

McLaren bowls WI away

Cricket AFP, North Sound

A career-best spell from Ryan McLaren bowled South Africa to a 13-run victory in the first of two Twenty20 Internationals against West Indies on Wednesday.

McLaren captured five wickets for 19 runs from 3.5 overs to earn the man-of-the-match award, as West Indies, chasing 137 for victory from their 20 overs, were dismissed for 123 with one ball to spare at the Vivian Richards Cricket Ground.

The 27-year-old McLaren finished with the second-best figures in a Twenty20 international behind Pakistan's Umar Gul, who collected five for six from three overs against New Zealand at The Oval in London in last year's World Twenty20.

Both the West Indies and South Africa came into Wednesday's match having failed to make it through to the knockout stages of this year's World Twenty20, which England won in Barbados on Sunday.

"It's a good way to start off the tour having practised indoors and not outdoors for the last few weeks," said McLaren.

"But it's only the first day, and there's plenty more cricket to come, so hopefully, I can better this performance.

"We all know the nature of T20 cricket -- the bowler is always up against it. You can take five wickets one day, and the next day, take a thumping, but I enjoyed it."

South Africa captain Graeme Smith added: "It was not an easy day for the batters, and you had to graft pretty hard.

"Playing shots was not easy, and there was a strong wind, so there were a lot of things you had to take into consideration.

"It was obviously nice to start with a win. This was the most important thing for us.

"We have worked really hard over the last few days here in Antigua, had a few discussions, the energy has been good around the team, and a lot of new faces have come in.

"We want to have a good tour of the Caribbean, so success in this match was very important to getting us off on

the right foot."

Earlier veteran South African batsman Jacques Kallis had struck one four and three sixes in 53 from 45 balls, as South Africa laboured to 136 for seven from their 20 overs, after deciding to bat on an uneven pitch.

He added 73 for the second wicket with Smith, whose 37 from 31 balls included three fours and one six.

Once they were separated, South Africa's batting collapsed, and they lost their last five wickets for 16 runs from 26 balls.

McLaren then became only the fourth bowler to collect five wickets in a T20 match, when he ripped off Andre Fletcher caught behind by stand-in keeper AB de Villiers for a duck, and had the dangerous West Indies captain Chris Gayle caught at long-on for 14 to leave the hosts on 28 for two in the sixth over.

Johan Botha snuffed out a West Indies revival, when he had Dwayne Bravo caught at long-on for 20 in the 10th over, and Narsingh Deonarine stumped by de Villiers for a duck two balls later.

When Roelof van der Merwe had Ramnaresh Sarwan caught at cover off the leading edge in the 11th over, West Indies still needed 85 from 56 balls, and there was little or no substance nor stability from the rest of the batting.

"It was a disappointing start for us," said Gayle. "We wanted to put our dismal performance in the T20 World Cup behind us, but this was not the best way to do it, and was not the best start to the series.

"We still have a match on Thursday, so we have to pick ourselves up. This is no time for pointing fingers.

"We have a lot of corrections to make out there, and we have to return to the drawing board to try and get the best out of the players."

SCORES IN BRIEF

SOUTH AFRICA: 136 for 7 in 20 overs (Smith 37, Kallis 53, De Villiers 11; Roach 2-25, Pollard 2-22)

WEST INDIES: 123 all out in 19.5 overs (Gayle 14, Bravo 20, Sarwan 13, Pollard 27, Sammy 17; McLaren 5-19, Botha 2-19)

Result: South Africa won by 13 runs.

Man-of-the-match: Ryan McLaren.



PHOTO: AFP

West Indies' Kieron Pollard is clean bowled by South Africa pacer Ryan McLaren (L) in the first T20 international at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in St John's on Wednesday.

Lankans' good time off

CRICINFO

A relaxed and refreshed Sri Lanka are looking forward to the new experience of playing in the United States this weekend, according to the batsman Mahela Jayawardene. It's a week since they lost their World Twenty20 semifinal to the eventual champions England, and while the time off wasn't exactly part of their plan it has given them time to focus on this weekend's Twenty20s against New Zealand in Florida.

"We wouldn't have wanted to have that much downtime, obviously we would have wanted to go all the way in the tournament," Jayawardene said. "After a long season it's been good time off for some of the guys to recuperate and get their rehab and strengthening done before we start all over again."

Farce final

FROM PAGE 17 An issue with a foreign player registration for Mohammedan, which was vehemently protested by Usha, as they played the final under protest.

After the final, Abahani also sought an explanation from the game's governing body about the incident of the Club Cup final.

The league committee yesterday sat to solve the issue, but they failed to reach a decision as Usha threatened to boycott the upcoming Premier Hockey League if they do not get a justified result.

