

Kapil not leaving
ICL

AFP, New Delhi

Retired cricket great Kapil Dev will not sever ties with a rebel Twenty20 league despite an amnesty offer by the Indian cricket board, media reported Thursday.

Dev, India's only World Cup winning captain and one of the game's great all-rounders, heads the Indian Cricket League (ICL), which is struggling to keep afloat after being deserted by players and officials alike.

Last month, dozens of players and support staff quit the ICL to accept an amnesty offer from the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI).

But Dev said he had no plans to quit the doomed league.

"Look, on paper at least, the ICL still exists," Dev was quoted as saying by The Telegraph.

"I'm not hurt that so many have gone back to the BCCI's fold. It's a question of their future and if somebody wants to play for the country, then who are we to stop him?"

"But, yes, they had been intimidated."

ICL players were banned from official cricket around the world at the behest of the powerful BCCI, which organises the Indian Premier League, its own Twenty20 competition.

"I know the list of those who've returned to the BCCI includes some very dear friends, but I don't hold any grudges," Dev said.

Koertzen's century

CRICINFO, London

Rudi Koertzen, the South African umpire, will become the second official after Jamaican Steve Bucknor to stand in a 100 Tests at the Lord's Test starting on Thursday.

"It's a huge personal achievement and a dream come true," Koertzen said. The achievement comes less than a week after he became the first umpire to stand in 200 one-day games.

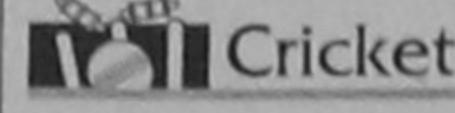
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runs and was declared man-of-the-match.

In the second match Simultair were all out for 51. TBS Krira Chakra struggled during the chase and only managed to overhaul the total in the last ball of the innings for the loss of nine wickets.

Shawon of TBS scored highest 20 run and was declared man-of-the-match.

Not a 'home' really!



AFP, London

England headed into the second match of the Ashes series here at Lord's knowing it was 75 years since they last won a Test against their oldest rivals at the 'home of cricket'.

In 1934 it needed an exceptional solo effort to see off the might of an Australia side whose top four included Don Bradman, Test cricket's greatest run-scorer, as they won against their oldest rivals at Lord's for the first time since 1896.

Fortunately for England they had in Hedley Verity, one of cricket's most outstanding left-arm spinners, someone who took 15 wickets in the match for 104 runs as the home side won by an innings and 38 runs.

England first made 440 which featured 120 from wicketkeeper Les Ames, who with Verity's Yorkshire colleague Maurice Leyland (109) put on 129 for the sixth wicket.

The 29-year-old Verity then captured the prize wicket of Bradman, caught and bowled for 36.

But Australia were still soundly placed at 192 for two as the match entered the weekend.

However, these were the days of uncovered wickets and heavy rain turned the pitch into a 'slow turner'. Only opener Bill Brown, who made 105, scored more than 37 as Verity took seven for 61.

Australia were sent in again by England captain Bob Wyatt, after failing to avoid the follow-on by just seven runs.

Bradman, caught behind for 13, again fell cheaply to the left-arter, as Australia were bowled out for 118 with Verity taking seven for 61 and 14 wickets in all on the third day.

But this was not a one-off performance in the manner of Bob Massie, the Australia swing bowler who 38 years later took 16 wickets on his Test debut at Lord's but then faded from view almost as quickly as he'd risen.

In 40 Tests, Verity took 144 wickets at an average of under 25 apiece and ten years of first-class cricket yielded 1,956 wickets at 14.87 runs each.

No wonder his obituary in cricket almanack Wisden read: "Judged by any standard, Verity was a great bowler."

"The balance of the run up, the high ease of the left-handed action, the scrupulous length, the pensive variety, all proclaimed the master."

"He combined nature with art to a degree not equalled by any other English bowler of our time."

Less than 10 years after his triumph at Lord's, Verity was dead, one of several leading cricketers killed during World War II.

A captain in the British Army, Verity died of his wounds in a prisoner of war camp in Italy two months following his 38th birthday after leading his company in an attack on German positions in Catania, Sicily.

The news of his death came on September 1, 1943, exactly four years after he had played his last match for Yorkshire and, at Hove, taken seven Sussex wickets for nine runs in one innings.

"Verity showed, as he was so sure to do, that rare courage which both calculates and inspires," Wisden said.

Akhtar doubtful for Lanka ODIs

AFP, Karachi

The chances of controversial paceman Shoaib Akhtar staging a comeback in Pakistan's one-day series against Sri Lanka plummeted after an official said Thursday he failed to show for a fitness test.

"He could not come because of his mother's illness and since his fitness and match form was not ascertained the status will be conveyed to the team management," Wasim Bari, Pakistan's interim chief selector, told AFP.

Bari said he would consult members of a newly appointed selection committee before leaving Friday for Sri Lanka, where he will seek input from team management on announcing the one-day squad.

Bari was appointed interim committee chief after the Pakistan Cricket Board disbanded the senior and junior selection committees last month.

A five-man selection committee, bolstered by two co-opted members and announced earlier this week, will start working from August 1.

Pakistan, 2-0 down in a three-Test series in Sri Lanka, will play the third Test in Colombo from July 20. The five-match, one-day series starts July 30.

The series will be followed by a Twenty20 match.

Akhtar, who was withdrawn from Pakistan's World Twenty20 squad last month after he developed genital warts, claimed he was ready to stage a comeback in the one-day series against Sri Lanka.

The 33-year-old paceman has been plagued by injury and disciplinary problems, and has not been a regular team member since 2007.

He informed that the schedule will be confirmed and announced in due course after getting the ICC ranking.

"On the basis of ICC ranking the participating 14 teams would be split into two groups. We will try our best to arrange the schedule in a way so that the host country could play at home most of their matches," he said.

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