

Murali out of World T20

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lanka suffered a major blow to their World Twenty20 campaign when veteran off-spinner Muttiah Muralidaran was sidelined with a groin injury, officials said on Monday.

Muralidaran, 38, who is also the team's vice-captain, was injured during Friday's opening match against New Zealand in Guyana, which Sri Lanka lost by two wickets.

"Clinical tests revealed a grade one strain of his right adductor muscle," team physiotherapist Tommy Simsek said in a statement released by Sri Lanka Cricket in Colombo.

"Murali has been advised to rest for two to three weeks." Muralidaran, who is the most successful bowler in history with a record 792 Test and 512 one-day wickets, took two wickets for 25 runs against New Zealand.

His replacement will be announced soon by the selectors in Colombo, a Sri Lanka Cricket spokesman said. Sri Lanka take on Zimbabwe in their last Group B match in Guyana later on Monday, a game the 2009 World T20 runners-up must win to stay in the 12-nation tournament.

Shirin, Liza still lead

SPORTS REPORTER

Holder Sharmin Sultana Shirin and last year's runner-up WFM Shamima Akter Liza maintained their joint lead in the Arlin Developer 31st National Women's Chess Championship at the close of the ninth round at the Narayanganj Club Auditorium yesterday.

Shirin beat Jahanara Haque Runu while Liza beat Masuda Begum to earn 8.5 points from nine matches. Masuda is in the second position with 6.5 points.

Nazrana Khan Eva drew with WFM Zakia Sultana, WIM Rani Hamid beat Rokshana Tili, Mahmuda Haque Chowdhury Moly beat Dilara Jahan Nupru and Protiva Talukdder beat Aeon Sarker.

Mahela shines

FROM PAGE 17

This edition and he made just two before a miscued drive off Elton Chigumbura went straight to mid-off.



Khulna are ecstatic after lifting the 30th Inter-District Cricket Championship by defeating Dhaka in the final at the Shams UI Huda Stadium in Jessore yesterday.

Khulna nat'l champions

SPORTS REPORTER

Khulna became the 30th Inter-District cricket champions with a four-wicket win over Dhaka at the Shams UI Huda Stadium in Jessore yesterday.

Chasing 200 for victory, the home side reached the target in 44.3 overs after Dhaka made 199-8 in 45 overs after the match was delayed due to wet conditions overnight.

Mosabdeq Iftekhar struck an unbeaten 43 off 59 balls, helped by two boundaries while Shafiqul Alam struck a quickfire 34 that had seven boundaries.

Masum Khan remained unbeaten on 27 off 20 balls with a six and two fours as Khulna reached the target in the final over.

For Dhaka, left-arm spinner Rakibul Hasan took two for 28.

Earlier, the visitors built their innings around Ashiqul Alam's 60. The wicketkeeper-batsman struck three boundaries in his 115-ball knock.

Raihan Sharif made 52 off 43 balls with a six and six boundaries.

For Khulna, Bishwanath Haldar took 3 for 34 while Masum, who was later adjudged man-of-the-match, took two wickets.

BCB tournament committee chairman Gazi Ashraf Hossain gave away the trophy to the champions as chief guest.

Raina in T20 century club

AFP, Gros Islet

India's Suresh Raina became only the third batsman to score a Twenty20 international century when he made 101 against South Africa here on Sunday.

Raina's century, off 59 balls, was the centrepiece of India's total of 186 for five in the first innings of their World Twenty20 Group C match against the Proteas at the Beausejour Stadium.

Only West Indies' Chris Gayle and New Zealand's Brendon McCullum had previously scored hundreds at this level.

Twenty20 international century-makers (score, player, team, opposition, ground, date):

117 Chris Gayle WIS v RSA, Johannesburg, Sep 11 2007.

116 Brendon McCullum NZL v AUS, Christchurch, Feb 28 2010.

101 Suresh Raina IND v RSA, Gros Islet, May 02 2010.

Members

FROM PAGE 17

have been requested to find out or stop fixed matches in the league.

The meeting also asked its development committee to take necessary steps to complete the deal with the government to use the Sylhet BKSP in a bid to run a football academy there.

It also formed an eight-member committee to distribute the World Cup's tickets which have been allotted to the game's governing body on the backdrop of allegations that the tickets fail to reach general people.