It was also learnt that Mohammedan have also threatened to boycott the league if the result of the Cup Cup Hockey final is changed while Abahani wanted a respectful solution in the greater interest of hockey.

The committee, however, wants to start the Premier Division Hockey on June 4.

WI A storm

FROM PAGE 17 Noor Hossain who strangely batted at number 11.

Paceman Baker and leg-spinners Odean Brown took three wickets each and it was Shane Shillingford who took the final wicket of Noor, making it two for him in the innings.

The defeat continued Bangladesh A's woeful performance in the past month, when they suffered massive defeats at the hands of South Africa A in two four-day matches and also lost all four one-dayers in the tri-nation series.

The second and final unofficial Test between the two teams will begin in BKSP from May 23.

SCORES IN BRIEF

WEST INDIES A: First innings 285 and second innings 269-6 dec.

BANGLADESH A: First innings 125 all out and second innings 315 all out in 81.5 overs (Nafees 133, Shuvo 64, Sahagir 47; Brown 3-33, Baker 3-70).

Result: West Indies A won by 114 runs

Big time cricket in US

AFP, Fort Lauderdale

Sri Lanka and New Zealand will stage the first cricket matches on US soil between two ICC full members this weekend, a move officials hope will launch a US boom for the sport.

"The historic event will provide great exposure," USA Cricket Association president Gladstone Dainty said. "We're very excited about the potential impact of this series for the growth and development of cricket in the United States."

Saturday and Sunday afternoon matches will be staged at Lauderdale's Central Broward Regional Park, the only ICC-approved venue in the United States.

The 20,000-capacity facility, which must still upgrade lighting to ICC standards in order to host night events, tried in vain to land a match ahead of the 2007 West Indies Cricket World Cup.

But with an India property developer sponsoring the Pearls Cup T20 matches and Indian Premier League officials talking about staging US events as early as 2011, the US breakthrough could be only a hint of greater things to come.

"We'll be meeting with potential investors and event developers to keep building our momentum," USA Cricket chief executive Don Lockerbie said. "Interest is already high and this is very encouraging."

"To grow the game of cricket in the USA, we need to have the best teams in the world play in our country. We want to demonstrate to the American public just how exciting the T20 format is."

More than 15 million people in the United States follow cricket and ICC chief executive Haroon Lorgat has said he sees "vast potential for the growth of the sport in the USA."

"It's massive now in the US," New Zealand's Jacob Oram said. "There are a lot of cricket fans from India and Pakistan in this area, a lot from the Caribbean. If they can tap into this market, it will get bigger and bigger."

Plans for a US T20 league failed in the 1990s but USA Cricket hopes to organize a US T20 league as quickly as 2012.

"Given the door to cricket has been opened to investment through the sale of Indian Premier League franchises, this model is a logical step to raising the capital required to take cricket in the US to another level," said New Zealand Cricket chief executive Justin Vaughan.

"The structure proposed is a wonderful opportunity for someone to get in on the ground floor, particularly given the growing level of interest in the US cricket market."

For now, Sri Lanka and New Zealand will settle for a bit of cricket history in a land where baseball is the national pastime, basketball and American football rule and cricket is seldom found on the sport pages or telecasts.

"Our team and nation is honored to be one of the first two ICC Full Members to be involved in this historic series," said Sri Lanka Cricket secretary Nishantha Ranatunga.

"The Blackcaps are tremendously excited about the opportunity of launching international cricket in the United States," Vaughan said. "We're looking at ways of helping USA Cricket grow professionally and at the grassroots."

The Blackcaps visited baseball's Florida Marlins to see how life is for their US counterparts, using gloves to snag baseballs while the Marlins declined the chance to field cricket balls with their bare hands.

"They were telling me how they break fingers and hands all the time," said Florida's Hanley Ramirez, a shortstop from the Dominican Republic. "I told them, 'Maybe in the future you should think about wearing gloves.'"

Ramirez took the chance to don cricket pads and helmet and grabbed a cricket bat to swipe at a few bowled balls. Bouncing one into the stands, he asked, "Is that a double?" Then he saw another problem. "Where do I run?" he asked.

Clearly USA Cricket has some work to do. But cricketers are ready for the effort.

"The Blackcaps are really excited," captain Daniel Vettori said. "We know the series against Sri Lanka will be a great advertisement for international cricket to US fans."

It has to be Pakistan

Cricket AFP, Karachi

Pakistan cricket is once again facing claims of match-fixing, with a parliamentary committee Thursday summoning the sport's top officials to answer questions in its probe into the allegations.

