



PHOTO: REUTERS

FIESTA EVERYWHERE: Spanish rider Dany Torres, wearing Spain's national soccer team shirt, hits a Jabulani ball during the training for the third stage of the Red Bull X-Fighters World Series in Moscow on Friday.

Durban's splendour in Pretoria

MOHAMMAD ISAM

What was promised in the Brazil-Portugal encounter was ultimately delivered 600km away, two hours later in Pretoria.

The end-to-end battle between Spain and Chile in Pretoria that marked the end of World Cup's first phase, produced three scrumptious goals and countless opportunities from both flair-riden line-ups, one of which had to function with ten men thanks to yet another refereeing error.

Ahead of the match, Spain's midfield architect Xavi Hernandez alluded to Chile's intentions and how those attacking options would help his team. And that was how it panned out.

Although Chile began well with their wingers sorting out the Spanish defence, it was David Villa who scored what possibly was the tournament's top goal.

The new Barcelona signing showed supreme calmness to sidefoot home the first goal following Claudio Bravo's gaffe to come out so far away from goal.

Villa was also involved in the second goal which was well finished by Andreas Iniesta who placed the ball to perfection.

Despite the goals and some nice touches by Xavi, Spain have their concerns ahead of the Iberian derby against Portugal on June 29. For the second game running, Fernando Torres was lethargic, had a terrible first touch and couldn't even come close to hitting the target. He could well lose his place.

Chile scored through Rodrigo Millar after the substitute found space on the edge of the area and fired in a shot that took a huge deflection off Pique before looping past Casillas and into the net. They showed enough attacking flair and ability to trouble one of the tournament favourites, and they will have to do it all again against Brazil.

While the Millar goal helped Chile, the scoreless draw

between Honduras and Switzerland eventually made sure of all five South American teams going into the second round.

Apart from the result though, the red card to Marco Estrada went badly against the Chileans. He did not deserve the second yellow card after it appeared that he tripped Fernando Torres outside the box during the build up of Spain's second goal.

Knowing a draw would take them through in first place, Brazil made major changes in attack and never looked like forcing themselves.

If this game is seen in isolation, this would be viewed as a poor performance and give Dunga's critics more ammunition, but they have shown they can step it up when required and a perfunctory showing like this is little cause for concern.

To Portugal's credit, they contained Brazil well and had the better of the game's limited opportunities.

Raul Meireles looked one of the more threatening players and should be looking to get forward more often but, defensively, Ricardo Costa looked a little vulnerable against Nilmar's pace.

The draw was good enough to take Portugal through, though Ivory Coast won their last group game against North Korea 3-0.

In what could well be the last World Cup for 32-year-old striker Didier Drogba, the Ivorians finally delivered with three well-taken goals although it was against a side that was ravaged 7-0 in their previous game.

Yaya Touré, Romaric and Salomon Kalou scored the goals but it was Romaric who stood out.

The Sevilla midfielder was very tidy in possession and positive when pushing forward. Romaric was industrious throughout the match and deservedly got on the scoreboard.



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Pepe blasts coffin cartoon

INTERNET

Simone Pepe concedes the World Cup was "a sporting tragedy," but felt newspapers went too far depicting the team in Azzurri coffins.

The media was understandably critical when Italy crashed out of SA2010 by propping up the group behind Paraguay, Slovakia and New Zealand.

Perhaps the cruellest of all was a cartoon by Il Giornale artist Giorgio Forattini that pictured a pitch with 11 coffins in Azzurri colours, laid out in a 4-3-3 formation.

"Whoever drew such a thing should be an undertaker," slammed Pepe. "I hope soon they

