



Bangladesh captain Mohammad Mithun hoists one over the Nepal bowler during their T20 match of the SA Games at the Shaheed Kamruzzaman Stadium in Rajshahi yesterday.

Afridi banned for two T20s

Shahid Afridi has been banned for two Twenty20 internationals after being found guilty of ball-tampering during Pakistan's two-wicket loss to Australia at the WACA in Perth on Sunday. Afridi, leading Pakistan for the first time in an ODI in the absence of Mohammad Yousuf, was caught on TV cameras apparently biting the ball on a couple of occasions. The incident was reported to the on-field umpires by the TV umpire and after a chat with Afridi, the umpires changed the ball immediately. Afridi was called into a hearing with the match referee Ranjan Madugalle immediately after the match. "Shahid Afridi has been banned for two T20s after the incident," a team official told CricInfo. "He pleaded guilty to the charge." The punishment puts Pakistan into a quandary because Afridi is their Twenty20 captain and they end their tour of Australia with a Twenty20 in Melbourne on February 5. Yousuf, who captained Pakistan in Tests and ODIs, is not part of the Twenty20 squad and Younis Khan, who was captain before the tour of New Zealand

Roger's Hit for Haiti raises \$600,000

A charity doubles match hastily-arranged by Roger Federer ahead of the Australian Open has so far raised more than 600,000 US dollars for the Haiti earthquake victims, officials said Sunday. The world's top players gathered for the Hit for Haiti on the eve of the tournament a fortnight ago and it drew a crowd of around 17,000 people to Melbourne Park. Gates receipts and public donations on the day raised around 123,000 dollars. Tennis officials said players had also donated racquets that are being auctioned on ebay and have so raised more than 38,000 dollars. In addition, the ATP World Tour, Sony Ericsson WTA, ITF and the Grand Slam Committee had donated hundreds of thousands of dollars. "Haiti is a tragedy that has touched the hearts of the world. The tennis community just wanted to help," said Tennis Australia chief executive Steve Wood. "The response of the players, the public and the sport's governing bodies has been nothing short of fantastic." Federer managed to rustle up fellow world number one Serena Williams, Rafael Nadal, Kim Clijsters, Novak Djokovic, Andy Roddick and Australian favourites, Lleyton Hewitt and Samantha Stosur, for the match. The 7.0-magnitude earthquake struck Haiti earlier this month, bringing death and misery on an unprecedented scale to the impoverished Caribbean nation. The money raised will go to Partners in Health and Care Australia.

City bounce back

Emmanuel Adebayor signalled his return to the Manchester City starting line-up with the opening goal as City defeated crisis club Portsmouth 2-0 at Eastlands. Adebayor has not started for his club since returning home early from the African Cup of Nations earlier this month following the terrifying gun assault on the Togo team bus in Cabinda that left three backroom staff dead. However, he told City manager Roberto Mancini on Saturday that he felt mentally strong enough to start the match and rewarded his manager's faith with a 40th minute opener. Vincent Kompany added a further first half goal in injury time which ensured City could bounce back following their shattering League Cup semifinal loss to Manchester United last Wednesday. These two sides may play in the same division but they are in different leagues financially. City are the richest club in the world whereas Portsmouth face the ignominy of a winding-up order to be served on the club on February 10 if they do not somehow resolve their dire financial situation before then. Chief executive Peter Storrie also said last week that his role is becoming increasingly untenable because of the boardroom problems, summed up by news that Portsmouth were trying to sell Younes Kaboul and Asmir Begovic without his knowledge. Matters are little better on the pitch either and they had won one of their last six before this encounter to leave them rooted to the bottom of the Premier League. However, they surprised everybody at the City of Manchester stadium by starting as the brighter side. After three minutes, Danny Webber delivered a cross which Shay Given juggled to the feet of John Utaka close out but he wasted the

