

World's oldest Test cricketer Tindill dies

Acclaimed New Zealand sportsman Eric Tindill, a double international who was the world's oldest surviving Test cricketer and an All Black, has died aged 99, a family spokesman said Monday. As well as playing cricket and rugby at Test level, Tindill also achieved the unique distinction of being the only person to umpire a Test cricket match and referee a rugby Test. He died in his home town of Nelson. Tindill, a wicketkeeper, became the world's oldest surviving Test cricketer last year with the passing of Englishman Francis McKinnon, who lived to 98. He played five Tests for New Zealand and had the honour of catching Sir Don Bradman at Adelaide in 1937-38, in the only match the Australian batting great played against New Zealand. Tindill played 16 times for the All Blacks but his sole rugby Test was when New Zealand were beaten by England 0-13 in London in 1936. As a match official, Tindill refereed the All Blacks' first two Tests against the touring British Lions in 1955 and three years later umpired a New Zealand cricket Test against England.



Victoria Azarenka of Belarus celebrates after defeating Maria Sharapova of Russia in the Bank of the West Classic final at Stanford University in California on Sunday.

Azarenka shocks Sharapova

Eighth seed Victoria Azarenka of Belarus overwhelmed Russian fifth seed Maria Sharapova 6-4, 6-1 in Sunday's WTA tournament final here to win her first title of the season. A day after her 21st birthday, Azarenka broke the Russian three times in the first set then took advantage of Sharapova's 16 unforced errors in the second set while committing only one to win the 700,000-dollar hardcourt event. "I haven't lost a match yet since I turned 21," Azarenka said. "It's great. I can have cake now." Azarenka, who will jump to 12th in the world rankings, improved to 19-5 this season on hardcourts, the surface where she has won her four career WTA titles and where she will play at the US Open later this month. "It just brings me so much confidence and passion to go, especially before the US Open," Azarenka said. "I'm glad I'm picking up my form and gaining so much confidence." Sharapova, who had won 17 of 20 prior matches, missed a chance to claim her third title of the year. She will improve to 13th in the rankings as she shows her best form since return-

ing from a shoulder injury in May of 2009. "I started making unforced errors off her returns and she stepped it up, took advantage and started to get on a roll," Sharapova said. "I don't think I served that smart. I need a higher percentage of first serves, in general and particularly against her." Azarenka took the 107,000-dollar top prize and improved to 2-2 lifetime against Sharapova, her first victory over the Russian since 2007. Azarenka needed four set points but finally took the first set when Sharapova sent a backhand wide. Azarenka twice rallied from 0-30 to hold serve, denying the Russian a third break to level. "Maria is a great player. I had to dig my way in," Azarenka said. "I was running a lot. It was tough to hold my serve. I had to play really well. I'm glad I kept fighting. Point by point it worked for me." Azarenka broke Sharapova to open the second set and again to seize a 4-1 lead and in the final game, which she claimed at love when Sharapova netted a forehand. "I tried to start aggressive right away and not let her come in," Azarenka said. "When she gets on a roll it's hard to keep up. I had to be on top of her every moment and not give her the chance to come back."

Development

FROM PAGE 17 In February, the ICC had written to the BCCI expressing concerns over facilities at Bangalore's Chinnaswamy Stadium. Andy Atkinson, the ICC pitch consultant, reportedly suggested several changes that need to be undertaken ahead of the tournament. In June, the Premadasa Stadium in Colombo was deemed to be behind schedule by an ICC delegation in terms of readiness of the pitch, but progress at the two new venues in Pallekele and Hambantota was assessed to be on track. Shetty also said that the hosts were working towards improving the security for the event. "Each of the countries now has full-time security advisors and they are preparing the national security plans as well as the tournament security plans. The three governments are working out to ensure that this will be an incident free 2011 World Cup." Shetty was in Colombo for the naming of the 2011 World Cup's mascot - a baby elephant called 'Stumpy'. The ICC had conducted an online competition inviting the public to suggest a name for the mascot.

