

Richest sportsmen in Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe's cricketers are the highest paid sportspersons in the country, claims a newspaper report. Zimbabwe Cricket has put in place a graded payment structure for domestic cricketers. Top cricketers are in Grade X, and receive US\$5,000 a month, those in Grade A US\$3,500, Grade B US\$2,000 and Grade C US\$1,500. At the bottom is the Rookie Grade, on which cricketers are paid a retainer fee of US\$300. The story names Gavin Ewing, Terry Duffin and Charles Coventry as examples of Tuskers players in Grade X, and also suggests that Mountaineers offloaded Tatenda Taibu and Stuart Matsikenyeri "in order to relieve the franchise's huge wage bill".



Crying for elections

ANISUR RAHMAN

Half of the national sporting federations and associations are at present being run by ad-hoc committees, giving a strong impression that they are going back to the culture of interim administrations.

After assuming power in 1996, the then Awami League government broke the tradition of ad-hocism in the sports arena to set examples at the different federations through holding elections, a way to bring democracy to the national organizations. The same party have returned to power after seven years and although they have spent almost two years, they haven't yet taken any initiatives to bring back a sense of accountability to these sporting bodies, as 21 out of the 41 federations and associations are at present being run by ad-hoc committees.

Following the end of different federation tenures, the National Sport Council, sports regulatory body in the country, has formed ad-hoc committees to run tennis, kabaddi, wrestling, wushu, badminton, gymnastic, chess, cycling, rowing, bodybuilding, carom, kho kho and handball. Apart from the mainstream disciplines, squash, fencing, billiard, bridge, rugby, kites, marshal arts and baseball are also being conducted by interim committees for years, considering less activities of those federations and associations.

Besides, taekwondo and karate are on the verge of getting ad-hoc committees as both federations already have expired tenures while federations like cricket, football, hockey, shooting, swimming, athletic, weightlifting, table tennis, basketball, volleyball and boxing are being managed by the elected committees. Organisers, though, have often criticised that those elected bodies came into power through interference from certain quarters during the caretaker government.

In its circulations, the NSC had asked the ad-hoc committees to take proper initiatives to hold elections immediately, though the NSC themselves ignored the election initiatives taken by a couple of elected committees earlier.

According to the statements from former general secretaries of Bangladesh Badminton

Federation and Bangladesh Kabaddi Federation, both federations completed all their tasks in a bid to hold elections, but the NSC had formed ad-hoc committees rather than revealing the election schedule.

"Of 78 councilors, some 42 appealed to NSC to hold an election but they haven't responded. Still we are waiting for their response, but it seems to us that there is no chance of holding election though the sports minister told us that he would look into the matter," said former general secretary of Bangladesh Kabaddi Federation Nazrul Islam.

"Though we took all initiatives to hold the election, the NSC delayed the process citing the SA Games at home early this year and finally they revealed an ad-hoc committee," said former general secretary of Bangladesh Badminton Federation Jobaidur Rahman Rana, adding that all ad-hoc committees after three months are illegal.

Both Rana and Nazrul slammed the NSC for not mentioning the timeframe of the ad-hoc committees and those committees have been unnecessary taken time to hold elections.

General secretaries of ad-hoc committees of different federations are also not against holding polls and they are waiting for the green signal from the government. And they want to amend their respective federations' constitutions to ensure the inclusion of the real organisers in the elected committees.

"We are yet to get any signal and I think the elections of all federations will be held simultaneously," said Mokaddesh Ali, who was appointed ad-hoc committee's general secretary of the chess federation last September.

He also said that they have only formed a committee in a bid to amend the constitution.

"We feel no pressure to hold the election as we have been not asked to do so," said Monir Hossain, who was made general secretary of the kabaddi federation last December. "You can't be sure of democracy in the committee if it is elected through poll," he added.

"There is weakness in sports-related laws and I think the government should first modify those. But there is no alternative to elections

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Tamim to be cautioned

SPORTS REPORTER

Opener Tamim Iqbal is going to receive a cautionary letter from the Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) for showing indecent behaviour against a board decision.

The young batsman had vehemently reacted when he learned that he has to sit in the economy class for the Australia trip and had been demanding for business class. The dashing left-hander reportedly tore the visa form in front of a BCB employee but later, he agreed to go as per the board's arrangements.

"The cricket operations committee has been asked to take proper action on this matter. We can't overlook it because

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First Division football

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Manikganj

Manikganj City Club thrashed Dragon Sporting Club 5-0 in the Hafijul Islam Khan Uttu Smriti First Division football league at the Shaheed Miraz-Tapan stadium in Manikganj yesterday.

Gafur scored two goals while Touhid, Nasir and Swapan struck one apiece for City Club, who took a slim advantage in the first half before adding four more goals in the second.

This victory raises City Club 10 points from four matches while Dragon SC remained at five points from as many matches.

