Clarke seals satisfying century

Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Michael Clarke has had to display a lot of patience over the past fortnight and he applied an unflappable, measured approach as his century steered Australia into a strong position. Clarke showed no lasting effects from the break-up of his engagement, which forced him home to Sydney last week, as he paced his innings perfectly.

His timing was so good he brought up his hundred in the last over of the day as he swung his side to 316 for 4. Clarke entered with Australia at a sticky 115 for 3 and locked down with Simon Katich, whose responsible 79 was also crucial against a disciplined local attack.

Only 70 runs came in 28 overs between lunch and tea as the tourists were restricted and Clarke needed 32 deliveries for his first two singles. However, once Marcus North, who helped confirm his spot at No.6 with 52, was set in the final session, Clarke started to accelerate and quickly undid the excellent work of the hosts.

The speed at which Clarke improved the situation from delicate to in control was impressive. For a couple of hours he had defended and clipped, playing a nice cut for four off Daryl Tuffey, but also being struck in the helmet attempting a pull off Chris Martin. His first sign of intent came when he charged at Daniel Vettori and lifted him for six to long-on, part of his collection of 91 in the last session.

Four overs later, having added three fours and launched Vettori over the sightscreen, he was 68 and Australia were suddenly purring. The second new ball came and Clarke continued to find the

DIV II CRICKET

Anirban

Manikganj

wickets.

OUR CORRESPONDENT,

Biltu Club got 74 runs victory

over Anirban Cricket Club in

the inaugural day in the Khan

Real Eastate Second Division

Cricket League at Shahid

Miraj-Tapan Stadium in

made 153 runs for nine wick-

ets in the 25 overs with Rasel

scoring highest 64 runs while

Moni added 21 runs. Rasel

junior of Anirban took two

Club scored only 79 runs in

25 overs expending nine

wickets. Rabbi scored 17 runs

and Zahid added 16 runs.

Dhruba of Biltu Club picked

up five wickets while Jobaer

adjudged man-of-the-match

Navana Group and manag-

ing partner of Khan Real

Eastate, Mamun Khan for-

mally inaugurated the

Deccan sneak

and ultimately fell just short of

DECCAN CHARGERS: 170 for

7 (Symonds 53, Gilchrist 33,

KINGS XI PUNJAB: 164 for 8

(Pathan, Bopara 38; Vaas 2-27)

Result: Deccan Chargers won

PLAYER PROFILE

"The national team environ

ment has been amazing and

everyone, starting from the

players to the coaching staff

and management, have

welcomed me and have

•What they said about him:

"He is going through a process

with the Academy and the A

team. He is a man in form with

four hundreds this year. He

also played well for

Bangladesh Biman in the

"No doubt he's a good, hard

working player. There are

some players who would do

well if he's under a good

coaching system and

definitely he's one. Apart from

Rajshahi captain and long-

time teammate Khaled

Jahirul is the only son and

while his father, a lawyer by

profession, always wanted

him to study law, his mother

wanted him to pursue

• Jahirul is a student of Islamic

Studies in Dhaka University.

this he's a good teammate."

Chief selector Rafiqul Alam

SCORES IN BRIEF

Suman 26; Yuvraj 2-21)

Rasel of Biltu Club was

General manager of

took three wickets.

for scoring 64 runs.

league.

FROM PAGE 17

the target.

by six runs

FROM PAGE 17

the Test match.

supported me."

Premier League"

Mashud

cricket.

In reply, Anirban Cricket

Biltu Club batted first and

Manikganj yesterday.

Biltu thrash

boundary, with two fours off Brent Arnel taking him to 98 with a dozen balls remaining.

The century came with a tight single from the first ball of the last over and he ran with his bat in the air as he accepted the applause. At stumps he was 100, with 10 fours and two sixes from his 142 balls, and had proved his ability to cope under an extreme spotlight.

