

It's staying in Windies

CRICINFO, undated

The ICC has quelled speculation that the 2010 ICC World Twenty20 could be moved away from West Indies by announcing that the tournament will be officially launched in Barbados on October 31.

Earlier this week a newspaper report suggested the ICC were considering shifting the tournament due to the ongoing contractual dispute in the Caribbean which has led to West Indies fielding a second string outfit during recent matches, including the ICC Champions Trophy.

Now, though, the ICC has said that Haroon Lorgat, the chief executive, will launch the event at the end of the month and tickets will go on sale the following day.

The news was announced after the ICC chief executives' committee (CEC) meeting in Johannesburg which has had two days of discussions over various issues.

The CEC also worked on developing a draft of the next Future Tours Programme (FTP) since the current one ends in May 2012. A working draft of the same will be presented to the next board meeting.

The CEC also appointed Justin Vaughan, New Zealand Cricket chief executive, to the ICC Cricket Committee while Nishantha Ranatunga was appointed to serve on the ICC Development Committee.

The ICC board is due to meet in Johannesburg on October 6 and 7.

Carlo's 1st

FROM PAGE 20

The ploughs appear to be working. Lampard, so free scoring for so much of his career at Stamford Bridge, has been relatively innocuous this term, having failed to score in open play in any competition, and Chelsea have instead been

largely reliant on the exceptional Didier Drogba, who already has six strikes to his name.

Ancelotti, however, insists a solitary training session - the one witnessed by Abramovich, conveniently enough - was enough to iron out any difficulties.

"I saw the game against Apoel and found something that we didn't do well, and we worked to improve that," he said.

"I think we will play better on Sunday. We have done our jobs until now but now we have a big game against a good team."

Liverpool are not without their own difficulties, having slumped to a surprise defeat at Fiorentina in mid-week in what Rafael Benitez, the manager, described as one of the worst displays of his Anfield tenure.

With the Merseysiders having already been beaten twice in the Premier League, another set-back at Chelsea would be costly, although Benitez insists nothing will be decided on Sunday.

"Both teams will be desperate to win and hopefully it will be a good game," he said.

"We go there with the idea we can win. We beat them twice last year, but we know Stamford Bridge is a difficult place to go. Both teams will try to win."

"If we can do that it will be two defeats in a row for them, but my idea is still same. It will be a long race."

Criticism fires

FROM PAGE 20

"He's fully concentrated on the game and he knows how to prepare for the game. I've been to pre-match talks and I've never heard anything like it in my life. He wants you to go out and destroy the opposition."

"I don't sing with him though. He sings only opera stuff and that's not my thing."

Berbatov is settling into life in Manchester and admits he has enjoyed getting used to being a home player at Old Trafford.

The Bulgarian has experienced being a visitor to United's home ground and now enjoys picking up on the tension in away players.

He said: "Every team that faces us is going on to the pitch with all the respect they have for us and sometimes they are a little afraid."

"That's especially at Old Trafford but that's normal because we're the best team in the world."

"You can see it, honestly and I know that because when I was at Tottenham you would come here and you were against United, the best team, and some of the best players."

"I know that now when opposition come to Old Trafford, they're a bit scared, they have respect, and we try to take advantage of that in the first minutes of games."



Russian tennis star Maria Sharapova holds the champion's plate after winning the final against Jelena Jankovic of Serbia in the Pan Pacific Open in Tokyo yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

Pan Pacific Maria's



AFP, Tokyo

Crowd favourite Maria Sharapova captured her first title since her injury lay-off by beating Jelena Jankovic to win the Pan Pacific Open tennis tournament on Saturday.

The 22-year-old Russian, who returned to action in May after a right shoulder injury, won the battle between the former world number ones to regain the title she won in 2005, when the Serbian seventh seed retired with an arm injury at 5-2.

"It was very tough because Jelena started off so strong. It was my second final of the year, so I was a little bit nervous," said Sharapova.

"I wanted to perform really well. I feel like I played good enough tennis to give her a go today and I just wanted to keep fighting out there."

Sharapova found herself 0-40 down in the opening game, which she lost two points later, hitting a backhanded drop shot wide.

She then went 0-2 down before moving into top gear, hitting an array of power-packed strokes and aggressive service returns to take the following four games in a row.

Jankovic, who needed court-side treatment to her right arm in the semifinals on Friday, took a medical time-out for the same injury at the beginning of the eighth game.

But Jankovic abandoned the match when

she went down love-30.

