

AFP, Rome

New Zealand all-rounder Scott Styris sends down a delivery during the World Twenty20 warm-up match against West Indies at the Providence Stadium in Guyana on Wednesday.

Windies need Gayle to fire

AFP, Providence

West Indies captain Chris Gayle struck Australia fast bowler Brett Lee for 27 runs in one over at last year's World Twenty20 so Ireland's attack could be forgiven for fearing the worst.

Hosts West Indies face Ireland, looking for yet more giantkilling success, on the first day of this year's World Twenty20 here on Friday.

One consolation for Ireland is that the form of the West Indies in general and Gayle in particular is far from consistent.

But if Gayle, whose 117 against South Africa in the inaugural 2007 edition remains the only century at a World Twenty20, does find his form then Ireland's bowlers will be hard pressed to keep him in check.

This month the West Indies beat Ireland by six wickets on the Duckworth/Lewis method in a one-day international in Jamaica but trying to apply conclusions from other forms of cricket to Twenty20 is fraught with risk.

Logically, West Indies should win but Ireland have enjoyed upsetting the odds on

the world stage. At last year's World Twenty20 they beat Test nation Bangladesh and at the 2007 World Cup in the Caribbean they knocked former champions Pakistan

out of the tournament. Ireland relish their role as underdogs on the big stage but for the home side are under pressure.

Greatest night

FROM PAGE 17 lines. They made it very hard for us."

Inter Milan midfielder Javier Zanetti praised the character of his side after they overcame an intimidating

atmosphere at the Nou Camp.

"This result was down to the spirit we have. We worked hard to deal with the tough reception that we received and we were able to cope. Now we are in the final and we can concentrate on that," said the Argentine.

Inter striker Samuel Eto'o admitted it took something special to beat the side he left last summer.

"It was extremely difficult and it felt like it was never going to end but we'Greatest night of my life' always knew what we wanted and how to beat a fantastic team like Barcelona. We managed to win against the best team in the

world." Barcelona midfielder Yaya Toure was critical of the Italian

"We couldn't do anything with the way the opposition played and the referee didn't help us, he is human and can make mistakes," he said.

"Inter stayed back and defended and the result is sad for the fans and the team."

I'll never

FROM PAGE 20

"We didn't want the ball because when Barcelona press and win the ball back, we lose our position - I never want to lose position on the pitch so I didn't want us to have the ball, we gave it away," he said.

"I told my players that we could let the ball help us win and that we had to be compact, closing spaces," he added.

Afghans upbeat

AFP, Bridgetown



Afghanistan cruised to a fivewicket win over Ireland in their World Twenty20 warm-up on world Wednesday, showing that they are ready for their world chamwest indies 2010 pionship debut.

Ireland made 133-9 off their 20 overs with John Mooney top-scoring with 42 but debutant seamer Dawlat Ahmadzai grabbed the headlines with 4-15 before Afghanistan reached their target with three balls to spare in Guyana.

When they batted, Afghanistan showed their all-round mettle with Ashghar Stanikzai and Mohammad Nabi adding 66 for the fifth wicket in six overs.

"Any team wants a jump start, no matter who you are playing against," said Afghanistan coach Kabir Khan.

"Ireland are one of the best Associate teams and as a coach the promising thing is that the boys are fighting hard and they are coming back

into games which is not very easy in Twenty20." Afghanistan begin their World Twenty20 campaign on Saturday against India.

A fine unbeaten 61 from Chamara Kapugedera was in vain as Sri Lanka slumped to a five-wicket defeat to South Africa with three balls to spare in Barbados.

Kapugedera and veteran Sanath Jayasuriya helped Sri Lanka post 137 for 8 before a 61-run partnership between Mark Boucher and Johan Botha allowed South Africa to squeeze home in the final over.

Sri Lanka skipper Kumar Sangakkara opted to bat first after winning the toss at the Kensington Oval but Tillakaratne Dilshan fell first ball to Rory Kleinveldt.

