



PHOTO: AFP

South Africa wicketkeeper AB de Villiers breaks the wicket to dismiss Narsingh Deonarine of the West Indies during their second T20 match at the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium in St John's on Thursday.

ZIMBABWE TOUR
SL rest key
players

AFP, Colombo

Batsman Tillakaratne Dilshan has been appointed to lead the squad to Zimbabwe for a tri-nation one-day international series that also involves India, Sri Lanka Cricket said Thursday.

Several senior players including captain Kumar Sangakkara, former skipper Mahela Jayawardene, Lasith Malinga and Sanath Jayasuriya, who had a dismal World Twenty20 tournament in the Caribbean, have been left out of the team.

Muttiah Muralidaran, the most successful bowler in history with a record 792 Test and 512 one-day international wickets, was not picked for the tour. Muralidaran is recovering from a groin injury.

All rounder Angelo Mathews will deputise for Dilshan, who is on his maiden stint as a captain for the one-day games.

The 15-member squad includes left-hand batsman Lahiru Thirimanne, who played two one-day games against Bangladesh in January, and uncapped allrounder Jeevan Mendis.

The selectors also included fast bowler Dilhara Fernando, opener Upul Tharanga and middle-order batsman Chamara Silva, who were left out of the World Twenty20 in the Caribbean.

The tri-nation series gets under way in Bulawayo on May 28, with Zimbabwe taking on India in the opener.

SQUAD

Tillakaratne Dilshan (captain), Angelo Mathews, Upul Tharanga, Thilan Samaraweera, Dinesh Chandimal, Lahiru Thirimanne, Chamara Kapugedera, Suraj Randiv, Nuwan Kulasekara, Thilan Thushara, Ajantha Mendis, Jeevan Mendis, Dilhara Fernando, Chamara Silva, Thisira Perera.

LOCAL SNIPPETS

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competition held at the Army Swimming Complex in Banani on Thursday.

Savar were runners-up with four gold, eight silver and three bronze medals.

Chief of General Staff (CGS) Maj Gen Md. Mainul Islam was present as chief guest and distributed prizes.

BODYBUILDING COMPETITION

Sanwar Sanju of Power Gym earned the first place in the 80kg division of the 'No Smoking' 3rd Dhaka Metropolitan Bodybuilding competition yesterday at the Abdur Rahim Community Centre.

The other winners of the different weight divisions were Monir Hossain Rony (75kg), Mohammad Ekram (70kg), Saad Obaid (55kg), Anwar Hossain (60kg) and Mohammad Parvez (65kg). Haji Rahmatullah won in the Masters weight division.

Mayor Sadek Hossain Khoka was present as chief guest and distributed prizes among the winners.

Eighty-six bodybuilders from 43 clubs and gyms from around Dhaka participated in the competition, organised by Pratyasha, an anti-drug organisation, and with support from Dhaka City Corporation and Bodybuilding Federation.

Proteas sweep T20 series

Cricket

AFP, Antigua and Barbuda

Ryan McLaren kept his nerve in a tense final over to help South Africa formalise a one-run victory over West Indies, and sweep their two-match Twenty20 International series on Thursday.

McLaren fired in a low full toss very wide of off stump, as West Indies, chasing a modest victory target of 121, required three from the final delivery of the match.

But he conceded just one run, after South African point fielder Jean-Paul Duminy swooped on the ball, when West Indies tail-ender Jerome Taylor essayed a slog at it, and it trickled 15 yards away.

"It was a bit tense at the end, so we had to find somebody to remain calm, and Ryan kept a good sensible head, although we had a few guys running all over the place, but it was an exciting finish, and nice again to get over the line," South Africa captain Graeme Smith said.

"We have performed well enough in tense situations like this before, although our record in such situations in competition play is quite poor, but we have performed really well again under pressure in a game that we probably shouldn't have won, so it's to our credit, and the confidence is definitely growing."

Africa also won the opening match on Wednesday by 13 runs at the same venue to take a psychological boost into the five One-day Internationals between the two sides, which open on Saturday at the VRCC.

Newcomer David Miller had battled to the top score of 33 from 26 balls, and Johan Botha made 23 from 22 balls to add some respectability to the Proteas' total of 120 for seven from their 20 overs.

They added 57 for the sixth wicket, after the West Indies' bowlers exploited an uneven Vivian Richards Cricket Ground to floor the South Africans on 59 for five in the 13th over.

Taylor was the most successful West Indies bowler with flattering figures of three wickets for 14 runs from his allotment of four overs, and Darren Sammy captured two for 16 from his four overs.

South Africa put West Indies under early pressure, when Dale Steyn trapped West Indies captain Chris Gayle lbw for a two-ball duck in the first over, and Morne Morkel had fellow opener Andre Fletcher caught behind for four in the third over to leave the home team on nine for two.

Flanagan vows crackdown

Cricket

AFP, London

Sir Ronnie Flanagan has vowed to tackle match-fixing with zero tolerance when he begins his new post with the International Cricket Council, amid fresh concerns over corruption.