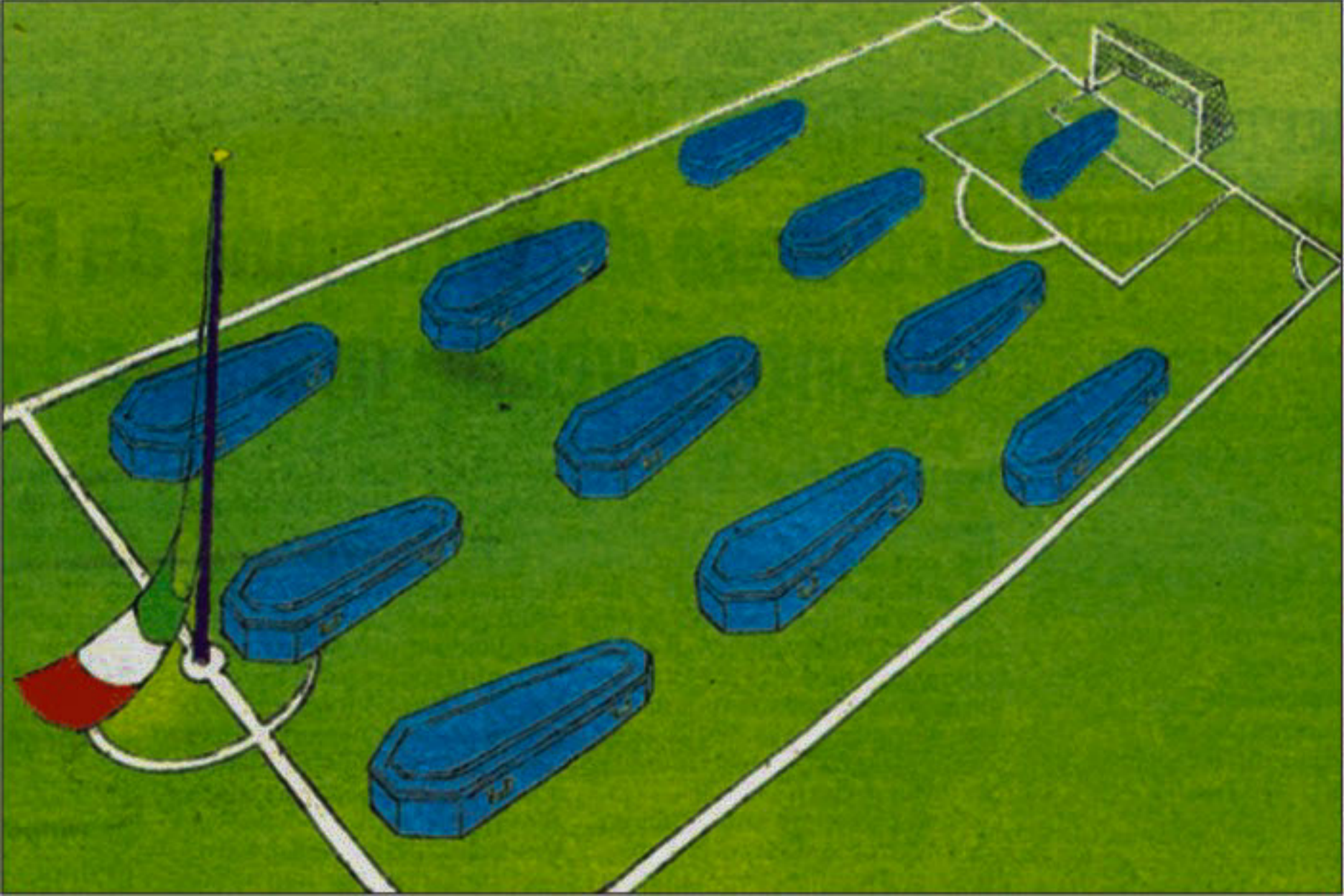
get to build a coffin for him instead.

"Of course we are upset and disappointed, as going out of the World Cup in the first round was a sporting tragedy for us.

"I accept criticism, but depicting us in coffins on the front page of a newspaper is really going too far."

Pepe is already looking ahead to next season, where he will switch from Udinese to Juventus on loan.

"Now I dive into this new experience, as Juventus are a great opportunity for me. In any case, the World Cup was an important experience to have."



ESPN & SuperSport3
2010 FIFA World Cup
Germany v England
Live from 8:00pm
Argentina v Mexico
Live from 12:30am (Monday)

STAR Cricket & SuperSport6
England v Australia
Third ODI
Live from 3:45pm

STAR Sports & SuperSport1
F1 World Championship
Valencia Grand Prix
Live from 5:45pm

TEN Sports & SuperSport2
West Indies v South Africa
Third Test, Day 2
Live from 8:00pm

DAY'S EVENT
Premier Div Hockey League
Abahani v Ajax
Time: 4:30pm
Venue: Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium

Mash back at helm?

Ashraful axed; Faisal, Rokibul return

Cricket

SPORTS REPORTER

Mashrafe Bin Mortaza could be named Bangladesh captain for the forthcoming one-day series against England and matches against Scotland and Ireland.

The Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) yesterday announced the squad for the tour to the British Isles which had no place for Mohammad Ashraful while seeing the return of Faisal Hossain and Rokibul Hasan. The tour consists of three one-dayers against England, two against Ireland and one against Scotland. The tour starts on July 3 with a warm-up game against Sussex.

According to sources, BCB are considering the change in leadership after they detected fatigue and a dip in performance from the incumbent Shakib Al Hasan.

The left-handed all-rounder, who took over from Mashrafe midway through last year's tour to West Indies and successfully led the 2-0 and 3-0 victories in the Test and one-day series respectively, scored just 42 runs and took five wickets in the Asia Cup and have failed to score a half-century since his 96 against England at home in March.

"We didn't reach a decision yet because we haven't discussed with Mashrafe (Bin Mortaza)," said BCB media committee chairman Jalal Yunus.

