

6-A-SIDE CRICKET Gladiators in semifinals

SPORTS REPORTER

Bengal Gladiators reached the semifinals of the 41st Kuantan International Six-a-side tournament in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

They became group champions after winning two out of three matches against Malaysia's national side and Kerala.

The semifinals and final will be held today.

Rowdy Ryder apologises

CRICINFO

Jesse Ryder has added another chapter to his troubled career after being fined for "intoxicated and rowdy" behaviour at a hotel during an indoor cricket tournament. Ryder, who is currently out of the New Zealand side with an elbow injury, admitted to a serious misconduct charge but is expected to be available for the tour of Bangladesh in September.

"I accept that being intoxicated and rowdy during the night put me in a position where I put New Zealand Cricket and my own reputation at risk and I accept this is not tolerable," Ryder said in a letter to New Zealand Cricket. "The potential consequences of this event have distressed me over the last few weeks."

Ryder said he had apologised to the hotel for his behaviour after a noise complaint was lodged. He had been staying there with his indoor cricket team.

"I have put a lot of time into working out a plan to prevent me being in this position again," he said. "I am committed to making the right changes in my life as I really want a long career as a professional cricket player. I've had enough of getting into this sort of trouble and bringing attention to myself."

The most serious of Ryder's indiscretions came in 2008 when he put his right hand through a glass window during a late-night session at a Christchurch bar. Early last year he gave up alcohol after another incident.

"I know the changes I am making do not dismiss the misconduct issue, however I am fully committed to [New Zealand] and I am committed to doing what is necessary to be the best I can be," he said. "I am grateful to NZC for sticking by me and I want to thank them by performing for many years to come."

Geoff Allott, NZC's general manager of cricket, said the matter was viewed "very seriously". "NZC is extremely disappointed in this breach of trust and protocol by Jesse," he said. "We have seen some positive progress from Jesse in recent times, which makes this incident even more disappointing."

Klusener next

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Fountain is a professional English cricket coach and former Great Britain Olympic Baseballer. He has a vast experience in coaching both domestic and international, professional cricket teams including the West Indies, Pakistan and England as a specialist fielding coach.

He was the first baseball player to be used by a Test level cricket team.

SL name

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games on the A tour of Australia in June and July. Muttiah Muralidaran, who recently retired from Tests, was rested, though he has made himself available for selection for the 2011 World Cup.

Silva, at one point, was a regular in Sri Lanka's middle order until a series of low scores cost him his place in the Asia Cup. Fernando played in the second Test against India at the SSC, while Perera represented Sri Lanka in 10 ODIs and was also part of the Chennai Super Kings squad in the IPL. The other participating teams in the tri-series are India and New Zealand and all the matches will be held in Dambulla.

SQUAD

Kumar Sangakkara (captain), Mahela Jayawardene, Chamara Silva, Thisara Perera, Dilhara Fernando, Tillakaratne Dilshan, Upul Tharanga, Angelo Mathews, Thilan Samaraweera, Chamara Kapugedera, Suraj Randiv, Ajantha Mendis, Lasith Malinga, Nuwan Kulasekara, Rangana Herath.



PHOTO: AFP
WHEN NOTHING GOES RIGHT: A disgruntled Pakistan captain Salman Butt (R) complains to the umpire after an appeal for a catch against England batsman Kevin Pietersen, who was earlier dropped thrice, was turned down due to a controversial call of a dead ball on the second day of the second Test at Edgbaston yesterday.

Salman tells mates to clean up their mess

Cricket

AFP, Birmingham

Pakistan captain Salman Butt said his side had to "clean up their own mess" after they were dismissed for just 72 on the first day of the second Test against England at Edgbaston here Friday.

It was the second time in as many innings Pakistan had been bowled out for their lowest-ever total against England after being skittled out for 80 five days earlier as the hosts won the first Test at Trent Bridge by a crushing 354 runs on Sunday to go 1-0 up in this four-match series.

England compounded their opponents' misery by taking advantage of another woeful Pakistan fielding display to be 112 for two, a lead of 40, when bad light forced an early close.

Jonathan Trott, dropped once was 31 not out and Kevin Pietersen, dropped twice, 36 not out.

As happened at Trent Bridge, where James Anderson took a Test match-best 11 wickets for 71 runs, including six for 17 in the second innings, Pakistan collapsed in the face of accurate swing bowling.

