

Gilly bats for Twenty20 in Olympics

INTERNET, undated

"20-20 for 2020" was the call given by Adam Gilchrist, flamboyant batsman who led the Deccan Chargers to a sensational win in the second edition of Indian Premier League T20 Championship a few months ago.

Gilly, as he's popularly known in India or 'Church' to his Aussie teammates, Gilchrist said the shorter version of the game was a perfect fit for the Olympics.

The explosive opener and record breaking wicketkeeper, who was in town for a press conference, spoke about the appeal of the game to the public and reiterated that 20-20 cricket in a 16-day format should easily make its way into the 2020 Olympics. "With this game in the Olympics, more of the Asian Countries will get a chance to win a medal," he said, obviously as a lure for countries like India to push the cause.

"It is very difficult to attract more people to the sport through the medium of Test cricket, but T20, on the other hand, is the perfect tool to do so," he said.

Gilchrist thoroughly approved of experimenting with the 50-over ODI format of the game but felt that Test cricket should remain unchanged. He agreed with Sachin Tendulkar's suggestion of splitting the one-day format into four innings, and was of the view that test cricket, being the purest form of the game, will always have a fan following. "Test cricket is a masterpiece and should be left untouched", he said.

Hockey team

FROM PAGE 17 Bangladesh were scheduled to play the second match against the same opponents on yesterday and the third and last game against Italy U-21 today.

The statement also said that the national team will also play a three-match series against the Check Republic.

After having played for different clubs in the German Hockey League, the national players are currently playing friendly matches as part of their preparation for South Asian Games that will be held in Bangladesh from January 29 to February 9 next year.

Unacceptable

FROM PAGE 17 having avoided many of neighbours India's decent into violence. With the biggest cricket show on earth coming to Bangladesh, this is exactly the time we should aim to keep up our generally high standards.

Carlo won't

FROM PAGE 20 "There is so much to look forward to and I am so excited about just playing football for Chelsea and England," Cole said.

"There are a lot of ups and downs in football and I've had eight months of sitting on my backside watching so I'm just happy to be playing for Chelsea. My job is to help the club win something this year."

Bolton will not travel south in great expectation, although Megson's side are in form of their own.

They shrugged off a spirited Everton fightback at the Reebok Stadium last weekend to ensure they have now only suffered one defeat in seven matches, playing the kind of slick football not often associated with their manager.

Not that Megson is about to put style before substance as he seeks one of the most notable wins of his tenure in Lancashire.

"Quite a few people have been talking about the way we are playing, which is nice, but we want to be winning games," he said.

"They are not particularly interested in Bolton's results but they have seen us on the television when we have played against Liverpool, Tottenham, Manchester United and Everton."

"We are playing some decent stuff but we have to play decent stuff and win the games."

Fergie accepts

FROM PAGE 20 Despite the furore, Ferguson had no qualms about criticising the performance of referee Andre Marriner after United's 2-0 loss to arch-rivals Liverpool at Anfield last weekend, questioning whether the official had "enough experience" to handle such a high-profile game.

The 67-year-old Ferguson has requested a personal hearing with the FA and a date has yet to be set.

Sisters not retiring

Tennis

AFP, Doha

Venus and Serena Williams, ghetto-kids turned multimillionaire senior citizens of women's tennis, go into the WTA Championships here insisting that retirement is not an option.

In the last two years, the American sisters have seen former rivals Kim Clijsters and Justine Henin both quit before deciding to return to the tour.

Venus, a year older than her sister at 29 and the holder of seven Grand Slam titles, and Serena, with 11 majors to her name, are still such an impressive combination that they have also qualified for the four-team doubles here.

"Singles is something which I usually expect at the end of the year to be here. But doubles, that's not something I expect. So it's definitely exciting," said Venus, one of the eight-woman field in the singles.

"It was kind of a secret goal of Serena and I to get to the doubles here."

Venus lost her Wimbledon title to Serena this year, but her tournament wins in Dubai and Acapulco took her career total to 41.

That would normally be enough for even the less demanding of the players, but not the Americans who are also hopeful of playing some role in the Fed Cup final against Italy later this month.



VENUS (L) AND SERENA WILLIAMS

"Serena and I are playing at a level that would keep us here for quite a few years longer. This is very good news for us," added Venus.

"At the end of the year, I'm feel like I'm ending on a high note."

"I'm at the point in my career where I've been very successful at every tournament just about, almost on every surface. For me it's about obviously playing great tennis, adding to my repertoire, my game, continuing to get better, to enjoy the challenge while being on top."

