

Manzur joins

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in the early eighties and has had a distinguished club and zonal cricket career spanning two decades.

"It was nice to meet with old friends again," Manzur said with a smile and added that he has a number of friends both in Abahani and Mohammedan.

Manzur is an engineering graduate of the Bangladesh University of Engineering & Technology (BUET) and had completed his MBA from the Institute of Business Administration (IBA) of Dhaka University. He is also an IT specialist.

Manzur, the elder brother of former national wicketkeeper turned computer analyst Nasir Ahmed Nasu, is BCB's third CEO after Zimbabwean Macky Dudhia and Mahmudur Rahman.

Rubic sets

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Rubic's liking of Mourinho is reflected in his philosophy of building a strong defensive block as he promises to present good football with a balanced formation of 4-2-3-1.

"I prefer fast and speedy football, running for the ninety minutes. I emphasise on the technical aspects," Rubic said. "I like open play too if the opposition are not that strong. When the opposition is superior, you have to switch tactically to a defensive mode."

The former assistant coach of Croatia was also a member of the World Star XI that played a benefit match for Gabriel Batistuta alongside greats such as Claudio Tafari, Joao Pinto and Hugo Sanchez in Florence in 1995.

The left-back, Rubic, also played an international match for Croatia against Romania after representing Yugoslavia at the Under-16 and Under-18 levels.

After meeting the press, the coach travelled to the Bangladesh Krira Shikha Protisthan (BKSP) where he was introduced to the national team's players. He also received a first hand introduction to his charges as they divided into two teams and played a practice match.

Rubic is scheduled to sit with the local coaching staff today to discuss about the players and is supposed to take charge of the national side after the four-day Eid vacation that began yesterday and will end on September 13.

Americans

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there will be no US player in the men's singles quarterfinals for the second year in a row.

Last year was the first time that had happened in the Open era dating back to 1968.

The 20th-seeded Wawrinka joins Roger Federer in the last eight, making it the first time two Swiss players have reached the quarterfinals of a Grand Slam in the Open era.

The match, played in tough, windy conditions, lasted four hours 28 minutes.

"I think for sure the crowd was hoping that he can stay in the tournament. But if you watch the match they were very fair. For me it was great to play that kind of match with that crowd," the 25-year-old Wawrinka said after reaching his first Grand Slam quarterfinal.

His opponent for a place in the semifinals will be 12th-seeded Russian Mikhail Youzhny, who defeated Tommy Robredo of Spain 7-5, 6-2, 4-6, 6-4.

BFF to invite

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Bangladesh Police, BKSP and three top teams of the Senior Division Football League will be invited to the tournament, which will follow two phases of qualifying and finals.

Abahani, Mohammedan, Sheikh Russel KC, Feni Soccer Club, top four teams of the Bangladesh League, will join the four qualifiers after playing a 16-team qualification.

"The formation of the qualification will depend on the response of the invited teams as the lower eight teams of the professional football league will also join in the qualification," said Bangladesh Football Federation general secretary Al Musabbir Sadi after the meeting.

Replying to a query, he said that newcomers Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club would be counted as one team of eight Bangladesh League teams apart from Abahani, Mohammedan, Sheikh Russel and Feni Soccer Club.

Tigers go

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announcement before the vacation but it was delayed due to unavailability of BCB high-ups.

The itinerary is yet to be released but New Zealand is likely to arrive in Dhaka on September 29.

