



Bangladesh coach Zubair Nipu (3rd from R) briefs his players during a preparation camp for the AFC Under-16 qualifiers at Motijheel Boys High School ground yesterday.

Federer fined for profanity

AFP, New York

Swiss superstar Roger Federer was slapped with a 1,500-dollar fine by the United States Tennis Association Thursday for a heat of the battle argument with a US Open official.

Federer used a profanity when talking with the chair umpire during the final in New York on Sunday which he eventually lost to Argentina's Juan Martin Del Potro.

Federer's fine pales in comparison to Serena Williams who was docked 10,000 dollars for threatening to shove a ball down the throat of a female line judge in an expletive-laden tirade in her final singles match.

Williams was also fined 500 dollars for throwing her racket.

Tournament spokesman Chris Widmaier says there were a total of 31,500 dollars in fines levied at the 2009 US Open.

Vera Zvonareva and Daniel Koelliker were fined the same amount as Federer for swearing.

Canadian doubles player Daniel Nestor was fined 5,000 dollars for unsportsmanlike conduct directed at unruly fans of his opponent who were cheering double faults.

Big hitters

FROM PAGE 17 enough to dent England's prowess, came the news that Flintoff was also ruled out of the tournament.

Flintoff, who quit Test cricket after the recent Ashes series, is a proven match-winner with both bat and ball in all forms of the game.

England have often relied on his aggressive batting and sharp seam bowling to gain a big advantage. Their recent one-day series defeat against Australia only proves how badly they missed their match-winning duo.

While England, Champions Trophy runners-up at home in 2004, will be under strength without Pietersen and Flintoff, cricket will also be poorer without the three quality batsmen.

WADA stands

FROM PAGE 17 in the registered testing pool.

"It is helpful any sport keeps that to themselves, they should decide who should be on the registered testing pool and they should make their rules about what that might be," Fahey said. "Having said that, any athlete can be tested anywhere any time. I've to stress that again whether you are part of the registered testing pool or not, that's part of the WADA code."

He added that "the element of surprise" in the clause is essential for out of competition tests.

The ICC implemented the new WADA code from January 1 and that included a clause which mandated cricketers nominated to an international testing pool to reveal to an ICC-nominated officer before every quarter details of their location for an hour every day for the next three months to facilitate out-of-competition testing.

This whereabouts system was to start from August 1 but was stalled after the 11 Indian cricketers in the pool, including Sachin Tendulkar, refused to reveal the required information citing security and privacy concerns. The BCCI has backed the players in this issue and even sought the opinion of two top legal authorities in the country to firm up its stand. It is believed that the BCCI now has significant support from other ICC full members on this issue.

Renault future in balance

AFP, Paris



The Nelson Piquet junior 'crashgate' scandal could not have come at a worse time for a Formula One team such as Renault already under pressure to justify its operation against the backdrop of the global economic crisis.

The French manufacturer's implicit acceptance of what has been described as the worst case of cheating in the history of sport cannot fail to have some bearing on its continued presence in the sport.

The credit crunch has already forced Honda and BMW to pull the plug on their F1 operations -- and the negative publicity that has shadowed the murky goings on at last year's Singapore Grand Prix can hardly help Renault's image in a decimated market place.

Question marks over Renault's F1 involvement had already been raised before Piquet's whistleblowing call to the FIA which triggered the latest and most damaging of scandals to hit the sport.

Former team boss Flavio Briatore angrily brushed off suggestions that Renault's future could be in doubt back in January, just one month after Honda announced they were quitting.

"Everyone always talks about Renault, whereas the others have more problems than us," said the Italian, who resigned on Wednesday along with Renault's director of engineering Pat Symonds.

"No one ever asked Honda if they were going to stay. And look what happened, they left," added Briatore.

"It's been five years now that we've been talking about reducing costs. Renault has never been one to waste money. Spectacular presentations, fireworks, that's not for us. I've never had a budget problem at Renault."

