

Utseya quits captaincy

CRICINFO

Prosper Utseya has resigned as captain of Zimbabwe, handing over a formal resignation letter following a meeting with the managing director of Zimbabwe Cricket.

"It has been a privilege for me to captain Zimbabwe for the past four years," Utseya stated in his resignation letter. "It has been an experience that has been fraught with many emotions, though I am glad to say that, overall, I have enjoyed the experience immensely and would not have wished for it to be otherwise."

"I remain committed to the cause of the team and Zimbabwe Cricket," he continued. "That commitment is something every international sportsman has. It is more so for those who, like me, have had the honour to lead their national sides."

Thrust into the senior national team in 2004 at the age of 19 when the 'rebel' players withdrew, Utseya held his place in a weakened national side, taking over the captaincy from Terry Duffin in 2006. He led Zimbabwe in 67 one-day internationals, with 20 victories, and all 10 of the Twenty20 internationals the team has played so far.

Always economical but rarely incisive, Utseya came of age with the ball during the tour to West Indies in May 2006, where his flight and spin belied his lack of experience and years. He should, in all likelihood, retain his place in the side on his bowling alone as he, together with left-arm spinner Ray Price, has formed the backbone of Zimbabwe's spin-oriented attack in recent times.

Utseya captained the side in the darkest days of Zimbabwe cricket, but despite some positive results in recent times the team has continued to perform inconsistently, even against weaker opposition. It is understood that he stepped down in the interests of the team's future development.

Chigumbura will now lead the side in their tri-series against India and Sri Lanka at home, which starts on May 28. Another player who got his start in the national side during the 'rebel' player crisis, Chigumbura has since emerged as a frontline performer for Zimbabwe with both bat and ball, and already captains the Mashonaland Eagles. His appointment as captain was a unanimous decision by the ZC Board.

All square

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There was more drama as Khaled was shown a red card a minute after scoring as the Sylhet-based club played the last 12 minutes with ten men and held on for a valuable point. After this result, Beanibazar remained at the bottom of the pile with 14 points from 20 matches against Arambagh's 20 from same number of games.

The other match of the day between Chittagong Abahani and Muktiyoddha ended 1-1 at the Chittagong MA Aziz Stadium. Raphael Sagno of Guinea gave Muktiyoddha a 35th minute lead which was cancelled by Sakhawat Hossain Rony in the 61st minute.

Muktiyoddha have 21 points from while Chittagong Abahani have 18 from 20 matches played.

Dordei

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being reduced to ten men. Amirov tapped a Volos low cross in the 71st minute and one minute later Muladjanov made it 4-0 before Amirov struck his second to complete the rout in the 90th minute.

Dordei's Russian coach Dvoryankov Sergey said that he was happy with a winning start and by a handsome margin.

He believes the professional attitude throughout the game helped them edge past Hasus. Hasus coach Chao Jung Jui blamed the humid weather for the debacle.

TEAMS

DORDEI BISHKEK: Volkov Vladislav, Samsaliev Talant, Sydykov Ruslan, Kniazev Sergey, Amirov Ildar, Baimatov Azamat, Volos Artyem (Mu Muladjanov Rusy), Mysikov Alexander (Askarov Davron), Abitov Faruh, Tetteh David Bruce (Sataev Nurkal) and Vlasichev Anatolli. HASUS NTCP: Chen Hao Fan, Tzu Chi Lin, Cheng Tsung Huang, Chan Yuan Chan, Jian Liang Lee (Chun Ching Wu), Ming Hung Hsu, Ho Shen Yen (Chai Kun Chen), Chao Hsun Yang, Po Liang Chen, Chen Hsun Hsu and De Chai Su. Red card: Izu Chi Lin (Hasus NTCP).

Referee: Pratap Singh

Anand keeps world title

AFP, Sofia

India's defending champion Viswanathan Anand retained his world chess title on Tuesday by defeating Bulgarian challenger Veselin Topalov in the last of their 12-game duel.

Anand, nicknamed the "Tiger from Madras," beat Topalov on the 56th move after a series of twists.

Ahead of the final game, Anand and Topalov were tied with 5.5 points each, having each won two games, while seven games had ended in a draw.

The inability to produce a clear winner in the 12th game Tuesday would have forced the players into four tie-break games of rapid chess to decide the next world champion. Another tie would have then led to five five-minute blitz chess matches of two games each, followed by one sudden-death game.

But the 40-year-old Indian Grand Master, whom his fans affectionately call Vishy, managed to wear off Topalov's defence to bring his score to 6.5 points on Tuesday.