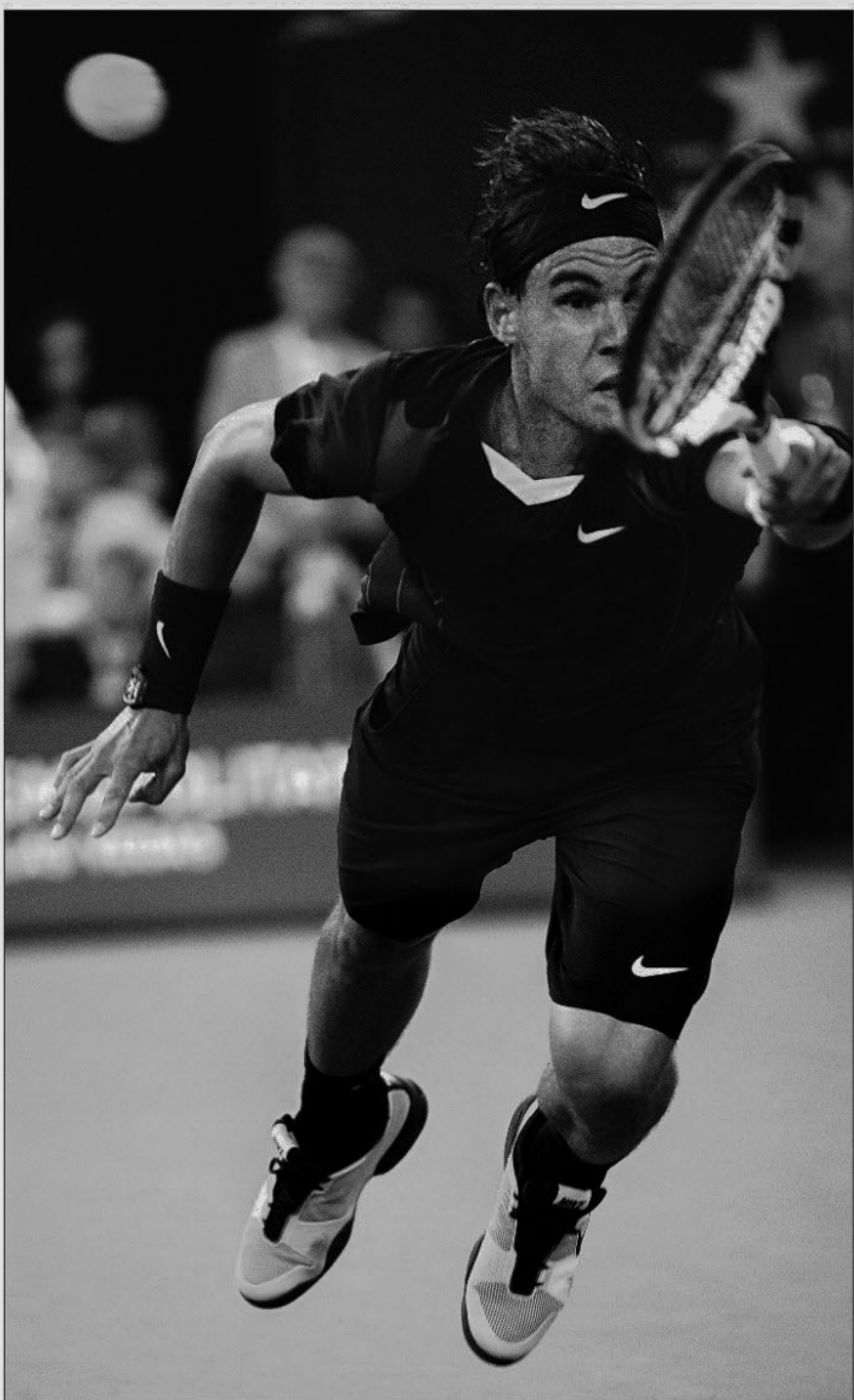


PHOTO: AFP

World number one Spaniard Rafael Nadal stretches to return the ball against compatriot Feliciano Lopez during their US Open fourth round match at Flushing Meadows on Tuesday.

Afridi aware of his task



AFP, Cardiff

Pakistan one-day captain Shahid Afridi admitted he had a job on his hands to raise the morale of his scandal-hit side after they were bowled out for just 89 by England in a thumping Twenty20 loss.

Pakistan were dismissed for their lowest Twenty20 score in 40 matches at this level at Sophia Gardens here on Tuesday as England won by six wickets to wrap up a 2-0 series win with a mammoth 36 balls to spare.

World Twenty20 champions England, who completed a 3-1 Test series win over Pakistan last month, will now look for fresh success when the teams meet in the first of five one-day internationals at Chester-le-Street, northeast England, on Friday.

"We were very bad, inexperienced and immature from my side and from all the batsmen," Afridi told reporters. "I think we played very bad cricket."

"It will be a big challenge to compete in the one-dayers, but we have some time," he added.

"Me, my coach (Waqar Younis) and the team, we will sit together and talk."

"Pakistan's tour has been overshadowed by a 'spot-fixing' scandal that has seen Test captain Salman Butt and bowlers Mohammad Aamer and Mohammad Asif all suspended by the International Cricket Council after allegedly conspiring to deliberately bowl no-balls during last month's fourth Test at Lord's."

But Afridi said off-field problems could not account for Pakistan's form.

"We are coming through a bad situation, but as professionals we should take that from our mind and focus on our cricket."

"At this stage I know our morale is very down. It is down day by day, and game by game. But one victory and it will be very high."

"I just want one victory. I'm not letting my team down like this, not in the one-dayers," Afridi added.

But he conceded the loss of the suspended trio had hit Pakistan hard.

