



England coach Andy Flower (R) talks with the match officials after rain delayed the start of the first one-day international against South Africa at the Wanderers yesterday.

Chapal gets EC post in AAF

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Archery Federation president Kazi Razibuddin Ahmed Chapal has been elected an executive member of the Asian Archery Federation yesterday.

Chapal, also secretary general of South Asian Archery Federation, got the second highest vote in the election held in Bali, Indonesia, said a press release.

The BAF president is accompanying the Bangladesh Archery squad that are taking part in the 16th Asian Archery Championship.

Silver Cup cricket

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Gaibandha

Central Eidgha Cricket Club became the champions defeating Rice Mills Eleven by nine wickets in Palashbari Silver cup cricket tournament final at Palashbari Government college ground yesterday.

Rice Mills Eleven batted first and scored 36 runs all out in the ten over match. In reply Central Eidgha Cricket Club scored 37 runs losing one wicket.

Palashbari Upazila vice-chairman Alamgir Mandal gave away the trophies among the champion and runner-up teams in a simple ceremony.

India force

FROM PAGE 17

The second Test starts in Kanpur on Tuesday, followed by the third at the Brabourne stadium in Mumbai from December 2.

SCOREBOARD

Final scoreboard of the first Test between India and Sri Lanka at the Sardar Patel Stadium in Ahmedabad on Friday:

INDIA: First innings 426 (David 177, Yuvraj 68, Dhoni 110; Welegedara 4-87, Muralidaran 3-97)

SRI LANKA: First innings 760-7 decl (Dilshan 112, M Jayawardene 275, P Jayawardene 154 not out; Zaheer 2-109, Sharma 2-135)

INDIA: Second innings (over-100-2)

Gambhir c Prasad b Herath 114

Sehwag c Mathews b Herath 51

Dravid lbw b Welegedara 38

Mishra c Dilshan b Mathews 24

Tendulkar not out 100

Laxman not out 51

Extras: (b-12, lb-9, nb-11, w-2) 34

Total: (For 4 wks in 129 overs) 412

Did not bat: Yuvraj, Dhoni, Harbhajan, Zaheer, Sharma.

Fall of wickets: 1-81, 2-169, 3-209, 4-275.

Bowler O M R W

Welegedara 21 1 76 1

Prasad 13 0 56 0

Herath 40 6 97 2

Muralidaran 38 6 124 0

Mathews 15 6 29 1

Dilshan 1 0 2 0

Paranavithana 1 0 7 0

Result: Match drawn.

Man-of-the-match: Mahela Jayawardene.



Did U Know?

A referee at a friendly match in Brazil drew a revolver and shot dead a player who disputed a penalty decision. The referee escaped in horseback.

ICL serves notice on ICC, boards

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

The first legal shot has been fired in the long-running battle between the unauthorised Indian Cricket League and the men who run cricket, with Essel Sports Private Ltd (ESPL), the ICL's owners, serving notice on the ICC and the English and Indian cricket boards over what it claims was an unlawful ban on players associated with the unofficial league.

The notice, served by London-based legal firm Ingram Winter Green, claims that the barring of ICL players from international cricket, particularly the county circuit, violated England's restraint of trade laws. It also claims that the BCCI "engaged in a range of activities clearly calculated to deter and prevent prospective players (and others) from involving themselves with ICL".

The ECB has been named as the first respondent in the notice while the BCCI and ICC have been named as second and third respondents respectively. While ESPL has been named as the first claimant, unidentified "professional cricketers" have been named as the second claimant.

Further legal proceedings, if any, are expected to take place in the UK.

The notice, dated November 16, also demands an injunction against each defendant for implementing the boycott and unspecified damages to make up for the loss that ESPL has suffered due to the ban after an inquiry. It has asked the ECB, ICC and BCCI to respond within December 7.

"We want just justice, that's all," an ICL

spokesperson told Cricinfo. "There are a lot of issues involved including the restraint of trade and threatening of players who were part of the ICL".