The amount of money it costs to run a modern day Formula One team -- Renault's annual budget is put at up to 300 million euros -- has

never been more pertinent in these cash-strapped times.

That's a hard figure to justify for a car giant that recorded an 80 per cent loss in profits in 2008 on the previous year's sales and which has already suffered a 2.7 billion euro hit in the first quarter of 2009.

Renault's success in F1 is pivotal to its image and consequently its performance in a market place shrunk by the worst economic downturn since the Great Depression in the 1930s.

F1, with its 600 million spectators, remains the principal vehicle for Renault to advertise its marque -- Fernando Alonso's world drivers' titles in 2005 and 2006 giving it a huge boost around the world.

But for the past two years the team based in France at Viry-Chatillon on the outskirts of Paris and near Oxford in England has treaded water.

And with a difficult start to the 2008 season a win for Alonso in Singapore could well have been just what was needed to convince Renault to continue, according to paddock rumours.

Alonso's (legitimate) follow-up success in Japan would have only helped the argument to stick with F1.

The 2009 campaign has not been kind to Renault -- after 13 races Alonso is trailing in tenth place in the drivers' standings while the team are eighth of ten in the constructors' title race -- 126 points from leaders Brawn GP.

What's more Alonso is set to jump ship and move to Ferrari in 2010 when the Italian team will be backed by Santander, Alonso's long-term partner.

So the stakes could not be higher for Renault as they await the FIA's verdict on crashgate -- a huge fine like the 100 million euros meted out to McLaren Mercedes in 2007 or lengthy suspension could well spell the end for the proud French outfit.

Their one hope going into Monday's hearing at FIA headquarters in Paris is the decision by Briatore and Symonds to quit on Wednesday -- resignations which they hope will lead to clemency by the FIA stewards.

England feel the Paine

FROM PAGE 17 second ball of England's reply.

England captain Andrew Strauss appeared to have swayed out of the way of a Lee bouncer in near textbook fashion, the ball brushing his shoulder on the way through to Paine.

But Pakistani umpire Asad Rauf, after a prolonged appeal, gave Strauss out and England were nought for one.

"It was a bit of a horror show with the bat," Strauss said.

"No-one is more frustrated than I am. We can sit down and talk about what went wrong today but ultimately it is about people getting up there, showing some character and delivering."

Joe Denly drove James Hopes's second ball for six but the medium-pacer had his revenge when, off his 11th delivery, the Kent opener skied him to Lee.

Ponting, long one of the world's best outfielders, then produced two magnificent direct hit run-outs to dismiss Matt Prior and Ravi Bopara.

That left England 60 for four and they never looked like clawing their way back from such a dire position.

England, after Strauss's run of five straight toss wins ended, saw Anderson dismiss Shane Watson and he then had

Ponting caught off a hook at deep backward square-leg by Ryan Sidebottom.

But England's joy at removing Ponting for six, 120 fewer than he managed in Australia's four-wicket victory on Tuesday, was short-lived as Paine unfurled a fine array of strokes.

The 24-year-old, only playing after first-choice keeper Brad Haddin was ruled out of the series with a broken finger that will also sideline him from the Champions Trophy, had made his maiden ODI fifty at Lord's on Saturday.

His single off Graeme Swann saw him to a hundred off 130 balls, including a superb straight six off Dimitri Mascarenhas and 13 fours.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard in the sixth one-day international between England and Australia at Trent Bridge on Thursday:

AUSTRALIA	
Watson b Anderson	4
Paine c Prior b Mascarenhas	111
Ponting c Sidebottom b Anderson	65
Hussey c Denly b Swann	6
Ferguson b Anderson	6
White c Denly b Anderson	35
Hopes c Strauss b Sidebottom	38
Lee run out (Anderson)	0
Hauritz not out	1
Siddle not out	8
Extras: (b-1, lb-7, w-14)	22

Total: (For 8 wts in 50 overs) 296
Did not bat: Bracken.
Fall of wickets: 1-19, 2-40, 3-203, 4-206, 5-220, 6-273, 7-281, 8-288.

