

Dhoni blasts his bowlers

PTI, Centurion

A furious India captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni slammed his bowlers for conceding too many runs against Pakistan in their ICC Champions Trophy opener and said if his side were to repeat Saturday's listless performance they should pack up and go back home.

"We have to win both the matches against Australia and West Indies if we want to reach semifinals.

From now onwards it will be a knock-out tournament for us. If we don't improve in the next two matches it is better we pack up and go back home," he said in disgust after India's 54-run loss against the arch-rivals.

Dhoni was clearly unhappy that his bowlers conceded so many runs towards the close of Pakistan innings and said he felt three or four bowlers short today.

"In the first eight overs we bowled a bit short and gave away boundary balls. From 38th over till the 42nd if I am not wrong we gave away nearly 100 runs. That was crucial. I have never seen so many runs conceding off cut shot," he said.

"Frankly speaking, I was thinking in the middle that it was one of those days in which we fell short by three or four bowlers.

Thankfully, Ashish Nehra and Yusuf Pathan did their job," he added.

Dhoni though said till the 35th over when Suresh Raina and Rahul Dravid were going strong he thought the 303-run target was gettable.

India

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Singh due to a finger injury, will also need to bat better against Australia having excellent fast bowlers in Brett Lee and Johnson.

TEAMS

AUSTRALIA (from): Ricky Ponting (captain), Michael Clarke, Callum Ferguson, Nathan Hauritz, Ben Hilfenhaus, James Hopes, Michael Hussey, Mitchell Johnson, Brett Lee, Tim Paine, Peter Siddle, Adam Voges, Shane Watson, Cameron White.

INDIA (from): Mahendra Singh Dhoni (captain), Sachin Tendulkar, Gautam Gambhir, Rahul Dravid, Suresh Raina, Yusuf Pathan, Harbhajan Singh, Praveen Kumar, Ishant Sharma, Ashish Nehra, Rudra Pratap Singh, Amit Mishra, Dinesh Karthik, Abhishek Nayar, Virat Kohli.

Umpires: Tony Hill and Billy Bowden.

Barca, Real

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Valencia looked poised to take the points after goals from Pablo Hernandez and David Villa had cancelled out Sergio "Kun" Aguero's early opener but Argentine Maxi struck in stoppage time to level the scores.

The draw was a relief for Atletico but they have still yet to win in the league and the pressure is still on coach Abel Resino.

Valencia fans were also unhappy with their coach Unai Emery waving their handkerchieves after the full-time whistle.

Valencia sit fifth, seven points behind the leaders, while Atletico are third from bottom with just three points.

Upstarts

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to get his hands on the ball and pushed it past the lurking Milito.

Up the other end Pazzini turned smartly in the box and swept a shot just wide of the far post.

But the decisive moment came due to a mistake from from Santon who belied his inexperience by trying to play a risky short pass while deep inside his own half.

He gave the ball away to Palombo who teed-up Daniele Mannini for a shot and while he scuffed the effort it found the unmarked Pazzini 10 yards out whose hurried and shanked effort left Cesar rooted to the spot.

Inter had the ball in the net six minutes from time through substitute Ricardo Quaresma when his long range effort deflected off fellow sub Chivu and in but the Romanian was standing in an offside position.

Inter piled on the late pressure but Castellazzi beat away a vicious Lucio free-kick and Samuel Eto'o flashed a volley wide as Sampdoria deservedly held on for the victory.

Gautam Veeru's choice

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Virender Sehwag has said his fellow opener Gautam Gambhir is a leading candidate to captain India in the future. Sehwag felt Gambhir, his teammate at the club, state and national levels, had the potential to be groomed into a leader and that appointing him vice-captain in South Africa was clear indication that he could graduate into the captaincy.

"He (Gambhir) is a good cricketer, is very intelligent and Delhi have won the Ranji Trophy under him already once (in 2007-08)," Sehwag said in Mumbai.

Gambhir, named deputy to MS Dhoni in the Champions Trophy after Yuvraj Singh was forced home with a finger injury, was recently appointed Delhi Daredevils captain after Sehwag opted out of the role. Sehwag made public his intentions of not wanting the Indian vice-captaincy as he felt the selectors were better off grooming a youngster for the job, but was open to leading his country. "I never said I don't want captaincy," he said. "I don't want to

be the vice-captain of Indian team."