"I started yesterday during the match I guess because the roof was closed and it's very humid in there. The ball got really heavy. I started to feel pain in my shoulder, then it was going down to my wrist," said Jankovic.

She said her wrist was now swollen and she had no power to hold the racket.

"I don't know what happened there. But it is a new injury, started yesterday. I tried my best... but I would just get weaker and weaker and there was more and more pain. Unfortunately, I had to stop. I couldn't finish."

"Hopefully, I will recover for the (China Open) tournament in Beijing, which is really important for me. But we will see," added Jankovic.

Meanwhile, Sharapova said: "It's never easy to win a match like this. Obviously, it's very important for Jelena to be healthy and we want to compete at 100 per cent."

"It's very difficult for her to perform at her best right now. We have gotten a lot of injuries. This is towards the end of the year. I wish Jelena a speedy recovery," she added.

Sharapova's fifth win against Jankovic in seven meetings earned her the 350,000-dollar top prize.

For Sharapova, who claimed her first career WTA singles and doubles titles at the 2003 Japan Open on the same court, it was her first title since Amelia Island in April 2008, and 20th overall, four of them in Tokyo.

Hosts avoid

FROM PAGE 20

Asian Football Confederation vice-president Mani Lal Fernando, actress Shomi Kaiser, models Nobel and Bindhu, former Bangladeshi captains Jewel Rana and Rajani Kanta Barman, Maldives football president Ali Azim participated in the draw proceedings.

Besides, the executive committee members of the Bangladesh Football Federation led by Kazi Salahuddin were among others present in the draw ceremony.

Indo-Pak still

FROM PAGE 17

bent on maintaining our winning streak," he said.

"Who does not want to beat the World Champions."

"Younis said the way his players fought to defend a low total despite the Australians getting a good start showed how keen they were to win the match.

"For it didn't matter that the result could put India out of the competition."

"We didn't think about it. We were more focused on doing well against Australia."

You can't afford yourself to be diverted while playing a strong side like Australia," he added.

Mainul visits

FROM PAGE 17

Hockey Stadium, Kabaddi ground, under-construction handball ground, NSC Gymnasium were among the venues he visited.

Chairman of the Training and Development Committee of Bangladesh Olympic Association Mizanur Rahman Manu and Anisur Rahman Dipu were accompanied him.

Bangladesh A

FROM PAGE 17

hapless batting in the Bangladesh A batters as they couldn't build up any resistance and collapsed to 81 in 29 overs. The highest of the innings was 17, which came from the bat of former opener of the national side Hannan Sarker. Another former national star Rajin Saleh managed 13. The day's play was shortened due to bad light and rain.

GP Zim series sponsors

FROM PAGE 17

Grameenphone, also the sponsors of the national cricket team, will in addition give another 14,000 dollars for the prizes. However, half of the amount will be spent for the man-of-the-match and man-of-the-series awards in the five-match one-day international series.

Axiom earned the rights of the Package One and the Package Two which include perimeter boards, mid-wall, western side fence, etc., at an offer of \$1179 dollars.

"When we want to sponsor something we do that passionately and this time too there was no shortage of passion and ultimately we won the rights," said Kazi Monirul Kabir, chief of communications of Grameenphone Ltd.

"Grameenphone and BCB have come a long way together and we want to continue it as well as widen and deepen the relation in the days ahead," Kabir said. "Grameenphone is currently involved with the cricket academy and different development activities and the company is eager to expand its involvement with cricket."

Jalal Younis, the chairman of the media committee,

Fund.

Ricardo Chaves, a 47-year-old accountant, noted echoed hopes "for security and transportation to improve in the city, because the daily life of the Carioca is very difficult."

Rio is known for chaotic traffic, an overwhelmed public transportation system and a high crime rate - 6,000 people were murdered in 2008.

The challenges the city must overcome to be ready for the Games are not insignificant, but Mayor Eduardo Paes said the bid was "realistic."

Transportation issues are expected to be among the most pressing for the city to address, with many of the Olympic sites around 40 kilometers (25 miles) from the Olympic village.

More than a third of the Rio budget for the Games will be

devoted to improving the transportation system, which has been neglected in the years since Rio lost its title as capital to Brasilia in 1960.

"This is a great opportunity for Rio," said musician Cintia Lobato. "The city is impoverished and it needs the Games, which could spur development if they are well managed."

An official study estimated that the Games could generate 56 million dollars and two million jobs by 2027.

Some naysayers have pointed out that the city benefited little by hosting the Pan-American Games in 2007, but most were simply overwhelmed by the moment.

