

We needed this: Sammy

Cricket

AFP, Guyana

The two-Test series between Pakistan and West Indies is a battle of two notoriously mercurial sides, with both having to deal with problems on and off the field. Heading into the first Test on 12 May at the Guyana National Stadium, it was the West Indies who had more to prove, with their last test win coming more than two years ago.

To add to this problem of scarcity, their captain, Darren Sammy, was under fire coming into the Test because of his lack of form with bat and ball. Four days after taking the field against Pakistan, the Windies walked away with both black marks washed away -- a much-needed Test victory, and a man-of-the-match performance from skipper Sammy.

Sammy finished with impressive figures of five for 29 from 17 overs, while fast bowler Ravi Rampaul supported with four for 48 from 21 overs.

"This is all about West Indies cricket," said Sammy on Sunday after the victory. "We as a team needed this performance, this victory, and I can't stop commending the effort of the guys - every single person that batted on such a difficult pitch.

"It was a total team effort, and it was good to come out on the right side of the result for a change."

Sammy had been under fire from a demanding West Indies public, following a string of weak personal performances in the lead-up to the Test, but felt he had answered the critics as he celebrated his first Test victory since being put in charge last November.

"Once I step on to the field wearing that West Indies cap, I give my heart and soul," he said.

"I know things have not been going too well for me lately, but I still had the self-belief to go out there and do well - and so did my teammates."

The result also meant that Pakistan will have to wait for another trip to earn their first Test series victory in the Caribbean.

"To lose a Test match is never an easy thing," said Pakistan captain Misbah-ul-Haq, whose 52 was the top score in his side's second innings.

"But they played better cricket than us. They bowled really disciplined throughout the match, and most of the time, they got us out with good bowling."

Misbah added: "I think it was a bit of everything that went wrong for us, but our fielding especially. We dropped way too many catches.

"It was also disappointing from the batting point of view, but this is how it goes sometimes."

In a fluctuating match, the result did not appear to be a formality until Sammy trapped Umar Akmal plumb lbw for 47, as Pakistan lost their last four wickets for 18 runs in the space of 31 deliveries after lunch.

Akmal's dismissal established a new record for the most lbw decisions ever in a Test of 20, erasing the previous mark of 17 between the two sides 18 years ago at Queen's Park Oval in Trinidad.

Date	Match	Players	LBW
May 12 2011	West Indies v Pakistan	16	20
Apr 16 1993	West Indies v Pakistan	12	17
Nov 21 1996	Pakistan v New Zealand	12	15
Mar 5 1999	West Indies v Australia	12	15
Jan 2 1992	Pakistan v Sri Lanka		1314

Liu off the mark with a bang

AFP, Shanghai

Chinese star hurdler Liu Xiang thrilled a hometown crowd in Shanghai on Sunday, starting his outdoor season with the fastest 110m of the year as he seeks to recapture Olympic glory at London 2012.

Meanwhile, Jamaican sprint star Asafa Powell banished recent injury woes with a 9.95 seconds win in the men's 100 metres at the Diamond League event, after a pulled hamstring led to a last-place 200m finish a week earlier.

In front of a rapturous crowd Liu, who in 2004 became China's first athlete to win an Olympic track gold medal, ended world number one David Oliver's 20-race winning streak with a time of 13.09.

Liu, who has been eyeing the London Olympics since an achilles injury forced him out of his first heat at the 2008 Beijing Games, said he felt good on the track.

Tamim

FROM PAGE 16

Umar Akmal represent some of the Pakistani talent on show.

South Africa's dashing Herschelle Gibbs and veteran Makhaya Ntini, New Zealand's Daniel Vettori and Ireland's Kevin O'Brien are among the other big names.

Khulna

FROM PAGE 16

Mithun played all five games but couldn't even reach an aggregate of 200 runs.

Also surprisingly for Khulna was Nizamuddin Ripon's performance as an off-spinner. Regarded as more of a batsman, Ripon ended up with 14 wickets, the highest by any of their bowlers, a list that included international pacemen like Syed Raseel, Dollar Mahmud and Robiul Islam.

