

Botha SA's T20 captain

REUTERS, Johannesburg
Off-spinner Johan Botha has replaced Graeme Smith as South Africa's Twenty20 captain, Cricket South Africa (CSA) announced on Saturday.

Smith announced he was stepping down from that role earlier this week.

Botha, 28, impressed as Proteas skipper after leading South Africa to a 4-1 away one-day international series win against Australia during the 2008/9 season.

"I really enjoyed the captaincy when I stood in for Graeme before and I am proud to be offered the job now. I am looking forward to working with such a special team," Botha said in a statement.

Botha, who has played in three Tests, 57 ODIs and 21 Twenty20 matches, has had a controversial career, having been investigated twice by the International Cricket Council (ICC) for an alleged illegal bowling action.

South Africa's convener of selectors Andrew Hudson said Botha had all the qualities to succeed as captain.

"His appointment is part of the process of refreshing our Twenty20 squad and also deciding whether to follow the route of having different captains for different formats of the game," he said.

Nobleness

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Since the attack, Pakistan has been forced to play home series at neutral venues including matches against Australia and New Zealand.

Pakistan are scheduled to play a 'home' Test series against South Africa in the United Arab Emirates in October.

Sarwar said the ICC and member boards were keen to help Pakistan cricket and most importantly to raise funds for flood victims.

PCB Chairman Ijaz Butt told TV One "on Friday that they had asked several boards including India to play matches to raise money for flood victims."

The worst floods in Pakistan's history have claimed around 1,500 lives, washed away thousands of villages and left millions homeless.

Academy

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"We are well aware of this issue and have already taken initiatives," said Nizamuddin.

The consultancy company, Basat, however claimed that they are yet to hand over the building to the BCB, who are using the establishment based on their own wish.

"Actually we are in a difficult position with this Academy. We are yet to hand them the building but BCB is using it," said engineer Ripon, who is looking after the whole thing in favour of Basat, over phone to The Daily Star.

"We could not pay the full amount of money to the contractors (Desh Builders). You can say BCB is using an incomplete building," he added.

"It will take only seven days to rectify all these problems but I already explained to you where lies the problem with the establishment," said Ripon.

BCB director Gazi Ashraf Hossain, who has been specially assigned to look after the Academy affairs as a chairman, informed that he has a meeting with BCB president AFM Mustafa Kamal today regarding all the Academy issues.

Win Tigers'

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that he would take special care of the bowling department.

"On the other hand we have got a new fielding coach. So I believe things will be different this time," added a confident Mashrafe.

"Jamie also said that the players should have their commitment and it should reflect on the ground. Every player is also advised to develop special skills so that they can surprise the opponents in the World Cup.

"These special skills however will not be applied in the coming two series against New Zealand and Zimbabwe because we will try to perfect it first," he said without elaborating about the special skills.

New fielding coach Julian Fountain also wanted hundred percent effort from the players.

"What he (Julian Fountain) told us was that he will give his hundred percent but it's ultimately the players who should make things happen," informed Mashrafe, who is all set to lead the team in the World Cup.



India captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni leaves the ground after rain suspended his team's training session at the Rangiri Dambulla International Stadium yesterday. India are due to meet hosts Sri Lanka today in the latest match of the Micromax Cup tri-series.

Clijsters beaten, US Open looks cloudy

Tennis

REUTERS, Montreal

An injured Kim Clijsters hobbled to a 2-6, 6-3, 6-2 quarterfinal loss to Vera Zvonareva at the Montreal Cup on Friday, casting doubt on the Belgian's ability to defend her US Open crown.

As Clijsters was being questioned later about her fitness, world number two Caroline Wozniacki -- the player the Belgian beat last year to win the US Open -- was sending a message of her own by blasting her way into the semifinals with a 6-3, 6-2 win over French Open champion Francesca Schiavone of Italy.

The Dane had extra reason to smile after learning that she will likely be seeded number one at the US Open after Serena Williams announced she would sit out the year's final Grand Slam while recovering from foot surgery.

"It's something special to be the first seed at a Grand Slam," Wozniacki told reporters. "But it doesn't really matter for me if I am first seed or second seed."

"It's just a number when you're on the court. I just want to beat every single one of the girls that are in my way, that will be my goal."

Wozniacki will next face in-form Russian Svetlana Kuznetsova, who booked her semifinal spot with a ruthless 6-1-6-3 win over China's Zheng Jie.