glorious chance by firing over. Jamie O'Hara, who has rejoined Portsmouth on-loan from Tottenham Hotspur, then also went close as he drove a low shot into the City goalmouth which Given did well to smother. In what was generally a disappointing opening period, both sides were happy to merely amble along but City were not helped when they lost Pablo Zabaleta to a suspected broken nose after a heavy aerial challenge with Kevin Boateang. As they tried to temporarily readjust with only 10 men, Portsmouth had the best chance when super interplay between Danny Webber and Boateng gave Anthony Vanden Borre the chance to shoot but he hit the crossbar. And Portsmouth were left to almost instantly rue that miss as Adebayor chased down Stephen Ireland's through ball and smashed past David James to open the scoring. It broke Pompey's resistance and before they knew it, they were a further goal down as Petrov swung a corner in during first-half injury time and Kompany rose unmarked to head past James. Although City had a two-goal advantage, they by no means dominated the game following the re-start in an atmosphere that was generally flat. The loss to United had clearly deflated both the players and City's supporters with both just happy to see a win and little else. They were also up against a Portsmouth side that look far more composed and skilled than a team that has acquired just 15 points this season and certainly made the game harder than City were perhaps anticipating. Yet real chances remained elusive although Webber did fall over at one stage when trying to shoot, much to his embarrassment. As the clock ticked down, talking points remained virtually non-existent as City were willing to sit back and wait for the final whistle while the visitors failed to ask any serious questions and although Carlos Tevez hit the post with 11 minutes remaining, further goals never seemed likely.

Imran criticises 'insulting' IPL snub

Legendary fast bowler Imran Khan said Sunday that Pakistani players had suffered 'insulting treatment' at the hands of the Indian Premier League, and no player should take part in the tournament. Eleven top Pakistani cricketers were up for grabs at the Indian Premier League (IPL) auction in mid-January but none were picked, sparking outrage in Pakistan and accusations against arch-rival India of political meddling. "IPL did injustice to Pakistani players -- in fact it was insulting treatment meted out to players who are world champions, and we should never send our players to the league," said Khan, a former captain turned politician. "Pakistani cricketers are the best in the world and the PCB should protest this with the Indian Board and boycott the IPL," he told reporters. "They totally disrespected Pakistani players. If they had security problems they should have dealt with them before the auction." The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has already revoked permission for players to feature in the third edition of the IPL in March-April, while PCB chief Ijaz Butt has also said the nation's cricketers are banned from the tournament.

Gibson quits English job

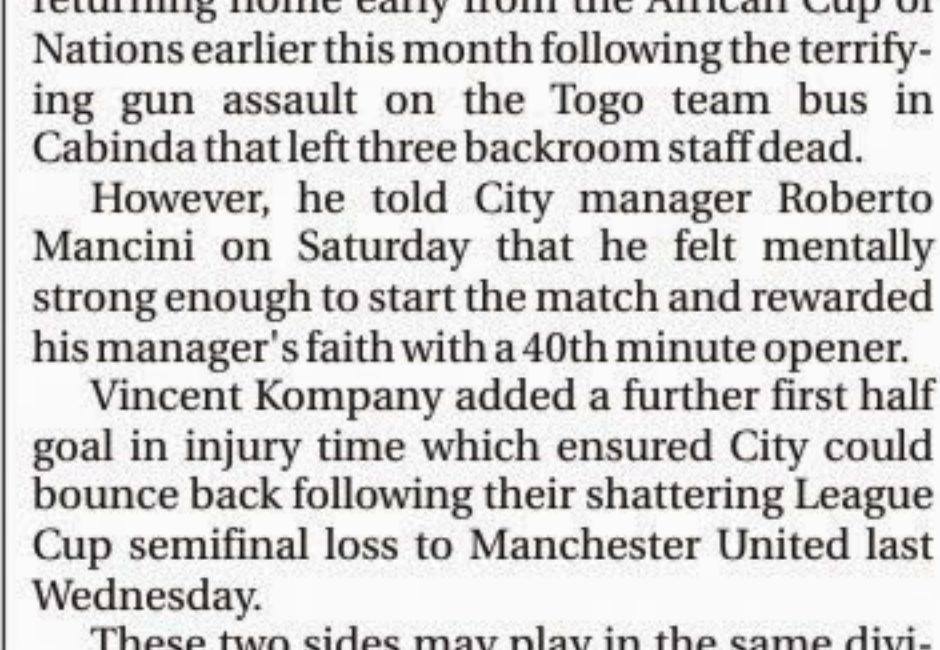
Ottis Gibson has left his position as England's bowling coach to become the head coach of West Indies, according to the UK's Daily Telegraph. There were suggestions last week from Radio Jamaica indicating Gibson's departure but they were flatly denied by the ECB who said they had no knowledge of any deal being struck. England are due to tour Dubai and Bangladesh next month and will now almost certainly, according to the report, be travelling without Gibson. Gibson, 40, played two Tests and 15 one-day internationals for the West Indies and applied for the coach's job in 2007. He instead, however, got an offer from England to take over from Allan Donald first as a temporary and then full-time bowling coach. He has fitted well into the disciplined regime of Andy Flower and Andrew Strauss as he tried to nurture an inexperienced attack into a potent force. The tour of South Africa showed some of his work had paid off, as England conceded just four runs to no-balls during the four-match series. It continues a tumultuous week after South African coach Mickey Arthur resigned on January 26 and the South African board fired their panel of selectors the day after. Though a blow for England, as there appears no obvious replacement, Gibson's departure is a boon for West Indies.