Raina thanks Dhoni

CRICINFO, Gros Islet

Suresh Raina has credited the India captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni for helping him develop to become the third player to score a Twenty20 international century.

Raina's 101 against South Africa elevated him to elite company with only Chris Gayle and Brendon McCullum having previously made hundreds.

The innings ensured victory for India, who have progressed to the Super Eights, and surpassed Gautam Gambhir's 75 three years ago as the highest score by an India player in an international. Raina said playing with Dhoni in the Chennai Super Kings' triumphant IPL campaign had been a major bonus.

"Mahi [Dhoni] helped me a lot in the IPL," Raina told reporters in St Lucia. "The senior players, Sachin Tendulkar and Rahul Dravid,

have also supported me throughout. I've played five or six years of international cricket, it's important to fulfil the dreams they've had for me."

He brought up his milestone with a six off Albie Morkel and in doing so, made the most of an early life after he was caught off a Morne Morkel no-ball on 5. Raina said he didn't feel at his best early in the innings but found his touch as the day wore on.

"I was not hitting the ball when I came in," he said. "I was thinking 'just rotate the strike' and when I get a loose ball just go for it."

The 14-run result has left South Africa needing to beat Afghanistan in Barbados on Wednesday to move past the group stage. It is a game that South Africa should win but they have left themselves vulnerable after failing to restrict Raina's output.

"We started well with the ball, 160 was par and we were on track for that until Raina got hold of us at the back end," the captain Graeme Smith

said. "It was a terrific knock, he held the innings together."

"He played with great accuracy and power and he was able to exploit our lack of accuracy towards the back end, which played into his hands. I spoke before the game about little things and that no-ball proved to be costly for us in the end."

Smith conceded that South Africa's chase wasn't helped by a slow start from himself and Jacques Kallis. Both men made reasonable scores but they didn't move fast enough and when they fell within an over of each other, they had left the team still needing 59 from 22 balls with seven wickets in hand.

"Myself and Jacques probably left it a bit late for the other guys," Smith said. "It was disappointing, when you are chasing a total and you end up 15 runs short of whatever it is and not all your guys get a chance to have a whack. We've definitely got to sharpen up before we play Afghanistan. We've got some things to work on and to think about."

Henin's first win

Tennis

AFP, Stuttgart

Former world number one Justine Henin gave herself a French Open boost on Sunday with the first victory on her comeback as she won the Stuttgart WTA tournament.

Since ending her 18-month hiatus in January, Henin's 6-4, 2-6, 6-1 win over Australia's Samantha Stosur in Sunday's final was her first title in her third final since coming out of retirement having last won here in 2007.

"It's very emotional for me to win here," said Henin. "I never thought I would be back here again, not even a year ago."

"I have had a fantastic week and I can now say I really try to be back here next year."

Henin, who has won seven Grand Slam titles, revealed she first had the idea to come back to tennis when she saw Roger Federer win at Roland Garros.

"To see Roger win the French Open last year, and keep fighting so hard, brought back the fire in me which had not been there for a long time before," said the 27-year-old, who revealed her pet dog is named 'Deuce'.

"I still have to work hard for the next few weeks, months and hopefully years. It was fantastic to get away from tennis, but it feels

so good to be back and share all these emotions again."

Henin's 42nd title in her 60th final puts the former world number one back inside the world's top 20 as she bids to win a fifth French Open title at Roland Garros which starts on May 23.

Seventh-seed Stosur was contesting her second straight final, having won last month's Charleston tournament, but she had her 11-match winning streak ended by Henin's victory.

"It's been a good week, I have really enjoyed playing here and it was nice to be back after a few years away," said Stosur.

"It's been a nice feeling to get into the final, but Justine was a bit too strong for me."

"In the third set she got really aggressive, put in some great returns which put me under pressure and she broke me three times in a row."

"That was the key to her win."

Both Henin and Stosur, who is set to move up the rankings to eighth, reached the final as wildcard entrants, but Henin more than proved her credentials with victory over fellow ex-world number one Jelena Jankovic in the quarterfinals.

Henin made the crucial breakthrough in the fifth game for a 3-2 lead in the first set which she never relinquished having defended the single break point against her.

But in the second set, Stosur finally got the breakthrough she had worked for in the fifth game when Henin succumbed to allow the Australian a 4-2 lead and she then broke the Belgian again to take the set.

