



PHOTO: AFP

Speedster Shoaib Akhtar, back again in the Pakistan team, follows through on a delivery as Sri Lanka batsman Angelo Mathews looks on during the first one-day international of the Asia Cup at the Rangiri Dambulla Stadium yesterday.

Tigers take on India today

Malinga bowls Lanka to dramatic win

SPORTS REPORTER



After two Test matches away in England, Bangladesh switch focus on the shorter-version of cricket when they take on India in the second one-day international of the Asia Cup at the Rangiri International Stadium in Dambulla in Sri Lanka today.

Struggling off disappointment of the Tests, Tigers captain Shakib Al Hasan has backed his team to do well in this tournament.

"Tough we didn't finish well in England, we are all looking forward to doing better in this tournament as we have been playing good cricket for the last 12 months," Shakib said on the eve of the tournament.

The tournament got underway yesterday with Pakistan taking on champions Sri Lanka.

Afp adds from Dambulla, sling-arm fast bowler Lasith Malinga grabbed 5-34 as the hosts stunned Pakistan by 16 runs.

Shahid Afridi's first one-day century in five years was in vain as Sri Lanka, restricted to 242-9, bowled out Pakistan for 226 in 47 overs.

The Pakistan captain, who came in to bat with his side struggling at 32-4, smashed 109 off 76 balls to leave the team needing just 38 runs off the last 9.2 overs with four wickets in hand.

Afridi was caught behind off Muttiah Muralidaran, triggering a dramatic collapse.

Malinga bowled Mohammad Aamer, had Shoaib Akhtar caught at mid-off and then yorked last man Mohammad Asif to finish with his best one-day figures.

Afridi hit eight boundaries and seven sixes in his first one-day hundred, the first since making 102 versus India at Kanpur on April 15, 2005.

Earlier, fast bowler Akhtar made an impressive return to international cricket

with 3-41 from 10 overs in his first game for Pakistan since May last year after recovering from a knee injury.

Sri Lanka slipped to 36-2 by the ninth over, before skipper Kumar Sangakkara (42) and Mahela Jayawardene (54) put on 83 for the third wicket.

All-rounder Angelo Mathews hit an unbeaten 55 off 61 balls to help the defending champions set a challenging target under lights after they were reduced to 168-7 by the 37th over.

SCORES IN BRIEF

SRI LANKA: 242 for 9 in 50 overs (Mathews 55 not out, Jayawardene 54, Sangakkara 42; Akhtar 3-41, Aamer 2-57)

PAKISTAN: 226 all out in 47 overs (Afridi 109, Umar 30, Razzaq 26 not out; Malinga 5-34, Mathews 2-38)

Result: Sri Lanka won by 16 runs.

Man-of-the-match: Shahid Afridi.

Umpires: Billy Bowden and Billy Doctrove.

'Mute the TV'

AFP, Johannesburg

An online company has begun marketing an 'Anti Vuvuzela Filter' that promises to silence the sound of the controversial plastic trumpets that have become the trademark of South Africa's World Cup.

The company's web site, antivuvuzelafilter.com, sells an MP3 audio file for 2.95 euros (3.60 dollars) that the company says will cancel the vuvuzela noise for TV viewers by producing a sound wave similar to the horn's that cancels the noise.

"Just download our specially designed vuvuzela noise cancellation MP3 and play it back on your home stereo system, computer, iPod, iPhone, etc.," the web site says.

"Depending on the circumstances, the resulting sound-wave may be so faint as to be inaudible to human ears."

But Anthony Sullivan, a physicist at South Africa's Rhodes University, called the idea "a marketing hype and a waste of money."

"Noise cancelling depends on specific positions. You're not going to get that cancelling," he said.

His advice to those who don't like hearing the vuvuzela?

"Mute the TV."

Boon for touts

REUTERS, Johannesburg

Tickets touts in South Africa are cashing in the world's most-watched sport event, selling tickets for the final at up to 4,000 dollars five days after the World Cup kicked off in the country.

The South African government has promised a clamp-down on black market tickets after a stampede, triggered by fake tickets, during a warm-up match between Nigerian and North Korea that left 15 people injured.