Referring to the unnamed professional cricketers, the notice claims: "The names of those individuals have been withheld to prevent retaliatory measures ahead of possible pending litigation".

The ICL was formed in 2007, a year before the official IPL Twenty20 tournament came into being, but was denied recognition -- despite repeated requests and discussions -- by the BCCI, other national cricket bodies and the ICC. The league went ahead for two years but finally decided to suspend operations early this year after all its players -- around 150 Indian and foreign cricketers -- preferred to take up a worldwide amnesty offered by the various official national boards.

"From the inception, the ICL has received a hostile reaction from the BCCI," the notice claims. "Early approaches in correspondence in which the ICL aimed to achieve co-operation (with the BCCI) were rebuffed by BCCI. BCCI has since engaged in a range of activities clearly calculated to deter and prevent prospective players (and others) from involving themselves with ICL, and intended to obstruct the activities of the ICL".

"The boycott of the ICL has had a serious effect on the players. The boycott of the ICL prevents the players carrying on their trade as professional cricketers in the UK if they also enter into contracts to play in the ICL. In the premises, the ECB is committing an unlawful restraint of trade by implementing the boycott of the ICL in the UK."

No coming back for Akhtar?

Cricket

ANI, Karachi

Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Ijaz Butt has said there is slim possibility of controversial fast bowler Shoaib Akhtar returning to international cricket.

"Shoaib is already 34, and with a history of fitness problems, is unlikely to make a comeback," a website reported Butt as saying in response to a query whether the recent liposuction surgery would enhance the right-arm pacer's changes of a comeback for the forthcoming Australia tour.

"Pakistan have a number of young fast bowlers to choose from and that makes Shoaib's chances of a comeback very remote," the website quoted Butt, as saying.

However, Butt has denied giving any such statement.

Interacting with media persons at Lahore Airport, the PCB chairman said he never gave any statement regarding Akhtar's future.

The PCB is miffed with Akhtar's fat removing surgery, which he had just after returning from London following knee surgery.

While neither Akhtar nor his family members are saying anything regarding the operation, a PCB official said being on the board's central contract, the fast bowler should have informed it about the surgery.

"He is a centrally contracted player and he is supposed to consult our medical panel and inform us before undergoing any medical treatment, but he didn't do this before opting for the liposuction," the official said.

It will take Akhtar, 34, another three to four months to regain full fitness and play competitive cricket.

MSC see off Kalabagan

FROM PAGE 17

Opener Elias Sunny was the top scorer for Biman with 30 while skipper Sanwar Hossain scored 25 runs. Chasing this small target, Surjo Torun looked on course and needed just 22 runs off the last four overs when their skipper Habibul Bashar fell for 31. Wicket keeper Dhiman Ghosh batted crisply but found no support at the other end as Biman pacer Shafiu Islam ripped through the lower order.

Dhiman was left stranded on 23 at one end and saw a massive collapse at the other end that took Surjo Torun from a healthy position of 145 for 4 to 156 all out in the span of four overs.

Shafiu finished with 4 for 28 from 9 overs.

SCORES IN BRIEF

Mohammedan vs Kalabagan Kalabagan: 225 for 7 in 50 overs (Nazmus Sadat 31, Zubair Ahmed 24, Ariful Haque 76 not out; Nabil Samad 3-41)

Mohammedan: 227 for 5 in 46.3 overs (Shamsur Rahman 31, Mohammad Ashraf 32, Aftab Ahmed 64, Mahmudullah 64 not out; Faruiddin 3-41)

Result: Mohammedan beat Kalabagan by 5 wickets.

Biman vs Surjo Torun

Biman: 116 all out in 48.5 overs (Elias Sunny 30, Sanwar Hossain 25; Tapash Kumar 2-29, Zakarier Islam 2-31) Surjo Torun: 156 all out in 49.4 overs (Rajin Saleh 35, Habibul Bashar 31, Dhiman Ghosh 23 not out; Shafiu Islam 4-28).

Replay fairest solution: Henry

AFP, London

France captain Thierry Henry said on Friday that "the fairest solution" to the row surrounding his handball in the World Cup playoff against Ireland would be to replay the match.