Abahani

FROM PAGE 16

Abahani but unfortunately Twum Frank's effort was too feeble and Iran Sheikh saved the kick with ease.

After resumption, Abahani strengthened the attack sending on Shakawat Hossain Ronny and the ball was mostly confined to the Rahmatganj box but the Sky Blues failed to break the crowded backline. Luck was surely not on Abahani's favour as Ashraf Mahmud Likon saw his effort in the 74th minute come off the woodwork.

Abahani's Iranian coach Ali Akbar blamed both the referee and his strikers for this defeat. "Poor refereeing let us down. Even then we should have scored at least 15 goals but our finishing was poor too." However, Akbar still believes they are in the title race.

Dilshan's riposte

Cricket

AFP, London

Sri Lanka captain Tillakaratne Dilshan answered a hundred from England skipper Andrew Strauss with one of his own on the second day of the islanders' tour opener against Middlesex at Uxbridge on Sunday.

Dilshan struck 123 off 134 balls and with Tharanga Paranavithana, who made 103, put on 209 for the first wicket.

Both openers retired to give batsmen lower down the order some time in the middle ahead of a three-Test series against England that gets underway in Cardiff later this month.

Lahiru Thirimanne and Dinesh Chandimal added an unbroken 59 to take Sri Lanka to 309 for two declared in reply to Middlesex's first innings 360 for eight that featured 151 from Strauss.

Dilshan was reprieved on 10 when he was dropped by Jamie Dalrymple at second slip and, having made 1144, was missed again when Strauss failed to hold a catch at point.

But his innings featured several fine shots, including 14 fours and a six driven way back over Tom Smith's head.

Azlan Shah Cup Aussies'

Hockey

AFP, Kuala Lumpur

World Champions Australia won the 20th edition of the Sultan Azlan Shah Cup on Sunday beating Pakistan 3-2 through a golden goal in extra-time.

Australia took the lead in the 11th minute through Christopher Ciriello off their second penalty corner, but the goal only served to spur on Pakistan who went in search of the equaliser.

It came in the 31st minute off their second penalty corner attempt by Sohail Abbas whose powerful drag flick had goalkeeper George Bazeley well beaten.

Australia regained the lead in the 44th minute through a field goal by Glenn Turner, only for Rahan Butt draw Pakistan level with an equaliser on 61 minutes sending the match into added-time.

Both teams had their chances to score the golden goal but it was Australia who prevailed through a Ciriello winner to give Australia their sixth Sultan Azlan Shah Cup title.

Pakistan's manager K. M. Junaid was happy with the performance of the players but was anguished at his side's failure to take their chances to grab the winner.

"It was a good showing by the players and they played one of the best matches here. It shows that despite having a young team we can play good hockey and the young players are maturing fast," he said.

Pakistan had the consolation of adding two individual awards to their silver medal. Shakeel Abbasi was named the best player of the tournament while Sohail Abbas was the joint top scorer with India's Rupinder Singh at six goals each.

Meanwhile, Great Britain bounced back from a lethargic start to beat New Zealand 4-2 and finish third in the tournament held in Ipoh, the capital of northern Perak state.

New Zealand were the early aggressors against Great Britain for third place, forcing a penalty corner in the fourth minute. Andrew Hayward had the ball in the net but it was ruled-out.

The Kiwis struck off their second penalty corner as Hayward played the ball towards the goal and pusher Stephen Jenness rushed in for a neat deflection that sailed over the outstretched goalkeeper.

Paranavithana, a left-hander who is set to open with Dilshan in the first Test, which starts at Cardiff's Sophia Gardens on May 26, reached a hundred off 145 balls with 15 fours.

At stumps, on the second day of three, Middlesex were 26 for one in their second innings.

Earlier, Middlesex, 321 for five overnight, added 39 runs before their innings was closed at 360 for eight after 100 overs.

Chanaka Welegedara, the left-arm seamer likely to share the new ball with Dilhara Fernando in the Test matches, took two wickets and spinner Ajantha Mendis, added one to his first day haul.