The captaincy was originally given to

Mashrafe from Mohammad Ashraful last year but after Shakib's triumphant captaincy and rise in form, scoring three hundreds -- two against Zimbabwe and one in New Zealand -- it was perceived that Shakib will see through till the 2011 World Cup. But after one good innings in the World Twenty20s, Shakib had looked out of touch in England and has raised the concern of the board.

"We will sit with everyone including Shakib (Al Hasan) and take their view on the matter," said BCB cricket operations chairman Enayet Hossain Siraj.

But the switch at the top looks highly expected because of Shakib's value to the team as an all-rounder and the continued see-saw in form of the batsmen as well as the bowling unit which includes an out-of-form Mashrafe who only recently returned from injury.

One of those who looked perpetually out of form for the past year has been Ashraful and duly, the former captain was given the axe from the team.

His omission comes after he was picked in the Tigers squad for the World Twenty20s, the Test matches in England and the Asia Cup earlier this month. Ashraful was dropped during the home series against England earlier this year and this drop could be a long-lasting sequence for the batsman who promises so much and delivers so little.

"He was dropped for his struggle with batting form," said chief selector Rafiqul Alam. But earlier this month, the batsman

was picked for the Asia Cup on the basis of being a key limited overs performer, only to make 29 runs from two matches in the regional tournament.

Along with Ashraful, Sohrawardi Shuvo and Naeem Islam were also dropped. Left-arm spinner Shuvo was not considered due to conditions in England and the latter seen off for his poor form.

Batsmen Faisal Hossain and Rokibul Hasan were picked in place of the trio with Faisal returning to the national fold after six years and Rokibul coming back after suddenly retiring from international cricket in March this year and being banned by the cricket board.

"He (Faisal Hossain) has shown good form in domestic cricket and in the A team," said Rafiqul who added that they have no policy to cast aside 30-plus players from the national fold while talking about the 31-year-old Faisal.

"Rokibul (Hasan) doesn't need to prove to get into the national team as he has done well in the two years he's been in the squad. He has been practicing hard and he has the desperate desire to come back to the national team," added Rafiqul.

SQUAD

Tamim Iqbal, Imrul Kayes, Junaed Siddiqui, Rokibul Hasan, Shakib Al Hasan, Mushfiqur Rahim, Mahmudullah Riyad, Faisal Hossain, Jahurul Islam, Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, Rubel Hossain, Shaiful Islam, Nazmul Hossain, Abdur Razzak and Syed Rasel.

MSC thump Azad

SPORTS REPORTER

Mamunur Rahman Chayan converted four penalty corners to give Mohammedan Sporting Club a tumping 9-1 win over Azad Sporting Club in the lone match of the Green Delta Insurance Premier Division Hockey League at the Maulana Bhasani National Hockey Stadium yesterday.

The other goals were scored by Sabbir, Kamruzzaman, Jahidul Islam, Sazzad John and Rasel Mahmud. Shafiqul Islam scored a consolation goal for the losing side one minute from time. The winners led the first half 3-0.

Yuvraj back for SL Tests

AFP, New Delhi

India's cricket selectors on Saturday recalled middle-order batsman Yuvraj Singh in a 16-man squad for next month's Test series in Sri Lanka.

The left-hander, 28, was not part of India's recent Asia Cup winning campaign in Sri Lanka after being dropped due to poor form during the World Twenty20 in the Caribbean.

Yuvraj, who has scored 1,582 runs in 33 Tests at an average of 35.95 since his debut in 2003, had also missed the home series against South Africa in March due to a finger injury.

The squad, announced by the Indian cricket board after a selection meeting in Chennai, comprises a tried and trusted combination that has taken Mahendra Singh Dhoni's team to the top of the Test rankings.

Veteran batsmen Sachin Tendulkar, Rahul Dravid and Venkatesh Laxman make a formidable middle-order to follow openers Virender Sehwag and Gautam Gambhir.

The selectors have picked three specialist spinners and as many seamers to deliver on the batting wickets in Sri Lanka.

Off-spinner Harbhajan Singh will be joined by left-arm Pragyan Ojha and leg-break bowler Amit Mishra in the spin department, while pace spearhead Zaheer Khan will be supported by Ishant Sharma and Shanthakumaran Sreesanth.

One-day specialist Suresh Raina is the only player in the squad yet to play a Test. Reserve-wicket Wriddhiman Saha played one Test against South Africa when Dhoni was injured.

Dhoni's men begin the month-long tour with a three-day match in Colombo on July 13-15, followed by the first Test in Galle on July 18.

The action then shifts to Colombo where the second Test will be played at the Sinhalese sports club from July 26 and the third at the P. Sara Oval from August 3.

