

GREATEST ODI TEAM Sachin, Veeru on shortlist

PTI, Dubai

Indian batting icon Sachin Tendulkar, along with Virender Sehwag, on Wednesday found a place in the list of players nominated for an ICC online poll to pick the all-time greatest team as part of one-day cricket's 40th anniversary celebrations.

The retired Sourav Ganguly is also part of the list of openers, from which only two would make the final dream team.

"To mark the 40th anniversary of one-day international cricket, the ICC's official website is asking supporters from across the globe to select their choice of the greatest ODI match and team of all-time," the ICC said in a statement.

Website www.icc-cricket.com is asking supporters to select a dream team from a shortlist of 48 players and pick their favourite game from a choice of 10 memorable matches.

Ranatunga praises Tendulkar

PTI, New Delhi

The glamour and glitz of Twenty20 has had its adverse affect on Test cricket and only someone of Sachin Tendulkar's stature can help restore the waning popularity of the traditional form of the game, feels former Sri Lankan captain Arjuna Ranatunga.

The Lankan captain lavished praise on Sachin for not treating the game as a source of income.

"Sachin is an iconic figure. We need cricketers like him to save Test cricket. As long as Sachin is playing, I am sure Test cricket is safe," Ranatunga told PTI Bhasha from Colombo while congratulating the champion batsman on his 50th Test century.

"He has been playing for more than 20 years now. I think he is a rare cricketer who does not consider cricket as a source of income."

SDCA charity football

SPORTS REPORTER

Social Drive for Community Awareness (SDCA), a non-profit youth organisation run by students, will organise an 8-a-side Charity Football Tournament for the young people of Dhaka on December 23-25 at the RAB 1 Field opposite the airport.

This is their second charity tournament that the SDCA have held this month. On December 10 the SDCA Charity Basketball Tournament held at Abahani Indoor Gymnasium was successfully completed.

All funds raised from the two tournaments will be donated to an NGO working for underprivileged children.

Anxious 10

FROM PAGE 16 doctor [David Young] told me to be mentally prepared because if I want to play I will have to play with this injury. I am determined to make a comeback. I would like to request everybody to please pray for me," he said.

Based on the progress of the conservative treatment the medical team will provide an update in due course.

Mashrafe has sustained the injury during a Premier Division League match between Abahani and BKSP on Tuesday.

Meanwhile, Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) president AHM Mustafiz Kamal visited the injured pace bowler at his Mirpur residence yesterday.

The good

FROM PAGE 16 against Zimbabwe at Harare.

Kenya upset Sri Lanka and beat the other minnows in the group, and with their four points from New Zealand's forfeited match, progressed to the Super Six stage, an unlikely outcome considering their ability. Since they had beaten their fellow qualifiers Zimbabwe and New Zealand, they entered the Super Six with two wins to their name and had only to beat Zimbabwe (who had made their way to the Super Six in similarly fortuitous fashion) to progress to the semis. They were thus the first non-Test playing nation to play a Cup semifinal, which devalued the quality of the tournament. They were easily brushed aside by India in a farcical match-up.



World's top two tennis stars Spaniard Rafael Nadal (L) and Swiss Roger Federer pose prior to their charity game 'The Match for Africa' in Zurich on Tuesday.

Match for Africa Fed's

Tennis

AFP, Zurich

Roger Federer took the upper hand against Rafael Nadal on Tuesday with a two set to one win in a charity exhibition match in the Swiss city of Zurich.

After losing the first set 4-6, Federer broke back against the world number one early in the second set to take a 6-3, 6-3 lead, watched by a capacity home crowd including Formula One champion Sebastian Vettel, skiing champions Lindsey Vonn and Didier Cuche.

The 10,500 tickets for the "Match for Africa" were sold out within a few minutes when they went on sale on September 1.

The world's top two in tennis this year move on to Madrid for another exhibition match on Wednesday, this time to raise money for the

Spaniard's charity.

"Both of us realise we are in a very privileged position, where we have everything in life, the least we can do is to help people who are in difficulty," said Nadal.