But illegal touts were operating in South Africa, some of them plying their trade in front of the official FIFA ticketing office in Johannesburg's financial district, Sandton.

Faded Azzurri

ATIQUE ANAM

Contrasting with the masterclass performance from the young Germans the previous night, The Oranjes looked bleak in their 2-0 win over the Danes while the Azzurri sparkle has faded to such an extent since lifting the coveted crown four years ago that a 1-1 draw with Paraguay was hardly any surprise.

On a day of average outings, Japan's historic 1-0 win over the Indomitable Lions of Cameroon was the biggest talking point and after South Korea's impressive 2-0 victory over Greece couple of days ago, this result only confirms that Asian teams are no longer there to make up the numbers. Their East Asian neighbours North Korea can take heart from these performances ahead of their opener against five-times world champions Brazil.

Talking about champions, four-time winners and current champions Italy took the field for the first time in the tournament against Paraguay, arguably the toughest opponent in the easiest of groups. So, a 1-1 result is something Marcello

Lippi would not be totally unhappy with, but the way his team performed once more raised few questions about the potency of his side. Let alone potency, the Azzurri looked short of imagination in midfield, and frailties at the back reared its head once more. Leaving their more creative players at home, and trying to blend the weary old guard with the inexperienced young blood, a complacent Lippi is running the risk of ignominy for the world champions and himself.

The goal that Italy conceded poses a big question mark over Fabio Cannavaro's capability to hold fortress at the age of 36 and it was only a goalkeeper gaffe that saved the blushes for the world champions.



The 4-3-3 formation seems ill-fitted with this Italian crop, and the former Juventus tactician realised it as he reverted to the safer option of 4-4-2 in the second half which gave the team the balance and increased the verve in attack.

Daniele de Rossi provided the poise in midfield while despite the classy stuff from Riccardo Montolivo, it was evident that Andrea Pirlo's boots are still too big for him to fill.

To their discredit, the South Americans did not pose any real threat to the Azzurri defence or tested the young Cagliari 'keeper Federico Marchetti as the two teams settled for a draw.

In the day's first match, the Netherlands eked out a rather unconvincing 2-0 win over Denmark. It was very unlike the free-flowing, attacking football that we associate with the Dutch. This was a more defensive-minded

Netherlands playing counter-attacking game and to their credit they passed the first hurdle without any hiccups.

But there should be no complaints for that as their captain Giovanni van Bronckhorst put it bluntly on the previous day that they wanted to win even if it meant sacrificing beautiful football.

The first half was a dreary affair with the Danes soaking up whatever pressure was built up by the Dutch and it looked like it would be more of the same in the second half until a unfortunate own goal from Liverpool defender Daniel Agger paved the way for the Dutch.

The second goal from Dirk Kuyt at the death ensured the favourites got off to a decent start to their campaign of winning an illustrious World Cup.

Unattractive as they were all the three matches, there was one good thing about them as none of the players got sent off, especially after the flurry of reds that flowed the previous day.

Glove maker backs Green

TELEGRAPH

Bosses at Yorkshire-based Sells Goalkeeper Products offered the West Ham goalkeeper their unequivocal support and insisted that their long-standing relationship would not be jeopardised by Green's World Cup howler.

The gaffe has put his hopes of holding on to one of England head coach Fabio Capello's starting berths in Friday's game against Algeria in doubt, but Green has no reason to fear for the future of a commercial deal that stretches back over 10 years.

"We're giving him our full support," said the company's marketing director, David Baxter.

"The truth is if a keeper makes a mistake it's a goal, but strikers like Emile Heskey or Shaun Wright-Phillips can miss five and people hardly notice."

"We believe he will get the nod for the next game, but regardless of Mr Capello's decision we'll be sticking with Robert."

"He made a really good save in the second

half of the USA game. All you need is the next good performance and it's forgotten about. These things happen in football and we're supporting him 100 per cent."

Baxter, whose firm is based in Clayton West, near Huddersfield, offered Green, 30, his backing after the former Norwich goalkeeper came under fire following a shocking mistake that handed the United States an unlikely equaliser in England's World Cup opener last weekend.