Butt, defending his decision to bat first in overcast conditions that Pakistan quicks Mohammad Aamer and

Mohammad Asif would have relished, told reporters. "The idea was to put some runs on the board and let the other side get them."

"But, unfortunately, things didn't go the way we thought. But having created about five chances and not taken them, the match could have been pretty even."

As for the grey, swing-friendly, skies above Edgbaston, Butt said: "It's been like this since we've come here, we haven't had one day with sunshine."

But he said the top-order batsmen had to take responsibility.

"We've been doing this all our lives and we have to clean up our own mess."

Azhar Ali battled hard for a 32-ball nought while opener Imran Farhat faced 24 balls as he too became one of five ducks in the innings.

"I think we've got to give credit to the English bowlers," said Butt. "Those first 20-odd overs, they literally didn't give us anything to hit."

After Trent Bridge, Pakistan ended the international exile of former captain Mohammad Yousuf -- who boasts an impressive Test average of more than 53 and exactly 70 against England.

But he only arrived in England late on Thursday and Butt said it would have been unfair to pick him for this match.

"He's not somebody whose selection is questioned but he arrived at five,

5.30pm Thursday and he hadn't had a (outdoor) net session for the last 15 days because of the monsoons in Pakistan.

"So, after consulting him, the team management decided to let him get in the groove. To put a guy straight in would have been unfair."

As for Pakistan's fallible fielding, summed up when debutant wicketkeeper Zulqarnain Haider dropped Pietersen on 20, having been brought in after the experienced Kamran Akmal's wretched match behind the stumps in Nottingham, Butt said: "It's something hard to contend with."

Meanwhile Broad, who a fortnight ago took a first-class best of eight for 52 at Edgbaston for Nottinghamshire against Warwickshire, was delighted by the discipline shown by England's seam attack.

"We didn't want to fall into a trap here of chasing wickets and suddenly going at four or five an over for the first hour," Broad said.

"We're bowling fantastically well, and we've had slightly cloudy conditions which have suited us."

Broad, the son of former England opener Chris, now an ICC match referee, added: "We've not given them a sniff. For batsmen to get 24, 32-ball noughts it proves as a bowler you're giving them nothing."

Flavia flays Samantha

Tennis

AFP, San Diego

French Open runner-up Samantha Stosur of Australia was ousted from the 700,000-dollar WTA San Diego Open on Friday, losing a quarterfinal 6-4, 6-3 to Italian fifth seed Flavia Pennetta.

Second seed Stosur joined Serbian top seed Jelena Jankovic and Russian third seed Vera Zvonareva on the scrapheap at the 700,000-dollar hardcourt tournament, a tuneup for the US Open that begins on August 30.

Pennetta fired seven aces and blasted 19 winners past Stosur to book a semi-final berth against Svetlana Kuznetsova, who downed US teenager CoCo Vandeweghe 7-5, 6-2.

"It's a good feeling because she's one of the best players," Pennetta said. "She has had an unbelievable year. It's never easy to beat this kind of player."

Kuznetsova, who reached her first semi-final of 2010, said eventually her experience won out over the US youngster, who upset Zvonareva on Thursday night.

"I think I won by experience," Kuznetsova said. "I wasn't playing my best game. I think she was so confident (from Thursday). It took me time to break her up."

In a battle of unseeded players, Daniela

Hantuchova of Slovakia beat Russian Alisa Kleybanova 2-6, 6-4, 6-3. In the semi-finals Hantuchova will face fourth-seeded Agnieszka Radwanska of Poland, who won the last nine games in a 6-2, 6-0 rout of seventh-seeded Israeli Shahar Peer.

While Stosur is one of the tour's top servers, she didn't muster an ace and had five double faults.

"She makes a lot of balls and runs everything down," Stosur said. "She really makes you work for every point you win. Sometimes that can be a little bit frustrating."

Vandeweghe, who hails from the San Diego area, took a 5-2 lead in the first set against Kuznetsova, riding the momentum of her victory the night before.

"I thought early on I was kind of beating her with my pace and the heaviness of the ball," she said.

But after Kuznetsova saved a set point, the Russian went on to win five straight games to take the first set.

She put together a string of four games in the second set to lead 5-1 and sealed the match in the eighth game on her third match point.

"I came in a little bit tired from last night, a little heavy legged," said Vandeweghe, who came through qualifying here but said she has received a wild card to play next week at Cincinnati.

"I had a great first set. She's a two-time Grand Slam champion for a reason."

Laxman ton secures

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lost the first Test, that our bowling was weak and the batsmen were not doing enough," said Dhoni.