Welegedara had Dawid Malan caught at mid-on and Smith caught behind, while Mendis had Anthony Ireland well-taken by Thilan Samaraweera on the midwicket boundary.

Mendis, who took four for 285 in two championship matches for Somerset before dropping out of the county side with a back strain, finished with two for 83 from 20 overs.

Sri Lanka also face the England Lions -- the national A side -- in a four-day fixture at Derby starting on Thursday in their second and final warm-up game before the Test campaign.

But Great Britain levelled in the 34th minute and then took the lead in the 51st minute through Robert Moore.

Richard Smith sent in a low flick from a penalty corner that put his team 3-1 ahead while Matthew Daly added the fourth in the 65th minute.

Blair Hilton netted New Zealand's second in the 69th minute but it was clearly Great Britain's game.

British coach Jason Lee was pleased with the team's second half effort.

"The players did better once they had equalised and the pressure came off them. We are happy that we finished third and it will motivate the players to work harder at their game," he said.

Last year's joint champions South Korea and India battled it out for fifth spot in a repeat of 2010's washed-out final with the Koreans prevailing in a 2-1 victory.

Phelps clinches 200m b'stroke

AFP, Charlotte

US Olympic swimming star Michael Phelps beat Ryan Lochte in the 200m backstroke Sunday to leave the Charlotte UltraSwim long course Grand Prix with one victory.

Phelps, the 14-time Olympic gold medalist, had finished sixth in the 200m free and second in the 200m butterfly this week, but clocked 1min 57.20sec to win the backstroke with Lochte second in 1:58.82.

"I saw a splash out of the corner of my eye and saw the green suit, so I knew it was Ryan," said Phelps. "I ended up with two terrible races and one halfway decent one."

Hungary's Katinka Hosszu won the women's 200m individual medley in 2:12.29, finishing in front of Sweden's Stina Gardell who trains with her with Trojan Aquatics.

"After a week off, we've working hard, adding more yardage, swimming longer stuff," Hosszu said. "As the World Championships get closer, I wanted to be swimming faster and faster as this meet went on. I felt I was slow on the first day here."

US Olympic veteran Natalie Coughlin won the women's 100m free in 54.19sec ahead of Dana Vollmer and 16-year-old Missy Franklin.

NAT'L WOMEN'S FOOTBALL Jessore start with a goal-spree

SPORTS REPORTER

The first round of National Women's Football Championship started at the Jessore Stadium yesterday with hosts Jessore scoring a comprehensive 5-0 victory over Rajbari. Sharmin Akter Lima slammed a hat-trick while Rehana Khatun scored the other two as Jessore coasted to an easy victory.

Earlier, local member of parliament Khalidur Rahman Titu inaugurated the meet as the chief guest where Bangladesh Football Federation's vice-president Manjur Hasan Malu and chairperson of women's football committee Mahfuza Akter Kiron were also present.

In today's matches Satkhira will take on Sirajgonj while Magura will play against Naogaon at the Jessore Stadium. Dinajpur will take on Bogra in the other match at the Dinajpur Stadium. All the matches of the tournament have a duration of 80 minutes.

Open squash begins Thursday

SPORTS REPORTER

The Grameenphone Open Squash Tournament begins on Thursday at the Dhaka Club Squash Court.

A total of 72 players from 13 clubs will participate in five sections of the meet. The sections are premier, A, B, U-18 and 45+.

The details of the tournament were presented at a press conference at the federation office on Monday with president Mushfiqur Rahman Mohon and Tahmid Azizul Huq, the head of corporate communications of Grameenphone present.

Comilla face Mymensingh in 1st semi today

SPORTS REPORTER

The first semifinal of the 31st Inter-district cricket championship between Comilla and Mymensingh will be held at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur today.

The second semifinal between Sylhet and Rajshahi will take place at the same venue tomorrow.

The final is scheduled to be held in Mirpur on May 20.

Olympic marathoner Wanjiru dies after fall

Athletics

THE GUARDIAN

The Olympic marathon champion Sammy Wanjiru has been killed in a fall from a balcony at his home in Kenya following a domestic dispute, police said on Monday.