"Of course the fairest solution would be to replay the game but it is not in my control," Henry said, in a statement sent to Sky Sports News in Britain and other media.

"Naturally I feel embarrassed at the way that we won and feel extremely sorry for the Irish who definitely deserve to be in South Africa," said the Barcelona and former Arsenal striker.

He released the statement after football's world governing body FIFA officially turned down a request for a replay lodged by the Irish football authorities.

Video replays showed Henry used his hand to stop the ball going out of play in extra-time of Wednesday's playoff in Paris, before he passed to William Gallas to head the goal which gave France a 2-1 win over the two legs.

Flintoff wants two more WCs

ANI, London

England all-rounder Andrew Flintoff wants to play in two more World Cups after coming through a career-saving knee operation.

Freddie has been told his recovery is going so well he can set his sights on the 2011 one-day bonanza and the 2015 tournament, by which time he will be 37, reported The Sun.

"It is a weight off my shoulders. I'm hoping this is going to give me the chance to play in the next World Cup in 2011 and the one after is a possibility, too," he was quoted, as saying.

Flintoff recently had said that he is recovering well from his knee surgery, but conceded that he could miss England's tour to Bangladesh early next year.

Flintoff, 31, said: "My recovery is still on track. But I must admit that saying I would be fit to play in Bangladesh may have been a touch optimistic on my part."

England's tour of Bangladesh begins on February 28 with three one-day internationals, before a two-Test series starts on March 12.

Flintoff had turned down an incremental contract offer from England in order to pursue other short-term opportunities but pledged to remain available for their one-day matches.

If he fails to recover in time for the Bangladesh ODIs, his next target is likely to be the 2010 Indian Premier League (IPL) season, which will run from March 12 to April 25.

His next opportunity to resume his international career would be at the ICC World Twenty20 -- which starts almost immediately after the IPL final -- before England's summer ODIs against Scotland, Australia and Pakistan.

Last year, Flintoff signed a record 1.55 million dollar contract to play for the Chennai Super Kings in the IPL, although his 2009 stint was cut short by injury.

He had surgery in August after helping England regain the Ashes with victory over Australia and was pleased with the findings of his 12-week check-up by Williams.

"I know I'm not in the clear yet and there is still a lot of hard work to be done, but so far, so good and it is very good news because if he'd said he was disappointed with my progress I'd have been devastated," said Flintoff.

Abahani ride

FROM PAGE 17

of Nayeem Islam, who hit a record six sixes in an over at the same venue. Nayeem went for big one but failed to clear the midwicket fence.

Veteran left-arm spinner Mohammad Rafique initiated the early collapse by taking three wickets.

SCORES IN BRIEF

ABAHANI-GAZITANK Venues: SBNCs

GAZI: 240-8 in 50 overs (Nazimuddin 19, Mithun 13, Nafees 28, Misbahul Haq 43, Kapali 66, Nayeem 18, Reza 16 not out, Razzak 19, extras 17; Rafique 3-33, Shakib 2-38)

ABAHANI: 241 for 4 in 46 overs (Kayes 55, Rony 90, Nadif 40, Shakib 32 not out, extras 8; Nayeem 3-42)

Result: Abahani won by six wickets.

Windies fight back

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

The openers Travis Dowlin and Adrian Barath provided the best news of the tour for the struggling West Indians as they reached 1 for 133 at stumps on the third day. Since the squad arrived in Brisbane last week they have lost their captain Chris Gayle, who flew to Jamaica to be with his sick mother, and received a tough initiation in their opening tour game against Queensland. Ramnaresh Sarwan, one of the two leading batsmen, has also been told by his doctor to stay off the field due to an infection.

So after the Bulls declared at 7 for 617, with a lead of 346, the tourists needed something to cheer and Dowlin and Barath provided it during a 95-run opening stand. With Gayle increasingly unlikely to be back in Australia before Thursday's first Test, the side is desperate for the remaining openers in the squad to be in form. The team management is still waiting to learn when Gayle is likely to return and the selectors are expected to meet over the weekend to consider possible replacements and whether to extend the outfit to 16 men for the three-Test series.