This is the second time he has defended his title after first winning it in 2007.

Tuesday's final game again confirmed his chess skills and ability to keep a cool head.

"It is certainly the toughest match I have ever played. I can't recall another experience like this," Anand told journalists after the game.

"I knew it was going to come



PHOTO: AFP

World champion Viswanathan Anand of India speaks at a press briefing after winning the FIDE World Chess Championship against Bulgarian Veselin Topalov at Sofia's Military Club on Tuesday.

down to the question of whose nerves held up and I am really relieved and glad that it was me," he added.

Topalov failed to make the most of playing white and an error on the 30th move gave Anand a clear advantage.

The Bulgarian, known for his aggressive style, attempted a desperate march of the rook to check Anand on the 40th move.

Still, Anand's position remained commanding, allowing him to eventually force Topalov to surrender on the 56th move.

"I took a risk and was punished," Topalov shrugged after the loss.

He said he had refused a draw offered by Anand at some point in the game as he did not want to play a tie-break of rapid

chess, where Anand excelled.

This "was a mistake," he noted.

Anand first became the undisputed world champion in 2007, a year after the title was reunited following a bitter split in the chess world.

The "Tiger from Madras" already once managed to defeat his chess crown by beating Russia's Vladimir Kramnik in 2008 in Bonn, Germany.

The 35-year-old Bulgarian grandmaster Veselin Topalov had won the right to challenge Anand by beating Gata Kamsky of the United States in the semifinal in February 2009.

Anand takes home 1.2 million euros (1.5 million dollars) as the winner, while 800,000 euros in prize money goes to Topalov.

Australia humble WI

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runs as West Indies failed to sparkle under the Beausejour floodlights.

West Indies' star batsman Gayle was out second ball, clean bowled by left-arm quick Dirk Nannes, the tournament's leading wicket-taker.

Then the experienced Chanderpaul, having flicked Mitchell Johnson's second and fifth balls for four was out to the left-arm quick's sixth.

The left-handed batsman launched Johnson high over the bowler's head but didn't quite time his shot and David Hussey, running back from mid-on, took a superbly judged catch.

The slump really took hold in unlucky fashion when all-rounder Dwayne Bravo (six) was run out, backing up, after Johnson touched a Sarwan drive onto the stumps at the bowler's end.

Smith then got in on the act as recalled batsman Narsingh Deonarine holed out for a duck, caught by Michael Hussey at deep midwicket.

And he followed up with two wickets in two balls.

Kieron Pollard (13) tried to work the ball legside but was beaten by the turn and wicketkeeper Haddin completed a neat stumping.

Next ball Darren Sammy, in front of his St Lucia home crowd, chipped a simple return catch back to Smith. Jerome Taylor survived the hat-trick.

Sarwan, the last of the specialist batsmen, tried to clear long-off but simply holed out off part-time spinner David Hussey to David Warner.

In reply, Warner made a typically brisk 25 off 12 balls before he edged paceman Taylor to Gayle at slip.

And next ball 31 for one became 31 for two when Watson gloved an intended sweep off left-arm spinner Benn onto his stumps.

Clarke helped Haddin add 47 for the third wicket before he was brilliantly run out by Bravo, after an athletic stop and direct hit from third string man. But that was an all too rare highlight for the West Indies.

SCORES IN BRIEF

WEST INDIES: 105 all out in 19 overs (Chanderpaul 24, Sarwan

26, Smith 3-20, Johnson 2-23, D Hussey 2-3)

AUSTRALIA: 109 for 4 in 16.2 overs (Warner 15, Haddin 42, Clarke 16, D Hussey 10)

Result: Australia won by six wickets.

Man-of-the-match: Steven Smith.

Federer in Round 3

AFP, Madrid

World number one Roger Federer shrugged off his surprise loss in the Estoril semifinals last weekend and defeated Germany's Benjamin Becker 6-2, 7-6 (7/4) to reach the third round at the Madrid Masters on Tuesday.

Federer -- the title holder -- has yet to produce a significant winning run on clay this season with his defence of the French Open title starting in less than a fortnight.

HK hold hosts

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off-target. To make matters worse, Bangladesh even failed to capitalise on the penalty stroke as Rasel Mahmud Jimmy's strike was saved by the keeper. Hong Kong too got a penalty stroke in the first-half which was fired out side by Asghar Ali.

Bangladesh's German coach Gerhard Peter Rach blamed poor finishing from the Bangladesh attackers for the result while giving credit to the opposition keeper.