"I made some plans as a captain, I knew Salman Butt was my opener and key player, and Asif and Aamer."

"Everything has changed as a captain for me, but inshallah (God willing) I will bring my team up."

Victory, built on seamer Tim Bresnan's man-of-the-match winning return of three wickets for 10 runs in 3.4 overs, saw England to a seventh straight Twenty20 success -- equalling the record for consecutive international victories in this format shared by South Africa and Pakistan.

"In this form of the game it can be tough to win consecutively," said England Twenty20 captain Paul Collingwood.

"It just takes one performance from the opposition to take it away from you."

"To have that 'World Cup', you can have added pressure on you as well."

"But the way we've played over the last two games, the boys are enjoying that added pressure," added Collingwood, who led England to a five-wicket win over Pakistan here on Sunday.

"They tried to come hard at us today (Tuesday) -- you could sense that was their approach -- but we kept taking wickets and really applying the pressure."

ICC's notice to Kamran

ANI, Melbourne

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has sent an official notice to Pakistan wicketkeeper Kamran Akmal telling him that is under investigation for allegedly fixing the Sydney Test.

"Only months after clearing the Pakistan team of any wrongdoing in relation to the controversial Test, the ICC has written to Kamran to advise him he is now in their cross-hairs for the Sydney debacle," a report in the 'Courier Mail' said.

Kamran had dropped four catches in the Sydney Test where Australia won the match from a losing position, raising doubts of match-fixing.

The ICC then investigated the matter and gave a clean chit to him.

However, the world governing body was left red-faced after Pakistan opener Yasir Hameed reportedly claimed that the SCG Test was rigged and players involved in the corruption had pocketed USD 3 million for the staged loss.

"ICC investigators have reopened the SCG case and fingered Kamran as their primary suspect. But investigations aren't moving at a fast pace, with the NSW Fraud Squad yesterday revealing they had received no contact from Scotland Yard detectives or the ICC," the report said.

Even as the investigators probe the SCG Test, Australian wicketkeeping great Ian Healy said Kamran could not have dropped those catches deliberately.

"You couldn't drop those on purpose the way he was," he said.

Argentina

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Argentine goalkeeper Sergio Romero saw another shot come back off the woodwork from substitute Santiago Cazorla after 75 minutes and he made a fine save from Pedro Hernandez three minutes later.

But he was well beaten after 84 minutes when substitute Fernando Lorente spun and fired home from close range.

That counter sparked a late flurry of activity from the home side and a fourth goal from Agiero one minute into injury time, heading home a cross from Gabriel Heinze.

Argentina coach Batista said that the emphatic win proved that Argentina had put the crushing loss to Germany behind them.

"We were sent packing from South Africa, but we could just as well have won the World Cup," he said.

"If Spain this evening did not look like the side that won the World Cup, then the way Argentina played had a lot to do with that."

"We played the way we wanted to play."

Del Bosque said that there was no shame for Spain in losing to Argentina.

"We lost with dignity and never gave up trying," he said.

"Argentina were very fast up front, they move well and it was normal that they controlled the game. They hardly left us any room to play in."

Venus, Kim to clash

AFP, New York



Two-time champions Kim Clijsters and Venus Williams booked a US Open semifinal showdown with hard-fought victories on Tuesday, struggling in windy conditions to overcome their toughest foes yet.

Defending champion Clijsters, trying to become the first winner to repeat since Williams in 2001, struggled but stretched her Flushing Meadows win streak to 19 matches by ousting Australian fifth seed Samantha Stosur 6-4, 5-7, 6-3.

"I didn't play a good match but I was able to win it," Clijsters said. "Even after the match I was like, 'How did I win this?' Next match everything will have to be a lot better."

US third seed Williams, a seven-time Grand Slam champion who has not won a US Open crown since completing her back-to-back feat, eliminated sixth-seeded French Open winner Francesca Schiavone of Italy 7-6 (7/5), 6-4.

"I was trying to find a rhythm in the wind to get on top of it," Williams said. "It was challenging. I don't think either of us were able to play our exact normal game. When the stakes were higher I was able to raise my game."

Entering Friday's semifinal, Clijsters and Williams have split 12 matches, although Williams has lost their past four meetings, including a 2005 US Open quarterfinal and a fourth-round match last year that went three sets.

"We had a great match last year. It was really close," Williams said. "I'm sure we'll have another really good matchup. I would like to kind of flip the way it turns out."

Williams, who has yet to drop a set in this Flushing Meadows fortnight, became the first 30-year-old woman to reach a Grand Slam semifinal since France's Mary Pierce at the 2005 US Open.