Inter get tough group

Real up against Milan

AFP, Monaco

The Champions League group stage draw held here Thursday pitted titleholders Inter Milan against Tottenham with Real Madrid, now coached by Inter's former boss Jose Mourinho, facing AC Milan.

Inter, now in the care of former Liverpool manager Rafael Benitez, also have German side Werder Bremen and Dutch champions FC Twente for company in Group A along with Spurs, making their debut in the world's most lucrative club competition.

Inter president Massimo Moratti was relieved not to have been paired with nine-time winners Real Madrid.

"It's a very tough group with no weak teams," he told the club's official website.

"It's a balanced group and we have to get off to a good start. I am happy that we avoided Real Madrid. I don't know whether it would have been better to face them now or later, and maybe I thought that we were going to get them, but we didn't."

Werder Bremen's director of sport Klaus Allofs admitted Werder Bremen face an uphill task.

"This is a tough group. Inter are the clear favourites, but we are ninth in the UEFA rankings and we want to prove ourselves and finish second in the group."

Group B features last season's semi-finalists Lyon, Schalke, Benfica and Hapoel Tel Aviv.

Three-time European champions Manchester United have a trip across the border to play Scottish giants Rangers, with Spanish outfit Valencia and Bursaspor of Turkey completing Group C.

United and Rangers were drawn together at the same stage in 2003/2004 with United winning 3-0 at home and 1-0 at Ibrox.

UEFA CHAMPIONS LEAGUE 2010/11 GROUP STAGE DRAW

GROUP A	GROUP E
Inter Milan (Italy)	Bayern Munich (Germany)
Werder Bremen (Germany)	AS Roma (Italy)
Tottenham Hotspur (England)	Basel (Switzerland)
Twente Enschede (Netherlands)	CFR Cluj (Romania)
GROUP B	GROUP F
Olympique Lyon (France)	Chelsea (England)
Benfica (Portugal)	Olympique Marseille (France)
Schalke 04 (Germany)	Spartak Moscow (Russia)
Hapoel Tel-Aviv (Israel)	Zilina (Slovakia)
GROUP C	GROUP G
Manchester United (England)	AC Milan (Italy)
Valencia (Spain)	Real Madrid (Spain)
Rangers (Scotland)	Ajax Amsterdam (Netherlands)
Bursaspor (Turkey)	Auxerre (France)
GROUP D	GROUP H
Barcelona (Spain)	Arsenal (England)
Panathinaikos (Greece)	Shakhtar Donetsk (Ukraine)
FC Copenhagen (Denmark)	Braga (Portugal)
Rubin Kazan (Russia)	Partizan Belgrade (Serbia)

Sources: www.uefa.com Graphic: Brice Hall/Fabian Chan REUTERS

The 2009 winners Barcelona, one of eight top seeds, were thrown into Group D with Greek outfit Panathinaikos, FC Copenhagen, and Russian league winners Rubin Kazan.

Bayern Munich, last season's beaten finalists at Mourinho's new home, the Bernabeu stadium, will have to extricate themselves from Group E where they face Roma, Basel and CFR Cluj.

Bayern coach Louis van Gaal admitted he was relieved at the relatively kind draw.

"It could have been much worse. But we also need to address this group with plenty of concentration," said the Dutchman, who was above all delighted to have been "spared the very long flights".

Chelsea, defeated by United in the Moscow final in 2008, are in Group F with Marseille, the only French team to lift the trophy, Spartak Moscow and Slovakian side Zilina.

Group G looks the toughest of all with three former winners, Real, AC Milan and Ajax.

Real and AC Milan are facing each other at this stage of the competition for the second season in a row.

Completing the cast list for this mini-league are surprise package from France, Auxerre.

The road to the 2011 final at the new Wembley stadium starts next month with four English Premier League sides

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SIX STAR AAMER: Pakistan pacer Mohammad Aamer celebrates after taking one of his six hauls on the second day of the fourth and final Test against England at Lord's yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

India eye revenge

Tri-Series final today

Cricket

AGENCIES

India would look to avenge the league-stage humiliation and clinch their second successive ODI trophy on Sri Lankan soil when they take on the hosts in what promises to be a high-voltage summit clash of the cricket tri-series here today.

Both teams find themselves face to face in a final clash for the second time in just over a month after Kumar Sangakkara's men finished on the losing side in the Asia Cup finals in June.

The ongoing tri-series, however, has been a lot more dramatic than the Asia Cup both on and off field. The third team in fray, New Zealand, is out of the equation after India handed it a 105-run thrashing in the last league match of the series.

Befitting the drama that has unfolded in the past two weeks, including the now infamous no-ball that Suraj Randiv bowled to deny Virender Sehwag a hundred, India and Sri Lanka have made the finals and it is hard to pick a winner in conditions where the toss of the coin has been of decisive significance.