The upbeat partnership with North of 140 at almost five an over sent the day Australia's way. After a few worrying early moments, North gained confidence and was also batting more freely than at any time this year.

His place is under pressure from Steven Smith, the batsman-legspinner, but if he goes on the spot will be his until he has to negotiate his next elongated slump. A straight drive for four from Arnel steadied him and he felt more comfortable after swiping Vettori for six over midwicket. The contribution allowed all of the tourists to relax.

Australia knew life against New Zealand was going to be harder than their home summer of success and they were forced to battle for much of the day. Life was tough before lunch when the pitch was offering more help, but Arnel's first wicket, which came from his fifth ball on debut, was the only break though. However, when Australia lost Ricky Ponting to a run-out on 41 and Michael Hussey (4) to a sharp catch from BJ Watling there was some concern.

Katich, Australia's ideal man for the difficult situation, was less inclined to chase boundaries than his team-mates, although he eventually forced himself to become more adventurous to Vettori. A hook behind square off Arnel brought up his half-century and he slog-swept Vettori for an awkward six, but mostly he nudged,

Another step

need to do back to them if we

want to be successful," he

expectations rather he wants

his boys playing good cricket

us playing our game as well as

we can. No expectations, I just

want our players to play well.

Each day is different, expecta-

tions change every day,

according to the situation of

the game. I expect us to play

pretty good cricket, it's our

home conditions, and we

played reasonably well at

Chittagong, the Bangladesh

bowling was terrible espe-

cially the performance of their

two pace bowlers--Rubel

Hossain and Shahadat

Hossain--was nowhere near

expectation. As expected the

axe fell on Shahadat and

Siddons was expecting his

bowlers bowl in right areas in

maidens in 145 overs. It's

ridiculous, and it's not good

enough. Test cricket should be

the second game.

On a flat track in

Chittagong," he said.

in the second Test.

Siddons said that he has no

"For me as usual it's about

added.

chipped and glanced.

His reward was a 191-ball stay that gave him more batting time but not a century. While New Zealand missed him twice in the lead-up to tea, Katich did not last long after the break and was lbw shuffling across the crease to Arnel, who was operating around the wicket.

SPÖRT

Arnel, a 31-year-old right armer, was brought in for his debut in a four-man seam attack and he delivered a tricky opening spell of seven overs. He picked up a slashing Phillip Hughes (20), who did not take advantage of Shane Watson's hip injury, and showed his pace and movement was worthy of a promotion. Arnel's first Test day ended in figures of 2 for 70 but he and his team-mates were disappointed to have let Australia off.

The ball swung throughout to disrupt the batsmen's rhythm and Martin was a problem when he curled it into the righthanders and away from the lefties. It was a delivery across Hussey that resulted in his fatal edge and he returned 1 for 63.

New Zealand's major problem was they couldn't sustain the effort until the end. Vettori was attacked before the second new ball was taken but Tuffey, who gave up 13 runs from his first 11 overs. regained some control to finish with 0 for 35 from 15. Despite their commitment, Clarke's brilliant burst left them with ground to recover.

SCORES IN BRIEF

AUSTRALIA: First innings 316 for 4 (Hughes 20, Katich 79, Ponting 41, Clarke 100 batting, North 52 batting; Arnel 2-70) To bat: Haddin, Johnson, Hauritz, Bollinger, Harri.

NEW ZEALAND: McIntosh, Watling, Ingram, Taylor, Guptill, Vettori, McCullum, Tuffey, Southee, Arnel,

side to win or lose. Although balance was retained, the 78 Jankovic, Stosur that Karthik, Mithun Manhas and Rajat Bhatia added proved in semifinal to be inadequate when put up against Hayden. showdown **SCORES IN BRIEF**

With 7.3 overs still to go, there

was time enough for either

DELHI DAREDEVILS: 185 for

6 in 20 overs (Sehwag 74,

Manhas 32 not out, Bhatia 21;

Balaji 2-21, Muralidaran 2-25)