Charl Langeveldt then struck twice to remove Sangakkara and Mahela Jayawardene as Sri Lanka slipped to 22 for 3.

Dinesh Chandimal and Angelo Matthews soon followed as Sri Lanka, runners-up to Pakistan in the 2009 Twenty20 final, collapsed to 42 for 5 in the ninth over.

But Jayasuriya (33) helped steady the ship before Kapugedera gave his side a fighting chance with three fours and five sixes.

South African skipper Graeme Smith was dismissed by Nuwan Kulasekara in the first over for one befor Loots Bosman hit a quick 20.

Botha and Boucher put South Africa on their way, scoring at more than 11 runs an over.

At the same venue, England eased past Bangladesh by seven wickets. Bangladesh were limited to 126-7 with slow

left-armer Michael Yardy taking 3-20 before Ravi Bopara hit 62 from 48 balls to steer England to victory in the 18th over.

West Indies lost by seven runs to New Zealand in a warm-up later in Guyana.

SCORES IN BRIEF

SRI LANKA: 137-8 in 20 overs (Kapugedera 61 not out). **SOUTH AFRICA**: 141-5 in 19.3 overs (Boucher 33 not out).

Result: South Africa won by five wickets. IRELAND: 133-9 in 20 overs (Mooney 42;

Ahmadzai 4-15). AFGHANISTAN: 134-5 in 19.3 overs. Result: Afghanistan won by five wickets.

NEW ZEALAND: 124-8 in 20 overs (Taylor 50, Oram 46 not out). WEST INDIES: 117 in 19.4 overs (Chanderpaul

53; Styris 4-15).

Result: New Zealand won by seven runs.

Time to get cricket

FROM PAGE 17 with both Afghanistan and Ireland having had six matches apiece. At the other, India and South Africa have played just two since June 2009.

It makes it hard to formulate plans and work out tactics when matches are played so infrequently. Some commentators believe Twenty20 should be purely a domestic event, but ICC have committed to spreading it internationally and there is much merit in doing so. The obvious solution would be to trim the number of ODIs to accommodate more T20s (how about three of each on most tours?) but this would need a global commitment and ODI cricket is still favoured by boards.

Despite the imbalance, in the short history of international Twenty20 the two events, in South Africa and England, have been a resounding success both from a point of view of the cricket on display and the response from the public. The inaugural tournament in 2007 was the tonic the game needed after an awful 50-over World Cup in the Caribbean which managed to completely forget the roots of the game in the region. Instead of a vibrant, colourful, joyous event we had a sanitised, dull and, ultimately, farcical seven weeks.

For that reason alone this World Twenty 20 is vitally important and everyone has their fingers crossed that ICC have learnt from their mistakes of three years ago. The pre-tournament hype has sounded promising -- fewer restrictions on what can be brought into grounds and fair pricing top of the list -- but as ever the real test will be when the action begins.

LOCAL SNIPPETS

ASIAN CHESS

Grand Master Ziaur Rahman finished 40th in the 9th Asian Individual Continental Chess Championship that concluded at Subic Free Port City in the Philippines yesterday.

Zia secured five points from nine games after beating IM Nadera Barlo of Philippines in the ninth and final round. GM Ni Hua became champion with seven points.

A total of 90 players including 32 Grand Masters from 14 countries took part in the meet.

ASIAN GAMES HOCKEY

Hosts Bangladesh will start their Asian Games qualifying campaign on the third day of the seven-team meet that commences at the Maulana Bhasani National Stadium on May 7.

Oman and Hong Kong will play the tournament opener. Bangladesh will play their first match against Thailand on May 9 before facing Chinese Taipei the next day.

After a rest day, the hosts will take on Hong Kong on May 12 and against Sri Lanka on the following day. The will take on Singapore on May 15 before their last match against Oman on May 16.

KIRONAWOL

Mohammedan's national hockey goalkeeper Mehrab Hossain Kiron has left the country for Italy without informing his club, alleged a Mohammedan official.