"But we proved in this game that there was nothing wrong. Laxman and Tendulkar were outstanding. Their experience helped us to soak in the pressure of a fourth innings chase.

"In the end, it was a very convincing win."

Sri Lankan captain Kumar Sangakkara conceded Laxman took the match away, but rued the lack of support for Randiv and the meagre total of 267 in their second innings.

"Laxman was fantastic and Sachin also played really well,

but it would have helped if someone had backed Randiv," said Sangakkara.

"The guys can be proud of their effort all through the series. In this game we were found wanting with our batting, especially in the second innings.

"But I am happy the way we played in the three Tests. It was a young bowling attack and this series was a good learning experience for them."

India and Sri Lanka will now be joined by New Zealand for a limited-overs tri-series that opens in Dambulla on August 10.

SCORES IN BRIEF

SRI LANKA: First innings 425 (Samaraweera 137 not out, Sangakkara 75, M

Jayawardene 56, Mathews 45, Dilshan 41; Ojha 4-115, Sharma 3-72) and second innings 267 (Samaraweera 83, Mendis 78, Sangakkara 28; Mishra 3-47, Sehwag 3-51, Ojha 3-89)

INDIA: First innings 436 (Sehwag 109, Raina 62, Laxman 56, Mithun 46, Tendulkar 41, Mishra 40; Randiv 4-80, Malinga 3-119) and second innings 258 for 5 (Laxman 103 not out, Tendulkar 54, Raina 41 not out; Randiv 5-82)

Result: India won by 5 wickets and drew the 3-Test Series 1-1.

Man-of-the-match: VVS Laxman.

Man-of-the-series: Virender Sehwag.

Lucky KP

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bowling in helpful, overcast conditions here on Friday.

James Anderson, who took a Test match-best 11 for 71 at Trent Bridge, led England's attack again with four for 20 and he was well-supported by fellow seamers Stuart Broad (four for 38) and Steven Finn (two for 10).

SCORES IN BRIEF

PAKISTAN: First innings 72 (Amin 23, U Akmal 17; Anderson 4-20, S Broad 4-38, Finn 2-10)

ENGLAND: First innings 191 for 3 at Trent (Pietersen 78 not out, Trott 55, Strauss 25; Amin 1-11)

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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57				58				59		

ACROSS

1 Tosses in
5 Trail behind
8 Lone Ranger's concealment
12 Dirt
13 Id counterpart
14 Stratford's river
15 Tryout
17 Motion picture
18 Tending (to)
19 Car shelter
21 Recognized
24 Barracks bed
25 "Why not?"
28 Money
30 Altar affirmative
33 Male turkey
34 Daphnis' love
35 "— Town"
36 Clothing protector
37 Oodles

DOWN

1 Pronto, acronymically
2 Gloomy
3 "Aeneid" queen
4 Stealthily quiet
5 Mainlander's memento
6 Past
7 Amateur-nip prop
8 Large-scale
9 Flying
10 "American Idol" choice
11 Dangling site
16 X rating?
20 Rue the run

22 Vocal come-back?
23 Strauss specialty
25 Gamblers' venue (Abb.)
26 Japanese pond carp
27 Ardent desire for a goal
29 Mediocre
31 Pair
32 Sphere
34 Hint
38 Band-leader Stan
40 Butler's love
42 Pinch
43 Arp's movement
44 "— Man" (Downey movie)
45 Suggestive
47 Pet name
48 Anger
49 Domini lead-in
52 Buck's mate
53 Possess

Solution time: 21 mins.

G	R	A	B	O	F	F	M	A	N	E
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V	O	L	T	A	I	R	E	T	O	N
T	U	T	N	O	U	G	A	T		
S	T	A	L	K	C	Z	A	R		
C	I	T	E	C	A	I	R	E	N	E
A	D	O	D	A	R	E	S	I	M	P
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I'm no puppet: Isaac

Cricket

AFP, Sydney

New Zealander Alan Isaac says he is not a puppet and does not feel like a third-rate choice after his nomination as vice-president of cricket's global governing body, reports said Saturday.

Isaac is Cricket Australia and New Zealand Cricket's nomination behind former Australia Prime Minister John Howard and former New Zealand board chairman John Anderson.

Howard failed to get sufficient backing from the International Cricket Council board for a post which will eventually see the holder become president of the body.

Anderson was beaten by Howard for the original nomination and is now unavailable.