"She has been playing really well," Clijsters said. "It's a challenge. I look forward to it."

Clijsters and Stosur exchanged breaks in the first six games of the third set before the Belgian held serve, then broke Stosur again when the Aussie double faulted for a 5-3 edge. Clijsters then held again for the victory.

"I just had to be aggressive in the third set and keep going when my serve wasn't as good as I would like it," Clijsters said.

French Open runner-up Stosur, now 0-4 against Clijsters, missed a chance to become the first Aussie woman in the US Open semifinals since Wendy Turnbull in 1984.

"I'm going to be disappointed about this one," she said. "You can't break serve and have chance after chance after chance and blow it in a quarterfinal. It's just too big an opportunity to let go. Unfortunately that's what I did."

Stosur could take some consolation in her best-ever US Open run.

"I'm very pleased," she said. "It's just unfortunate it had to end like this."

"It wasn't easy out there to find your best tennis. Windiest conditions I've played in all week and probably the worst I've served all week. Put those two things together and don't hold serve for the third set and you lose."

Schiavone, who fell to 0-8 against Williams, was similarly frustrated after her defeat.

"I think I lost a little bit more this match than she won," Schiavone said. "It's a lot of disappointment. I have the quality and the chance to beat her."

Schiavone and Williams exchanged breaks to open the match and each double faulted to surrender another break on the way to a first-set tie-breaker.

Williams led 4-0, Schiavone levelled at 4-4 but the Italian swatted a pair of forehands beyond the baseline on the last two points to hand Williams the set.

In the second set, Williams broke Schiavone for a 3-1 lead and the rivals traded service breaks over the last four games to finish the match.

England sweep series



AFP, Cardiff

England wrapped up a 2-0 Twenty20 series victory over Pakistan after the tourists suffered the embarrassment of being dismissed for 89 to add to their off-field problems here on Tuesday.

World Twenty20 champions England finished on 90 for four to complete a six-wicket win with 36 balls to spare, having won by five wickets here Sunday.

Pakistan's total was their worst in 40 matches at this level while England's seventh straight Twenty20 international win saw them equal a record held jointly by South Africa and Pakistan.

"It was irresponsible the way we played," said Pakistan captain Shahid Afridi. "England are the world champions. We have to take more responsibility and show more pride."

By contrast, elated England skipper Paul Collingwood said: "It's a special achievement and we obviously did it during the best time which was during the World Cup."

"We are just doing a lot of things really good -- and we still have a lot of intent with the bat as well. Hopefully that continues into the future."

Yorkshire seamer Tim Bresnan, the man-of-the-match, took three wickets for 10 runs in 3.4 overs as Pakistan fell well short of their previous worst Twenty20 international score of 125 for nine in 20 overs against Australia at Melbourne in February.

England had held Pakistan

to 126 for four on Sunday.

But they did even better in this match as Pakistan were bowled out with eight balls of their innings left.

Stuart Broad, left-arm quick Ryan Sidebottom and off-spinner Graeme Swann took two wickets each, while left-arm spinner Michael Yardy's four overs cost just 10 runs.

Umar Akmal's 17 was the top score for 2009 World Twenty20 winners Pakistan.

The tourists, after Afridi won the toss, collapsed to 22 for four off five overs -- after taking 11 off the first from Sidebottom.

Bresnan started the slump with Kamran Akmal, for the second match in a row, top-edging a pull which was well caught by Swann.

Mohammad Yousuf, already dropped once, fell for two when he hooked Bresnan to Ravi Bopara at deep square leg as he too exited in similar fashion to the way he'd departed Sunday.

The big-hitting Afridi was out fourth ball when trying to carve Broad and was caught by Eoin Morgan.

Umar Akmal cheered up Pakistan fans in a meagre crowd of just 5,821 with a straight six off Swann and repeated the dose in Swann's next over.

However, he was bowled the following ball trying to smash a slower delivery.

Bresnan ended the innings when he yorked Shoaib Akhtar.

England briefly wobbled in reply, losing two wickets on 26, and then two more in quick succession to be 63 for four.

But Morgan (18 not out) and Yardy (six not out) saw England home.

England, who won the Test series 3-1, will look for another victory against Pakistan when the teams meet in the first of five one-day internationals at Chester-le-Street on Friday.

Afridi, trying to remain upbeat added: "We are still making mistakes, but on this stage I just want one victory because one victory will keep the morale of my team high."