Pakistan chief selector resigns

Iqbal Qasim has tendered his resignation as Pakistan's chief selector following the side's disastrous results in Australia, where the team was whitewashed in both the Test and ODI series, in what turned out to be one of Pakistan's most dispiriting campaigns in recent years. "We made this team and it was the best possible team, but their performance has been really poor, unbelievably poor," Qasim told CricInfo. "I had two options after this. One was to stick on, evaluate and analyse the performance or step down. Anyone would do a post-mortem so I thought it my moral responsibility to do this." The move came within minutes of Pakistan's two-wicket loss in Perth, sealing off their second-ever 5-0 blanking in ODI cricket. The statistic, in particular, hurt Qasim. "I have been very disturbed by it and it has really hurt. Everyone has a conscience and so with that in mind, I have stepped down. Clearly major surgery is required in the side," he said. If and when the resignation is accepted it will bring to an end a very short tenure for Qasim and likely bring in a third head of the selection committee within a year. Qasim took over in July last year, after Abdul Qadir had left the post claiming interference in his duties from external influences. His only assignments were the Champions Trophy, in which Pakistan reached the semi-final, and the Test and ODI challenges against New Zealand and Australia. During this tour, on a couple of occasions disagreements with Mohammad Yousuf, the captain, cropped up, notably over the call-up of Misbah-ul-Haq in New Zealand and the request for Younis Khan for the Tests in Australia. That is not believed to be a factor behind the decision, however. Qasim was a member of the selection committee until the 2007 World Cup and had been appointed in an honorary post, continuing as a senior employee with the National Bank of Pakistan (NBP). As such, his honorary post was a break from recent practice, where the chief selectors were full-time, paid employees of the board. It is believed that at least one other member of the seven-man committee - who are paid selectors - is considering his future as well.

D/N Tests could be delayed

Day-night Test cricket could still be 'several years' away, according to the head of the Kookaburra company, who believes a red ball is the only one that can last 80 overs. Cricket Australia has asked Kookaburra to deliver a ball that can be used for Test cricket under lights and a pink ball is being trialled over the next week in Futures League matches. The ICC and Cricket Australia are keen to hold day-night Tests as soon as possible but Rob Elliot, Kookaburra's managing director, said the time-frame could be longer than the authorities wished. He said the main problem was trying to replicate the way a red ball wears over a day's play. "I know CA are hoping it might be a couple of years, but in all honesty it could be several years," Elliot told the Sunday Herald Sun. "We'll be doing some trials, but it's a bit open-ended. If we have to make some further changes, we'll have to go through the process again and so it will go on until we can give the administrators something that they can live with."



The Australian players pose with the ODI series trophy after beating Pakistan in the fifth and final one-day international in Perth yesterday.

