

Malik to lead Pakistan in HK Sixes

AFP, Karachi
All-rounder Shoaib Malik will lead Pakistan's challenge in next month's Super Sixes in Hong Kong, Pakistan selectors announced on Monday.

The 28-year-old Malik, who was national team captain until January last year, was overlooked for the series against South Africa starting later this month in the United Arab Emirates.

Instead Malik will lead a seven-member second-string Pakistan team for the Hong Kong event which will be held on November 6 and 7.

Pakistan chief selector Mohsin Khan said: "We have selected Malik to lead the team for the Hong Kong Super Sixes." Other members of the Pakistan team are Imran Nazir, Shoaib Khan, Sohail Khan, Shabbir Ahmed, Ahmed Shahzad and Asad Ali.

Besides Pakistan, teams from Australia, India, England, New Zealand, Hong Kong, South Africa and Sri Lanka will take part.

The teams are comprised of six players with one substitute. The Hong Kong Sixes tournament was first held in 1992 and is sanctioned by the International Cricket Council. Pakistan won the inaugural event 18 years ago, then again in 1997, 2001 and 2002.

Lee to play T20 in NZ

AFP, Wellington

Australian fast bowler Brett Lee has signed to play domestic Twenty20 cricket in New Zealand later this year with the Wellington Firebirds, the club said Monday.

Lee, looking for as much match-time as possible as he seeks a career swansong at next year's World Cup, will debut for Wellington against Auckland on December 14, Cricket Wellington chief executive Gavin Larsen said.

"It's tremendous to have secured the services of Brett and his record speaks for itself," Larsen said.

"He's a gifted all-round athlete who has proven himself a true match winner for Australia in over a decade at the highest level."

The 33-year-old will miss the first half of the New Zealand domestic competition because of prior commitments to his home state New South Wales but will play five matches and be available for the final on January 2.

Lee retired from Test cricket earlier this year after a string of injuries but is desperate to cap his international career by appearing for Australia at the World Cup in February.

Lee has a large following in India, which is co-hosting the World Cup with Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, and has said previously that an appearance at the tournament would be a fitting end to his international career.



Serbian star Ana Ivanovic celebrates after beating Swiss Patty Schnyder in the WTA Open final in Linz on Sunday. Ivanovic won 6-1, 6-2.

Akram has a dig at Butt

ANI, Karachi

Former Pakistan skipper Wasim Akram feels that Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Ijaz Butt seeking another term would be nothing but ridiculous, as the whole country wants him ousted from the post.

"If Ijaz has asked for another term then hats off to him. The whole of Pakistan and world cricket is after him. Pakistan cricket is in a mess, there is no leadership and amidst all this, to ask for another term, well what can I say. This shows that his advisors are not giving him the right directions," the Daily Times quoted Akram, as saying to a sports TV channel.

The PCB chief's term which runs from October 6, 2008 to October 31, 2010, has been marred by controversies. Butt, who has been facing scathing criticism from all quarters for the way he has handled the spot-fixing scandal or allowed things to get out of hand in the team, has also been blamed for interfering in purely cricket and team matters, something which no chairman had done in the past.

Under his chairmanship, Pakistan has also seen five different Test captains -- Shoaib Malik, Younis Khan, Mohammad Yousuf, Shahid

Afridi and Salman Butt -- come and go in just over a year.

Akram said, "Ijaz has been unable to hold forte. He is not a man in command. Pakistan cricket is in doldrums. There is no leadership and it was the chairman's role to keep all these things under check. He has failed."

The selection board has also been criticised for not consulting ODI skipper Shahid Afridi and coach Waqar Younis while picking the team for the upcoming series against South Africa in UAE.

Blaming the whole incident as a management failure, Akram said, "I strongly believe that the presence of the captain and coach is a must in the process of team selection. It's fine that it is a selectors' job, but again it is a team game. If you keep fighting amongst yourselves then where is the leadership? The ball once again falls in Ijaz's court. He should take care of all these things."

Talking about the forthcoming Pak-South Africa series, he said, "Pakistan can beat anybody in Twenty20, but the one-dayers and Tests will be a different ball game. Even if Pakistan win a match or two South Africa can always come back, they are always a difficult side."

"Wherever the Proteas play, they are a tough side to beat. Pakistan will give them competition, but I believe the series will be a close affair," Akram added.