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Anderson	10	0	55	4
Sidebottom	9	0	65	1
Mascarenhas	10	0	49	1
Bresnan	9	0	60	0
Swann	10	0	48	1
Bopara	2	0	11	0

ENGLAND	
Strauss c Paine b Lee	0
Denly c Hopes	25
Bopara run out (Ponting)	24
Prior run out (Ponting)	6
Shah c Watson b Hopes	23
Morgan c Hussey b Bracken	23
Mascarenhas b Hopes	11
Bresnan not out	31
Swann b Bracken	12
Sidebottom b Siddle	15
Anderson b Lee	1
Extras: (lb-3, w-8, nb-3)	14
Total: (All out in 41 overs)	185

Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-45, 3-59, 4-60, 5-100, 6-114, 7-125, 8-158, 9-182.

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Lee	8	0	48	2
Bracken	10	0	42	2
Siddle	8	1	22	1
Hopes	9	0	32	3
Hauritz	6	0	38	0

Result: Australia won by 111 runs and lead seven-match series 6-0.
Man-of-the-match: Tim Paine.

SA fume over ICC awards

FROM PAGE 17 panel representative: Alan Hurst; ICC umpires elite panel representative: Billy Bowden and chairman of the ICC cricket committee: Clive Lloyd.

While the shortlist was announced on Tuesday, the category winners will be known only on awards night. The votes have already been collated by Ernst and Young, who acted as independent auditors.

South Africa are currently the No. 1 Test and ODI team on the ICC rankings and the long list, reflecting this, featured four South African players. Graeme Smith, who led his team to their first Test series win ever in Australia, and AB de Villiers, who hit two match-

winning centuries against Australia -- one of them set up that historic away series win -- were nominated for Cricketer of the Year and Test Player of the Year; Dale Steyn, who was ICC's Test Player of the Year in 2008, also featured on the long list for the best Test player; and Wayne Parnell, the left-arm fast bowler, was nominated for the best Twenty20 International Performance of the year.

None of them made it to the final four in their categories.

Writing on the SuperSport website, Manthorp said the fault lay not with the ICC but with the system used for determining the award winners. The 25-member panel has to select the final nominees from a dozen or more names on the long list,

which, he said, was simply too time-consuming to be done thoroughly. There were "plenty of Proteas" on the long list, he said, but not having played for three months meant they were "out of sight and out of mind."

Andrew Strauss, the England captain, and Mitchell Johnson, the Australian fast bowler, figure in both the shortlists (of four players each) for Cricketer of the Year and Test Player of the Year. MS Dhoni, the India captain and Gautam Gambhir, the India opener, are the other shortlisted nominees for Cricketer of the Year; Gambhir and Thilan Samaraweera, the Sri Lankan batsman, are also in the race for the best Test player.

Strauss calls for character

Cricket

AFP, Nottingham

England captain Andrew Strauss told his players to show "character" after a 111-run thrashing by Australia on Thursday left them on the brink of a record 7-0 series loss.

No side has ever lost a bilateral one-day international (ODI) campaign 7-0. But a sixth straight defeat by world champions Australia meant England faced the prospect of making unwanted history in Sunday's climax at the Riverside.

"Six-nil is bad enough to be honest," Strauss said after England were beaten for the second time in three days under the Trent Bridge floodlights.

"We've got one more opportunity (this series) to show our calibre as a side. We need to take that opportunity."

England, set 297 to win after Australia made 296 for eight featuring a maiden ODI century from wicketkeeper/batsman Tim Paine, were bowled out for 187 with a crushing nine overs to spare with only No 8 Tim Bresnan, 31 not out, making more than 30.

Once again England's top order failed, although Strauss, the hosts' best batsman this series, did appear unlucky to be given out caught behind for a second-ball nought.

But the left-handed opener said his dismissal was no excuse for another batting "horror show" that shattered

England's already dented confidence ahead of next week's start of the Champions Trophy ODI tournament in South Africa.