Pakistan whitewashed

of cracking after Pakistan's innings, Shahid Afridi and Shoaib Malik, recalled for the specialist spinner Saeed Ajmal, made a fist of defending a modest total. Afridi, the captain today, made the key breakthrough as the in-form Cameron White reached way outside off stump and dragged the ball onto his stumps in the 17th over. With that Ponting stepped down a notch, allowing Afridi and Malik to slowly apply the squeeze. After crossing fifty for the first time in nearly three months, Ponting danced down to Malik and picked out long-on. Not too long after Malik struck again when he lured Adam Voges out of his crease and an easy catch was held at midwicket. James Hopes never looked in command against spin and became Afridi's second when an outer edge was well taken by Younis Khan at slip. Pakistan had lost three wickets for 28 runs, and at 6 for 150, their performance was in danger of freefall. But one man was still there. Hussey's tussle with Malik was especially compelling - Malik repeatedly tried to beat Hussey in flight, and each time Hussey rose to the challenge, using the depth of his crease well. Even when he wasn't to the pitch he was willing to take some chances, reaching out to steer the ball. A superbly placed late cut in the 44th over took the equation to 39 from 38 balls, but in the second over of the batting Powerplay Mitchell Johnson chased and nicked Naved-ul-Hasan behind. Nathan Hauritz, coming off a maiden ODI fifty, eased the pressure with a spanking four in the next over before he turned his attention to Naved, steering a deliberate shot to third man. With fine leg up, Afridi strayed down leg and Hussey pulled four, cuing chants from that section of the crowd. Brilliant running, some nerves from the fielders and another controlled pull from Hussey allowed Australia scamper past the finish line with four deliveries to spare. SCOREBOARD Scoreboard of the fifth and final one-day international between Australia and Pakistan at Western Australia Cricket Association Ground in Perth on Sunday: PAKISTAN Butt c Haddin b Harris 0 Navedul 10 0 40 1 Latifc & b Johnson 0 Anjum 9.2 1 39 1 Younis c Haddin b McKay 3 Afridi 10 0 31 2 Malik 10 0 48 2 U Akmal b McKay 67 Fawad c Hauritz b McKay 63 Afridi c Hauritz b Harris 1 Sarfraz c White b Johnson 6 Naved b Harris 8 Anjum c Ponting b McKay 16 Afrifnot out 0 Extras: (b-5, lb-3, w-4) 12

Table with cricket statistics including Total (All out in 49.3 overs) 212, Fall of wickets: 1-0, 2-0, 3-16, 4-76, 5-158, 6-162, 7-180, 8-189, 9-212. Bowler O M R W Harris 10 1 44 3 Johnson 10 1 42 2 McKay 9.3 3 35 4 Hopes 10 1 45 0 Hauritz 10 0 38 0 AUSTRALIA Marsh c Fawad b Asif 25 Haddin c Malik b Navedul 7 Ponting c U Akmal b Malik 55 White b Afridi 13 Voges c Younis b Malik 24 Hussey not out 40 Hopes c Younis b Afridi 6 Johnson c Sarfraz b Navedul 13 Hauritz lbw b Anjum 18 Harris not out 2 Extras: (w-9, nb-1) 10 Total: (For 8 wks in 49.2 overs) 213 Did not bat: McKay. Fall of wickets: 1-21, 2-54, 3-73, 4-122, 5-139, 6-150, 7-178, 8-210. Bowler O M R W Asif 10 0 40 1 Navedul 10 0 55 2 Anjum 9.2 1 39 1 Afridi 10 0 31 2 Malik 10 0 48 2 Result: Australia won by two wickets and clinched the 5-match series 5-0. Man-of-the-match: Clint McKay. Man-of-the-series: Ryan Harris.

Murray sorry

1936. It has now been 279 Grand Slams since that success and Murray knew how much it meant back in Britain. "I had great support back home and I am sorry I couldn't do it for you tonight," he said as his voice cracked and he battled to hold back tears. "I can cry like Roger, it's just a shame I can't play like him. He was a lot better than me tonight." Murray also lost in straight sets to Federer in the 2008 US Open final. The fifth seed became the first player to lose his first two Grand Slam finals in straight sets since Frenchman Cedric Pioline, runner-up to Pete Sampras in the 1993 US Open and at Wimbledon in 1997. Pioline never managed to a major title. Murray was playing in his 17th Grand Slam, the point at which Federer broke through for his first title, and the Swiss had some consolation for him in his acceptance speech. "Andy, you played an incredible tournament. You are too good a player not to win a Grand Slam, so don't worry about it."