Serena, the first female athlete to earn over 23 million dollars, said she is even feeling even more determined to keep playing, an ambition fuelled by her frustration at losing the world number one ranking once again to Dinara Safina on Monday.

"I'm feeling good. I actually feel way more energized than I did last year, so that's a good thing," said the Australian Open and Wimbledon champion.

"I think as I get older, my priorities change more towards tennis. I want to play more. I want to enter more tournaments. I want to play more doubles. I think my career has been really more focused onto tennis."

Both sisters have been drawn in the same group here, but are happy to renew their rivalry which stands 11-10 in favour of Serena since their first meeting at the 1998 Australian Open.

"We could still potentially be in the final if we both do well, so we'll see," said Serena.

India look to Yuvraj

Cricket

PTI, Nagpur

Bolstered by the return of dashing Yuvraj Singh, India would look to wrest the initiative when they go into the second one-day international against Australia here today with the visitors being hit hard by injuries to three key players.

The home team sorely missed left-handed Yuvraj's explosive batting in the middle overs as well as his left-arm slow bowling since he was forced out of cricket after sustaining a finger injury in South Africa before the Champions Trophy.

The hosts will also seek to exploit the injury-induced absence of Australian pacers Brett Lee and Mitchell Johnson as well as all-rounder James Hopes who have been ruled out of the day-night encounter. Down 0-1 in the seventh-match rubber following their narrow four-run defeat in Vadodara on Sunday, the hosts would be keen to put an end to their inconsistent run in the 50-over format since their short tour of the West Indies in June-July.

Mahendra Singh Dhoni's men have won only five out of a dozen matches they had played from the series in the Caribbean, losing an equal number while two ties have ended in no result. More than their inconsistency, a loss tomorrow would put them in trouble as they will have to win four out of the remaining five matches to win the series.

The home team were outplayed by Australia in Vadodara but with the visitors' pace department severely depleted due to unavailability of Lee and Johnson, besides all-rounder Hopes, due to injuries, Dhoni's men will be fancying their chances.

But for that to happen, the Indian top-order batting, that failed to click in Vadodara, needs to buck up while their bowlers, especially off-spinner Harbhajan Singh, will have to improve a lot.

Abahani's mediocre show

FROM PAGE 17

till December 31, the game governing body is still in dilemma to make the final decision on the national players, who are scheduled to return home from Germany in early November.

Manager Zakir Ahmed Ripon explained the reasons behind forming an ordinary squad.

"Not game was played in the last two years and most of the players were out of action, but the BKSP students are in practice and they have been playing together for long so we think that these boys will be able to compete in the title race along with five foreign players in a match."

It, however, was learnt that the Abahani management did not want to sign star players because of the betrayal of those 'pool players' who joined Usha Krira Chakra despite promising to play for Abahani.

A member of the Abahani hockey committee also informed that they could not retreat from their decision after having made a commitment with the BKSP authority as the game governing body had earlier asked them that the national players would not be allowed this season's domestic league.

Asked on whether this squad would be able to keep pace in the title race, BKSP coach Zahid Hossain Raju believes it depends on the foreign collection as there is almost no difference among the local players.

Of 12 signed players, 11 played in the top-flight in the last season while three are new faces in the top-level competition.

PLAYERS: Labu Nahid, Ajit Kumar, Morshedul Islam, Nilon Hossain, Hasan Jubair Niloy, Mehdi Hasan, Rokonzaman, Jamil Bin Talib, Asim Ghop, Rubel Hossain, Abdullah Al Mansor and Yeaqub Ali Shah.

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Div I cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Mohammad Lal of Kathalagan produced a magnificent spell of 6 for twenty in his ten overs to give his side an eight-run victory over Lalmania in their First Division Cricket league clash at the Jahangirnagar University Ground yesterday. Batting first Lalmania posted 148 in their 50 overs losing all their wickets, with highest 48 coming from the bat of Jamil Alam. Lal Mia then produced his exploits with the ball to restrict Kathalagan to 140 in 49 overs.

Azad Sporting Club beat Orient Sporting Club by seven wickets at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium. Azad first got Orient all out in the 47th over for 95 runs and then romped past the target in 26 overs losing only 3 wickets. Over at Jagannath Hall Ground, Eskaton Sabuj Sangha beat Motijheel T&T Club by 28 runs.

Russel off

FROM PAGE 17 hesitate to strike his sixth goal of the season to seal the fate of the match.