"It was a bit of a horror show with the bat," Strauss said. "No one is more frustrated than I am."

Strauss, booed by angry spectators during the post-match presentation ceremony, added: "We were never in the hunt with the bat so I can understand the frustration of the crowd. I'm not going to sit here and make any excuses."

"What we have shown so far in this series hasn't been good enough, far from it. As a group of players and as individuals we need to stand up and show some character now. It's as simple as that."

He added: "It's been damaging for the one-day unit because confidence has become increasingly frail."

However, Strauss insisted England -- who just over a year ago were 5-0 down in a seven-match ODI series in India that was cut short by the Mumbai terror attacks -- could regroup in time for Sunday's match and the Champions Trophy.

Recalling how England won the one-day series on their last tour of Australia, after losing the Ashes 5-0, Strauss said: "It's not impossible to get back."

"I remember in Australia in 2006/07 we were in a similar state and Paul Collingwood got a couple of hundreds and things turned around."

"It's a very simple process. Sitting around in a team room having a chat

about it is not going to solve anything.

"What is going to solve it is a couple of guys standing up and showing the necessary character to go out and turn things around. It's as simple as that... but with each game that passes the pressure grows."

The 24-year-old Paine, in only his seventh ODI, built on the fifty he made at Lord's last Saturday in fine style during a 148-ball innings with 14 fours.

Paine, only given a chance against England because first-choice wicketkeeper Brad Haddin was ruled out with a finger injury that will also sideline him from Australia's defence of their Champions Trophy title, was delighted.

"I'm rapt. I obviously got a bit nervous there so to get it out of the way and for the team to win the sixth straight game is a great thrill," the Tasmanian gloveman added.

"It's my job opening the batting for Australia is to score runs," opening batsman Paine added. "The first few games I felt reasonably good but didn't go on with it so it was just pleasing once I got my start to cash in."

Asked if he felt any sympathy for Ashes-winners England's one-day plight, Paine replied: "Not at all from me."

And he insisted that for all the talk of whitewashing England, there would be no change in Australia's approach at the weekend.

"We haven't spoken about that to be honest," Paine said. "We'll be talking about the seventh game and how we're going to go about winning it."

GP to sponsor beach cricket

UNB, Dhaka

Telecom giant Grameenphone will sponsor the country's first-ever beach cricket tournament to be held at the tourist resort of Cox's Bazar on October 9.

Week End Cricket Club Association (WECCA) is organizing the tournament to introduce Bangladesh to the world of beach cricket as well as to popularise Cox's Bazar as a local and international beach cricket venue.

Some 14 teams, split into four groups, will compete in the five-over-a-side daylong meet.

WECCA was established in 2000 with professional and amateur cricketers from Bangladesh who play cricket on weekly holiday.

Del Potro's rousing return

INTERNET, Tandil

US Open champion Juan Martin del Potro was greeted by thousands of fans and feted with rock band Queen's seminal "We are the Champions" when he made a triumphant return to his hometown of Tandil.

An emotional Del Potro, who upset world number one Roger Federer in five sets, reached the town's main square on top of a fire truck waving to thousands of fans who turned the four kilometre ride along the city's streets into a carnival.

"I owe this to Tandil," he said from the balcony of the municipal palace after receiving the keys to the city where he played his first matches at the age of six.

"I don't want to cry but thank all of you -- the ones that were cold waiting on the streets, the ones that ran along the route just to greet me," said Del Potro, wrapped in an Argentine flag.

Tandil, a modest rural town of 100,000 has turned into the unlikely cradle for Argentine tennis with ATP players Mariano Zabaleta, Diego Junqueira, Maximo Gonzalez and Juan Monaco all hailing from the city 350 km south of Buenos Aires.

Del Potro, who will turn 21 next Wednesday, made a stop at the Club Independiente, where he started his career, while loudspeakers blared out Queen's rock anthem.