Life has been tough and will become harder when they run into an Australia side preparing for their first series since the Ashes defeat. Dowlin, who went for 2 in the first innings, backed up with a much more authoritative display, striking seven boundaries in his 53 before he was caught behind off the unstoppable Nathan Reardon.

Barath is expected to make his debut next week and he followed his first-day duck with a composed 65. He was dropped by Chris Hartley on 34 but held on to make it to stumps, taking advantage of some loose bowling by the legspinner Dan Doran to increase his boundary tally to nine.

Reardon's 147 was the major problem for

the tourists on the third day as he became the third local batsman to register a maiden first-class century in the innings. Kemar Roach, the 21-year-old fast bowler, continued to run in hard despite his side's situation and returned 3 for 135 from 32 overs, but he did not receive much help from his teammates, who wilted against a modest batting line-up.

The day began well for them when Hartley (12) edged a Roach short ball in the third over, but they were soon being pummelled by Reardon's muscular stroke-play. Reardon, a 25-year-old in his second four-day game, joined Nick Kruger (172) and Wade Townsend (100) in raising centuries, which was only the second time in Australia three players have achieved their maiden first-class hundreds in the same innings. Reardon resumed on 45 and sped towards his century, equalling a state record with his seven sixes while taking advantage of the mediocre offerings.

He was particularly brutal against the left-arm spin of Suleiman Benn, who was lashed for two sixes in one over and later launched on to the roof of Queensland Cricket's offices at midwicket. Another Reardon sweep off Benn cleared the fence and the hitting was so strong that the bull mascot sitting in the back of a caged ute was asking to go back to the farm. After lunch he also pulled a tiring Roach high into the Matthew Hayden Stand before eventually falling caught behind to Dwayne Bravo.

Chris Simpson, the captain, also blasted one on to the office roof off Ravi Rampaul, who continued to find life in Australia difficult. He was not the only one. Benn gave up 151 runs in 34 overs and Rampaul went for 131 in 29, while Bravo and Narsingh Deonarine also failed to make much of an impact. Simpson and Reardon clumped 156 in 30.4 overs for the sixth wicket before Simpson was bowled by Roach on 73, but the tourists were kept waiting before the innings was closed 40 minutes before tea. They needed the break.

Chappell fears for Tests

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Greg Chappell has delivered a blunt message to cricket's administrators: Test cricket is under threat from Twenty20 and something must be done to save the traditional form of the game. Chappell believes the situation is so severe that there could come a time when only four or five nations play Test cricket, with the weaker countries focusing purely on 20- and 50-over games.

The former Australia captain and India coach was in Melbourne on Thursday to deliver the annual Bradman Oration on the state of the game and he painted a worrying picture for the five-day format. He said while iconic tours like the Ashes retained their importance, many other series had lost relevance and administrators should focus on the quality of cricket played, rather than the quantity.

"I'm of the belief that we can support the three formats but obviously we have to give a very long and hard think about how best they work together," Chappell said. "I have a belief that we need to make each series, whether it's 20-, 50-over or a Test match series, a lot more relevant."

"I think the format that is under most pressure with 20-over cricket coming in is Test cricket. It has been struggling for some time. Economically, some countries find it very difficult to be competitive and therefore it affects economically the viability of Test series between some countries."

"I have a feeling that Test cricket is going to reduce in size rather than grow in size. I can see

the time when perhaps there will only be four or five major countries playing Test match cricket. It's another reason why I think 50-over cricket needs to be supported and given a rethink because 50-over cricket could well become the Test cricket of the future for a lot of cricket playing countries."

"There are only probably four or five countries that have the critical mass and have the infrastructure that will allow them to produce competitive Test match teams on a regular basis. That is a problem. That's been exacerbated by the success of 20-over cricket."