"The [parliamentary] standing committee on sports has summoned PCB chairman Ijaz Butt, Australian tour coach Intikhab Alam, former captain Younus Khan and other officials on Monday," the committee said in a statement.

The officials have been summoned to a hearing Monday days after video footage of a Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) meeting was leaked to the media, showing players and former officials raising suspicions about match-fixing during the Australia tour.

The footage showed Alam and his deputy, Aaqib Javed, recording statements that

wicketkeeper Kamran Akmal was involved in match-fixing in the second Test in Sydney, which Pakistan lost after holding a winning position.

Akmal dropped Australian batsman Michael Hussey three times and missed an easy run-out, with Hussey going on to accumulate 138 runs (not out) in the second innings. Pakistan, chasing a modest 175 to win, lost the Test by 36 runs despite leading by 206 runs after the first innings.

Pakistan suffered a white-wash on their December-February tour of Australia, losing all three Tests, all five one-day internationals and a Twenty20 match, prompting the PCB to investigate.

Following the PCB's inquiry, the board banned Younus and Australia tour captain Mohammad Yusuf for an indefinite period, while former captain Shoaib Malik and Navedul Hasan were banned for one year and fined heavily.

Kamran Akmal, Shahid Afridi and Umar Akmal were also fined heavily.

Germans

FROM PAGE 17 It was not just a football match. It was a clash of two footballing cultures. The Dutch with their exciting, attacking brand of football and the Germans with their solid and dependable style of playing revolving around some exceptionally talented players.

No World Cup final has had a more sensational opening or a quicker goal. Held up for several minutes because the corner flags were missing, it began with a series of passes among the Dutch, simply keeping possession until Cruyff took the ball in the centre circle and ran at Vogts, beating him on the left and being brought down in the area by Hoeness. Penalty, the first in any World Cup Final. Neeskens thrashed it almost straight as Maier dived to his right. At that point the Germans had not even touched the ball.

TO BE CONTINUED

Agrani ride on Mehdi

SPORTS REPORTER

Agrani Bank recorded a solitary-goal win over Badda Jagarani Sangsad in the Bashundhara Senior Division Football League at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Motafa Kamal Stadium yesterday.

Mehdi struck the decisive goal in the 39th minute.

In the day's other match, Jatrabari KC and Purbachal Paribari played out a goalless draw at the same venue.

Dhaka Wanderers take on Mohakhali XI today.

Afridi, Razzaq set to retire from Tests

PTI, Karachi

Pakistan's Twenty20 captain Shahid Afridi, who has not played a Test since 2006, is planning to retire from the longer version of the game along with fellow all-rounder Abdul Razzaq.

Sources said both the players would be meeting Pakistan Cricket Board chairman Ijaz Butt next week to convey their decision.

"They are not interested in playing Test matches any longer and just want to concentrate on extending their international careers in the one-day internationals and Twenty20 matches," a source said.

Both Afridi and Razzaq last played a Test match in 2006.

He pointed out that both the players were not interested in touring England for the Test matches against Australia and England because they wanted to spend more time with their families.

Tigers close

FROM PAGE 17

Earlier, England Lions were all out for 294 runs after resuming the day for 124 for three. Young pacerman Robuil Islam was the most successful bowler with three for 71 while Shafiqul Islam, Rubel Hossain and Abdur Razzak captured two wickets each.

Wicketkeeper-batsman Davies top-scored with 84 while Andrew Gale contributed 74 runs.

BOA order

FROM PAGE 17

of the Tk 172 crore competition, though the government repeatedly asked the BOA to submit the audit.

The meeting also approved the Chef de Mission and general manager for the upcoming four international games that include the Youth Olympics in Singapore, Commonwealth Games in India, Beach Games in Damask and Asian Games in China.

Three to four members, who are involved in the movement of removing BOA CEO retired Col Wali Ullah, have been made chef de mission as well as manager, seemingly to calm them down.

There was also an agenda on the 'no confidence on the BOA CEO' by some general secretaries of different national federations and the Bangladesh Rowing Federation general secretary Abdul Awal Majnu raised the matter. The BOA president Gen Abdul Mubeen told him that he would let the matter to the higher authority of the government, informed BOA member Nazrul Islam after the meeting.

Tendulkar's compassion

Cricket HINDUSTAN TIMES

The god of cricket has yet again played god, this time for a friend. "He [Sachin Tendulkar] is a true friend who came to my help when I needed it most," said Dalbir Singh (37) after undergoing a hip replacement surgery on Wednesday, courtesy Tendulkar.

Dalbir had played with the Little Master at the under-15 and under-17 level. Dalbir, who played for Gujarat and represented West Zone with Tendulkar till 2001, met a road accident in 2002 that left him with severe head injuries.