Sheikh Russel coach Kamal Babu was happy after having made a winning start in the league, but the performance of his charges could not satisfy him.

Kamal's counterpart Riaz Biswas thought the three foreign recruits made the difference.

TEAMS SHEIKH RUSSEL: Himel (Mamun Khan), Mamun Mia, Zahirul Islam, Aminul Islam, Abass Inusab, Abdullah Parvez, Maruf Ahmed, Mobarak Hossain, Leite, Rony and Omari.

SHUKTARA: Al Amin, Sohulul Islam, Kaiser Ahmed, Abul Kashem, Robin Hasan, Liton, Jahidul Hasan, Abdullah Rintu (Sujon Ahmed Rizvi), Sohul, Tapu and Saiful Islam Khokon. Yellow cards: Abdullah Parvez (Sheikh Russel), Abul Kashem (Shuktara) Referee: Azad Rahman

Aussies' twin

FROM PAGE 17 join the Australian squad and become familiar in this environment," Hilditch said.

"His form for Australia A in Pakistan and for New South Wales has been very good and we view him as an exciting young all-rounder who will be looking to make the most of this opportunity in India."

Henriques, a right-hand batsman and right-arm seamer, has played a lone Twenty20 international against New Zealand earlier this year.

The 22-year-old, who will arrive in India on Wednesday, is expected to be available for the third match in New Delhi on Saturday.

TEAMS INDIA (from): Mahendra Singh Dhoni (captain), Sachin Tendulkar, Virender Sehwag, Gautam Gambhir, Yuvraj Singh, Suresh Raina, Virat Kohli, Ravindra Jadeja, Harbhajan Singh, Ashish Nehra, Munaf Patel, Sudeep Tyagi, Praveen Kumar, Ishant Sharma, Amit Mishra.

AUSTRALIA (from): Ricky Ponting (captain), Michael Hussey, Doug Bollinger, Nathan Hauritz, Jon Holland, Ben Hilfenhaus, James Hopes, Shaun Marsh, Tim Paine, Peter Siddle, Adam Voges, Shane Watson, Cameron White.

Kiwis fly out for Pakistan series

Cricket

AFP, Wellington

New Zealand aimed to put behind them the turmoil of the sudden departure of coach Andy Moles as they left Tuesday for a series of one-day cricket internationals and Twenty20 matches against Pakistan.

The series in the United Arab Emirates features three one-day internationals in Abu Dhabi from November 3, followed by two Twenty20 internationals on November 12 and 13 in Dubai.

Moles announced his resignation on Saturday after reports the team had lost confidence in the 48-year-old coach because he was not providing the technical and tactical guidance they wanted.

Daniel Vettori, already loaded with responsibilities as New Zealand's captain, leading all-rounder and selector, now has the added burden of acting coach as well.

New Zealand Cricket is targeting the home series against Bangladesh in February for a new coach -- yet to be named -- to start work.

Vettori's team is also without a vice-captain, after wicketkeeper and opening batsman Brendon McCullum was relieved of the job last week in the hope he can instead recover his best batting form.

The upheaval has obscured the fact New Zealand was on an upswing in one-day cricket after earlier this month reaching the final of the Champions Trophy in South Africa, where they lost to Australia.

The Kiwis lie fourth on the International

Cricket Council's (ICC) one-day rankings after their strong Champions Trophy performance, one place ahead of Pakistan.

Vettori's team have won their last five one-day internationals against Pakistan, the last being their five-wicket victory in the Champions Trophy semifinal at Johannesburg on October 3.

But New Zealand's captain is wary of the enigmatic Asian team.

"We'll face a near full-strength side and we know they can be a great team. In a lot of ways we resemble them with our own inconsistencies," Vettori said.

Pace bowler Kyle Mills said New Zealand can't wait to get back on the field and leave the controversies behind them.

"We're pretty keen to get over there, it's a really important series for us to carry on where we left off in South Africa and start the season for us," Mills said Tuesday.

"Hopefully our senior guys can step up in this tour and fill the mould of what needs to be done for this coming season."

Injuries mean New Zealand are without batsman Jesse Meyer, all-rounder Grant Elliott and pace bowler Daryl Tuffey.

Debutant batsman BJ Watling has been brought into the side, which also features the return of veteran all-rounder Scott Styris and young quick bowler Tim Southee.

Pakistan will travel to New Zealand in November ahead of a three-Test series.

Pakistan was originally scheduled to play a home series against New Zealand but the matches were moved due to security concerns after the attack on the Sri Lankan team earlier this year in Lahore, in which eight people died.