CHENNAI SUPER KINGS: 190

for 5 in 19.1 overs (Hayden 93,

Raina 49 not out; Nannes 1-18,

Result: Chennai Super Kings

Man-of-the-match: Matthew

Malik, Naved

Akmal and Umer Akmal were

also fined heavily and put on

probation for six months. The

players have 30 days to appeal.

eligible, however, to compete

in domestic cricket in Pakistan

and in competitions abroad,

like county cricket in England

and private leagues in other

no player could play abroad

some other players also applied

for permission and we have an

open mind on that," said Bari,

PCB chief operating officer and

in Bangladesh earlier this

week. The Twenty20 league

starts later this month.

Openers Imran Farhat and

Taufeeq Umer have also been

cleared to play in Bangladesh.

Yousuf was cleared to play

himself a former captain.

"Besides Malik and Naved

without prior permission.

The banned players are

Mishra 1-25)

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countries.

Hayden

won by five wickets

AFP, Indian Wells

Former world number one Jelena Jankovic reached the semifinals of the BNP Paribas Open Thursday with a battling straight-sets victory over Alisa Kleybanova.

Serbia's Jankovic, the sixth seed, downed the Russian 6-4, 6-4 to set up a semi-final clash with eighth-seeded Australian Samantha Stosur.

Stosur defeated Spain's Maria Jose Martinez Sanchez 6-3,7-6(9/7).

By reaching the semifinals, Stosur is projected to move from her current career high of 11th in the world rankings into the top 10 next week. Stosur has reached the final

four without dropping a set. In the fourth round she ousted defending champion Vera Zvonareva of Russia. Stosur wrapped up the

victory amid some confusion on her fourth match point, when Martinez Sanchez finished with a double fault.

Shakib Al Hasan (captain), The Spaniard's first serve had "We bowled, I think, nine Mushfigur Rahim been called good and but was ruled wide on a replay after Stosur Abdur Razzak, Shafiul Islam challenged -- but not before swiping a return that landed out.

Hayden blazes Ljubicic books Nadal clash

Australia's Michael Clarke pulls the ball during his century against New Zealand on the first day of the first Test in Wellington yesterday.

Tennis

AFP, Indian Wells

Defending champion Rafael Nadal, trying to reignite his injurydisrupted season, will face a rejuvenated Ivan Ljubicic in the semifinals of the Indian Wells ATP Masters 1000.

Nadal looked sharp in overcoming Czech Tomas Berdych 6-4 7-6 (7/4) on Thursday, while Ljubicic gave himself an early birthday present with a 4-6, 6-2, 6-1 victory over Juan Monaco.

In a tight match, Berdych gave Nadal the only opening he needed, double-faulting to fall behind 5-4 in the tiebreaker. Nadal gave himself a match point with a forehand winner, and when Berdych hit a backhand into the net the Spaniard leapt in celebration." I played aggressive when I had the chance," Nadal said of the tiebreaker, adding that there was little he could do as Berdych built a 3-1 as Nadal was playing into the wind.

The Spaniard had managed to level the tiebreaker at 3-3 when they changed ends.

"Playing with the wind in that moment is almost decisive, and I played really well," Nadal said. I had one, two forehand winners down the line. That was the key of the match."

Nadal, 23, is playing his first tournament since retiring with a knee injury while trailing Andy Murray in the quarterfinals of the Australian Open.

Now the number three is the highest seed left in the draw after the early exits of Roger Federer and Novak Djokovic.

"Very good news for me to be in semi-finals," said Nadal. "I am really happy how I am playing. Coming back from an injury, But the PCB stipulated that | it's never easy the first tournament."

In Ljubicic, who celebrates his 31st birthday on Friday, Nadal will face a player he has beaten in five of six prior encounters.

Monaco a day after toppling world number two Djokovic.