Indeed, the businessman suggested Capello was to blame for the mistake for keeping his team selection a secret until two hours before Green and his colleagues kicked off their World Cup campaign in South Africa.

"We've looked after Robert since the brand started in 2001, right through from his days at Norwich," Baxter added.

"I think that goalkeeper is a special position. You need time to mentally prepare because it's a position of trust. Also you have to focus, because you can spend a lot of the 90 minutes away from the action."



NEO Cricket

Asia Cup Cricket
Bangladesh v India
Live from 3:00pm

ESPN & SuperSport3

2010 FIFA World Cup
Honduras v Chile
Live from 5:30pm
Spain v Switzerland
Live from 8:00pm
South Africa v Uruguay
Live from 12:30am (Thursday)



Premier Div Hockey League

Ajax SC v Sadharan Bima
Time: 2:30pm
Azad SC v Wari Club
Time: 4:30pm
Venue: Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium

Hail hero Honda

AFP, George

Japan's Keisuke Honda has been warned not to pay attention to the avalanche of praise being heaped on him from back home following his match-winning performance against Cameroon.

"It would be dangerous if all the newspaper headlines are about Honda," former Japan coach Ivica Osim said after the CSKA Moscow rookie's 39th-minute goal led underdogs Japan to a 1-0 win over the African powerhouse - their first Cup win on foreign soil.

In a teleconference with Japanese media from his home in Austria, the 69-year-old Bosnian called Honda a 'pilot in the harbour' but said: "I am worried that he may get the wrong idea."

"The goal was a reward for playing courageously without feeling any complex," said Osim, who was replaced by home-grown Takeshi Okada as national coach in late 2007 after being laid low by a serious stroke.

Azzurri, Les Bleus frustrate locals

REUTERS, Cape Town

When the World Cup draw sent both 2006 finalists to Cape Town for their first matches the locals were delighted but having seen Italy and France in action they could be forgiven for wondering what the fuss is about.

It is a toss-up to decide which of the two marquee European forces were more feeble against their respective opponents.

France had one decent chance in their boring goalless draw with Uruguay last Friday and the holders were only marginally better as they drew 1-1 with Paraguay Monday.

France and Italy are by no means alone in failing to explode out of the blocks and, particularly in Italy's case, a slow start is the norm rather than the exception.

With New Zealand and Slovakia to come in their group, a draw against a Paraguay side who finished second in South American qualifying on the back of wins over Brazil and Argentina is hardly a stunning setback.

Defeat would have been, however, and it looked a distinct possibility after Antolin Alcaraz headed in a free-kick after 39 minutes of largely anonymous action in pouring rain Monday.

Italy levelled through Daniele De Rossi in the 63rd minute after Justo Villar added his name to the growing list of goalkeeping blunders when he failed wildly at a corner.

The most positive aspect for Italy was that after the equalizer, and particularly in the last 10 minutes, they really pressed for the winner when previously their natural instinct would probably have been to sit back and secure the point.

LOCAL SNIPPETS

SPORTS REPORTER

Victoria Sporting Club returned to winning ways in the Bashundhara Senior Division Football League with an emphatic 3-0 win over Jatrabari KC at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

After a barren first half, Javed broke the deadlock in the 60th minute while Ripon sealed the game for Victoria, who now have nine points from six matches. Jatrabari stuck to seven from five matches.

NATIONAL CHESS

Ten players shared the lead in the preliminary phase of the 36th National Chess Championship after the third round games at the Bangladesh Chess Federation Hall Room yesterday.

The leaders are FM Abu Sufian Shakil, FM Minhazuddin Ahmed Sagar, FM Aminul Islam, FM Mehdi Hasan Parag, FM Mohammed Abdul Malek, FM Mohammad Javed, Debaraj Chatterjee, Golam Mostafa Bhuiyan, national junior champion Abdullah Al Saif and Anwar Hossain, who all won their third round games to secure maximum three points.

HANDBALL COURSE

A month-long handball training programme for under-12 schoolboys got underway yesterday at the newly-built Handball Stadium adjacent to the Bangabandhu National Stadium.