BFF facing

FROM PAGE 17 If the BNS is allotted to the BFF to hold the season curtain-raising tournament Federation Cup or Super Cup, they will have to sweat over ensuring security to the participating teams because of the state of the galleries where iron bars and, plastic chairs remain scattered across the venue. Considering the huge turnout of the spectators, the BFF general secretary also believes it would be tough to hold tournaments at the alternative venue of Bishreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur. "We will think of the alternative of staging only the semifinals and the final at the BNS if the NSC does not allow us to use the BNS fully," said Sadi.

Strauss upbeat

Andrew Strauss believes England are developing the battling qualities that will serve them well in their bid to retain the Ashes after they thrashed Pakistan by 354 runs in the first Test. Victory, achieved with a more than a day to spare at Trent Bridge on Sunday, was ultimately crushing with Pakistan bowled out for 80 - their lowest Test score against England - in pursuit of what would have been a new world record fourth innings victory total of 435. Pakistan had no answer to James Anderson, who once again revelled in the swing friendly conditions for a Test match - best return of 11 wickets for 71 runs - including a second innings haul of six for 17. However, there were moments when England's batsmen struggled against the likes of Pakistan pacemen Mohammad Aamer, Mohammad Asif and Umar Gul before going 1-0 up in a four-Test series that resumes at Edgbaston on Friday. What really pleased England captain Strauss was the way Eoin Morgan, whose 130 was his maiden Test century, and Paul Collingwood, who made 82, put together a fifth-wicket stand of 219 that helped take the hosts to 354 in their first innings after they'd faltered at 118 for four. Similarly, England were in trouble at 72 for five in their second innings before wicketkeeper Matt Prior bailed them out with an unbeaten 102. "Test matches like this give me a lot of heart because of guys getting us out of trouble when we need them," said Strauss. "If you want to be a top quality Test team, you need people to come out and get you out of trouble," added Strauss who is hoping to become the first England captain to win a Test series in Australia since Mike Gatting in 1986/87 during an Ashes defence which starts in November. Strauss has now led England to three successive Test wins - albeit the other two were at home to Bangladesh following a 2-0 series win away to the Tigers under stand-in skipper Alastair Cook earlier this year.

Sachin set for 169th Test

FROM PAGE 17 "Cricket is not a simple game, but I have tried to keep things simple and concentrate on what lies ahead. I am as excited now about playing as I was at the start of my career." Asked if his records will ever be matched, Tendulkar replied: "Records are meant to be broken. But one will have to play a long time for that. "When it happens, I just hope an Indian does it." Age has not diminished Tendulkar's hunger for runs. He has hit five Test centuries this year alone, including a 203 last week in the previous match against Sri Lanka. "As long as you are mentally strong and prepared to go through the grind, age really does not matter," Tendulkar said after the drawn Test at the Sinhalese Sports Club. "I think everyone should just stop talking about the age factor. If I can score a double hundred at 37, I don't think age really matters." Among cricketers still playing, Australian captain Ricky Ponting is next in line with 146 Tests, followed by Rahul Dravid of India (141) and South Africans Jacques Kallis (140) and Mark Boucher (134). THE LEADERS (before Tuesday's match): 168 - Sachin Tendulkar (IND) 168 - Steve Waugh (AUS) - retired 156 - Allan Border (AUS) - retired 146 - Ricky Ponting (AUS) 145 - Shane Warne (AUS) - retired 141 - Rahul Dravid (IND) 140 - Jacques Kallis (RSA) 134 - Mark Boucher (RSA)

Querrey conquers Murray

Andy Murray squandered a match point in the second set and American Sam Querrey rallied Sunday for a 5-7, 7-6 (7/2), 6-3 victory over the British top seed in the final of the Los Angeles Open. The 23-year-old Scotsman missed a golden chance for his first ATP title of the season and suffered his first loss in five career meetings with Querrey, who had never before taken a set off Murray. "I've got to be happy getting to the final and having chances to win," Murray said. "I didn't play my best tennis. Just tired." World number four Murray announced a split from coach Miles Maclagan earlier this week. While he is looking at possible replacements, a final decision is not expected before the US Open. Murray played in Los Angeles for the first time as a last-minute replacement for Serbian Novak Djokovic, who withdrew citing a need for more rest.