But Henin dug deep into her vast experience on clay and broke Stosur in the third game of the decider for a 3-1 lead and having broken her opponent twice more, Henin took the set and title in style.

Masud propels Bandhu XI

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Bandhu Ekadash got a 28-run victory over Green Valley in the Col (ret) Malek Smriti First Division Cricket League at Shaheed Miraz-Tapan Stadium here yesterday.

Batting first, Bandhu Ekadash made 165-9 in the 40 overs with Masud scoring 46 runs from 56 balls.

Azmir and Mithun picked up three wickets each while Nur Alam took two wickets for Green Valley.

In reply, Green Valley were all out for 137 runs in 23.5 overs. Nur Alam made 21 runs while Mithun struck 20.

Shaheen picked up three wickets.

In today's match, Kulfa Goshthi will face Victoria Club.



Comeback queen Justine Henin of Belgium celebrates after beating Samantha Stosur of Australia in the final match of the Porsche Tennis Grand Prix in Stuttgart on Sunday. Henin won 6-4, 2-6, 6-1.

Aussies outdo Pakistan

AFP, Gros Islet

Shane Watson top-scored with 81 as Australia punished lax Pakistan fielding to win their opening World Twenty20 match by a convincing 34-run margin here on Sunday.

Man-of-the-match Watson's innings was the cornerstone of Australia's 191 all out, made after captain Michael Clarke took the toss.

But the all-rounder was dropped on 11 by Misbahul Haq and missed on 20, again by Misbah, who couldn't get a hand on a skied chance after running back at long-on, with Mohammad Hafeez the unlucky bowler on both occasions.

Watson made defending champions Pakistan pay by striking four sixes and seven fours in his blistering 49-ball innings and with David Hussey he put on 98 in under nine overs for the third wicket.

Hussey dropped on 18 at long-off by Salman Butt, a relatively easy chance, went on to make 53 off 29 balls with five sixes and two fours.

Hussey was especially severe on seamer Mohammad Sami, striking him for 28 runs in the 16th over with the batsman striking four sixes, including three in a row.

Australia's total was effectively made off 19 overs as their innings ended in extraordinary fashion with a five-wicket maiden from Mohammad Aamer but by then the damage had been done.

"It's a very good start from the boys, 191 runs in 19 overs," said Clarke. "The bowlers then did a great job in the first six overs and the boys caught really well as well."

Watson added: "It's nice when you do get a life, especially in Twenty20, it's nice to get a reprieve."

Pakistan captain Shahid Afridi said his team had been outplayed in all departments.

"We missed some opportunities and the pacers struggled with their line."

"They [Australia] played very well, they batted, bowled and fielded well."

Pakistan lost Kamran Akmal for nought to the first legitimate ball of their reply when he

sliced Dirk Nannes to Steven Smith at short third man.

Salman Butt (15) miscued an attempted hook off fast bowler Shaun Tait and was caught by David Hussey before left-arm quick Mitchell Johnson's second ball proved too much for Mohammad Hafeez, who pulled straight to deep square leg.

Australia, holding their catches, had reduced Pakistan to 34 for three inside five overs and they never looked like recovering from such a start.

Tait then had the satisfaction of bowling hard-hitting batsman Afridi for 33 before finishing the match by dismissing Saeed Ajmal off the last ball to finish with figures of three wickets for 20 runs.

Misbah top-scored for Pakistan with 41 in a total of 157 all out.

Earlier, David Hussey holed out off Ajmal and, three balls later, the off-spinner had Watson lbw.

There was a bizarre finish to the Australia innings as five wickets fell for no runs in the final over, from left-arm quick Aamer.

Brad Haddin was caught off the first ball, Mitchell Johnson clean bowled off the second with both Michael Hussey and Steven Smith run out by direct hits from wicketkeeper Kamran Akmal as they tried to run byes.

Tait survived the fifth ball but was bowled off the last for nought.

Aamer finished with three for 23, with Ajmal taking three for 34.

Pakistan defeated Bangladesh by 21 runs in the first Group A match here on Saturday and both Pakistan and Australia will qualify for the second round if the Aussies beat Bangladesh in Barbados on Wednesday.