About 100 participants from the capital's English medium schools will learn the basics of the game with national coach Kamrul Islam Kiron conducting the course.

Paraguay maintained their impressive, disciplined defence to keep them out and, though there must be concerns about their lack of creativity and penetration, the Italian camp and even their hyper-critical media had few complaints.

"More light than dark," was the headline on Gazzetta dello Sport's website, while coach Marcello Lippi, who said before the match he would be happy with a draw, was reasonably upbeat and maintained his long-term view.

"We have to grow and continue the work we have done," he said. "We are only at the beginning."

The players took a similar view, though there was also a general disappointment that they had failed to win.

"Our second-half performance was very good because we scored one and, when you are losing, that is not easy psychologically," said captain Fabio Cannavaro. "We played good football in the second half."

Midfielder Riccardo Montolivo nicely summed up the tactical conundrum that gives soccer such enduring and worldwide appeal.

"Once they went 1-0 up we came back a bit to defend to make sure we didn't go 2-0 down. We didn't want to lose the first game," he said.

"We were too stressed about the start of the World Cup but after the effort and heart we put into this game, I think it shows we can win the next two."

Goalkeeper Gianluigi Buffon was replaced by Federico Marchetti at halftime because of a sciatic nerve problem that gave him leg and back pain.

He is hoping to return against New Zealand on June 20 but team doctors said they would run tests on him Tuesday.

Dazzling MSC

SPORTS REPORTER

Titans Mohammedan Sporting Club maintained their dazzling form in the Green Delta Insurance Premier Division Hockey League as they thumped Bangladesh Sporting Club 8-0 at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Striker Rasel Mahmud Jimmy slotted a hat-trick after defender Mamunur Rahman Chayan gave Mohammedan a fifth-minute lead. Later, Rahul Kanti, Abdus Sajjad John, Sabbir Hossain and Rajon scored one goal apiece for Mohammedan, who cruised Wari Club 10-0 in their league opener.

In the day's other match, a youthful Dhaka Mariner Youngs came from behind to hold Sonali Bank to a 3-3 draw at the same venue.



PHOTO: STAR

A colourful rally in connection with The Daily Star-Rangs Toshiba World Cup Quiz was brought out in Rajshahi yesterday. City mayor's wife Shahin Akter Reny led the rally. The third round draw of the quiz takes place at the auditorium of Rajshahi Medical College at 4:00pm today.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Resort

4 Practice

8 Castle's

12 Branch

13 Ginor-

14 Con

15 Calm

17 Profound

18 Parodies

19 Actress

21 Remuner-

22 Follow

26 TV

journalist

Catherine

29 A handfu

30 Lucy of

"Charlie's

Angels"

31 Top 10,

e.g.

32 Blue

33 Micro-

brewery

product

34 Lemieux

milieu

35 Repair

36 Raise

a glass

to

37 Urge

39 33-Across

container

40 Main-

lander's

memento

41 Mountain

ridges

45 Vivacity,

to Vivaldi

48 Consist of

50 Lisa's

brother

51 Sandwich

treat

52 Sixth

sense

53 At the

home of

54 Night

light

55 Speck

DOWN

1 Pouches

2 Shore

(up)

Solution time: 25 mins.

GLOB BALM DAM

ALONE ALOE EKE

BUCHAREST FIR

STEEDS ALONE

SO COLOR

SLIT ARA LEFT

KEN JET SEA

TOTA ASS STYX

EXERT OH

SIREN ERASES

ODE TENDEREST

LES EGAD PLAY

EAT ROMY SLUE

3 Bullets

and such

4 Ram's-

horn

trumpet

5 — willow

6 Time

of your

life?

7 Lessened

8 Sir's

counter-

part

9 Indivisible

10 Foolhar-

diness

personi-

fied

11 Gratuity

16 Vatican

VIPs

20 Do some

lawn work

23 Entreaty

24 False-

hoods

39 Intaglio's

opposite

42 Needing

extra

innings

43 Old

gasoline

brand

44 Oct.

preceder

45 English

channel

46 Cheer-

leader's

word

47 Wrath

49 Tramcar

load