5

Ramdin ready for Sri Lankan spin

AFP, London



West Indies wicketkeeper Denesh Ramdin believes it is imperative they dominate Sri Lanka's unusual spin attack if they are to win Friday's World Twenty20 semifinal at The Oval.

Muttiah Muralidaran and Ajantha Mendis have posed numerous problems for batsmen during Sri Lanka's unbeaten run to the last four while round arm fast bowler Lasith Malinga has also been in the wickets.

"It's very rare you get two world-class spinners like this in the same side," said Ramdin.

"We want to get on top of them early so their captain has to take them off and bring them on later, so our plan is to get on top of them as they come on to bowl."

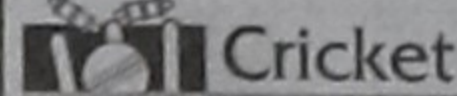
Ramdin added the key to playing Mendis, who flicks the ball off his fingers, was to treat him as a seamer.

"He's a mystery spinner, but as a batsman you just go out there and try and play each ball on merit," said West Indies' vice-captain.

"He's not spinning the ball as much as everyone expected so what we're trying to do is play him as medium pacer, hit him

SEE PAGE 18 COL 4

India shift focus



AFP, Nottingham

Mahendra Singh Dhoni's India hope a one-day series in the West Indies later this month will help them recover from a dismal campaign in the World Twenty20.

India, who won the inaugural event in South Africa two years ago, failed to make the semifinals after losing all three Super Eight matches against the West Indies, England and South Africa.

They now embark on a tour of the Caribbean for four one-dayers, the last leg of a hectic nine-month schedule across the globe that included the five-week Indian Premier League in South Africa in April-May.

India will return home after the last game against the West Indies at St Lucia on July 5 and will get a chance to rest till the Champions Trophy starts in South Africa in late September.

Skipper Dhoni wanted his team to forget the disappointing performance in the World

Twenty20 and look ahead towards the series against the West Indies.

"Once you lose a few games, you start dissecting everything and count how much better we could have played," the Indian captain said.

"We consider 80 per cent as the benchmark. If you are close to that, with the talent we have in the team, we have more chances of winning games."

"But we were more like 50 to 60 per cent of our potential in England."

"The T20 World Cup is gone. We are off to the West Indies, and that is what we are thinking about now."

"In the next two or three days, we will take some time off. Then we will start working back on the basics again, accept this has happened and start preparing for the West Indies."

"It will be tough in the West Indies for us. We must concentrate on that tour and not look what we will be doing during the break after that."

"We want to do well in the West Indies and then be really well prepared for the Champions Trophy."

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1



Brazil midfielder Felipe Melo (R) celebrates with teammate Miranda after scoring the opening goal against USA during their Confederations Cup match at the Loftus Versfeld Stadium in Pretoria on Thursday.

PHOTO: AFP

Azimpur Girls triumph

SPORTS REPORTER

Azimpur Girls School and College earned an emphatic 67 runs victory over Amzad Ali Sarker Girls High School 'B' team in the Girls School Cricket Tournament at the Gulshan Youth Club ground yesterday.

Put into bat first, Azimpur Girls School and College scored 101 runs for 8 in stipulated 20 overs with Jannat Ara contributing team highest 43 runs while the second highest 42 runs came from extras.

In reply, Amzad Ali Sarker Girls High School 'B' team were dismissed for 34 runs in seven overs with 29 runs coming from extras.

In another match, Viqarunnisa Noon School & College 'A' team beat their B

SEE PAGE 18 COL 4

Shuktara, Pabna in semis

SPORTS REPORTER

Shuktara Jubo Sangsad of Narayanganj and Brothers Union Club of Pabna have confirmed their places in the semifinals of the Bashundhara Champions Club Cup Football winning their respective matches at the Cox's Bazar Stadium yesterday.

The two teams will now meet in the semifinal tomorrow at the same venue.

In the day's matches, Shuktara Jubo Sangsad of Narayanganj edged past GRC Sporting Club of Narsingdi by a solitary goal scored by Sohel.

Robin of Shuktara Jubo Sangsad got the marching

SEE PAGE 18 COL 1