Federer has been hoping to raise around one million dollars from the event for his foundation to support projects for African children in education and sport.

"You have to look at the long term," said Federer.

"When you can help 1,500 children to go to school, it's great but you need a lot around it: how do the children get to school, what do they eat at school, do they have toilets... and that's where we come in," he added on Swiss television TSR.

The 29-year-old Swiss player remains on the wrong end of an 8-14 career record on the professional circuit against Nadal, breaking a six match losing streak against the Spaniard this year.

Seven new faces in NZ WC squad

AFP, Wellington

New Zealand included seven uncapped players Wednesday in a 30-man squad for next year's World Cup, as the Black Caps struggle to end a run of 11 straight defeats in one-day internationals.

The injection of fresh blood comes after former Test captain John Wright was appointed head coach this week in a bid to turn around the team's dismal recent form, which included series whitewashes against Bangladesh and India.

Chief selector Mark Greatbatch said the squad, which will be cut to 15 in January, had the potential to be competitive at the World Cup, which begins on February 19 and takes place in India, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka.

"A number of uncapped

guy who have excelled domestically made the squad. We believe it represents the best one-day cricketers we have in New Zealand," said Greatbatch, who was dumped as coach to make way for Wright.

The new faces in the squad are Brent Arnel, Doug Bracewell, Dean Brownlie, Ian Butler, Grant Elliott, Daniel Flynn, Martin Guptill, Jamie How, James Franklin, Kyle Mills, Adam Milne, Brendon McCullum, Nathan McCullum, Peter McGlashan, Andy McKay, Rob Nicol, Jacob Oram, Jeetan Patel, Jesse Ryder, Tim Southee, Shanan Stewart, Scott Styris, Ross Taylor, Daryl Tuffey, Daniel Vettori, Bradley-John Watling, Kane Williamson, Luke Woodcock, Reece Young.

MSC still not limited

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that a new ad-hoc committee was formed and ask them to enroll Mohammedan as a limited company in line with the already-placed board of directors' list," said the BOA president adding that only the name of Mosaddek Hossain would be excluded from the list.

However, a member of the ad-hoc committee preferring not to be named said that there is still a conflict between the convener and member secretary over the selection of the board of directors and there is very little chance to resolve it.

The member believes that both of groups are desperate to gain their majority in the board of directors in a bid to use the club land and that is creating barriers to turning Mohammedan into a limited company.

Like in the last season, Mohammedan are still suffering from acute financial problems and two-month wages of the footballers are still unpaid while the club officials rarely turn up at the club.

McGrath, Warne top

FROM PAGE 16

"I think there's no doubt the team's performance has been affected," Marsh told the Sydney Morning Herald.

"Hard aggressive cricket is in the Australian team's DNA and unfortunately the players started second-guessing their natural instincts in the heat of battle for fear of reprisal from CA [Cricket Australia] or a public backlash from the vocal minority."

Cricket Australia spokesman Peter Young admitted that the team went through a "period of introspection" after the 2008 backlash.

"But the public has consistently told us since then, through three years of research, that they are totally comfortable with on-field aggression as long as it is hard but fair cricket," he told the Herald.

"What the public saw in Perth, from my understanding of the public mood, was completely acceptable."

Meanwhile Pietersen was also confident that England spearhead Anderson would be fit for the hotly anticipated Boxing Day Test despite a side strain.

Roadshow hits B'baria

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Brahmanbaria

In the quest of involving the country's people with the upcoming 2011 ICC World Cup in Bangladesh, a colourful road show was held yesterday in Brahmanbaria.

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) along with the local administration arranged the road show where district administration, district sports association, educational institutions, clubs, social organisations, BNCC and hundreds of local people took part with flags, festoons and banners.

Having crossed the main roads of Brahmanbaria, the procession ended at Jatiya Beer Abdul Kuddus Makhon Mukha Mancha after the procession got underway at Luknath Maydan in morning. Later, a discussion and cultural show took place at Mukta Mancha.