Elaborating on his decision to step down from the leadership role with the Daredevils, Sehwag said he was disappointed the team couldn't qualify for the IPL final under him. "I tried for two years and we didn't qualify for the finals so I told the owners to try someone else's luck as mine was not working."

Sehwag targeted Australia's tour of India for seven one-day internationals later this year as the time for his return to international cricket. He said he would start by playing for Rest of India in the Irani Trophy next week and then graduate to the Daredevils in the Champions League Twenty20 before the home series beginning October 25. "I'm not yet fit for international cricket as I can't throw the ball from the boundary. During the Irani Cup I will be standing the slips since I'm the captain (of Rest of India) and I'll perform I stand a good chance."

Sehwag returned to on-field cricket recently for the low-key JP Atray tournament after shoulder surgery for an injury sustained during the IPL and ruled him out of the ICC World Twenty20, a short visit to the West Indies, the triangular ODI series in Sri Lanka and the ongoing Champions Trophy.

Younus quietly pleased

INTERNET, undated



India in the Champions Trophy but warned there is still a long way to go if they are to have any hope of lifting the title on October 5.

Younus was happy with the manner of the victory, their second in Group A, saying they will now turn their attentions towards Wednesday's opponents Australia as they bid to make the most of destiny being in their own hands.

"Actually, it's still too early to say," he said when asked about winning the tournament. "We are looking forward to the Australia game."

He added: "We just wanted to make sure this time that we don't rely on other results. We want to go through clean (by winning all our games). It's my wish but for now we will worry about the Australia game."

Shoaib Malik was named man of the match after his century helped turn over their Asian rivals at Supersport Park in what turned out to be

a comfortable 54-run win.

The all-rounder made 128 in a massive 206-run partnership with Mohammad Yousuf (87) -- a tournament record for any wicket -- to help their side set a daunting 303 for victory.

In reply, the Indians were well ahead of the asking rate for at least 35 overs thanks to half-centuries from Gautam Gambhir (57) and Rahul Dravid (76) but they lost their way and eventually finished on 248 all out with 5.1 overs remaining.

It was a good all-round display from the World Twenty20 champions and it left the skipper pleased, especially with the display of Malik and Yousuf.

He continued: "It was a professional performance. It was a good toss to win. In the conditions I thought that 260 or 270 (would be good enough) because, under lights, it is not easy to chase."

"We had a good start. Fantastic knocks from Yousuf and Malik. I thought we would reach 320 in the end but we didn't hit too many runs in the last powerplay. The boys were very keen. We are still hungry. If we can defeat Australia in the next game, it would be nice."



Farukul Islam, national director for the Special Olympics, addresses a press conference organized to brief about the upcoming initiatives to train local trainers and athletes.

Reifer feeling proud

INTERNET, undated



his under-strength side has devalued the competition in the ICC Champions Trophy.

West Indies sent a weakened squad to South Africa because of an ongoing contract dispute between the first-choice players -- such as Chris Gayle, Shivnarine Chanderpaul, Ramnaresh Sarwan, and Dwayne Bravo -- and the board.

The replacements were expected to be push-overs but have credited themselves with two fighting performances.

Their bowlers gave Pakistan a scare in their opening game and they ran Australia close in the second as well, reducing them to 171 for 7 before Mitchell Johnson lifted them to 275.

West Indies were in with a chance during the chase, having reached 170 for 3, before the batting collapsed and they fell 50 runs short.

"Against Pakistan if we had 40 more runs things could have been different and against Australia we were in the game into the 40th over. It's been a great effort," Reifer said.

"The important thing for us is to know that we are improving. From the first game to this one we have gotten better, as a team and as individuals."

"As we play as a team, stick together and keep practising, improving our skills, we will get better. We are a new team to international cricket. We are not going to come in and dominate straight away. We must show improvement, though."

We still have more time to prepare and improve our skills and our mental attitude. Getting to international standards is all about the mental attitude." West Indies were the first team to be knocked out of the Champions Trophy after suffering two defeats but they have a game remaining against India on Wednesday.

It will give their young players another opportunity to gain valuable experience in a major tournament.

"We try to encourage the guys to learn and learn fast," Reifer said.

"This is international cricket and not like the domestic cricket we play back at home. We talk a lot. We talk through situations that are going to happen in the game and we ask the guys to improve, to talk cricket, to improve their all-round game -- batting, bowling and fielding."

Cruise for Pakistan

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runs," said India captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni.

Pakistan, playing their first one-day against India in more than a year, earlier recovered from 65-3 after electing to bat, thanks to Malik and Yousuf who dominated the bowling with a wide range of attacking shots.