Sk Jamal, Abahani share

FROM PAGE 17
bourse looked more organised from the beginning, even though they could not penetrate the Sheikh Jamal backline and were able to muster their first shot on the target in the stoppage time of the first half.

It was an intense battle of physical strength and exchange of words between the players which forced referee Abdul Hannan Miron to book seven players -- four from Sheikh Jamal and three from Abahani.

Despite the lack of assistance from the midfield, winger Shakil Ahmed kept on creating chances with threatening crosses from the left.

Sheikh Jamal came within a whisker of an opener in the fourth minute when Enamul released a well-judged freekick only to be saved by Abahani goalkeeper Ziaur Rahman, who also thwarted two more efforts from Zahid Hossain from one-on-one situations.

After resumption, Sheikh Jamal brought in medio Shahedul Alam and winger Tawhidul Alam Sabuj to strengthen the attack and Enamul played behind striker Emily. The changes paid off

when 13 minutes into the second half Enamul headed a Shakil corner home.

Moments later, Abahani came close to an equaliser when Ghanaian striker Awudu Ibrahim beat Serbian defender Dragan Perisic to advance to the danger zone before Sheikh Jamal defender Reza made a timely intervention to clear the ball for a throw-in.

But, the defender finally let his side down when he brought down Prank inside the box. The Ghanaian converted the penalty kick on his second attempt after his first attempt, which also found the back of Sheikh Jamal net, was ruled out by the referee.

"We could have won the game had Prank not squandered a chance from a one-on-one situation. But both teams played well and I think these two sides will play the final of the tournament," said Abahani's Iranian coach Ali Akbar.

"It was a tactical game and my boys were a bit tired after playing two matches in four days. Besides, a 15-day preparation was not enough to compete against a big team like Abahani. Even then, it was disappointing to concede a

goal 10 minutes before the end," said Sheikh Jamal coach Zoran.

TEAMS
ABAHANI: Ziaur Rahman, Samad Youssif, Ibnul Siraji, Ashraf Mahmud Linkon, Pranotosh Kumar Das, Imtiaz Sultan Jitu (Abul Hossain), Mehdi Hasan Ujjal, Choumrin Rakhin (Shakawat Hossain Rony), Awudu Ibrahim, Ntim Twum Prank and Nazrul Islam (Mamun Mia).

SHEIKH JAMAL
DHANMONDI: Aminul Haque, Dragan Perisic (Ariful Islam), Rezaul Karim Reza, Wali Faisal, Nasirul Islam, Mintu Sheikh (Shahedul Alam), Atiqur Rahman Meshu, Zahid Hossain (Tawhidul Alam Sabuj), Shakil Ahmed, Zahid Hasan Emily and Enamul Haq.
Yellow cards: Enamul, Rezaul Karim, Emily and Meshu (Sheikh Jamal), Jitu, Choumrin and Samad Youssif (Abahani).
Referee: Abdul Hannan Miron.

Knives out

FROM PAGE 17
cricket blogs.

"This is what happens when you treat them with kid gloves and give in to player demands and reputations. Jesse Ryder should have been dumped ages ago."

Another disenfranchised fan named Allord said; "I was barracking for the Bangladeshis in the final game. I think the Bangladeshis played very well, and they played to win."

Loosenut of Waitakere City was gutted to see his favourite side lose like that.

"I wish they would give up and find a real job. How much embarrassment can one take? They have not been any good for years. Give it up guys you're useless!"

However, no analogy could have been as demeaning as the one that appeared in the poll section of a popular cricket blog survey. It posted a question to the bloggers.

Who is worse, the question asked, the Otago Rugby team (who are at bottom of the ITM Cup table) or the Black Caps?

Ala Bhai no more

SPORTS REPORTER

Abu Mohammad Abdul Ala, popular among cricket connoisseurs as Ala bhai, breathed his last yesterday.

He was 75. He spent his last days at the Crescent Hospital and was on life support for the past 45 days due to heart trouble.

Ala's namaz-e-janaza will be held at the Baitus Salam Jame Masjid (opposite RAB headquarters) sector-4, Uttara after Jhr prayers. He will be buried at the Azampur graveyard.