The prospect of separate divisions in Test cricket, which might help ensure matches are closely fought, was not an idea that sat well with Chappell. However, he believed that the introduction of day-night Tests, which appears to be a certainty when a suitable ball is developed, could help regenerate interest in the five-day format.

"If you want people to come, then obviously you have to fit into their lives, not hope that they will fit into the life of cricket," Chappell said. "I have no doubt that in the not too distant future we will see Test cricket played under lights and played at night time when it's easier for people to come."

Chappell's comments have come at a time when the ICC is considering ways to keep the public interested in Test cricket. An MCC survey recently found that only 7 per cent of cricket followers in India regarded Test cricket as their preferred form of the game, while ticket sales for Australia's SCG and MCG Tests against Pakistan this summer are 20 per cent down on the Tests at the same venue last season.

Middlesex sign Gilchrist

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Middlesex have signed a contract with Adam Gilchrist, and are in talks with Sachin Tendulkar, to play Twenty20 cricket for the county during the 2010 domestic season.

Vinny Codrington, the Middlesex chief executive, said he was "absolutely delighted" with the signing of Gilchrist. "We've worked extremely closely with the MCC to ensure that Adam comes on board with us next season," he said "and this signing is great testament to how well our two clubs are working together to guarantee that Middlesex supporters and MCC members alike are rightfully treated to the very best world talent that Twenty20 cricket has on offer."

Codrington confirmed that the county was also in discussion with Tendulkar and his agent. "As a result of Sachin's busy schedule of late however, representing India in the one day

series against Australia, playing in the current Test series against Sri Lanka and celebrating his twenty years in international cricket, this is yet to be confirmed," Codrington said. "He is due to be speaking to the BCCI about playing for us next season when the time is right."

Gilchrist has played 13 Twenty20 internationals for Australia, while Tendulkar gave up the format at the international level after just one match, but both batsmen are captains of their respective IPL franchises -- Deccan Chargers and Mumbai Indians. Gilchrist has never played for a county while Tendulkar's only appearance was as a 19-year-old for Yorkshire in 1992, when he was the county's first overseas player.

Signing up Tendulkar will be an expensive proposition but the MCC and Middlesex could hope to recover costs partly through gate money -- targeting the sizeable South Asian community in and around London -- and, given that England's domestic limited-overs games are shown live on Indian television, from international sponsorship deals.

Kimi gets huge pay-off

INTERNET, undated



Kimi Raikkonen is set for a bumper pay-off worth up to £15 million from Ferrari while his manager has suggested he might be open to offers from Brawn's new owners Mercedes.

Ferrari, who wanted to free up a spot for the incoming Fernando Alonso, will give their 2007 world champion £15m if he does not race for another team in the 2010 World Championship.

Should he accept an offer from a rival outfit that figure would fall to around £13m -- but the wages he would pick up should more than cover the discrepancy.

Raikkonen had spoken of plans for a year-long sabbatical from Formula One after talks with former team McLaren reached an impasse, but less than 24 hours later manager Steve Robertson suggested he might be open to offers from Mercedes Grand Prix.

"This is Formula One," Robertson, who manages the Finn with his father David Robertson, told Autosport.

"If they can... convince us that they can provide Kimi with an opportunity that Kimi is happy with, and that we are happy with, and he

feels he can win races and the championship then never say never.

"There is always a possibility." Brawn won this year's drivers' and constructors' titles with Jensen Button, but the Briton has left to join compatriot Lewis Hamilton at McLaren.

The champions will compete as the Mercedes factory squad next season, with Nico Rosberg expected to be announced as part of their line-up and his fellow German Nick Heidfeld in the running to perhaps join him.

Robertson said Raikkonen's decision would not come down to money.

"There are not many teams that would appeal to Kimi because he is honest when he says he has got to have a car to win," he said. "He is not interested in the money."

"Of course, money is a part of it but he doesn't need the money. He wants a car where he can show his talent."

Any contract that Raikkonen does sign will have to include a clause allowing him to compete in rallying series.

He competed in his home event rally Finland in this year's World Rally Championship as well as non-championship events.