The US Open victory assured Del Potro of qualifying for the season-ending Masters tournament in London in November.

'Fleeing' boxer

FROM PAGE 17 Nadim would return home within three or four days.

Nadim was sent to Italy after a bond from his father was obtained and Chowdhury had warned the boxer that his family might face problem if Nadim did not return.

It has become a familiar phenomenon for Bangladeshi athletes who often disappear in the first world in a bid to change their fortunes. A few months ago sprinters Shamsuddin Ahmed and Abu Abdullah also fled their camps in Greece while they were receiving advanced training.

However, it is learnt that the unemployment situation in Italy following global economy recession has prompted Nadim to reverse his decision and get back home.

Flintoff to help UAE

Cricket

AFP, Dubai

England all-rounder Andrew Flintoff will help coach the United Arab Emirates cricket team during his rehabilitation from knee surgery, the star's agent revealed on Friday.

Flintoff retired from Test cricket after England's Ashes victory over Australia last month and then had surgery on a knee problem before last week moving to Dubai, where he hopes to open a cricket academy.

The 31-year-old will base his recovery programme at the Dubai Sports City complex and will use his time away from the treatment room to help with the development of the country's leading cricketers.

Although Flintoff last week snubbed an incremental contract offer from the England and Wales Cricket Board, the UAE deal will see him assist the

team only on a casual basis and does not represent a formal arrangement.

"A partnership has been agreed with Dubai Sports City to use their gym and facilities as a base for his rehabilitation," Flintoff's agent Andrew Chandler told The National newspaper.

"I believe he will be one of the first people to use them. In return he will be carrying out some coaching for the UAE national team over the next six months."

"There has been good growth in UAE cricket in the last few years and Andrew felt that he wanted to give something back."

"He has turned down an England contract but this won't make much difference as he has said he will make himself available for one-day games."

"He is aiming to play a role in the one-day leg of the Bangladesh tour in the New Year."



The newly-crowned US Open champion Juan Martin del Potro waves at people gathered to see him from a fire engine on Thursday, following his arrival in his hometown Tandil, in Buenos Aires province.

Manaudou calls it a day

Swimming

AFP, Paris

Fallen French swim star Laure Manaudou, an Olympic gold medalist in 2004 who dominated her sport from the Athens Games to 2007, has announced her retirement from the pool at the age of 22.

"It's decided. I'm stopping. It wasn't an easy decision to take," Manaudou told the daily *Aujourd'hui en France*.

"It wasn't an impulsive decision," the three-time world champion added, saying it had been some time in coming.

Manaudou became a national heroine at the 2004 Athens Olympics at age 17 when she took gold in the 400 metres freestyle -- the first ever for her country for a woman. She also won silver in the 800 metres freestyle and bronze in the 100 metres backstroke.

Despite going on to set several world records, Manaudou struggled to stay on top as problems with her long-

time coach and an ugly breakup with her Italian swimmer boyfriend saw her picture splashed over the gossip magazines.

"I realised at this moment that swimming was no longer a pleasure for me," she told the newspaper.

She attempted to bounce

back at the Beijing Olympics but failed miserably and fled the pool in tears.

Manaudou, who is also reported by friends as being pregnant, pulled the plug on her 2009 season in January

saying she had lost the will to compete at the highest level.

"The hunger hasn't come back. Today I have other interests... I just know that when I get up in the morning I don't feel like going to swim."

"I have all the titles. I have all that I wanted, even more than I dreamed of... I have plenty of time to think about my future," said Manaudou, who regularly used to swim up to 14 kilometres a day from the age of 14 and has 30 French individual titles to her name.

"There's also the media pressure. Whatever I do, I am always spied upon. I hope that they will leave me in peace."

Manaudou also regretted her decision to abandon traditional schooling at the age of 14 to carry on her swimming and advised any future swimming stars to carry on with their studies.

"All my life I've talked swimming. When I come across someone who's not involved in it, I don't have many things to say. And I'm shy."

LAURE MANAUDOU