Hometown favorite Querrey won his fourth title of the season - only Rafael Nadal with five has more - and became the first back-to-back champion at the 700,000-dollar hardcourt event since Andre Agassi defended his crown in 2002. "In the second and third sets I played great, some of the best tennis I've played," Querrey said. "That's the highest-ranked guy I've ever beaten."

Dhoni to wait

FROM PAGE 17 Of the 14 Tests played at this ground, 10 have produced results with the hosts winning seven, including the last five in a row. Sangakkara said his side was determined to end the series 2-0 against the top-ranked Indians, who have not won a Test rubber in the island nation since 1993. "Our focus is on playing good cricket over the five days and put enough pressure on the Indians to take their 20 wickets, which is not easy to do on any surface," the Sri Lankan captain said.

TEAMS

INDIA (from): Mahendra Singh Dhoni (captain), Virender Sehwag, Murali Vijay, Sachin Tendulkar, Rahul Dravid, Venkatesh Laxman, Suresh Raina, Yuvraj Singh, Harbhajan Singh, Pragnan Ojha, Amit Mishra, Abhinavindu Mithun, Ishant Sharma, Munaf Patel. SRI LANKA (from): Kumar Sangakkara (captain), Tillakaratne Dilshan, Tharanga Paranavitana, Mahela Jayawardene, Thilan Samaraweera, Angelo Mathews, Prasanna Jayawardene, Ajantha Mendis, Lasith Malinga, Dilhara Fernando, Suraj Randiv, Dammika Prasad, Chanaka Welegedara, Ranga Herath, Nuwan Pradeep.

Freddi return delayed

AFP, London England star Andrew Flintoff has been forced to delay his long-awaited return from knee surgery. Flintoff was set to play in a one-day match for Lancashire's second eleven against Yorkshire on Monday, but the all-rounder has been held back on the advice of his county's medical team. The 32-year-old has had two knee operations since helping England win the Ashes against Australia in the final Test at the Oval last year. He retired from Test cricket after that match, but he still hopes to play in one-day internationals for England, as well as representing his county in domestic action. The positive news for Flintoff is Lancashire insist this latest delay is only a minor setback and it is believed he could still play in a three-day game against Yorkshire's reserves starting on Tuesday.

Former Pak players lash late call-ups

AFP, Karachi Former Pakistan Test players Monday criticised two of their cricket board's selections for the second Test against England, saying the decision would make the national team a "laughing stock." The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) axed leg-spinner Danish Kaneria after he conceded 171 runs for only one wicket in Pakistan's crushing, 354-run defeat by England at Nottingham last weekend in the first of a match of a four-Test series. Kaneria was dropped in favour of teenage left-arm spinner Raza Hasan, who will be available for the Test starting at Edgbaston Friday, pending travel arrangements, along with the other late call-up, batsman Mohammad Yousuf. Former captain Amir Sohail said the late inclusion of Hasan and Yousuf in the squad currently in England was a "knee-jerk" reaction. "Pakistan cricket will further become a laughing stock with these haphazard decisions," Sohail told AFP. "I agree with what others are saying -- Pakistan cricket has become a basket case. "You don't treat a player like Kaneria in this manner," he said. "If he (Kaneria) was not performing, it was a failure of the coaching staff and casts doubt on their ability to help players." Sohail said Yousuf had not been playing cricket for some months, and his form and fitness were unknown. Yousuf would also be in breach of an undertaking not to play cricket during the holy month of Ramadan following his 2006 conversion to Islam from Christianity, Sohail said. Yousuf retired in March after the PCB banned him indefinitely, one of several sanctions imposed on players following a disastrous three-month tour of Australia in which Pakistan failed to win a single match. Yousuf announced last month that he would be available if required, but there has been no official statement from the PCB on overturning his ban. Former chief selector and left-arm spinner Iqbal Qasim said Kaneria's exit was "tragic and shabby." "Kaneria is the second-best leg-spinner produced by Pakistan, after Abdul Qadir," said Qasim, who blamed wicket-keeper Kamran Akmal for Kaneria's poor performance. If Kamran had not missed a chance to stump Paul Collingwood in England's first innings at Trent Bridge, Kaneria would have found the rhythm he needed to take more wickets, Qasim said. He also termed Yousuf's recall as "one of the biggest jokes."