The 105-run triumph over New Zealand may make it seem that India are in destructive form. But it was Sehwag's individual brilliance that made the Indians sail through the depleted but spirited Kiwis.

Indian skipper Mahendra Singh Dhoni has admitted that barring Sehwag all batsmen are struggling on the tricky pitches here and mastering the conditions would be the biggest challenge for both teams in the match which might also have some tense moments given the build-up so far.

Randiv's deliberate no-ball

incident has added some zing to the rivalry between the two sides, whose way-too-often face-offs were becoming dull.

Words have been exchanged in the pre-match and post-match press conferences but in the end, it will boil down to the cricket played on the pitch and that's where the Lankans came out trumps in the league encounter.

Thisara Perera decimated the Indian batting with five wickets and left Dhoni's men to deal with the humiliation of their worst-ever defeat in terms of number of balls left.

To their credit, the Indians bounced back well in the do-or-die match against the Kiwis but that could not hide their batting frailties, most significantly the lack of application by the youngsters.

In the absence of senior batsmen such as Sachin Tendulkar and Gautam

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Aamer rattles England

Cricket

AFP, London

Mohammad Aamer took career-best figures of six wickets for 47 runs but England's Jonathan Trott held firm against Pakistan on the second day of the fourth and final Test at Lord's here on Friday.

England were 185 for seven at tea -- having been 47 for five -- after the 18-year-old Aamer, in his 14th match at this level, had become the youngest bowler to take 50 Test wickets.

Their total owed much to Trott's well-made 77 not out during an innings where most of the England top-order failed to cope with the swinging ball.

Trott found a useful ally in Stuart Broad (46 not out). England's eighth-wicket pair had so far added an unbroken 83, with Broad, who bats left-handed, driving stylishly through the offside and hooking Aamer for six.

Left-arm quick Aamer transformed England's overnight 39 for one into 47 for five with a dramatic spell of four wickets for no runs in eight balls.

That haul saw him rip through England's middle-order, with Kevin Pietersen, Paul Collingwood and Eoin Morgan -- the Nos 4, 5 and 6 respectively -- all dismissed by Aamer for nought.

England were 97 for five at lunch but soon afterwards they were 102 for seven as Aamer took two wickets for no runs in three balls.

Matt Prior, who helped Trott add 55 for the sixth wicket was caught behind by Kamran Akmal for 22 and Graeme Swann well held low in the gully by Azhar Ali for the fourth duck of the innings.

Nevertheless, Trott retained his composure to compile a 90-ball fifty with seven fours.

Pakistan, looking to square the series at 2-2 after victory at The Oval last week, did not have long to wait for a breakthrough on Friday after bad weather meant only 12.3 overs were possible on Thursday.

Aamer squared up Oval centurion Alastair Cook off Friday's third ball and the left-handed opener was caught behind for 10.

Star batsman Pietersen came in having revealed Thursday how his confidence had been "hammered" by his failure to score a Test century in 25 innings.

That sequence though was extended to 26 by a first ball nought.

Pietersen attempted to drive a ball angled across him by Aamer, and well wide of off-stump, but succeeded only in edging to wicketkeeper Kamran Akmal.

Overcast conditions were aiding swing bowling but Aamer's success was primarily down to his own skill and England's inability to "line him up".

Collingwood survived a hat-trick but could do nothing about a full-length, late inswinger that rapped him on the pad.

Billy Bowden rejected Pakistan's lbw appeal.

But Pakistan sought a referral from the Decision Review System (DRS) and, with replays indicating no inside edge, the New Zealand umpire reversed his verdict to leave England 39 for four.

SCORES IN BRIEF

ENGLAND: First innings 185 for 7 at tea (Strauss 13, Cook 10, Broad 46 not out, Trott 77 not out; Aamer 6-47)

PAKISTAN: Farhat, Hameed, Butt, Yousuf, Ali, U Akmal, K Akmal, Aamer, Riaz, Ajmal, Asif Toss: Pakistan. Umpires: Billy Bowden and Tony Hill.



India captain Mahendra Singh Dhoni (C) plays football with teammates Virat Kohli (R) and Praveen Kumar during a practice session at the Rangiri Dambulla International Cricket Stadium yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

SPORTS POLL
TODAY'S QUESTION
 Can Manchester City finish in the top three of the EPL?
 Visit the sports page of www.thedailystar.net to cast vote
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What to WATCH

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 Sri Lanka v India
 Tri-Series Final
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 England v Pakistan
 Fourth Test, Day Three
 Live from 4:00pm
ESPN
 English Premiership
 Blackburn v Arsenal
 Live from 5:40pm
 Chelsea v Stoke City
 Live from 7:55pm
 Man United v West Ham
 Live from 10:25pm
STAR Sports
 English Premiership
 Blackpool v Fulham
 Live from 7:55pm
ZEE Sports
 Primera Liga
 Hercules v Bilbao
 Live from 11:00pm