The first Russian woman to win the US Open, Kuznetsova is also hitting her stride on the North American hardcourts, claiming her 13th career title in San Diego two weeks ago.

The other semifinal will pit Wimbledon finalist Zvonareva against Victoria Azarenka of Belarus, who moved on with a 6-2 7-6 win over Frenchwoman Marion Bartoli.

Zvonareva had looked headed for the exit rather than the semifinals when Clijsters broke the eighth-seeded Russian at the first opportunity on her way easily taking the opening set.

But Clijsters hurt her hip in the second set and Zvonareva pounced, sweeping through nine straight games en route to her second victory over the Belgian in seven career matches.

Clijsters later played down the injury she described as tightness in her left hip, saying she will undergo an MRI next week to make sure it is nothing serious.

The Belgian made it clear she intends to be at Flushing Meadows to defend her title.

"Don't worry, there's no doubt in my mind [I will be at the US Open]," Clijsters told reporters. "Maybe I will have to take precautions but a lot of girls these days play with tape to protect themselves."

"It doesn't mean you can't compete." Despite being unable to chase down shots, the battling Belgian refused to retire and rallied from 5-0 down in the third before Zvonareva finished her off with a service break.

Pakistan make heavy

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Butt took three fours from a Broad over and two from Steven Finn, forcing Andrew Strauss to rotate his fast men from the Pavilion end.

Yousuf, playing his first Test since he was banned indefinitely after leading Pakistan on a spectacularly unsuccessful tour of Australia this year, was again an assured and elegant presence.

Yousuf, who scored 56 in the first innings, showed his class with a square drive for four off Broad and an elegant late cut to the boundary off Swann.

The most unpredictable and possibly the most talented team in the world have been condemned to play all their internationals abroad since the deadly militant attack on the Sri Lanka team bus in Lahore in March last year.

Six players were banned or fined after the Australia tour and to compound their misery Pakistan's fielding was abject in the first two Tests against England.

The fielding was much improved at The Oval with wicketkeeper Kamran Akmal, who has been dropped twice this year, taking eight catches.

But the victory was set up on Friday by Pakistan's two new talented international bowlers.

Left-armer Mohammad Aamer, who finished on Saturday with his best test figures of five for 52, made the ball reverse swing at high pace from around the wicket.

At the other end Saeed Ajmal bamboozled the England batsmen, who was unable to distinguish his doosra, Urdu for "the other one" which leaves the right-hander, from his off-spinner.

The upshot was six wickets for 26 runs and plenty to think about for an England side whose next task after Lord's is to defend the Ashes in Australia.

SCORES IN BRIEF
ENGLAND: First innings 233 (Prior 84 not out; Riaz 5-63, Asif 3-68)

PAKISTAN: First innings 308 (Ali 92 not out; Yousuf 56; Swann 4-68)

ENGLAND: Second innings 222 (Cook 110, Trott 36, Pietersen 23, Aamer 5-52, Ajmal 4-71)

PAKISTAN: Second innings 148 for 6 (Butt 48, Farhat 33, Yousuf 33, Umar 16 not out; Swann 3-50, Anderson 2-39)

Result: Pakistan won by four wickets.

Man-of-the-series: Mohammad Aamer.
Umpires: Steve Davis and Tony Hill.

Naved hearing adjourned

AFP, Lahore

A tribunal has adjourned an appeal by allrounder Navedul Hasan against a one-year ban and heavy fine, an official said Saturday.

Naved was one of seven Pakistani players who were handed bans and fines on March 10 following an inquiry into team defeats in Australia and discipline breaches on earlier tours of New Zealand and the United Arab Emirates.

Pakistan lost all three Tests, five one-day internationals and a Twenty20 match on the tour of Australia between December and February.

Former captains Younus Khan and Mohammad Yousuf were banned indefinitely "over infighting which brought the team down", while Shoaib Malik and Naved were banned for one year and fined two million rupees (24,000 dollars).

Shahid Afridi, Kamran Akmal and Umer Akmal were also fined heavily.

"The tribunal of Justice Irfan Qadir heard the appeal and after Naved's request to meet the PCB chairman the proceedings were adjourned for September 27, while Naved is given a meeting with the PCB chairman on September 7," PCB legal adviser Talib Rizvi told AFP.

'NO-BALL INCIDENT MADE INDIANS MORE AGGRESSIVE'

2nd Indo-SL tie today

Cricket

PTI, Dambulla

India captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni on Saturday conceded that the no-ball controversy in the last Micromax Cup tri-series match against Sri Lanka has turned his players into a more aggressive lot but the team will take care not to cross the line.