Father of former national cricketer Salim Shahed, Ala was a true sports lover and was known for his undying passion for domestic football and cricket matches. Ala, a cricket player himself, was selfless and was one of few people who turned up rain or shine. Even in his old age, Ala sometimes went to the local fields and watched cricket matches.

Apart from Salim, who played several times in the ICC Trophy for Bangladesh, Ala also had a daughter.

Cricket Welfare Association of Bangladesh (CWAB) expressed deep shock at his death.

Ivanovic ends title drought

AP, Linz

Ana Ivanovic routed Patty Schnyder 6-1, 6-2 in the final of the Generali Ladies Sunday to win her first WTA Tour title in two years and ninth overall.

The 22-year-old Serb won her last title at the same event in 2008 after capturing the French Open and becoming the top-ranked player for 12 weeks.

"Winning again after two years is so wonderful, just unbelievable," Ivanovic said. "I have been waiting so long for this and I worked hard to achieve it."

Ivanovic, now ranked No. 29, played her first final in 19 months. She had not planned to appear at the event, but accepted a late wild card after Serena Williams pulled out with a foot injury.

Sammy named new WI captain

Cricket

REUTERS, London

Darren Sammy was handed the task of rebuilding the fortunes of the once-mighty West Indies team when he was named as the new captain on Sunday.

Jamaican Chris Gayle had been in charge of the side since 2007 but after team slid to seventh in the Test rankings and eighth in the one-day standings, the West Indies Cricket Board (WICB) decided to change the leadership.

"Chris Gayle led the West Indies during a challenging period and the board thanks him for stepping up then," WICB chief executive Ernest Hilaire said in a statement.

"But it is now time to pass the mantle on as the West Indies rebuilds."

Selection committee chairman Clyde Butts added: "We are at the dawn of a new era in West Indies cricket and we have entrusted the challenging job of captaincy to Darren Sammy because it is believed that he has demonstrated the attributes of a leader of this diverse group of

men." The 26-year-old Sammy has played eight Tests, 43 one-dayers and 19 Twenty20 internationals and will hope to help West Indies recapture the form that brought them 11 successive Test wins during the 1980s.

The fast bowler's first task will be to lead the side during a six-week tour of Sri Lanka which begins on Nov. 15.

"Being appointed West Indies captain is an honour and distinction which I will treat with the highest regard and dignity," Sammy, who hails from St Lucia, said.

"I have always given my all when I prepare and play for the West Indies and nothing will change now. I know this will be a difficult challenge and I will take the torch from Chris and hold it high as we forge ahead."

Brendan Nash was named as vice-captain.

SQUAD

Darren Sammy (captain), Brendan Nash, Chris Gayle, Adrian Barath, Carlton Baugh Jr, Suleiman Benn, Darren Bravo, Dwayne Bravo, Shivnarine Chandernaul, Nelon Pascal, Kemar Roach, Andre Russell, Shane Shillingford, Devon Smith, Devon Thomas.

Warner aims to be the new Gilchrist

Cricket

CRICINFO

David Warner has his sights firmly set on becoming the new Adam Gilchrist at the top of Australia's one-day batting line-up. Warner, 23, is in India with the ODI squad and Australia's selectors are keen to see how he performs in the 50-over format on the subcontinent, with a potential World Cup place up for grabs.

Although Australia have largely used Warner as a Twenty20 specialist, he also played seven ODIs last year and once bludgeoned a memorable 165 in a one-day game for New South Wales. His all-or-nothing style might not always suit the pacing of 50-over cricket but he hopes he can play a similar role to Gilchrist, who was viewed by every opponent as a potential match-winner.

"I see myself as similar to Adam Gilchrist, more of an X-factor player, where I go out there and try to mimic his role as he played," Warner told reporters in India. "He was aggressive, he might've come off in five innings as well, but he changed the course of the game."

"Everyone was talking about, 'We've got to get Adam out, if we don't get him out then he could put 100 on in 10 overs'. I look up to him as that kind of player, an impact player, where if I can get off to

a good start, I can put the other team on the back foot and make them worry about how they're going to get myself out, instead of the other players they should be worrying about as well."

The most recent of Warner's one-day internationals came against Scotland last August, but that was a one-off encounter used as a warm-up for Twenty20s against England. During his six earlier games Warner made one significant score - 69 against South Africa in Sydney -- but he said he had found it hard to adjust from Twenty20 in his initial steps on the ODI scene.