"It was our bad luck that nothing clicked today (Wednesday). Strikers were not in right position at the right time. [Rasel Mahmud] Jimmy was perhaps half-hearted taking the penalty stroke. But credit must be given to the Hong Kong keeper who had an

excellent game," said the German tactician.

Bangladesh now are in fifth position with four points from three matches, four behind leaders Chinese Taipei, two behind Singapore and one behind Hong Kong all of whom have played a game more than Bangladesh. Oman also lead Bangladesh by a point playing the same number of games. Two teams from the seven will qualify from this tournament which means Bangladesh will have to win rest of their matches to stand any chance of qualifying. The Bangladesh coach though feels that is very much possible.

"The equation is very simple. We will have to win our next three matches which we are going to do."

The day's first match between Singapore and Thailand was a riveting encounter that ended 5-5. Thailand's 3rd minute lead was cancelled within 14 minutes before Taipei took a 4-1 lead in 40 minutes. But Thailand pulled four back within the next 22 minutes to take a 5-4 lead. Taipei then scored a 66th minute equaliser to share the spoils. Surasak scored three goals for Thailand.

The later match between Singapore and Oman ended in a 1-1 draw.

There are three matches today with Bangladesh taking on Sri Lanka at 10am, while in the evening matches Hong Kong play against Chinese Taipei and Oman take on Thailand.

Jamie being realistic

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admits he is at a loss to explain Ashraf's failure to develop from the teenage wonder-boy of a decade ago.

"I've given up thinking it's his attitude," said Siddons. "He's always trying, but he gets impatient too easily, and tries to slog the ball when there's an easy single on offer. He always comes back to the dressing-room] saying 'sorry, sorry', but that's not an answer. We're going to play seven batsmen, so he'll fit in somewhere, but in 30 out of 31 innings, he'll fail, and that's not good stats."

"But I definitely won't put expectations on him," Siddons added. "Right now, he's No. 4 or 5 in terms of contributions -- Tamim, Mushfiqur [Rahim], Shakib [Al Hasan] and [Mahmudullah] Riyad are all contributing way more than him, so I'll expect them to carry the burden, and we'll take from Ash whatever he gives us. But we've got young kids like Jahurul who should be allowed to come in at No. 5 and 6, they shouldn't have to go in early to

protect the senior guys. My thoughts are that if the senior player is not good enough you don't give them a game, you bring some kids in."

When Bangladesh last toured England in 2005, they were cruelly exposed on seam-friendly wickets by a motivated opposition with their focus squarely on the forthcoming Ashes series. Siddons is hopeful that his team can put up a better fight than their counterparts from that trip, but he's realistic enough to recognise that there's still a yawning gulf between the teams.

"We can't look at beating the best teams in the world," he said. "We can't expect to knock them over -- if they play at their best and we play at our best, everything says that they will win, but if we play well and they play really badly, then yes, we'll beat them. The pitches won't be green with grass knee high, because it's a Test match, but all it takes is seven bad shots or seven good balls, and all your batters are gone."

LOCAL SNIPPETS

SPORTS REPORTER

Gregarious Club crushed The Shawns Club 88-31 in the Premier League First Division Basketball League at the Dhanmondi Basketball Gymnasium yesterday.

For the winners, Shaon netted 14 points.

Dhuketu Club beat Flame Boys 74-44 with Mithun and Rashed scoring 21 and 20 points respectively.

In the other match, Cantonians Club beat Mohammadpur Basketball Club 69-53 with Jahan top-scoring with 14 points.

Both the winners joined Narail yesterday. Dhaka beat Patuakhal 3-0 in straight sets and Noakhali also won by the same margin against Khulna.

Both the winners joined Narail and Comilla in the quarterfinals that begin today. MANIKGANJ CRICKET Our Correspondent: Bangladesh Cricket Academy and School (BCAS) defeated Dashara Palli Mangal Samity (DPMS) by 32 runs in the Col (ret'd) Malek Smriti First Division Cricket League at the Shaheed Miraz-Tapan Stadium here yesterday.

Batting first, BCAS were all out for 179 runs in 39.5 overs. Shaon scored 38 runs while Sujon added 32. Champak picked up three wickets while Kamal and Atik took two wickets each. In reply, DPMS were all out for 147 in 35.3 overs. Atik remained not out on 69 runs. Sajal picked up three wickets for the winners.

Enamul

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Abahani coach Amalesh was happy with the victory but not the result.