The Croatian, a former world number three who is now ranked 26th, showed no sign of a letdown as he rallied to beat

INTERNET, undated US President Barack Obama is sure Tiger Woods will still be a

Obama

Tiger betrayed

his family, says

The Baily Star

"terrific golfer" when he returns to competition, but acknowledged that he had "betrayed his family". In an interview with Fox

News, Obama was asked his thoughts on Woods's decision to return to golf at next month's Masters, the first Major of the season.

Woods has not played in a tournament since November last year after disappearing from public view following tabloid revelations about his

marital infidelities. "I think that Tiger has acknowledged that he betrayed his family; that is a

personal issue that he has got to work out," said Obama, himself a keen golfer.

"I hope they've worked it out and I am sure he is still

going to be a terrific golfer." At the US Tour event in

Tampa, Kenny Perry, who lost in a play-off at last year's

Masters, agreed that Woods would still be a great player and urged the public to forgive him.

England to go for spin?

a game where you have to

work a lot harder for your runs,

but we couldn't bowl on one

side of the wicket, and when

we wanted to bowl at the

wickets we couldn't do that

that they will not make the

same mistake that they did in

Chittagong if they win the toss

with another spin-friendly

we expect it to, and day one

should be flat, if we win the

toss we will bat. And if we do

bowl I hope we put the ball in

better areas and make them

work a little harder for their

runs. I expect it to turn a bit

more towards the end of the

game, because the footmarks

play a bigger part on this

wicket. Hopefully it will turn

from day one, but we won't be

Tamim Iqbal, Imrul Kayes,

Junaed Siddiqui, Jahurul

Islam, Mahmudullah Riyad,

(wicketkeeper), Naeem Islam,

taking that risk," he said.

BANGLADESH

and Rubel Hossain.

"If the wicket plays the way

surface in prospect.

Siddons also made it clear

either."

FROM PAGE 17 out with fewer than three

seamers. But these are the selection decisions that do come up in the subcontinent, and if we want to do expand our game on turning wickets, we're going to have to get used to it," said the England cap-Cook though rued the fact

that they didn't have a good bat who could fill in for the fifth bowler position too. "Historically four bowlers

tend to do very well. In an ideal world you'd love to find that fifth bowler who can bat to find the perfect balance, and obviously that's what great allrounders like Jacques Kallis bring to the side, but they are few and far between," said

Cook. "There's always a chance this pitch might suit a different attack or it might spin more, so you have to go with whatever side you think will win the game."

going to turn much, then offspinner James Tredwell may earn his first Test cap for England having being on the sidelines for the last few series at the cost of young pacer Steven Finn who had a hard time in Chittagong returning with only two wickets.

There was good news for bers. the England side as the senior paceman Stuart Broad has made a timely recovery from back-spasm for the second

in training, so he is expected to be fully fit." said Cook.

"He had a little illness but we think he'll be fine. The medical team have seen him and he's up and about now, And if they do think its which he wasn't on Thursday. Hopefully the bug is gone and he'll be fine."

The young skipper was bent on ending the tour on a high, even if that meant making a few less friends over here, as he was drawn into the issue of the untoward behaviour from some of his team mem-

"They (Graeme Swann and Stuart Broad) were probably very close to the mark (of being reported) and Swanny has apologised, but we want to





BCB punishes

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In his instant reaction, Rokibul said he had hoped it would be a lighter punishment and now realises how difficult it would be to restart his cricket career.

"The board did what it thought was best for me but you must understand that it (punishment) is a big blow to any cricketer," said Rokibul.

"I did well against a team like England but now I have to take a long route to the national team," he added. However BCB considered

his behaviour as 'disruptive to the preparation of the Bangladesh team ahead of a highly important Test match' against England in Chittagong. The board thought it was a 'serious breach of discipline on part of a contracted player and unbecoming of an international cricketer'. It was predicted that he

could be banned for up to two years but the board went for only three months. But it still means Rokibul will have to resurrect his cricket career from next season's domestic compe-The cricket board took the

lighter stance as the player is young but maintained the punishment it delivered was enough for the situation. "We took his age under

consideration before taking any decision. But we still punished the player since we take discipline as the most important for a cricketer," said BCB director Jalal Yunus.