"I felt that I had to keep going the same pace and one tempo, and that's where I reckon I've matured now and I've learned to adapt," Warner said. "There were little things there where I wasn't in the right position, so that's the thing that was out, but if I go back into the same situation I'm going to do the same thing because it was there to hit."

"But in the end I was probably feeling a bit of pressure because I wasn't scoring runs. I'm still going to play the same way I play, but not trying to go after every ball -- I've got 50 overs, not 20. Now I reckon I'm mature enough that I can try to last 50 overs."

Warner's opportunity in India was granted when the selectors decided to rest Shane Watson ahead of the Ashes, but rain washed out the first ODI in Kochi on Sunday. There are also concerns over the weather for the remaining two games, in Visakhapatnam on Wednesday and Margao on Sunday.

Hard work pays dividends

FROM PAGE 17

charge and it was newcomer Sohrawardi Shuvo, only a-wicket old in international cricket, came to the party with three wickets. Shakib's captaincy too stood out, as he swiftly changed ends and made sure the new Kiwi batsmen kept facing left-arm spinners.

Later, Shahriar Nafees announced his second coming in the national side, hitting 73 and with no memories of his terrible Test against India earlier this year. His fielding too has caught the eye but he needs a few more big scores to cement a place in the World Cup squad. The seven-wicket defeat was the biggest against a top-flight team but New Zealand looked less so after the two games.

Things got a little tougher for them as Shakib reached a different level in the series-deciding clash on October 14.

The left-hander peeled off a century from a dire situation and, as if that wasn't enough,

took three crucial wickets to confirm once again his stature as the No. 1 all-rounder in the world. His captaincy is also a plus and Bangladesh would miss a good captain if they chose otherwise in the World Cup.

The fourth game also ensured that bringing a new fielding coach has paid off as Julian Fountain, with all his efforts, made slow-movers like Nafees and Abdur Razzak pull off major coups with their fielding. When Rokibul Hasan gulped down Kane Williamson's final fling in the air, Bangladesh clinched the series with a match to spare.

On the eve of the final game of the five-match series, the Tigers asked around if 4-0 would be considered a white-wash and in less than 24 hours time, completed the rout with another thrilling victory.

The Tigers' batting completely came off in the last game but as the day wore on and the Kiwi openers came out, there

was an air of the inevitable around the fielders. Rubel hustled with his 80mph and the Kiwi top and middle order had little to say and as soon as the game was meandering away, out came Shaiful with his diving catch that removed Vettori.

If there was one catch that could change the way the world looked at Bangladesh cricket from now on, this would be it. Rubel finished off the job and celebrations began as Bangladesh won a battle against cricket's elite for the first time in its history.

But with every big success, the failures become less visible and there were some during this series.

The players, officials, coaches and everyone related to the game in Bangladesh must (and one couldn't stress that enough) not be complacent and wait for things to happen. This series is as much a success as it is a sign of how hard work can take you to new heights.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down words. Includes a solution time of 21 mins and a grid with letters filled in.

Cryptoquip puzzle grid with letters filled in and a key provided below.

CRYPTOQUIP
BXDDP ZDFXHVJ QDFXB-PQFGDM
RDFCDP SNRBHCFBDM HV
DVJRFVM'P SFGHBFRTNRM
ZD RTVMTV'P RHVMDVP
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: BECAUSE THAI NOBLEWOMAN LIKES TO WRITE LOTS OF MEMOS, FOLKS SHOULD CALL HER NOTER DAME.
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Z equals B

SPORTS POLL TODAY'S QUESTION Do you think Real Madrid has improved under Jose Mourinho? Visit the sports page of www.thedailystar.net to cast vote

What to WATCH TEN Sports UEFA Champions League Arsenal v Shakhtar Donetsk Live from 12:45am (Wednesday)

TEN Action UEFA Champions League Real Madrid v AC Milan Live from 12:45am (Wednesday)

ESPN Sportscentre India Sports News Live at 8:30pm

GP Federation Cup Soccer Club, Feni v Brothers Union Time: 3:00pm Mohammeden v Muktijoddha Time: 5:30pm Venue: Kamalapur Stadium