SQUAD

Mahendra Singh Dhoni (captain), Virender Sehwag, Gautam Gambhir, Murali Vijay, Sachin Tendulkar, Rahul Dravid, Venkatesh Laxman, Yuvraj Singh, Suresh Raina, Harbhajan Singh, Amit Mishra, Pragyan Ojha, Zaheer Khan, Shanthakumaran Sreesanth, Ishant Sharma, Wriddhiman Saha.

Serena cruises, Robin bulldozes

REUTERS, London



A display of violent hitting from Robin Soderling on Saturday showed why it is always unwise to ignore a Swede at the business end of Wimbledon as Serena

Williams gave herself a "must do better" report as she eased into round four.

Another warm day in south west London promises much with world number one and 2008 champion Rafa Nadal making his bid for fourth-round berth while "Andy-monium" reaches fever pitch again when home hope Andy Murray takes to Centre Court. Until 1922 the reigning singles champions at the All England Club were granted byes to the final the following year and at times against Dominika Cibulkova on Saturday it seemed a policy worth reviving given Williams' complete dominance and lack of competitive challenge.

The 28-year-old three-time champion bludgeoned her way through the opening set in just 18 minutes, the third straight

match she has won the first without losing a game, but the Slovak finally struck some kind of form to at least spare any further blushes. The victory set up a potential repeat of the 2004 final against Maria Sharapova should the 16th seed come through later on Saturday against Czech Barbora Zlahavova Strycova.

Victoria Azarenka, the 14th seed from Belarus, was sent packing 7-5 6-0 by Czech Petra Kvitova as Chinese ninth seed Li Na reached the last 16 for the second time in three years with a 6-1 6-3 win over Australia's Anastasia Rodionova.

Some of the leading men's seeds will have been anxiously checking the draw earlier this week to see just where they might run into Soderling, who is becoming a real challenger for the title on the skidding lawns.

Soderling battered 15 aces in a bulldozing two-hour performance against Brazilian 25th seed Thomaz Bellucci on Court One, winning 6-4 6-2 7-5.

The Swede, a player transformed since two appearances in the French Open

final, alters his game little for grass with big-swinging forehands and angled backhands that left Bellucci pinned against the back wall for much of their third-round battle.

Not since Stefan Edberg in 1990 has a Swede graced the final here but Nadal and Murray will certainly be wary of his presence in their half of the draw.

To reach the quarters for the first time Soderling must next beat David Ferrer after the Spanish ninth seed came from 4-2 down in the fifth to beat Frenchman Jeremy Chardy.

Nadal faces German 33rd seed Philipp Petzschner and is followed onto Centre Court by Murray, who takes on Frenchman Gilles Simon, seeded 26.

Another Frenchman mercifully heading for an ice bath and a sleep is Nicolas Mahut.

The player who will long be remembered as the loser of tennis's longest ever match earlier this week against John Isner also bowed out of the doubles with partner Arnaud Clement.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Roe provider
5 Big fusses
9 Kennel squeal
12 Day fraction
13 Sur-rounded
14 Rhyming praise
15 Quotable catcher
17 Solidify
18 Three-piece piece
19 Leavening agent
21 Check recipient
24 Oil cartel
25 "Once — a time, ..."
26 Parts of brains
30 Possibly will
31 Turning point
32 Diane Sawyer's network
33 One making a vow
35 Norway's capital

DOWN

1 Bashful
2 "Yoo- —!"
3 Sept. preceder
4 Strongly motivated
5 Quite some time
6 Gossip of hockey
8 "Don't go anywhere"
9 Where people meet for a stretch?
10 Mid-month date
11 Hide contest
16 Spelling
20 Slithery fish
21 Gasoline dispenser
22 On — with (equal to)
23 Plans with frequent gains and losses
24 Stench
26 Atomizer output
27 Previous night
28 Competent
29 Highlander
31 Inebriated
34 Oktoberfest vessel
35 Body of work
37 Feathery neckwear
38 George Herman Ruth
39 Verve
40 Some other people
41 Not his
44 Eggs
45 A billion years
46 Possessed
47 "— bodkins!"

Solution time: 21 mins.

FACE PRO ROMP
THANKYOU EVER
LANCELOT FARE
AGE BAILEY
VANE MARPLOT
EGO TORSO ROB
INKBLLOT KALE
ASAN TALLY
SLURPS FOR
TUNA SPAMALLOT
EXIT ETCETERA
METE SAT SEEN

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48					49				50		
51					52				53		

CRYPTOQUIP

OM ELJZL SE PMJZLWE QTVOY
SLTOMOMW SE QZYEZH T
VTONEL, YEPNJ T XZLVEM
ZMLENN OM QETS YTHX?

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: BECAUSE THAT NEWLYWED WOMAN DEMONSTRATES GREAT DENTAL HYGIENE, I'D CALL HER A BRUSHING BRIDE.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: M equals N