Flanagan, the former Chief Constable of the Royal Ulster Constabulary, will take over as chairman of the ICC's anti-corruption and security unit (ACSU) when Lord Paul Condon retires at the end of next month.

Lord Condon's work over the last decade has been widely praised but as he departs there have been concerns over Pakistan's recent tour of Australia and also the emergence of "spot-fixing", where specific elements of the game can be gambled on, rather than the result.

It is also known as "micro-fixing" and an example is betting on the number of wides to be bowled in an over.

"My personal message is that if anyone is thinking about fixing, we will find them and deal with them," said Flanagan, speaking at a press conference at Lord's.

"My message is to forget about it. We exist to pursue rigorously the policy of zero tolerance on corruption. We cannot be complacent and I will not be."

Danish Kaneria and a colleague at English county side Essex, Mervyn Westfield, have been arrested and released on bail in connection with a police investigation into betting.

There has also been controversy over Pakistan's performance in the Test match at Sydney Cricket Ground in January.

Australia's 36-run win, despite conceding a first-innings deficit, has led to allegations of match-fixing, with a parliamentary committee in Pakistan summoning top officials to answer questions.

Bolt tips on striking pose

AFP, Shanghai

Jamaica's Usain Bolt, the world's fastest man and the unrivalled champion at striking a pose after a big win, says a signature stance is all about personality.

The 23-year-old's trademark "To the World" trade -- pointing to the sky while cocking his arm as if firing an arrow -- has been adopted by everyone from US National Football League wide receivers to the 2012 London Olympics mascots.

"For me a pose is just a part of you. It's just who you are. The best thing you can come up with is part of your personality. It's just what you want to do," Bolt said Friday with a smile at a news conference in Shanghai.

"It's nothing specific. You might see something you like or you'll do something at home. Anything is good as long as it is good for you," he said ahead of the IAAF Diamond League meet in Shanghai on Sunday.

Bolt's poses and enthusiasm have been credited with helping put the fun back in the world of athletics. In Shanghai, he will compete in his first 200m of the season.

Chinese hurdles star Liu Xiang recalled watching Bolt -- who won three gold medals at the Beijing Games in 2008 -- speed down the track at past competitions.

"He looks like someone from another planet, not like us earthlings," Liu said.

At this year's Vancouver Winter Games, speed skating triple gold medalist Wang Meng brought out her own poses, cupping her hands behind her ears, fingers spread wide, to encourage the crowd to make noise.

But Bolt was unable to offer any feedback on Wang's moves.

"Personally, I never watch the Winter Olympics," he said. "I'm not a fan of the cold weather."

IPL 3 clean, confirms ICC

CRICINFO

Paul Condon, the outgoing chief of the ICC's Anti-Corruption and Security Unit (ACSU), has said it worried about the first two IPL seasons not because it suspected match-fixing but because of the lack of infrastructure to prevent it. He said the third edition held this year was a clean event largely due to the heavy involvement of the ACSU.

"IPL 1 and 2 we were worried about, not because we think there were huge fixes, but because there was no infrastructure to prevent it," Condon said at Lord's on Thursday. "That doesn't mean to say that matches were fixed in IPL 1 and 2, but nor can I, hand on heart, give it a clean bill of health. I just don't know."

"Our advice was, and remains, that if you are going to have world-class players, international players, who are playing in IPLs and Twenty20s, and if they do anything daft there, sadly they will take that back into the international game. You can't be a part-time fixer, once the bad guys get into them, and a lot of them are organised criminals, then you are on the hook."

While Condon acknowledged he had heard rumours of spot-fixing in the third IPL season, he said there was no concrete evidence to suggest that was the case. "In IPL3, the ACSU was heavily involved, there was an education programme, and we've got no current intelligence, or information, or ongoing enquiries, which suggest anything other than IPL3 was a clean event in terms of spot-fixing."

Tigers lose

FROM PAGE 17

in Lord's on May 27. Right-hander Jahurul struck seven boundaries and a six in his 153-ball knock. The unlikely hero with the ball was Bopara, who picked up four wickets in the innings. The Essex man ended up with seven wickets in the match, further humiliating the Tigers.

Bopara however didn't shine too well with the bat when the Lions batted in the second innings, getting out to Abdur Razzak for 28.

Skipper Alastair Cook remained unbeaten on 42 with the left-handed Moeen Ali who faced just three balls for his 10.

Armstrong slams & crashes

Cycling

AFP, Los Angeles

Seven-time Tour de France champion Lance Armstrong abandoned the Tour of California after crashing early in the fifth stage on Thursday.

"Sorry to report there was a huge crash," RadioShack team manager Johan Bruyneel said via Twitter. "Lance had to abandon and is going to the hospital for x-rays."

Team spokesman Philippe Maertens said Armstrong was evaluated by doctors in the team bus who gave him eight stitches under his left eye, and also had "a severe left elbow contusion".

He was taken to hospital for precautionary X-rays, which were negative.

Armstrong, defending champion and teammate Levi Leipheimer, and Saxo Bank's Stuart O'Grady were among those involved in the crash, which came as the road narrowed departing the town of Visalia.