"It could have been pleasant for us had we won the game with a 4-0 margin. We also created the chances, but could not avail those," said Amalesh adding that they had an intention to start the campaign with a big margin.

Despite going down, Yogamber Suwal was happy with the way his boys played.

"Abahani capitalised the opportunities but we could not and it basically made the difference. Besides the boys could not cope with the heat," said Suwal.

TEAMS

A BAHANI: Biplob Bhattacharjee, Rajani Kanto Barman, Atiqur Rahman Mishu, Ibnul Siraji, Mohammad Sujon, Samad Yousuf, Motiur Munna, Pranotosh Kumar (Zahed Parvez Chowdhury), Mehdi Hasan Ujjal (Shahedul Alam), Awudu Ibrahim (Abul Hossain) and Emanul Haque. NEW ROAD: Surendra Kumar Shrestha, Biraj Maharjan, Umesh Upreti, Jeevan Sinkemana, Nirajan Rayamajhi, Ghavghani Mosavi Shayan, Rajesh Khadagi, Nabin Neupane, Roshan Lamichhane, Sagar Thapa and Rajit Shrestha (Laxman Ruchal). Yellow cards: Mehdi Hasan Ujjal (Abahani), Jeevan and Sagar (New Road Team) Referee: Kim Sang Woo (Korea Republic).

Former greats blast India's early exit

AFP, New Delhi



Former Indian cricket greats lashed the current team on Wednesday after their early exit from the World Twenty20, blaming weakness against the bouncer and the poor standard of the Indian Premier League (IPL).

Mahendra Singh Dhoni's men failed to qualify for the semifinals after a five-wicket defeat by Sri Lanka on Tuesday, their third successive loss in the Super Eights round.

India, who won the title in 2007, failed to win a Super Eights match in the last two editions despite being the world's top-ranked side in Test cricket and number two in the 50-overs game.

Both the tournaments in 2009 and 2010 were held within a week of the completion of the cash-rich Indian Premier League (IPL) where some of the world's top stars feature in a gruelling six-week schedule of T20 cricket -- and post-game partying.

Sourav Ganguly, India's most successful Test captain, said Dhoni's men did not deserve to make the semifinals and blamed the IPL as one of the reasons for the team's disappointing performance.

"The IPL is a domestic tournament and the standard is much lower than a world event where you are up against quality batsmen and

bowlers," said Ganguly. "You don't expect to go to World Cup semifinals if you play cricket like the way the team has played in the Caribbean."

Ganguly said he hoped the selectors would take a hard look at the non-performers, including senior batsman Yuvraj Singh, who managed just 74 runs in five matches at an average of 18.50.

"Yuvraj has to look at his game. If he doesn't perform for long periods, the selectors will not play him just on the basis of his reputation," said Ganguly.

"Some of the players have got a lot of opportunities, but have not delivered. They have been around for quite a while and the entire country wants performances from them."

Batting great Sunil Gavaskar said India were let down by an apparent weakness against short-pitched bowling.

"India's lack of adaptability has been a disappointment," the former opener, who was the first batsman to reach the 10,000-run mark in Test cricket, wrote in the Hindustan Times.

"What is baffling is that even though most batsmen showed a distinct sense of discomfort against the short ball during the World 20 in England last year, they were picked again for an event on even bouncier pitches in the Caribbean."

"All other teams remember what happened last year and the tactics employed by them against the Indians prove this."

Aussies' riposte

AFP, Gros Islet



Australia captain Michael Clarke said his side had proved their critics back home wrong by reaching the semifinals of the World Twenty20.

But the batsman, whose in-form side face defending champions Pakistan here on Friday, insisted reaching the last four wouldn't satisfy either him or his teammates.

Australia, following mediocre warm-up displays, including a defeat by Zimbabwe, have been the dominant side in the tournament proper.

They set the seal on their place in the knockout stages with a commanding six-wicket win over the West Indies at the Beausejour Stadium here on Tuesday, a result that ending the hosts' participation in the tournament after they were skittled out for just 105.

It's all a far cry from last year's World Twenty20 in England where the Australians were dumped out in three days after defeats by the West Indies and Sri Lanka.

"For the people at home who have doubted us in this form of the game, we're thrilled to make it this far," Clarke said.

"We're excited to be in the semifinals, it's something we haven't achieved before, but we didn't come here to make the semifinals," he added.

Australia overpowered Pakistan by 34 runs in a first round group match at Beausejour on May 2, piling up 191 on the back of opener Shane Watson's 81 before strike quicks Shaun Tait and Dirk Nannes took six wickets between them.