SCORES IN BRIEF

PAKISTAN: 89 all out (K Akmal 11, U Akmal 17, Hafeez 14, Gul 16; Bresnan 3-10, Broad 2-18, Swann 2-27)

ENGLAND: 90 for 4 (Kieswetter 16, Collingwood 21, Morgan 18 not out)

Result: England won by six wickets and clinched two-match series 2-0.

Man-of-the-match: Tim Bresnan.

Open tennis from Sept 26

SPORTS REPORTER

Shahjalal Islami Bank Open Tennis competition will begin at the National Tennis Complex in Ramna on September 26.

The events are men's singles and doubles, women's singles and doubles, boys and girls under-16 and under-14 and mini-tennis for the under-10 children.

Total prize money worth Tk 124,800 will be given out to the winners.

The tournament will conclude on September 30.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 46 Old 3 Ms. 19 Tease 1 Take a anesthetic 21 Fuss 23 Corn on the TV 4 Recede 50 Unkempt 7 Employer one 4 Sprite 25 Deli salad 11 Handle 53 Court 5 Rosary 26 Unrivaled component 27 Mimicked 28 Obama predecessor 6 Pack animal 7 Deadpan 29 Norway's star of capital 30 Ca-comedies 31 Scratch 8 Inseparable 31 Scratch 35 Hair goo 38 Family 40 Born 42 Fabric 12 Swimming softener champ brand 45 Memo 47 Barrel part 48 Pound of poetry 49 "Ratatouille" rat 50 Bashful 51 Zodiac sign 52 Bobby of hockey 54 Surprise cries

Crossword grid with numbers 1-61 indicating starting positions for words.

DEMOB DEPOT SONORA AGARIC CORNET CORNELL ADDO SILTS HERE BLOT KEY ORCA SLETIN ALLAYER BUR SOS STAINED GIMME PAPA FIR SEAS ABE BEGET ADS CORNER CORNEA EOCENE TWEEDY SUEDE INTRO

CRYPTOQUIP LZXW DZX YBEDX NYM JN KJHOWS UJEM ZYWPRYS BYEHXH UJE DJ HLXYD, LJEKP DZYD RX VEMHX-VOMYDOJW? Saturday's Cryptoquip: IF PEOPLE FIGHT OVER A WINDOW'S OPERATING SYSTEM, COULD YOU SAY THEY ENGAGE IN VISTA-CUFFS? Today's Cryptoquip Clue: U equals Y

New format of IPL worries franchises



CRICINFO

Franchises in the Indian Premier League (IPL) believe that the league's new format and the player retention clause take away their control over their players and also affect their bottom lines. At least three IPL franchises say the new regulations devised by the Board of Control for Cricket in India are needlessly complicated.

"New IPL rules a bit confusing," Kolkata Knight Riders owner Shah Rukh Khan wrote on the micro-blogging website Twitter. "Two new teams added (good). All players should go into pool to make it fair for everyone. Simple and straight."

The new rules governing player retention allow a team to keep up to four players but at a steep price. The first player retained will cost a team 1.8 million dollars against the salary cap of 9 million dollars, regardless of the amount the player is actually paid. The second player will cost 1.3 million dollars, the third

900,000 dollars and the fourth 500,000 dollars. A team official said this rule suited a franchise only if it owned a player worth the 1.3m-1.8m dollars bracket. "That person needs to win you at least five or six games and three IPL seasons have taught us that there is no one such player to be found." Using all four retention options will mean that a franchise will have only 4.5m dollars to spend on 26 other players.

The handful of players who may come into the 1.8m dollar bracket, an official said, would be big-ticket names like Sachin Tendulkar and MS Dhoni. A franchise official said the next group of players who could find themselves up for retention would be "Kieron Pollard, Suresh Raina and maybe Virender Sehwag but after that, I can't see anyone else."

The high cost of keeping a player effectively means most players will be part of November's auction. An official said, "Given the amount of money that you have to commit to retention, practically it will be difficult for teams to retain players." While the schedule of 74

games ensures the franchises will play a minimum of 14 games, the same as in previous years, the addition of two new teams means each team gets a smaller share of the central revenue. "The business revenue models were calculated on the extra games," another team official said and thought that the new clauses had, for the franchises, made the IPL "a loss-making proposition".

The new rule under which all IPL player contracts can only be vetted by the BCCI has also come in for criticism with another franchise official saying, "This is a very player-centric rule and it benefits the player more than the franchise. So what leverage do franchises have with them?" The new rule had sent out a message from the BCCI to the franchises, "It is clear the BCCI understands that their biggest assets are the players and not the franchises."

With the players now out of their control, the only budgetary elements directly under the control of the franchises would be gate revenues, merchandising and sponsorships.