Kiron, who also did not report to the national team ahead of the Asian Games Qualifiers in May, last played for his club in the Federation Cup final against Usha Krira Chakra. Mohammedan hockey committee secretary Sajed AA Adel

said that they have spent a lot of money behind him for this season and questioned who would now take this responsibility for the disappearance of the national hockey goalkeeper.

He said that they learnt that Kiron went to Europe and his family had recently revealed the fact. A player on condition of anonymity confirmed that Kiron left

the country a few days earlier for Italy.

"Bayern have a great team and great coach," said Mourinho bemoaning the fact that Inter midfielder Thiago Motta and Bayern star Franck Ribery will both be suspended after their

dismissals in the semifinals. The final in Madrid will also be something extra special for Inter's former Bayern defender Lucio and three former Real Madrid players at Inter - Esteban Cambiasso, Walter Samuel and Wesley Sneijder.

Bayern's Arjen Robben, who like Sneijder was offloaded last August by Real and who also played for three seasons under Mourinho at Chelsea, is likewise returning to the Bernabeu.

BU exact

FROM PAGE 17 hold visiting Sheikh Russel KC to a 2-2 draw.

Moroccan striker Samir Omari put Russel ahead four minutes from the half-time striking his 14th goal in the league to the join top scorers --Mohammedan's Zahid Hossain Emily, Abahani duo Sheriff Deen Mohammad and Enamul Haque -- before his compatriot Jamal Nakhli doubled the margin in the 54th minute.

But, the visitors faced a sudden rally in the last 10 minutes that forced them to drop points against a side they thrashed 4-1 in their home game.

Mohammedan's Guinean recruit Lamine Soumah pulled a goal back in the 80th minute while Lincoln levelled the margin three minutes later to present the Black and Whites of the port city their eighth draw in 19 matches and leapfrogged one place to grab the fifth position in the 15team points table with 20 points.

Despite the fifth draw in 19 matches, Sheikh Russel maintained their third position with 44 points, five points behind second-placed Mohammedan SC.

Yardy, Bopara batter Tigers

CRICINFO, undated

England maintained their 100 per cent record in international fixtures cc WORLD against Bangladesh as TWENTY20 they launched their World WEST INDIES 2010 Twenty20 preparations with a comfortable seven-wicket victory at the Kensington Oval on Wednesday.

Left-arm spinner Michael Yardy was the star of the show with 3 for 20 in his four overs, before Ravi Bopara marked his return to the national side with a calm 62 from 48 balls, to seal the contest with 17 balls to spare.

Having recently completed their tour of Bangladesh, England knew exactly what to expect from their opponents, and were rarely less than in control of the contest -even though they started a touch sloppily. Imrul Kayes slammed his second ball of the innings from James Anderson over midwicket for six, only to be reprieved by Stuart Broad in the same over.

Mohammad Ashraful top-edged a pull to be caught by the wicketkeeper, Craig Kieswetter, but Kayes fell soon afterwards, caught at third man off Anderson for 14, before the introduction of the spinners cemented England's domi-

Yardy claimed his first international wicket for almost three years when Ashraful was caught down the leg-side, and he doubled his tally as Aftab Ahmed holed out to Tim Bresnan for 8. In his next over, captain Shakib Al Hasan was bowled for 7, and when Mushfigur Rahim was crassly run out for 2, the backbone of the innings had been broken, even though Mahmudullah hung around for a useful 38 not out from 31 balls.

The run-chase was launched by two Twenty20 debutants, Kieswetter and Michael Lumb, who are set to be England's 16th opening pairing in 26 matches when their tournament proper gets underway against West Indies on Monday. Lumb, however, wasn't able to Broad then overstepped as mark his moment in style -- he reached 8

from 10 balls before carving Syed Rasel to point.

Kieswetter gave a hint of the fireworks that could follow later in the competition when he blazed a massive six over the imposing 3Ws stand, but on 22 he was bowled neck and crop by a ripper from Shakib that lured him down the track and spun viciously past his flailing bat.