A rider in the main group skidded on some gravel and fell, causing others to crash.

Armstrong resumed riding after the crash but eventually gave up as his eye swelled shut, Maertens said.

"It was a shame to have to abandon early and not be able to help Levi to another victory," Armstrong said. "It was one of those crashes that put a bunch of us down. I tried to give it a go but my eye was swollen so I couldn't see properly and the pain in the elbow prevented me from holding the bars for the remainder of the stage."

Armstrong had started his day denying doping accusations levelled by former teammate Floyd Landis, who was stripped of his 2006 Tour de France title after a positive dope test.

Landis has gone public with confessions of his own doping, and alleged that Armstrong and Bruyneel were also involved in systematic doping. "We have nothing to hide," Armstrong said before the fifth stage began. "We have nothing to run from."

Armstrong had gone into the fifth stage in 16th place overall, 27 seconds off the pace of American race leader David Zabriskie.

Armstrong, using the Tour of California as part of his buildup to a Tour de France campaign, said he would take a few days off and resume training.

"It was a relief to learn there were no breaks," said Armstrong, who had surgery to repair a broken collarbone last year. "I will take a few days to recover and be on the bike as soon as possible."



PHOTO: INTERNET

Lance Armstrong crashed out of the Tour of California on Thursday shortly after he dismissed a former Floyd Landis's claim that he used performance-enhancing drugs.

FRENCH OPEN

Federer, Serena get tough draw

Tennis

AFP, Paris

Rafael Nadal claimed the first victory of the French Open on Friday after defending champion Roger Federer was handed a tricky draw while Serena Williams was on collision course with long-time rival Justine Henin.

Federer, whose Roland Garros win in 2009 allowed him to complete a career Grand Slam, opens against Australia's Peter Luczak and could face Swiss compatriot Stanilas Wawrinka in the fourth round.

However, last year's runner-up Robin Soderling, who sent four-time champion Nadal crashing to his first French Open defeat in 2009, could be a quarterfinal opponent.

The same applies to Latvia's in-form Ernests Gulbis, the man who beat Federer at the Rome Masters in April and Spain's Albert Montanes who defeated the top seed in the semifinals in Estoril.

Should Federer make the semifinal, fourth-seeded Briton Andy Murray, who has a 6-5 career advantage over the Swiss, may be waiting. Murray has an intriguing first round clash with France's Richard Gasquet.

Second seed Nadal, fresh from sweeping all three claycourt Masters titles and the overwhelming favourite to regain his Roland Garros title, will face French wildcard Gianni Mina, the world 653, in his first round.

Australian veteran Lleyton Hewitt, who has lost three times in four years to Nadal in Paris, is a possible third round opponent.

Nadal's Spanish compatriot Fernando Verdasco, who has a 0-10 against the world number two, is a potential quarterfinal foe.

World number four Novak Djokovic, who has been battling allergy problems, is seeded to meet Nadal in the semifinals.

Federer, with a record 16 Grand Slam titles, has admitted he will go into the French Open with all the pressure off after finally winning a first Paris title.

"I'm more relaxed. From 2002, people were asking me: 'So you are going to do it?' You just

had to ignore it," said Federer, who has warmed up for his title defence by playing an exhibition tournament in Paris.

Before Federer defeated Soderling in the 2009 final, he had lost the 2006, 2007 and 2008 finals to Nadal as well as the 2005 semifinal against the Spaniard.

"Now I come into the tournament with more enthusiasm. In the past I never knew if I was happy or not about returning."

"It was always hard leaving Paris having lost the final and knowing that I'd have to come back the next year, face new challengers and win seven matches. There was always a lot of pressure."

In the women's draw, top seed Serena Williams, the 2002 champion, was handed a testing path with four-time champion Justine Henin a possible quarterfinal opponent.

Henin, the winner in 2003, 2005, 2006, 2007 before sensationally quitting the sport on the eve of the 2008 event, is playing here for the first time since her return to the game.

Belgium's former number one lost in three sets to Williams in the final of the Australian Open in January, a result that gave the American a 12th Grand Slam title.

Williams holds an 8-6 career record over Henin, but the Belgian, seeded 22, has won both their Roland Garros meetings -- in 2003 and 2007.

Also in Williams's top half of the draw is another former world number one, Maria Sharapova, another possible last eight opponent, but whose recent form has been blighted by injury.

Serena starts her French Open campaign against Switzerland's Stefanie Voegele while Henin faces Bulgaria's Tsvetana Pironkova.

Venus Williams, the second seed and runner-up to her sister in 2002, faces Swiss veteran Patty Schnyder in the first round while defending champion Svetlana Kuznetsova of Russia, the sixth seed, starts against Romania's Sorana Cirstea.

World number three Caroline Wozniacki of Denmark, who has been struggling with an ankle injury, tackles Russia's Alla Kudryavtseva in the first round.



PHOTO: AFP

French Tennis Federation (FFT) president Jean Gachassin (C), flanked by Swiss world number one Roger Federer (L) and Russian Svetlana Kuznetsova, gets ready for the draw of the French Open at the Roland-Garros Stadium in Paris yesterday.