A prolonged dose of steroids resulted in a vascular necrosis (loss of blood supply to the hip bone), which rendered him immobile.

"If not for Sachin, I do not know what would have happened to me. There was no chance of an operation," Singh told Hindustan Times after being operated upon at the Shalby Hospitals.

Coming to know of his friend's deteriorating condition, Tendulkar swung into action.

"Sachin sent a message a few days back, telling us to contact specialist doctors in Ahmedabad and said he would bear the cost," said Sukhbir Kaur, Dalbir's sister.

That assurance came again when Tendulkar met his friend after the surgery.

"He hugged me and told me that he would take care of everything. I am very happy," said Dalbir.

The former cricketer will require another surgery after three months to replace the right hip.

The two surgeries will cost about six lakh rupees and Tendulkar will give the sum to the hospital.

Police say Dalbir was rescued from his Gandhinagar home last month, where his second wife kept him under house arrest.

Dalbir said he would like to forget the past and get on with life. Despite a career-damaging accident and two bitter marriages, the humourist still intact.

Dalbir also wrote a letter to Tendulkar in which he said his son, Arjun, would surpass him in the sport. "Tera beta tera baap niklega," said Dalbir.

Clarke wants to stay on

Cricket CRICINFO

Michael Clarke believes he might need to rediscover the attacking approach of his youth to become a successful Twenty20 batsman. Clarke has no intention of giving up his place as Australia's captain in the shortest format despite struggling to lift his scoring rate in the World Twenty20, where he led Australia to the final, which they lost to England.

Ricky Ponting has been impressed with Clarke's leadership and in the Herald Sun on Thursday, Shane Warne argued that Clarke was the best captaincy option and No. 3 for the Twenty20 team. However, after arriving home to Sydney, Clarke conceded he might have to dust off some of the more aggressive strokes he played as a younger man.

"Who knows? Maybe I need a little bit of that back," Clarke said. "Everybody has a different role in our team though and that is one thing that players certainly are aware of,

and you need to do your role to the best of your ability.

"For me my role is not the same as Dave Warner or Shane Watson. I always want to perform, I always want to score runs, it doesn't matter what form of the game I'm playing, but like I said in this game, sometimes you can't always make those runs."

Clarke's immediate future in the format is expected to be decided over the next week as the selectors settle on the squads for the upcoming tour of England. Clarke is determined to stay in charge of the Twenty20 side, a role he took over last year when Ponting retired from that version of the game.

"No doubt [I want to continue], I'm disappointed we couldn't win the World T20, win the final, but I've really enjoyed the opportunity," Clarke said. "I've loved playing with the guys, I've had a lot of support from people back at home, the people who came and watched the games in the West Indies, and family and friends, so it's been great and I'm enjoying it."



PHOTO: STAR

Action from yesterday's Standard Chartered National School Kabaddi Championship of Dhaka Zone match between JB Memorial Academy and Birshreshtha Nur Mohammad Rifles School and College at the Kabaddi Stadium. JB Memorial won 61-54.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

- ACROSS 1 Datum 5 Handheld computer, for short 8 Cover of gloom 12 Capri, e.g. 13 Lummox 14 Hodgepodge 15 They follow exes and wyes 16 Specters 18 Buxom 20 Matures 21 Blunders 23 Lous — 24 Ancient Egyptian rulers 28 Morays, e.g. 31 Tummys muscles 32 Miniskirt creator Mary 34 Knock 35 Rolling stone's lack 37 Drugstore 39 Resistance measure 41 Fix, in a sense 42 Mexican state 45 Fool's gold 49 Strictly observant one, in biblical times 51 Walked (on) 52 — Misbehavin' 53 Rocky peak 54 TV journalist Lisa 55 Youngsters 56 Donkey 57 Being, to Brutus

Crossword grid with numbers 1-57.

- DOWN 1 Effervescence 2 On the briny SOLUTION TIME: 24 mins. REHAB AMELIA WARREN CIGARS ELISE EBON YEP MODE OIL BRAZILICA KEEP AUITOICASSETTE DEMOTUTUSAW OWNASTENTRAPS HEISTS ICECAP MESHES SHANTY SPHERE KITES

CRYPTOQUIP

PA ZMSL APZG JLFL CSHILI R S H S S B H P B L R G P D K W D O W B L Z , P Y N L Z Z S D L C P Y G R L D I N K J P R G O F L K L O S I .

Saturday's Cryptoquip: WHICH TWO ABDOMINAL ORGANS BELONGING TO ACTOR POITIER ARE SHAPED LIKE BEANS? SIDNEY'S KIDNEYS. Today's Cryptoquip Clue: O equals C