But Bopara and captain Paul Collingwood guarded against any mishaps in a dominant but measured thirdwicket stand of 71 in 56 balls. The only anticlimax from England's point of view came when Bopara ran himself out with the scores level, but by then the job had been done.

SCORES IN BRIEF

BANGLADESH: 126 for 7 in 20 overs (Kayes 14, Ashraful 21, Mahmudullah 38 not out; Yardy 3-20, Anderson 2-23) ENGLAND: 127 for 3 in 17.1 overs (Bopara 62, Kieswetter 22, Collingwood 32 not

Result: England won by seven wickets.

Nadal roars Kiwis bank on spin into Rd 3

Reigning champion Rafael Nadal was at his dominant best as he thumped German Philipp Kohlschreiber 6-1, 6-3 on Wednesday to reach the third round of the ATP Rome Masters 1000.

The 23-year-old Spaniard broke his opponent four times and gave up only one break point as he easily avoided the fate that befell world number one Roger Federer when he was stunned by Ernests Gulbis on Tuesday.

"It probably wasn't my best match but I did well, I played safe," said four-time champion Nadal. "I was focussed the whole time and I tried to be more aggressive.

"He made more mistakes than usual which helped me a little bit but my serve was working very well." The occasion on the brand

new centre court in Rome seemed to get to world number 29 Kohlschreiber as he made 28 unforced errors, many wildly off the forehand side, compared to just 11 by The world number three

has only ever lost here once, two years ago, and is aiming for his fifth title in six years at the Foro Italico. Nadal cruised through the

first set, breaking in the second and sixth games, but his German opponent finally started making a fist of things in the second.

He even had a chance to move a break ahead at 3-2 after a poor Nadal drive volley left him out of position and he was passed down the line to give up his only break point of the match.

BCB Academy

FROM PAGE 17 SCORES IN BRIEF

SOUTH AFRICA ACADEMY: First innings 222 and Second innings- 198-2 in 40 overs (Swanepoel 20, Hendricks 62 not out, Miller 98, Zondo 16

not out, extras 2; Shaker 1-39,

Hasan 1-40) GP-BCB Academy: First innings (107-2 overnight) 260 all out in 82.3 overs (Mintu 16, Rony 33, Hom 24, Mithun 88, Sabbir 86, extras 9; Birch 3-40, Matshikwe 3-46, Maharaj 2-78).

AFP, Providence



Brendon McCullum's prowess as a Twenty20 batsman is well known but older brother KC WORLD Nathan could also have an TWENTY20 important role to play in the west indies 2010 upcoming World Twenty 20.

The Black Caps open the competition against Sri Lanka here on Friday and, with warm-up matches suggesting pitches will take spin, off-break bowler Nathan is set for some key overs in an attack where New Zealand captain and left-arm spinner Daniel Vettori has been the mainstay for several years now. McCullum was given the new ball in New

Zealand's 40-run warm-up win over Ireland here on Tuesday, reviving memories of Martin Crowe's ploy of using off-spinner Dipak Patel at the start of the innings at the 1992 World Cup -a tactic that helped the Black Caps get to the last four of that event. Against Ireland, McCullum took three wick-

ets for 25 runs and Vettori, who went wicketless,

said: "Nathan McCullum was outstanding with

the ball. On a wicket like that you've got to be

inch perfect because it's so slow." The Black Caps' pace attack is led by fast bowler Shane Bond and it won't just be Kiwi fans who will be hoping the former policeman, whose career has been blighted by injuries, can

come through this tournament unscathed. New Zealand headed to the Caribbean with fitness doubts over several senior players but batsman Jesse Ryder suggested he was over the groin strain that forced his withdrawal from the Indian Premier League with a brisk 64 against the Irish.

Together with Brendon McCullum he forms an explosive opening partnership with McCullum posting an unbeaten 116, one short

of Chris Gayle's world record, when New Zealand beat Australia in a Twenty20 match in February.