"That no ball incident really has pushed us to be more aggressive. But there is a limit to be aggressive on the field. We don't really want to cross that boundary though we will be as aggressive as possible on the field," Dhoni told reporters ahead of India's penultimate league match against Sri Lanka here on Sunday.

"Of course, whatever happened was bad. It is better off to just ignore the incident. It is important to be focused and that is what we will do on the field. We will just forget what happened in the last game and hope we come out winners in the next game," he said when asked whether the incident will change the course of India's rivalry with Sri Lanka.

Dashing batsman Yuvraj Singh had to sit out of the controversial match on August 16 because of dengue but Dhoni said all the players are available for Sunday's match.

"Everyone is available. There is no issue about fitness as of now. Hopefully, the whole squad will be available for selection," he said clearing the air on Yuvraj's availability.

The Indian captain said it was at times difficult for the players to concentrate on the game because of the weather conditions here but they will have to maintain focus all the time.

"When you get up in the morning you have to be prepared for the game irrespective of the weather condition because all of a sudden you may find yourself in a position where you are not really prepared for the game and the game happens. It may be a 20-over game. So it is important to be focused and do whatever you can to be prepared for the game."

"If the game doesn't happen, it doesn't happen. It is important to be spot on throughout and it goes on for two days because you have a reserve day at the same time. So we will be prepared for it and we will just hope the game happens tomorrow [Sunday]," he said.

Dhoni was happy about the schedule of the tournament and said the players got enough time to rest in between matches which they have not got for a long time.

"In a way it is good for us. We have played throughout the year and hardly get an opportunity to get some time off. This was one of those tournaments where we got time between our games and this is my fourth visit to Sri Lanka and frankly speaking I have never been out of the hotel," Dhoni said.

"So this gave me time to see what Sri Lanka is all about."

Of course, it breaks the momentum a bit. But till now it has been good for us. Whenever we have turned up the intensity has been good on the field. It has helped us so far," Dhoni said.

Dhoni said under the circumstances with weather playing a factor, the bonus point India got against Sri Lanka in their last game could come in handy.

The Indian captain has a poor record as far as winning the toss is concerned and he indicated he would like to bat if the coin falls in his favour on Sunday.

"I will be practising with you," Dhoni said turning to team manager Ranjib Biswal when reminded about his poor record in toss.

Nadal bites the dust

Tennis

REUTERS, Mason

World number one Rafael Nadal fell to Cyprus's Marco Baghdatis 6-4, 4-6, 6-4 in the quarterfinals of the Cincinnati Masters Friday as three of the top four seeds lost out.

Britain's Andy Murray and Serbian Novak Djokovic both suffered defeats to American opponents with Mardy Fish and Andy Roddick advancing to meet each other Saturday.

The only member of the top four to progress was third-seed Roger Federer, who met a confident Baghdatis for a spot in Sunday's final after defeating Russian Nikolay Davydenko 6-4, 7-5.

Nadal was well below his best against an inspired Baghdatis, whose big serve was on full power -- he blasted 18 aces while the Spaniard could manage just four.

The match turned decisively in favour of the Cypriot, who had lost all six previous meetings with Nadal when the Spaniard double-faulted at break point with the game at 4-4 in the third.

It was a mistake the Nadal described as "criminal" and the 20th ranked Baghdatis served out for the win, giving himself a major confi-

dence boost ahead of the US Open, which begins on August 30.

"I'm playing good; I'm feeling happy on court. I'm out of injuries. It's nice when you wake up and you don't have pain somewhere," said the Cypriot, beaten finalist in Washington earlier this month.

An All-American semifinal is a timely boost for the game in the U.S which is currently without a top ten male player -- although Roddick's win assures he is back to at least ninth in next week's rankings.

Roddick and Fish are close friends who, since their high school days, have spent many hours together practicing.

"There won't be many secrets that's for sure," Roddick said after beating third-ranked Serb Djokovic 6-4, 7-5, his booming serve looking back to its best.

"We know each other probably better than any other two guys on the tour," added Roddick, who has been struggling for fitness and recently revealed he has been hampered by mononucleosis.

But, after his win over fifth-ranked Swede Robin Soderling Thursday and his confident display against Djokovic, the Texan is looking in good shape for the US Open.

"Once you decide you are playing you forfeit any excuses," Roddick said when asked about his health.