Wanjiru, 24, died late on Sunday night in the town of Nyahururu in the Rift Valley, allegedly after his wife caught him with another woman.

In the 2008 Beijing Olympics, Wanjiru became the first Kenyan to win a gold medal in the marathon, finishing in an Olympic-record 2hr 6min 32sec. His death has stunned fellow athletes.

Local media reported that relatives found Wanjiru lying on the concrete floor bleeding through the mouth and ears. Police said he suffered internal injuries and was confirmed dead by doctors at a nearby hospital.

Eric Kiraithe, Kenya's national police spokesman, told the Associated Press: "The fact of the matter is that Wanjiru committed suicide."

The police commissioner Mathew Iteere also said initial reports indicated Wanjiru killed himself, though a local official offered a different account.

Jasper Ombati, the regional police chief, told AP: "Wanjiru came home with another woman friend at around 11.30pm and then when his wife came home and found them she inquired who the lady was. They got into an argument. His wife locked them in the bedroom and ran off."

"He then jumped from the bedroom balcony. He is not here to tell us what he was thinking when he jumped. We do not suspect foul play. In our estimation we think he wanted to stop his wife from leaving the compound."

Ombati said Wanjiru's wife, Tereza Njeri, and his female companion are assisting police in investigating the death.

The athlete had a history of domestic problems. Last December he was charged in court with threatening to kill Njeri and illegal

possession of an AK-47 assault rifle. Njeri later withdrew her accusation of attempted murder against him in court, saying the couple had reconciled. But Wanjiru was due to appear in court on 23 May on the charge of illegal possession of a firearm.

He also suffered minor injuries from a car crash in January when he swerved to avoid an oncoming truck, hit a pot hole and rolled his car.

It was reported that some Kenyans believe Wanjiru found it hard to handle the sudden financial rewards that came with his success.

He was the youngest runner to win four major marathons. In addition to the Olympics, he won in London in 2009 and Chicago in 2009 and 2010, running the fastest ever time recorded in a marathon in America.

He moved to Japan at the age of 15 and won major cross country events while also competing in track competitions. Moving to Europe to advance his promising career, Wanjiru won the Rotterdam Half Marathon in 2005 in a world record time.

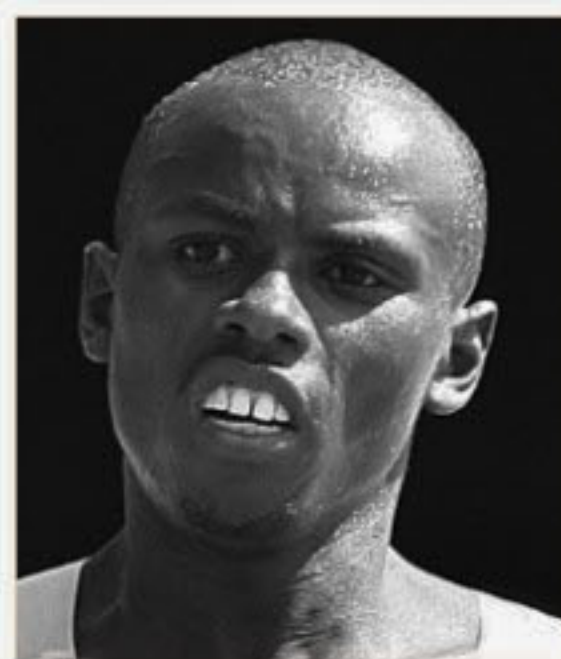
He twice improved on that record before stepping up to the full marathon in 2007, back in Japan, winning the Fukuoka marathon. The following year he finished second in the London marathon, and then claimed the ultimate prize of Olympic gold in Beijing.

A big crowd gathered around Wanjiru's house on Monday morning. The Ethiopian marathon veteran Haile Gebrselassie, a two-time Olympic champion and world record holder, said on his Twitter feed that he was "totally shocked" by the news.

"My thoughts are with his family and all his friends and colleagues," Gebrselassie said. "Of course one wonders if we as an athletics family could have avoided this tragedy."

The American marathon runner Ryan Hall posted on Twitter: "Incredibly sad news about Sammy. I am shocked and saddened."