McCullum is one of the most dangerous batsmen around in this format and Vettori was in no doubt of his value to New Zealand. "McCullum at the top of the order is the real

key. If he has a good tournament I think the

team will fire." Sri Lanka, last year's losing finalists, appear to have one of the best balanced squads for this form of cricket with the pace of Lasith Malinga to the spin of Muttiah Muralidaran and Ajantha

Mendis posing problems for most batsmen. Tillakaratne Dilshan, player of the tournament in England in 2009 and veteran Sanath Jayasuriya are just two of the island nation's

batsmen capable of fast scoring. The Sri Lankans lost by five wickets to South Africa in a warm-up match on Wednesday but did not have their strongest side out in a clash that, in any event, went to the last over.

Whether the fact that most of the squad have been taking part in the lucrative Indian Premier League will catch up with Sri Lanka, remains to be seen but conditions, at least, should hold no fears for a side who reached the final of the 2007 World Cup in the West Indies.

At it was in Guyana where the unorthodox Malinga made history in 2007, taking four wickets in four balls against South Africa.

But former captain Mahela Jayawardene

knows Sri Lanka, now led by the experienced and talented Kumar Sangakkara, could have had an easier opening fixture. "New Zealand has got a really good all-

round team which can be totally devastating, he said. To back him up, New Zealand beat West Indies by seven runs in their second warm-up



on Wednesday.

World number two Spaniard Rafael Nadal serves to German Philipp Kohlschreiber during their Rome

16

Masters second round match in Rome on Wednesday. Nadal won 6-1, 6-3.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

36 "- the 2 Chart 22 Badder ACROSS 1 October Knife" than format birthstone 37 Meadow 3 Landers bad 38 Last or Curry 23 Some 5 Loosen 4 Shylock, 9 Explo-Greek urban sive, for letter e.g. homes 5 Cold War **24** Guy short 40 Burn 12 Suitable 26 Squealer someinitials 13 Appear what 6 Bird's 27 Fond 14 — de 42 Chignon home du —, 43 Octopus' 7 Sandra or Wisconcologne 15 Nash-Ruby sin arms ville's 48 Superla-8 Brunch 28 Squished 35-Down home tive entrees **17** Pen suffix 29 Dweeby 9 Treat **49** "— go meat? point sort **18** Pub bragh!" 31 Stopped

10 Ham-

11 Tooth-

mer's

target

paste

53 Whirlpool holder 16 Listener DOWN 20 Onassis, familiarly 1 Frequently **21** Jab

50 Slender

course"

51 "Of

52 Facts

missile

19 Punch

bowl

sory

21 Pumpkin

eater of

rhyme

simple

25 Finished

agent?

26 Press

30 Family

31 Centri-

fuge

inserts

32 "— Got a

Secret"

35 Nicholas,

for one

33 Style

24 Plain

and

acces-

Solution time: 21 mins. ENDS ASH QUAD URSA MAUNALOA SEBELIUS ADAR AFTABRUPT PARKASPOT CLOYSALAZAR TELSILAS REF

WASABIBAS

H U L L G E I T H N E R E T U I H A B A N E R A

YOGATUBUTAH

say 39 Ponder 40 Fit of peevishness 41 Sicilian CLINTON VEAL TURNDIARY

44 Mound stat 45 Young bloke

spouter

occupy-

geometri-

ing

34 Joke

35 Ring,

cally

org.

38 Do as I

37 Air safety

46 Remnant 47 Firma-

ment

22 26 27 28 | 29 37 40 41 38 | 39 45 46 47 43 49 52 53

CRYPTOQUIP

HEZD VGFD AQMWQD'M

EZUJQUW SMFM HQWWQFM ZD ZWM EPM, Z MSJJQMF WGQMF

VQSRP AF RQKED'M MRQKEDM.

TOO LARGE TO FIT COMFORTABLY ON THE SHELF, I'D SAY IT'S IL-LEDGE-IBLE.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Z equals I

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: SINCE THIS ITEM IS