The Malik-Yousuf onslaught saw Pakistan plunder 85 in the last 10 overs.

Yousuf fell playing shots, bowled by left-arm seamer Ashish Nehra, but not before he had put his team in a strong position. Malik was out in the penultimate over after smashing 16 fours in his 126-ball knock.

Nehra was the most successful bowler with 4-55, but received little support from the other end.

Pakistan began aggressively as openers Imran Nazir and Kamran Akmal helped their

team race to 50 in less than nine overs.

Nazir went for shots early in his innings, hitting four boundaries in his 17-ball 20 before top-edging a pull off Nehra to be caught by Harbhajan at mid-on. Nehra struck again when he bowled Akmal for 19.

Pakistan looked in trouble after Yousuf (20) was caught behind off left-arm pacerman Rudra Pratap Singh.

India then had to wait for more than 31 overs for their next success as Malik and Yousuf applied themselves remarkably well to put their team in a comfortable position.

SCOREBOARD
Scoreboard of the Champions Trophy match between India and Pakistan in Centurion on Saturday:

PAKISTAN: 302
INDIA:
Gambhir run out 57

Tendulkar c K Akmal b Aamer 76
Dravid run out 78

Kohli c Gul b Afridi 16
Dhoni lbw b Afridi 3

Raina lbw b Ajmal 46
Y Pathan c sub (Misbah) b Aamer 5

Harbhajan b Ajmal 13
RP Singh c Yousuf b R Naved 2

Sharma b R Naved 0
Nehra not out 0

Extras: (b-4, nb-7, w-11) 22
Total: (for all out, 44.5 overs) 248

Fall of wickets: 1-23, 2-90, 3-126, 4-133, 5-205, 6-218, 7-238, 8-243, 9-244.

O M R W
Aamer 8 0 46 2
RNaved 9 0 48 2
Gul 6 0 55 0
Ajmal 8.5 0 31 2
Afridi 10 0 39 0
Malik 3 0 25 2
Result: Pakistan won by 54 runs.

Man-of-the-match: Shoaib Malik.



Former world No. 1 Ana Ivanovic of Serbia is in anguish after going down to Lucie Safarova of the Czech Republic in the first round of the Pan Pacific Open in Tokyo on Sunday.

Bernie lashes Sir Martin

AFP, Singapore

Bernie Ecclestone has hit back at Sir Martin Sorrell, a senior figure in the sport, after he was accused of being "totally out of touch" for saying Flavio Briatore's life ban was excessive.

Sorrell serves on the board of CVC Capital Partners, the private equity firm that owns F1's commercial rights, and as such is one of the few men who could be described as Ecclestone's boss.

In a weekend interview with Britain's Daily Mail, he slammed Ecclestone for saying Renault chief Briatore's ban for cheating was too harsh, and for his comments earlier in the year about Hitler.

But Ecclestone, who is CVC's chief executive, said that Sorrell was in no position to attack him because he was not directly involved with F1.

"Everybody's entitled to their own opinion, aren't they? Why should his opinion be more important than mine? He doesn't come to races, he doesn't know the people involved," he said in a BBC interview at the Singapore Grand Prix.

"The comments I made about Hitler were taken completely out of context and I apologise. As far as cheating, I haven't made any comments," he added.

In July, Ecclestone, who has effectively run Formula One for 30 years, caused a storm when he praised Adolf Hitler as a man who "was able to get things done."

"First, we had Hitler did good, now we have cheating is acceptable. Where will it end? His latest comments are yet another example, I'm afraid, of Bernie being totally out of touch with reality," said Sorrell.

Ecclestone refused to back down on believing Briatore's punishment was over the top.

"Giving somebody life -- they don't even do that for murder," he said.

According to the Daily Mail, CVC are increasingly dismayed by the controversies dogging the sport and impacting on their investment.

Ana's slump on

Tennis

INTERNET, undated

Former world number one Ana Ivanovic's alarming slump was prolonged by Czech Lucie Safarova in the first round of the Pan Pacific Open on Sunday.

The Serb's 6-4 7-6 defeat at the 2-million-dollar (1.24 million pounds) Tokyo event follows her first-round exit from the U.S. Open earlier this month, underlining a mystifying loss of form.

"I know how Ana is feeling and I feel it with her," a sympathetic Safarova said. "She's struggling with her serve and when that goes, all your game goes."