India want

FROM PAGE 17 from the delegates regarding accommodation, transportation and security. President of BOA assured them of solving these issues within soonest possible time. Both the president and the secretary general of BOA expressed their deep sympathy for the Nepalese athletes who got injured in an accident at a local hotel on the opening day.

Bangladesh

FROM PAGE 17 and trained only those who did not play against Nepal and captain Aminul hinted that the coach might rest a couple of players before the final group match against Maldives. Akram lifts FROM PAGE 17 62-kg category gold lifting a total of 258 kilograms followed by Pakistan's Muhammad Istiaq Gafoor (silver) and Indian Otari Omkar (bronze). Sri Lankan vidanage Chintanagee won the 69-kg category gold medal lifting a total of 275 kilograms while Pakistani Matiuir Rahman finished behind Chintanagee lifting a total of 275 kilograms.



The Australian players pose with the ODI series trophy after beating Pakistan in the fifth and final one-day international in Perth yesterday.

Indian men

Divisional Commissioner Mohammad Yunus Rahman distributed gold medal to India while DIG of Police Khulna Range Sheikh Hemayetuddin and Khulna Police Super Shamsuddin gave away silver and bronze medals to Pakistan and Bangladesh respectively at a simple, but impressive function held at the Zero Point. Amardeep Singh and Rajendra Kumar expressed their satisfaction on winning the gold. The 170-Kilometre road race mass start (men's) will be held today. Bangladesh's Ripon and Anowar said that although their country could not do well on the first two days, they hoped to fare better in the next two races.



AFP, Melbourne

An emotional Andy Murray choked back tears as he apologised to British fans for failing to win the Australian Open and claim the nation's first Grand Slam men's title in 74 years. The Scot was left wondering what may have been after he was unable to serve out the third set in the final against Roger Federer when leading 5-3. He again squandered five set points in an agonising tie-break on his way to losing to the Swiss champion in straight sets, 6-3, 6-4, 7-6 (13/11). The 22-year-old appeared composed in the moments after the match, even sharing a joke with Federer ahead of their speeches, but when called upon to say a few words it quickly became clear how desperate he was to win his maiden Grand Slam. British tennis fans and media had hoped Murray was the man to end their Grand Slam drought stretching back to Fred Perry's US Open in

Akram lifts

FROM PAGE 17 62-kg category gold lifting a total of 258 kilograms followed by Pakistan's Muhammad Istiaq Gafoor (silver) and Indian Otari Omkar (bronze). Sri Lankan vidanage Chintanagee won the 69-kg category gold medal lifting a total of 275 kilograms while Pakistani Matiuir Rahman finished behind Chintanagee lifting a total of 275 kilograms.

Fabulous Federer

FROM PAGE 17 career head-to-heads one of only four players who can boast that but has lost the last three. Federer had just discovered in Melbourne last year unknown widely at the time that he was to be the father of twins. The emotions bubbled over after his loss to Nadal. But he recovered from that defeat to claim his first clay court major at the French Open, completing a career Grand Slam of titles at the four majors. He regained his Wimbledon title and then, after his twin daughters were born, reached

stands, almost crying herself. "You get the best out of me." Federer got on top early, breaking Murray's opening service game when he leaped onto a second serve and fired a forehand down the line to lead 2-0. Murray rallied immediately, breaking Federer's serve to huge cheers from the crowd with consecutive passing shots one which the Swiss star even had to applaud. Federer had to save three break points in the fifth game before holding with back-to-back aces. He then broke Murray in the eighth game, lifting his intensity in perfect time so that he could serve for the set. He had no trouble closing with a forehand winner down the line. Federer dominated the second set after breaking Murray's serve in the third game. The Scot did fend off seven break points across two service games to ensure Federer had to serve it out. When Federer's intensity dropped slightly in the third, Murray pounced. He broke in the sixth game, roaring "C'Mon" after rifling a forehand past Federer at the net.