Britain's Mo Farah, who trained with Wanjiru in Kenya, added: "So sad to hear about Sammy Wanjiru. He was a legend and still so young."



SAMMY WANJIRU

Maria ends title drought

Tennis

AFP, Rome

Triple Grand Slam title winner Maria Sharapova won her first tournament in almost a year as she powered past Australia's Samantha Stosur 6-2, 6-4 to win the Rome International on Sunday.

Sharapova's last title came at the low-key Strasbourg claycourt event on the eve of the 2010 French Open.

But having beaten world number one Caroline Wozniacki in Saturday's semifinal, Sharapova proved too much for an erratic Stosur.

"I'm so excited to be able to be champion of this tournament," said former world number one Sharapova.

"I'd been to the semis once a few years ago and it means so much to add this title to the ones I've won before."

"It's been a while since I won a title. I have gotten really close and I have had good results but winning this title in Rome

means a lot to me. "I surely wasn't the favourite and going into an event like this on clay and to (beat) players who have had great results on clay means a lot to me."

It is good news for the Russian just a week ahead of the start of the French Open, the only Grand Slam she has yet to win and a tournament where she has never been beyond the quarter-finals.

But on her least favourite surface she had too much power for Stosur, finalist at the French Open last year, who racked up the unforced errors throughout the match.

She admitted that she simply hadn't performed on the day.

"I am obviously disappointed to lose this one here but I thought Maria played quite well," she said.

"I simply wasn't at my best, I got off to a very slow start and I kind of struggled to begin with. To be honest when I woke up this morning I didn't feel too good."

"I think going out there it kind of hit me. She hits the ball quite hard and my reaction just wasn't there."

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Protuberance
5 Quoits
9 Blond shade
12 Birthright
13 Gumbo need
14 Bill's partner
15 Predicate part
16 Follow relentlessly
17 Big Apple letters
18 Pastoral poem
19 Reuben holder
20 Summit
21 Altar affirmative
23 Supporting
25 Re-inforced
28 Helix
32 "Lather, —, repeat"
33 Argentinian-based musical

34 Bee-keeper's place
36 Garland
37 Melissa of "The Fighter"
38 17-Across hrs.
39 Rubik's baffle
42 Card-table call
44 Catch sight of
48 Inseparable
49 Discourteous
50 Duel tool
51 "Monty Python" opener
52 Vicinity
53 Money of China

54 Parcel of land
55 Sch. orgs.
56 Blunders

10 High-protein bean
11 Pawn
20 Gumshoe
22 Big name in tractors
24 Unwraps
25 Monokini's lack
26 Rend
27 Blackbird
29 Disen-cumber
30 Devoured
31 Felon's flight
35 Dannon product
36 Trojan War hero
39 Spring wind?
40 "Do — others ..."
41 Oscar-night superlative
43 Concept
45 Boot attachment
46 Brandy flavor
47 Longings
49 Knock

Solution time: 27 mins.

J I B A T O M G Y M S
E C U B O L A R O U E
B U S Y B O D Y O G L E
T E A K B U I L D
B A L L S C H I N
R O I L B R E A D B O X
A N N B O O M S U L M
D E G R A S S I T A S E A
H I S S A D I O S
B E R Y L O P E N
O M I T B U S H N E L L
N I G H U G L I S E E
D R A M G O O D S I X

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12				13				14		
15				16				17		
18				19			20			
			21	22		23	24			
25	26	27				28		29	30	31
32						33				
34				35		36				
			37			38				
39	40	41		42	43		44	45	46	47
48				49			50			
51				52			53			
54				55			56			

CRYPTOQUIP

SEUS TUCHJ CBNNJE CDWLA
ANIHLHSNFV CNNYC IUMN
SD YN. H SEHLM HS YWCS
TN U BEDLV BEDLNYN.
Yesterday's Cryptiquip: APPETIZING SPECIALTY
DISH PREPARED AND SERVED ALONG A RIVER IN
CHINA: YANGTZE POT ROAST.
Today's Cryptiquip Clue: Y equals M