Safarova's win was arguably the highlight of a low-key opening day at the lucrative Pan Pacific Open, featuring nine of the world's top 10 women.

World number one Dinara Safina, last year's Tokyo winner, second seed Venus Williams and French Open champion

Svetlana Kuznetsova begin their campaigns today.

Japan's Kimiko Date Krumm will get little time to savour winning her first WTA Tour title in 13 years in Seoul as the wildcard is in action on Monday, her 39th birthday.

Safarova had lost two of her previous three meetings with Ivanovic, one of them at last year's French Open when the Serb went on to win the title before reaching number one.

But there was little grand slam pedigree in Sunday's encounter as the 21-year-old Ivanovic, who has slipped to 11th in the world, was buried under a deluge of unforced errors.

"When I saw the draw I thought I could beat her," said Safarova after knocking out the 10th seed. "But you never know what she's going to bring."

Ninth seed Flavia Pennetta was the first of the top 10 players to fall in Tokyo, bundled out unceremoniously by fellow Italian Roberta Vinci 6-16-2.

Hull break Chelsea

FROM PAGE 17

After a tight first hour, United finally broke the deadlock in the 62nd minute when Ryan Giggs, on as a substitute, slipped a pass to Dimitar Berbatov who tapped in.

United defender John O'Shea ensured there was no way back for Stoke when he headed in a Giggs free-kick in the 77th minute.

"I wish we were saying this (being top of the table) at the beginning of May," United boss Sir Alex Ferguson said. "There is a long way to go but it has been a good day for us."

Fernando Torres hit a hat-trick as Liverpool routed struggling Hull 6-1 at Anfield.

Torres gave Liverpool the lead in the 12th minute with a fine finish from Albert Riera's cross.

Hull hit back three minutes later when Brazilian midfielder Giovanni guided a volley past Jose Reina.

But Spain striker Torres restored Liverpool's advantage in the 28th minute. He took Yossi Benayoun's pass and danced past Ibrahim Sonko and goalkeeper Boaz Myhill

before slotting home.

Torres sealed the third hat-trick of his Liverpool career in the 47th minute when he converted another Benayoun pass.

Steven Gerrard added the fourth with a cross-shot in the 61st minute, then Ryan Babel scored twice in the last two minutes.

Arsenal rode their luck as Robin van Persie's goal and a fine performance from young Italian goalkeeper Vito Mannone secured a 1-0 win at Fulham.

Van Persie gave Arsenal the lead in the 52nd minute with an impressive finish from Cesc Fabregas's pass, but it took several excellent saves from Mannone to preserve the victory.

Tottenham striker Robbie Keane scored four times to inspire a 5-0 demolition of Burnley at White Hart Lane.

Keane stroked in an 18th minute penalty, then, after Jermaine Jenas's deflected effort in the 33rd minute, he notched three more in the last 16 minutes.

Ten-man Blackburn defeated Aston Villa 2-1 at Ewood Park.

'Oram should think about future'

INTERNET, undated

Former New Zealand captain Martin Crowe has called for Jacob Oram to consider his cricketing future after the all-rounder was forced to withdraw from another tour early.

Oram has been plagued by injuries in recent years, the latest setback being a hamstring strain that has forced him out of the Black Caps' Champions Trophy campaign.

Crowe has suggested it might be time for Oram to consider quitting the game, telling Radio Sport, "Jacob Oram is going to go home and reflect on how he is going to exit out of this game. When you get a chronic injury there reaches a point where the rest of the body just can't cope and you have got to call it quits."

He added, "He might stay and play Twenty20 because he might be able to survive it but to be honest I don't think when the body is letting you down that much you can carry on."

Oram has been replaced in the Black Caps squad by James Franklin, who has not played one-day cricket for New Zealand since the 2007 World Cup.

But his form for Gloucestershire has been promising. In seven limited overs matches he has taken 11 wickets at 21.90 and scored 224 runs at a strike-rate of 82.05.

Klitschko

FROM PAGE 17

Klitschko said. "I hit him a lot. He has a great chin."

Klitschko, who won every round on one of the judge's scorecards, improved to 38-2 with 37 knockouts while American Arreola dropped to 27-1 with 24 KOs.

Klitschko bloodied Arreola's nose in the eighth round, keeping the challenger away with his longer reach and a straight left jab in front of a near capacity crowd at Staples Center arena.

Ramirez said he had no choice but to stop the slaughter when he did.

"He was taking too much punishment," Ramirez said of his fighter. "It was not an easy decision, but I had to do it."

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

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