Younus ready to take more responsibility

Cricket

AFP, Karachi

Pakistan captain Younus Khan said Monday he was ready to shoulder more responsibility after withdrawing his resignation over match-fixing allegations.

In his first public appearance since resuming the captaincy last month following overwhelming support from the public and former players, Younus said he would reward their faith in him.

"It has put more responsibility on me," he said. "And if I used to play a hundred per cent, now I have to play 200 per cent."

"I have played eight, nine years now... but yes, this time

around the support from the public, media and former players has put more responsibility on me and I am ready to take it."

The 31-year-old offered to resign over match-fixing allegations after Pakistan lost against Australia and New Zealand in the Champions Trophy held in South Africa in September-October.

Pakistan Cricket Board chairman Ijaz Butt rejected his resignation saying that, provided he was fit and selected, he could continue until the 2011 World Cup to be jointly hosted by Bangladesh, India and Sri Lanka.

Pakistan plays New Zealand in a three-match one-day series on November 3, 6 and 9 in Abu Dhabi and in two Twenty20 matches on

November 12 and 13 in Dubai, a series relocated to neutral venues over security fears in Pakistan.

Younus and his deputy Shahid Afridi spoke to the media on the sidelines of a charity event to raise funds for Pakistanis who were displaced by a military operation against Taliban militants in the north-west Malakand region.

Younus said New Zealand presented a "big challenge" to Pakistan.

"New Zealand is like Sri Lanka and Australia as they also play as a unit, so when we play such a team we have to play as a unit to beat them. I hope that it will be a good series," said Younus.

Afridi will lead the team in the two Twenty20 matches.

Younus will return to lead the side in the three-match Test series in New Zealand starting late November. The Test series was also scheduled to be played in Pakistan but moved over security fears.

"We need to win the one-day series first, so that we have more confidence in the Twenty20 series," said Afridi, appointed captain after Younus resigned from T20 cricket after Pakistan won the World Twenty20 title in England in June.

"We need to iron out any differences in the team which usually surfaced because of lack of communication. If someone has any complaints he must come forward," said Afridi.

Pakistani media reported last week that some senior players have developed differences with Younus.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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CRYPTOQUIP

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Saturday's Cryptoquip: I'D LIKE TO FORM A SECLUDED RELIGIOUS COMMUNITY FOR MOLLUSKS AND CALL IT AN OYSTER CLOISTER. Today's Cryptoquip Clue: A equals T

Elton torments Tigers

FROM PAGE 17

Chigumbura's throw came in at the striker's end and Taibu clipped the balls.

Bangladesh fell in big trouble when Justice Chibhabha removed Shakib, who drove well away from his body and ended up with a faint edge to Taibu.

SCOREBOARD Scoreboard of the first one-day international between Bangladesh and Zimbabwe at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur yesterday:

Table with columns for Team, O, M, R, W. Bangladesh: Taibu b Chigumbura 5, Zunaed c Matsikenyeri b Chigumbura 0, Ashraf c Taibu b Chigumbura 20, Rokibul run out 16, Shakib c Taibu b Chibhabha 13, Mushfiqur c Taibu b Jarvis 56. Zimbabwe: Price b Chibhabha 4, Nayeem c Coventry b Price 21, Razzak c Utseya b Cremer 3, Dolar c Masakadza b Jarvis 41, Rubel not out 0, Extras: (lb-5, w-2) 7, Total: (All out in 46.5 overs) 186, Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-5, 3-41, 4-56, 5-58, 6-62, 7-115, 8-124, 9-178.

Table with columns for Player, O, M, R, W. Bangladesh: Jarvis 8.5, Chigumbura 8, Chibhabha 8, Utseya 4, Price 9, Cremer 9. Zimbabwe: Matsikenyeri not out 47, Chigumbura not out 60, Extras: (lb-1, w-10, nb-3) 14, Total: (For 5 wks in 34.4 overs) 189, Fall of wickets: 1-39, 2-39, 3-39, 4-54, 5-90, Did not bat: Utseya, Cremer, Price, Jarvis.

Bowler O M R W. Jarvis 8.5 1 43 2, Chigumbura 8 1 27 3, Chibhabha 8 0 28 2, Utseya 4 1 15 0, Price 9 0 31 1, Cremer 9 0 37 1.

Man-of-the-match: Elton Chigumbura. Toss: Zimbabwe. Umpires: Aleem Dar, Nadir Shah.