Asked if he drew confidence from that result, Clarke replied: "I think it definitely does (give Australia confidence)."

"More to the fact the way we're playing has

given me a lot of confidence. We've come into this tournament ranked very low and how performances have been outstanding. That's because of the desire from all the boys to perform, and we've done that consistently and in all different conditions."

"That's very exciting." Pakistan has been far less consistent but their spinners especially enjoyed themselves during an 11-run win over South Africa at Beausejour on Monday that helped secure their semifinal berth.

Clarke said: "Pakistan are very strong in any form of the game but especially Twenty20."

"They've shown that to obviously make the semifinals once again in this form of the competition."

And Clarke says he expects the Beausejour pitch to do more for Pakistan than the livelier surface in Barbados, on which they lost to New Zealand by one run last weekend.

"We take momentum from every win we've had, going into Friday's game. They'll come out with a lot to prove on a wicket that suits them more than Barbados does."

Pakistan have proved before that teams don't need to be consistently good to win one-day tournaments but Clarke rejected suggestions Australia had peaked too soon.

"I certainly don't think we've peaked too early. My goal was to get to our peak after the warm-up matches and that momentum would drag us through the tournament."

But Clarke's immediate focus was firmly fixed on Pakistan.

"It's something we've all worked very hard over the last 12 months to try to achieve. Pakistan is a very strong team in this form of the game. They've got a lot of match-winners. It's a big game for us."

Smith, Tonge warm up well

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West Indies. Noor had the right-handed Edwards caught and bowled for 45 and his eight-over spell was probably the only bright spot in the Bangladesh A bowling attack.

Mashrafe, making a comeback to one-day cricket after a flurry of Twenty20s in the last two months, took one expensive wicket, giving away 45 runs from six overs.

Apart from Noor's bowling, Faisal Hossain brightened up a dull batting display by the home side. The experienced left-hander held the innings together from the time he reached the crease at 15 for three.

The left-hander shared a 59-run fourth wicket stand with Marshall Ayub, who made a steady 35 before giving a return catch to Dennison Browne.

Faisal was eighth man out for 93 off 141 balls that had six boundaries and two sixes but more importantly, his contribution made sure the second string side reached the 200-mark after paceman Gavin Tonge's initial burst threatened an early finish.

The 27-year-old Antiguan removed openers Nazimuddin and Shamsur Rahman for next to nothing and returned to remove Faisal and Munna to end with fantastic figures of 4-37 from 9.5

overs and earned him the man-of-the-match award.

Tonge's new-ball partner Nelon Pascal took three for 43 while there was a wicket each for skipper Travis Dowlin and medium-pace Dennison Browne.

SCORES IN BRIEF

BANGLADESH A: 203 all out in 49.5 overs (Faisal 93, Marshall 35, Dhiman 22; Tonge 4-37, Pascal 3-43)

WEST INDIES A: 205 for 4 in 37.1 overs (Smith 63, Bravo 62; Munna 1-27)