Meanwhile, mass votes were collected here in favour of the Sundarban to be selected as one of the Seven Wonders of World.

Later on afternoon, the road show heads on towards Comilla.

H'ball refs nominated

SPORTS REPORTER

Two handball referees from Bangladesh have been nominated to conduct the Men's Continental Phase Challenge Trophy by the International Handball Federation.

They are Uttam Sen Gupta and Mostafizur Rahman, who will leave the country for India on January 5 to conduct the meet, scheduled for January 6 to 11 in Chennai.

Mehrab ton

FROM PAGE 17

GAZI TANK: 182 all out in 48.4 overs (Nasir 53; Arafat 3-25) KALABAGAN: 183-9 in 49.2 overs (Mahmudul 40, Ariful 35; Sabbir 2-27, Nasir 2-38)

Result: Kalabagan won by one wicket. ORIENT: 210-8 in 50 overs (Robiul 53, Sadid 44; Aslam 3-37) CCS: 214-3 in 46.1 overs (Amit 82, Shuvogoto 50 not out; Gazi 1-26)

Result: CCS won by seven wickets.

Fight for

FROM PAGE 16

If the teams can put in their natural performance today, the final should be an intriguing battle, and that is what the crowd will be expecting since their favourite team, the hosts could not make it through.

State of women's game in South Asia

ATIQUÉ ANAM from Cox's Bazar



Women's football in South Asia is at a very rudimentary stage, trying to take off but being stifled by constraints such as nagging conservatism, lack of opportunity to play, lack of sponsorship and financial insecurity.

However, some of the teams like India and Nepal have thrived in their own methods while the others keep struggling for improvement. India have been the frontrunner in this region with women's football having roots back to the 1970's. But most of the progress has been made recently, with the All India Football Federation (AIFF) installing a professional structure for the women's game.

They have the senior national championship, age level national championships for U-19s and U-17s, and the regional leagues that keeps the game going round the year. Monika Staab, a FIFA consultant puts India's progress down to these facts: "They have a lot of development work going, they have a league with lots of people involved, a fulltime manager who is paid, and an administrator solely for the women's football."

The other factor that has helped take India forward is that the girls, most of whom come from needy families, are assured financial security, with jobs in the defence forces. In the current Indian national team, eight out of the 18 come from the Police force.

Nepal's women too took a similar route after taking to the game in 1995. The internal political chaos has caused intermittent disturbances to its progress, but since peace was restored in 2008, the women's game has grown from strength to strength.

"Most of the girls (14 out of 18) come from the Armed Police Force. The girls have 3-hours training daily. And they take part in regional tournaments. There are currently three tournaments going on, and we are planning to start a national league next year," said Deputy Inspector of Armed Police, Prem Pokhrel.

The picture is far different though for the other nations, like Pakistan, Afghanistan and Maldives. Traditionally very conservative societies, women have only been allowed to play football recently and that too has not spread much farther than the schools and colleges of the capital and amongst the girls from the affluent families. It happens on most occasions that they give up the sport for

pursuing other career or once they get married, resulting in a vacuum every few years and a stunted growth of the game.

Bangladesh have been trying to follow the path taken by India and Nepal towards development, although it is a path fraught with many constraints.

The conservative social outlook has been a major obstacle to start with which has receded a little. At the absence of an women's football league, national championships are the only resort for women to get themselves tested, which has however been held only twice and not regularly. School football tournaments have focused more on the capital rather than looking to go grassroots.

Some of the players have been given jobs in the Ansar & VDP, but are away at their homes sitting idle for most of the year, apart from the training camps for tournaments. But things may change for the better if plans are put into action soon.

"We are planning to start a metropolis league in Dhaka from early next year. A corporate league is also in the offing. Besides, school football will be expanded, and football clinics will be held to take the game to girls at an early age," said a BFF official, detailing their plans for the immediate future.

Cricket looking for a way out

AFP, London

There were few more thrilling sights in world cricket in 2010 than Mohammad Aamer bowling and there were few more controversial too.