Isaac, the New Zealand Cricket chairman, has a lifetime of sports administration and corporate governance behind him and is seen as having the ability to navigate the culturally and politically diverse landscape of the ICC.

Isaac, 58, denied that he was a third-rate choice or would be a puppet to interests within the ICC.

"I don't feel like second or third pick and if you talk to anyone who knows me, I'm not a puppet, I am my own person," Isaac told The Australian newspaper.

"I'd like to think I'm judged on what I achieve or what I don't achieve in two, three or four years' time."

Isaac said he hoped to improve the standing of the ICC.

"As Haroon (ICC chief executive Haroon Lorgat) said recently, one of the things we all need to do is to improve the reputation of the ICC," Isaac said.

"In the time I've been at the table it does operate in a more effective way than the media would portray it."

"The realities are that decisions which have been made and will be made in the future inevitably won't be met with general acceptance."

"It often depends on what your own personal interests are as to whether you agree with a decision. That just goes with the territory."

Isaac said he was frustrated, but philosophical, about the way Howard was treated by the ICC, through a letter with no reason given and no formal vote taken of his nomination.

The Australian newspaper said while the ICC denies that it is dominated by the Afro-Asian countries of South Africa, Zimbabwe, India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, Isaac agrees it's hard to argue against the perception in the light of Howard's demise.

"I can understand why people would say that and like John Howard it's a little frustrating that countries weren't specific about why they didn't support John," he told the newspaper.

"But we live in a democracy and we have to respect the views of other people. You move on."

Isaac said he hopes his experience as a corporate mediator will help in his new ICC role.

"I've had a bit of experience working with people of different nationalities with different interests and backgrounds," he said.

"I'm not saying that makes me an expert but I've got some experience of recognising that people come at things from different backgrounds."

"Other countries do things a different way and it still works for them so it's about appreciating other people, what they want and how they operate."

Nalbandian closer to ending drought

Tennis

AFP, Washington

Former world number three David Nalbandian, who has missed the past six Grand Slam events with injuries, reached his first ATP semifinal in 18 months on Friday at the Washington Classic.

The 117th-ranked Argentine rallied to out Frenchman Gilles Simon 3-6, 6-2, 6-3 and will play for a spot in Sunday's hardcourt final against Croatian fourth seed Marin Cilic, who beat Serbian Janko Tipsarevic 7-6 (7/4), 6-4.

Nalbandian was sidelined nine months after hip surgery, made a brief return early this year, then missed two months with a sore hamstring before returning in July to help Argentina advance to the Davis Cup semi-finals.

"I feel good," Nalbandian said. "I will just try to keep believing in my game and play the best I can."

The other semi-final pits Belgium's 62nd-ranked Xavier Malisse, who upset Czech top seed Tomas Berdych 6-4, 3-6, 6-2, against Cypriot eighth seed Marcos Baghdatis, who eliminated Spanish third seed Fernando Verdasco 7-6 (7/3), 6-4.

Nalbandian, the 2002 Wimbledon runner-up, has not played in a Grand Slam event since losing in the second round of last year's Australian Open to Taiwan's Lu Yen-Hsun.

The 28-year-old South American, playing his first ATP event since April this week, reached his first semi-final since February of last year at

Buenos Aires. He last won an ATP title the month before that in Sydney but is on a roll now.

"During practice I know I can go far," he said. "Without playing matches, it's tough to know how far you can go."

Both Nalbandian and Simon, who missed nearly three months this year with a right knee injury, sprayed unforced errors throughout the match and five of 12 tie service break in the match came in the last set.

After an early exchange, Nalbandian broke again on his third chance of the sixth game, surrendered his next serve with a forehand beyond long, broke in five points to 5-3 when Simon netted a forehand and then held for the victory.

"In the second set, I started hitting better balls and he went down a little bit," Nalbandian said. "I tried to push it and play more offensive and it worked out."



PHOTO: AFP
David Nalbandian of Argentina serves against Gilles Simon of France during their Washington Classic quarterfinal clash at the William HG FitzGerald Tennis Centre in Washington on Friday.

CRYPTOQUIP

COF CXDF XWH RZSF QWZG
EQBDZFCF AQLV XT X CFXB.
COFG HFENHFH COFG BSTC
XZAXGT TCNEV CQRFQFL.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: EATING MUCH TOO LITTLE FOOD, THE HUNGRY SALAMANDER WAS DEFINITELY DEFICIENT IN NEWT-RITION.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: C equals T