Lemaitre's terrific treble

AFP, Barcelona French sprint king Christophe Lemaitre won his third gold of the European Championships on Sunday as his country stormed to victory in the men's 4x100m relay. France were the clear favourites thanks to Lemaitre's triumphs in the individual 100m and 200m as well as Martial Mbandjock's double bronze medal efforts. But it was a tight final with the French winning in a time of 38.11sec while Italy took silver, just six hundredths of a second behind. Germany came home in third. "We worked very well together. Of all the medals won this one feels the most precious because it was a team effort," said Lemaitre, who became the first white sprinter to break the magical 10-second barrier for the 100m last month. There was disappointment for France in the women's 4x100m relay with the Ukraine the surprise winners leaving a team which included silver and bronze medalists in the individual event - Veronique Mang and Myriam Soumaré - in second. The impressive performance from the Ukraine saw them set the fastest time in the world this year. Russia were also left to wonder what went wrong as they had brought a strong team to Barcelona it left without a medal with Poland taking bronze. "We have been working together for many years and training hard on passing the baton. This was the perfect stage to show how good we really are and clocking the world's fastest time is unbelievable," said Yelizaveta Bryzhina. There was no magical finale for Merlene Ottey who, at 50, was the oldest athlete in history to take part at the European Championships. Her Slovenian quartet had failed to make it out of the semi-finals. Russia had double success in the men's and women's 4x400m relays. They have an embarrassment of riches in the women's individual event and so it was no surprise to see them storm away to victory and the battle was more for second place which Germany took just ahead of Great Britain.



(From L) France's Jimmy Vicaut, Christophe Lemaitre, Pierre-Alexis Pesonneaux and Martial Mbandjock embark on a victory lap after winning the men's 4x100m relay of the 2010 European Athletics Championships at the Olympic Stadium in Barcelona on Sunday.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 1 Type measures 4 Corroded 7 Went sledding, maybe 12 Cowboy's sweetie 13 Peregrinate 14 Ultraviolet filter 15 Serengeti critter 16 Congratulates with a slap 18 Novelist 19 Anticipate 20 Tatters 22 Exist 23 Willy Wonka's creator 27 Have 29 Fairway shots 31 Isaac Newton's inspiration 34 Fix a text 35 Onions' kin 37 First lady 38 Prong 39 Fuss 41 Crooned 45 "All My Children" role 47 Hide-hair link 48 Cat's stat 52 G-man's org. 53 Scent 54 Indivisible 55 Poorly started 57 Afternoon social 58 Aviv preceder 1 Turkish title 5 Formosa's other name 6 Bergen or Buchanan 7 Hay storage area 8 9mm sub-machine gun 9 Head of st. 10 Compass dir. 11 — Moines 17 Wasted no time 21 Figure out 23 Thin coins 24 Rd. 25 Coop occupant 26 Leary's drug 28 Tiny 30 Cleric's title (Abbr.) 31 Performance 32 — Beta Kappa 33 Wrestling win 36 Rani's wrap 37 Of a Tertiary epoch 40 Duffer's digging 42 Not suited (for) 43 Aristocratic 44 Barbecue surface 45 Verve 46 On an ocean liner, maybe 48 Apprehend 49 Rage 50 Yule quaff 51 Ostrich's cousin

Crossword grid with numbers 1-58 indicating starting positions for the clues.

CRYPTOQUIP NDFA RXPFXBO RTOR "U'P HXF XAF HX ZSTPF," NXESB OXE IFKFI HX HDTH RHTHFFFAH TR T KTESH SUAF? Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF SOMEONE IS URGED TO PLAY A TWO-OF-A-KIND IN A POKER GAME, WOULD YOU SAY IT'S PAIR PRESSURE? Today's Cryptoquip Clue: P equals M