"Who wins? We do, my children do, my grandchildren do!" said Saul Trindade, 43, who joined the dancing masses to celebrate the win.

Carnival starts in Rio

FROM PAGE 20

many things in my life and thought I could never get emotional but suddenly I'm crying more than any other person."

He said: "Every team that faces us is going on to the pitch with all the respect they have for us and sometimes they are a little afraid."

"That's especially at Old Trafford but that's normal because we're the best team in the world."

"You can see it, honestly and I know that because when I was at Tottenham you would come here and you were against United, the best team, and some of the best players."

"I know that now when opposition come to Old Trafford, they're a bit scared, they have respect, and we try to take advantage of that in the first minutes of games."

Anlene Nat'l Tennis 2009

SPORTS REPORTER

Anlene National Tennis Tournament 2009 was inaugurated yesterday at the National Tennis Complex in Ramna, said a press release from Bangladesh Tennis Federation. Mohammad Zahid Hassan Russel, MP and president of the parliamentary standing committee for youth and sports ministry, inaugurated the week-long tournament which is being sponsored by the New Zealand Dairy Products Bangladesh Limited. SA Mallick FCA, managing director of New Zealand Dairy Products Bangladesh Limited, was the special guest at the event. A total of 218 contestants are taking part in the tournament under the banners of different clubs and organisations. The matches of the tournament will start from tomorrow at 9:00 am.

Ponting eyes Tendulkar record

CRICINFO, undated

Ricky Ponting, after becoming the third batsman to cross 12,000 runs in one-day cricket, has said he is chasing milestones set by Sachin Tendulkar. Ponting chalked up his 28th ODI century, an unbeaten 111 from 115 balls, to help Australia demolish England and march into the ICC Champions Trophy final.

Ponting paid tribute to Tendulkar, the leading run-scorer in ODIs and Tests. "The number of runs of this I have been able to sit back and watch, I think he is an amazing player," he said. "Look at his stats and records and it's quite incredible for someone to have stayed in the game for 20 years. He has set benchmarks for guys like me to chase him and get as close as we can. If I had to last 20 years, I would be batting in a wheelchair."

Ponting received a round of applause in Centurion as he pulled Graham Onions for four to deep square leg, and then raised his bat to acknowledge the crowd and his teammates. He sits at third behind Tendulkar and Sanath Jayasuriya in the list of all-time ODI run-getters. Ponting is the only Australian with over 10,000 runs and has an enormous buffer over the next of his countrymen on the list -- Adam Gilchrist is second with 9619 runs.

Meanwhile, Sharapova said: "It's never easy to win a match like this. Obviously, it's very important for Jelena to be healthy and we want to compete at 100 per cent."

"It's very difficult for her to perform at her best right now. We have gotten a lot of injuries. This is towards the end of the year. I wish Jelena a speedy recovery," she added.

Sharapova's fifth win against Jankovic in seven meetings earned her the 350,000-dollar top prize.

For Sharapova, who claimed her first career WTA singles and doubles titles at the 2003 Japan Open on the same court, it was her first title since Amelia Island in April 2008, and 20th overall, four of them in Tokyo.

Kiwis polish

FROM PAGE 17

He started with a slip, almost got Younis lbw in his first over, and then pried out his opponent in his second. In the 25th over, Umar Akmal looked to counterattack, hitting back-to-back fours off Vettori, the first boundary hit since the 14th over.

Tapu takes

FROM PAGE 17

the tournament, two minutes before the long whistle to shatter the Chittagong Mohammedan's dream of playing in the knockout phase.

mix, taking his fourth pole position of the year with fastest time in Japan.

The German was the class of qualifying, topping each of the three sessions, but again had to wait for another red flag interruption to pass before claiming the pole, after Heikki Kovalainen went off at Degner before posting a time.

Kimi Raikkonen was again the first to post a

Venus advances in China



AFP, Beijing

Venus Williams dug deep to advance to the second round of the China Open on Saturday in Beijing, where she won Olympic doubles gold with sister Serena last year.

Williams, the world number three and third seed here, came into centre court at the Olympic Tennis Centre with all guns blazing, but then had to battle back in the second set to defeat Russia's Vera Dushevina, 6-2, 7-6 (71).

The 29-year-old American, sporting a hot pink mini-dress from her Eleven fashion line, dictated play on the first night of main draw matches -- for better and for worse.

She punished Dushevina in the first set with heavy ground-strokes and big serves, breaking her twice for the easy lead.

The seven-time Grand Slam winner then lost her concentration in the second set, quickly falling behind to