SCORES IN BRIEF

AUSTRALIA: 191 all out in 20 overs (Watson 81, D Hussey 53, Warner 26, M Hussey 17, Aamer 3-23, Ajmal 3-34)

PAKISTAN: 157 all out in 20 overs (Butt 15, Akmal 18, Misbahul 41; Tait 3-20, Nannes 3-41, Johnson 2-21)

Result: Australia won by 34 runs. Man-of-the-match: Shane Watson.

Nadal Rome's master

Tennis

AFP, Rome

Rafael Nadal breezed to a fifth Rome Masters title in six years and then revealed that he is losing none of the fire that has seen him dominate clay tennis since 2005.

The 23-year-old world number three matched American legend Andre Agassi's record of 17 Masters titles as he beat compatriot

and 13th seed David Ferrer 7-5, 6-2 at the Foro Italico.

That took his overall record on clay to 191 wins to just 17 defeats, most of which were in his early career.

He has won the Monte Carlo Masters six years in a row, won Rome five times in six years, won Barcelona five years in a row before skipping it this season and will be aiming for a fifth win in six years at Roland Garros later this month.

"It's not true that I don't

have bad days. I've had a lot of bad days in the past five or six years," he said.

"The thing is to have high motivation to keep winning. The important thing is to have enough motivation to want to improve all the time and this is what has happened to me all my career."

"Every time I go on court I try my best and I try to do this all the time."

Nadal's clay court dominance seemed to reach its zenith two weeks ago in Monte Carlo when he dropped just 14 games on route to the title.

But he insists he will not be able to repeat that every time.

"Now I'm playing well and winning a tournament like Monte Carlo and losing 14 games doesn't happen every week," he said.



Spaniard Rafael Nadal bites the trophy after beating his compatriot David Ferrer in the Rome Masters final on Sunday. Nadal won 7-5, 6-2.

Tennis team returns empty handed

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh finished bottom in the Davis Cup Asia Oceania Zone-3 tennis campaign after losing all of their four matches in Iran, said a press release.

Bangladesh lost in 0-3 sets to Vietnam, 1-2 sets to Lebanon and 1-2 sets to Oman in the round-robin league matches of Group B.

Bangladesh also suffered a 0-2 defeat at the hands of Kuwait to finish third in the relegation group.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS 1 Donkey intent 4 Difficult publication hand 12 Cudgel 13 Hodge-podge 14 Formerly 15 Green onion 17 Stench 18 Began 19 Starting at the highest level 21 Diversion 24 Uncooked Here (French) 26 Aries 28 Family branches 32 Fax cover-page word 34 Post-proof abbr. 36 Cry loudly 37 Melodies 39 Grumpy companion? 41 By way of 42 Hiatus 44 Suitor's intent 46 Annual 50 Zilch 51 Worms, maybe 52 Bundle of nerves? 56 Wheels of 57 Duel tool 58 Mine-car contents 59 Paradise 60 Entrance 61 Promptly DOWN 1 Tummy muscles 2 Pouch 3 Mare's mate 4 Attorney General 22 Beige Eric 23 Online help page 27 Club — 29 Tent at an expo 30 Look-alike 31 Refinery waste 33 Explosive measure 35 Wall Street stat, with "The" 38 — Rafael 40 Eel type 43 Summoned on a beeper 45 Lubricant 46 Competent 47 Positioned 48 Marceau, e.g. 49 Guitar attachment 53 Ultra-modern (Prefix) 54 Acapulco gold 55 Fresh

Grid for crossword puzzle with numbers 1-61.

Solution time: 25 mins.

SHY JUNG HAVE YEA AFAR AGAR NIEL COMEALONG CREEK WIT PALS DECAF HOPALONG RAGA USE STEAD PIN SLEW TAGALONG KOREA DAME DINA ADOPT SINGALONG NOR TREENG SLOE COO YAWS ODDS ELY

CRYPTOQUIP

X O X L X T K P M A G M B K DAGHMBXYKJ HXVG MQ ZAPXQL S O M I B K I D R K T P B M J K N, S I K H R M G K Z N S Y K I V M X Q H K I G ?

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: AT THE HORSES' NECK HAIR GROOMING CONTEST, WE HEARD SOMEBODY REMARK "MAY THE BEST MANE WIN." Today's Cryptoquip Clue: M equals O