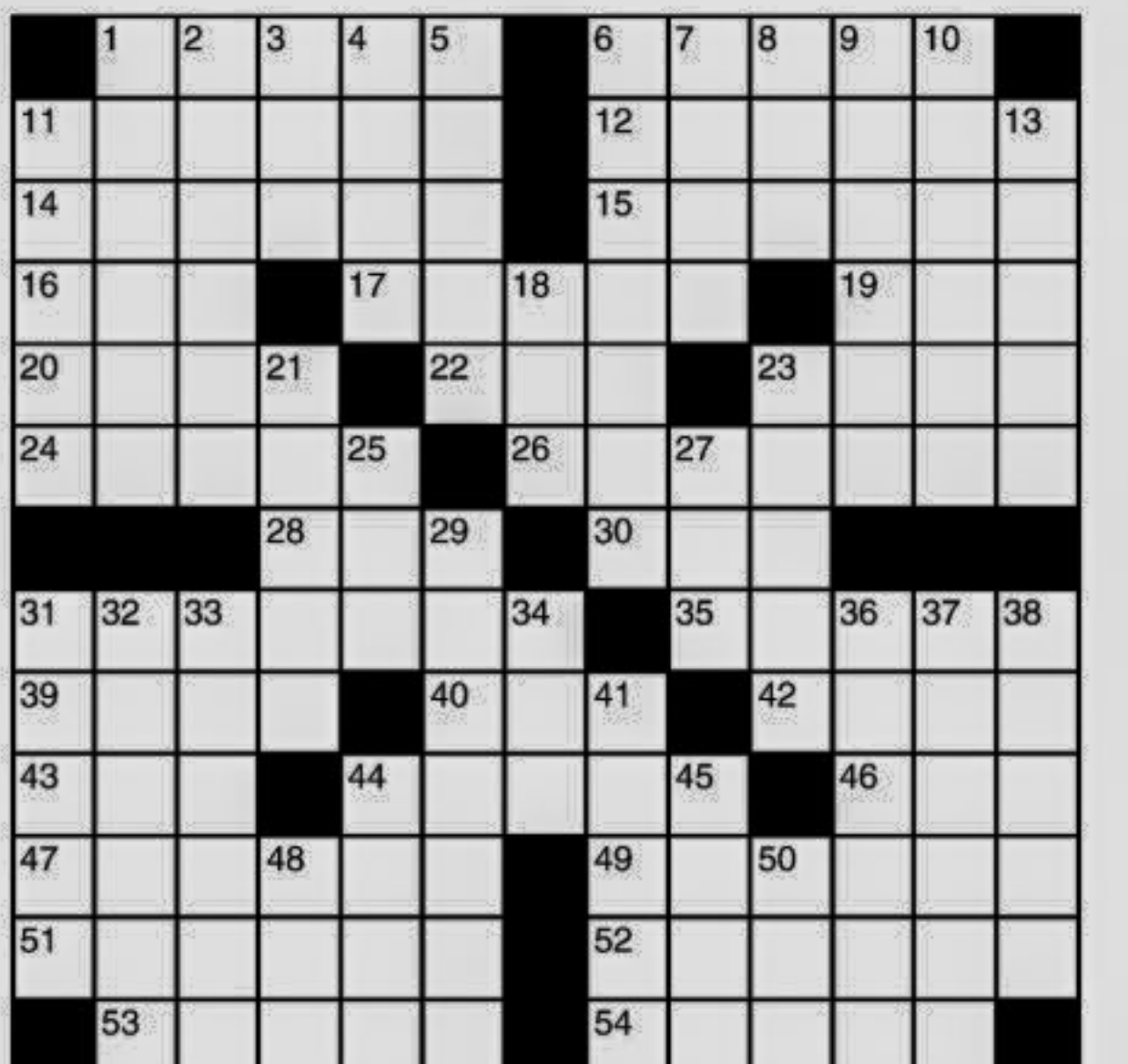
Result: West Indies A won by six wickets.

Man-of-the-match: Gavin Tonge.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 1 Attempts 40 Scot's refusal 2 Holly-wood glitter 23 Karenina and Koumi-kova 6 Old saw 42 Czech or Croat 3 Wood-shaping tool 25 Tie up the telephone 11 Low-pH 43 Last (Abbr.) 4 Coffin stand 27 Diving bird 12 Fluctuation of tempo brass? 5 Landslide debris 29 Provides "fire" insurance? 14 World War II tank 47 Sports jacket 7 Air for a pair 8 Honest politician 31 Movie-givers' mementos 15 Elderly eccentric 49 Hungry cow, in a sense 10 Always, in verse 11 Garden pest 13 Sandwich cookies 34 Shopping centers 16 Storefront sign 51 Tranquil 9 Staring 32 Rang out 17 Disprove 52 Shocked 10 Always, in verse 11 Garden pest 13 Sandwich cookies 34 Shopping centers 23 Hold-up 26 Prokofiev's "The Love for Three --" 28 Cistern 29 Altere BOTCHUP 30 Baltimore newspaper 31 Picket sign carrier 35 Phi Beta -- 39 Horn sound

DOWN 1 Hard to find 21 Lifeboat's crane 22 Holly-wood glitter 23 Karenina and Koumi-kova 24 Diving bird 25 Tie up the telephone 26 27 Diving bird 28 29 Provides "fire" insurance? 30 31 Movie-givers' mementos 32 Rang out 33 Traffic circle 34 Tatter centers 35 Least ruddy 36 Dodge 37 "Pomp and Circumstance" composer 38 Part of N.B. 39 Therefore 40 Buddhist sect 41 "Eureka!"



CRYPTOQUIP

E P R X W D C D G B W S H B C O G S Q B X Q D B N R B Q O Z I W G C V Q X R I O V R P N W O W S C D G H C X C Q D R P : Z I W C G C Q P E .

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: POPULAR OLD DITTY THAT EXPLAINS HOW TO HOAX UNWARY LONDON INHABITANTS: "PUTTIN' ON THE BRITS." Today's Cryptoquip Clue: B equals W