Fish took advantage of an exhausted

world number four Murray, who wilted in 100-degree heat (38 Celsius) and lost 6-7, 6-1, 7-6 to the unseeded American.

Fish, ranked 36th in the world, has now beaten the Briton in three successive meetings following victories in Miami and at Queen's Club, London.

Fourth seed Murray won the opening set tiebreak despite producing his first double-fault at 5-5 but the tired Scot then struggled in a one-sided second set.

Both players held serve throughout the decider and Fish emerged victorious against a frustrated Murray who, after losing a rally on the penultimate point, thrashed the ball out of the stadium.

Federer, who had a walkover in the third-round after having had his opponent retire in the first set of his second-round match, was pleased to have quickly adjusted to the slick surface at Cincinnati and book his place in the last four.

"I wondered if I had enough to play on these kind of courts in a match moment," Federer told reporters. "I was really hoping to get a decent match in today, play solid, and come through and then feel like I am really in the tournament."

"Because before it didn't really feel that way. So there's a sense of relief from my side. Right off the bat kind of beating a top 10 player is not so easy, you know."

Rach puts pen to paper

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But before the main assignment, Rach will be taking 18 of his pupils selected from the 29-member preliminary squad to Germany to play in the second division as he sees it as a great opportunity to hone their skills and learn from the European style.

"I want to take the players to Germany, because I think there is a huge gulf between European and Asian teams. Players can learn a lot from playing in Germany."

The coach also refuted claims in the local media about payment issues and welfare of the players during

their Europe tour last year.

"I never promised any monetary payments for the players. No other Asian player plays in the German or Dutch leagues, why would they take players from Bangladesh and pay them. They will be provided with food, accommodation, plane fare and some pocket money which was also the case last time. Playing there itself will be a great experience for the players."

However, the coach promised better management of the players this time, as most of the players will be based in the same city. 14 players will be with the club STC Bonne from

which 10 will be taken in the team. The other four will be playing in Austria. All 18 of the players will be having 2 week-end days of practice together while during the weekdays they will play for the clubs.

There will be an experienced fitness coach Klaus Brosseus who will work on the fitness of the players.

The touring party will return in the middle of October to join the camp for the Asian Games while the remaining eleven players will stay home and follow the schedules prepared by Rach during this time.

A 16-member final squad

will take part in the Asian games where Bangladesh have been drawn in Pool B along with Pakistan, India, Japan and Hong Kong in the Asian Games.

Anvir Adil Khan, member of BHF and league committee chairman and MR Manjur, manager of the team for the Asian Games were also present among others at the agreement signing ceremony.

PLAYERS SELECTED FOR TOUR

Zahid, Russel, Biplob, Chayon Pintu, Taposh, Turjo, Jimmy, Nannu, Niloy, Rana, Mimo, Krishna, Habul, Prince, Feroz, Suman, Sujan.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

27 Lennon's lady
4 First name of 8-Down
7 Hemingway sobriquet
8 Gyro holders
10 Invigorant
11 Morals
13 Arranges to win, maybe
16 Last Greek consonant
17 Procrastinator's reply
18 Siesta
19 Silithery
20 Some paintings
21 Mesa — National Park
23 "Odyssey" sorceress
25 Philbin's co-host
26 Family member

DOWN

1 Porch
2 Grand story
3 Stopped the ball carrier
4 Church donation
5 Different
6 Hotel employee
7 Cook-ware
8 Heart-breakers' lead
9 Picturesque
10 Recipe meas.
12 Do, re, mi, fa, sol, la, ti, do
14 Bargain event
15 Some GI duties
19 Historic time
20 Scrap
21 Tarzan's trans-ports
22 Geological periods
23 Adorable
24 Briefly
25 Scepter
26 Potok's "My Name Is — Lev"
28 Wicker willow
29 Say
30 Plaintive poem
31 Pond organism
32 Can. neighbor
34 Charlie Brown's nemesis, at times
35 Eastern potentate (Var.)

Solution time: 21 mins.

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CRYPTOQUIP

HBQTGDD CPJ'O GUVGBQ QP
YXKO NHVVXWC ORGWXKA
XK H YTGKBN RXXKG
TGAXPK: STXAXQQG SPTOGHJU.

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: BECAUSE THE PHARMACY WAS FRESH OUT OF THAT MEDICATION, WOULD YOU SAY IT WAS IN-DISPENSABLE?

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: P equals O