The teenage Pakistan left-arm quick's entrancing spell of swing bowling saw Australia dismissed for just 88 at Headingley in July.

But Aamer and new-ball partner Mohammad Asif, together with Pakistan captain Salman Butt, soon found themselves facing 'spot-fixing' allegations.

Butt was accused by British tabloid The News of the World of orchestrating a betting scam that saw Aamer and Asif bowl deliberate no-balls to effect a 'spot-fixing' coup.

The trio's future is set to be decided by an International Cricket Council (ICC) tribunal hearing in the Qatari capital of Doha in January.

Earlier in the year, Pakistan had banned three former

captains -- Younus Khan, Mohammad Yousuf and Shoaib Malik -- after a wretched tour of Australia where they failed to win a single match and Shahid Afridi was fined for an incredible ball-bouncing incident in Perth.

And in November wicketkeeper Zulqarnain Haider fled Dubai, where Pakistan were playing South Africa, for London saying his life was under threat from 'fixers'.

On the field, England won a first major one-day title by beating Australia in the final of the World Twenty20 tournament in the Caribbean.

Hopes of an Ashes series win in Australia looked realistic after England's innings and 71-run victory in the second Test in Adelaide.

That followed a draw in the series opener in Brisbane marked by a hat-trick from Australia paceman Peter Siddle.

But Australia levelled with a 267-run win in the fourth Test

at Perth. Nevertheless Australia, so recently the kings of Test cricket, had dropped to fourth in the ICC rankings as 2010 drew to a close.

The year ended with South Africa pressing hard to replace India as the world's leading Test side with an innings and 25-run victory in the first Test at Centurion.

The Proteas' Dale Steyn looked the one genuine fast bowler in the modern game whose record that would not look out of place alongside those of some all-time great fast bowlers while Jacques Kallis cemented his position as the world's leading all-rounder.

India's Sachin Tendulkar set yet more batting records by becoming the first man to score 200 in a one-day international and the first to 50 Test centuries.

Meanwhile Sri Lanka off-spinner Muttiah Muralitharan, whose unorthodox

action remained controversial even when 'cleared' by the ICC, bowed out with a record 800 Test wickets before retiring from the five-day game.

Chris Gayle became only the fourth batsman in history to make two Test scores of over 300 with an innings of 333 against Sri Lanka in Galle last month but this was a rare highlight for the West Indies in another struggling year.

New Zealand's 2010 was exemplified by an embarrassing 4-0 one-day series loss to minnows Bangladesh in October.

England's Ashes-winning all-rounder Andrew Flintoff and New Zealand fast bowler Shane Bond finally gave up their struggles with injury by retiring from all cricket while Australia quick Brett Lee quit Tests.

But the most notable retirement in 2010 was of South Africa's Makhaya Ntini, the first black African to represent his country, whose 13-year international career saw a fast bowler blessed with exceptional stamina more than justify his place on cricket grounds alone.

Split-innings matches were trialled in Australia, the ICC announced plans for a new Test championship and MCC experimented with a pink ball in a bid to probe the viability of day/night Tests.

It's a fair bet the pink ball would not have impressed Sir Alec Bedser, who died aged 91 in April.

Bedser, an outstanding fast-medium bowler who held the England attack together in the years after the Second World War, was credited by Don Bradman, widely regarded as cricket's greatest batsman, with bowling the best ball the Australian ever received.



The Catch Bangladesh Catch road show, part of Bangladesh's campaign of hosting the 2011 World Cup, parades Rajshahi streets yesterday.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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CRYPTOQUIP

VGMKT O RTSX DTOPBGEPU UOCK STVKPTC BYT ETUUNJ, G NJPUC VOX YT'V DTTM VORTC DX BYT DTUUT.

Saturday's Cryptokuip: POPULAR SOUL SONG ABOUT SINGER ROSS'S DEEP AFFECTION FOR A CERTAIN STATE: "INDIANA IN DIANA." Today's Cryptokuip Clue: T equals E