"The board will take tougher measures if any similar situation arises. We will never compromise with player discipline and break of the BCB's code of conduct," said the media committee chairman of BCB.

MSC gain no ground

FROM PAGE 17

And, Mohammedan should have taken the lead in the very fourth minute had Nigerian striker Alamu Bukola Olaleken, off a Wali Faisal chipped ball, not been denied by the bar.

Mohammedan launched a combined attack through Nasir, Bukola and Mamunul Islam, whose left-footer to the far post was denied by a block from Abahani defender Sujan on the half-hour mark.

It was a contrasting performance for two-time champions Abahani, who were busy thwarting the Mohammedan attacks especially in the first half and could not make their mark on the game.

However, the Sky Blues looked better in the second half that also made the game more lively compared to the first half and they mustered

their first shot on the target on the 60th minute. Picking up a through ball from Awudu Ibrahim, sriker Sheriff Din Mohammedan narrowly missed the target.

Mohammedan's reply was immediate with Mamunul's shot drifting past the post three minutes later.

Mohammedan should have opened the account in the 73rd minute when substitute Zahid Hossain snatched the ball from defender Sujan, darted into the danger zone and sent a well-judged chip for the unmarked Bukola, who saw his poor header cleared by Abahani national defender Atiqur Rahman Mishu from the goalline.

The wave of the Mohammedan attack could be measured by the 11 corner kicks they earned, but it was not enough to break Abahani's

solid defence. "The boys played good

football, but I think the strikers might have a lack of concentration in finding the target though they played speedy football," said a disappointed MSC coach Maruf.

Maruf's counterpart Amalesh Sen, however, blamed the referee for his poor performance.

"How would the players play their natural game if the referee distrusted them repeatedly," Sen said. "I never saw such poor refereeing in

my whole career." Abahani's long-serving coach admitted that they

misplaced many passes and the tendency of quick ball distribution made his midfield shaky to allow Mohammedan to go into

Champs get Gunners

FROM PAGE 17

"It's a tough but also very exciting draw," said Bayern president Karl-Heinz Rummenigge.

"Manchester United are at the summit of European football and we will have to play at our best level, and even higher, to make it to the semifinals.

"Manchester are the favourites for this tie, but that's what makes it exciting: to go and beat the favourites."

United secretary Ken Ramsden, mindful of either Lyon or Bordeaux waiting in the last four, was upbeat, saying: "If we chose the draw this would be a good draw but there will be no compla-

cency at Old Trafford." This season's final is being

staged at Real Madrid's Santiago Bernabeu stadium on May 22, the first time the final is being held on a Saturday.

Real's dream of lifting a tenth trophy on home turf were dashed by Lyon this week, with the former French champions' reward a date with Laurent Blanc's Bordeaux.

Lyon president Jean-Michel Aulas commented: "It's very special. At least it means there will be a French club in the semi-finals. It will also be a clash between the reigning (French) champions and the champions of the 2ndleg-April 6/7

season before." Jose Mourinho's Inter

European hopes, face a trip to first time quarterfinalists CSKA Moscow before the return leg at the San Siro. Friday's draw was made by

Milan, who ended Chelsea's

UEFA general secretary Gianni Infantino and the ambassador for the Madrid final, Emilio Butragueno. DRAW

Lyon (FRA) v Bordeaux (FRA)

Bayern Munich (GER) v Manchester United (ENG) Arsenal (ENG) v Barcelona (ESP) Inter Milan (ITA) v CSKA

Moscow (RUS) 1st leg - March 30/31

Major General Abu Belal Muhammad Safiul Hug, vice president of Kurmitola Golf Club, inaugurates the two-day long Nokia Independence Cup golf tournament at Kurmitola Golf Club yesterday.