



Brothers Union striker Kingsley Chigozie (R) attempts to evade a sliding tackle from a Chittagong Abahani defender during their Bangladesh League match at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

Draw looms in first Test

Cricket

AFP, Cardiff

Sri Lanka finally saw the back of Alastair Cook in the first Test at Sophia Gardens here on Sunday but only after he'd shared another huge stand with fellow century-maker Jonathan Trott. Meanwhile Kevin Pietersen's well documented problems against left-arm spin continued when he was lbw to Rangana Herath for just three.

England were 344 for four in reply to Sri Lanka's first innings 400, a deficit of 56 runs, at tea on the fourth day. Trott had extended his overnight century to 147 not out while Warwickshire colleague Ian Bell was unbeaten on 28 after rain, which has repeatedly interrupted this match, washed out the morning session to leave the first of a three-Test series heading for a draw.

England resumed on 287 for two, with Cook 129 not out and Trott 125 not out -- his sixth century in just 19 Tests. Cook had added just four runs when he top-edged a cut off seamer Farveez Maharoof and was caught head-high by wicket-keeper Prasanna Jayawardene.

England were 298 for three after a five-hour partnership of 251 between opener Cook and Trott that came hot on the heels of stands of 329 and 173 during a 3-1 Ashes series win in Australia.

This was also Cook's second hundred in as many Test innings, following on from an Ashes triumph where the 26-year-old left-hander scored a mammoth 766 runs at 127.66, including three centuries.

Pietersen had already looked uncomfortable against Herath before he went back, with a cross-bat, to a delivery that kept low. Sri Lanka's lbw appeal was rejected by West Indian

umpire Billy Doctrove, prompting a review. Australian third umpire Rod Tucker, after several minutes' study, eventually decided the ball had hit the

PIETERSEN'S LEFT-ARM SPIN BOGEY

Bowler	Occasions in Tests
Shakib Al Hasan	4
Daniel Vettori	4
Suleiman Benn	3
Paul Harris	3
Abdur Razzak	1
Xavier Doherty	1
Rangana Herath	1
Ryan Hinds	1
Yuvraj Singh	1

*Herath became the ninth left-arm spinner to dismiss Kevin Pietersen in Test cricket. Out of 124 Test innings, Pietersen has fallen to this breed 19 times while in ODIs, it is 17 times out of 104 innings, Yuvraj having snared him most times (4).

off after just 11 balls at the crease, with England now 305 for four.

It was the 19th time in Tests and 43rd occasion in all international cricket Pietersen had been dismissed by a left-arm spinner.

Bell though drove Herath, one of only two bowlers along with Maharoof used in the session, straight out of the ground for the first six of the match.

But Bell had a lucky break on 19 when a cut off Maharoof, playing his first Test in nearly four years after being called up from county side Lancashire, was dropped at gully by Kumar Sangakkara.

SCORES IN BRIEF
SRI LANKA: First innings 400 (Jayawardene 112, Paranavithana 66, Samaraweera 58, Dilshan 50; Anderson 3-66, Swann 3-78)
ENGLAND: First innings 344 for 4 at tea (Strauss 20, Cook 133, Trott 147 not out, Bell 28 not out)

Vettel breaks Monaco jinx

AFP, Monte Carlo

Defending drivers' world champion German Sebastian Vettel rode his considerable share of good luck on Sunday to claim his first victory at the Monaco Grand Prix after an incident-filled and dramatic race.

On an afternoon of Safety Cars, red flags, lengthy stoppages and multiple collisions, the 23-year-old leader of this year's title race emerged ahead of the field to enlarge his commanding lead as he steered his Red Bull car to an unexpected, and narrow, victory.

The race had been stopped temporarily after a mass crash which saw Russian driver Vitaly Petrov taken to hospital.

Vettel's victory, after claiming pole position in Monaco for the first time on Saturday, was the 15th of his career and his eighth in the last 10 races.

It stretched his golden run which has seen him finish on the podium at every race since the Singapore Grand Prix last year.

Two-times champion Spaniard Fernando Alonso, who had won twice at Monaco, finished second for Ferrari -- their best result this season -- ahead of luckless Briton Jenson Button of McLaren, who might have won but for the various Safety Car stops and other interventions.

Japanese Kamui Kobayashi of Sauber looked set to take fourth but was passed in a final flurry of drama by determined Australian Mark Webber of Red Bull and had to settle for fifth ahead of 2008 world champion Lewis Hamilton, who finished the race sixth for McLaren.

Hamilton, however, faced an investigation for his passing move on Venezuelan Pastor Maldonado of Williams in the final laps.

Club Cup

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She was well supported by fellow opening batswoman Shuktara Rahman, who made 25 off 61 balls, the two adding 64 runs for the first wicket before being trapped in front by Jahanara.

Rumana was unbeaten on eight when Mohammedan reached the target.

BCB president AHM Mustafa Kamal gave away prizes among the winners, Mohammedan claiming Tk 50,000 as champions while Sheikh Jamal bagging Tk 40,000 as the second best side in the competition.

Shailla was adjudged player-of-the-match, winning Tk 2,000 while BKSP's Farzana Haque Pinky became the player of the tournament for her 406 runs and three wickets, receiving Tk 5,000 as well as Tk 3,000 as the top scorer.

Salma, with 13 wickets, picked up the highest wicket-taker's award and Tk 3,000.

Few questions need to be answered

AFP, Chennai



After a gruelling seven weeks and 74 matches, the Indian Premier League (IPL) finally came to an end amid the usual glitter and glamour but left unanswered questions in its wake.

The sight of N Srinivasan, owner of the Chennai Super Kings franchise, handing out the winners' medals to his own players again raised issues of transparency in a tournament dogged with allegations of financial malpractice.

Srinivasan is a powerful figure in Indian cricket as secretary and president-elect of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) and president of the Tamil Nadu state cricket association.

His own side were crowned as IPL champions for the second time in a row late on Saturday, a result which was widely predicted given their dominance of home conditions and favourability of the wicket.

There have been grumblings for months over Srinivasan's multiple roles and a possible conflict of interest after he was spotted sitting at the BCCI table during the IPL player auction earlier this year.

"Srinivasan was in the group that set the norms for the auction, decided which player would go in which category, and when each name would come up for auction," wrote cricket author Vedam Jaishankar in the Daily News and Analysis newspaper on Sunday.

The BCCI has been keen to promote a better image of the money-spinning IPL after throwing out Lalit Modi, the league's founder, last September over graft accusations.

The BCCI has registered a criminal case against Modi for the misappropriation of 4.68 billion rupees (106 million dollars) and also faces a government probe for financial irregularities.

Modi, whose brash style personified the

IPL, left India last year -- and has consistently denied all the charges against him.

He now lives in self-imposed exile in London, surrounded by bodyguards, as he claims his life is in danger from Mumbai-based gangsters linked to illegal gambling.

"Good to see finally a packed stadium," Modi said on his Twitter page during the game, in an apparent dig at the organisers' struggle with falling ticket sales.

In a further attempt to tackle transparency issues, the BCCI also tried to expel two sides -- Kings XI Punjab and Rajasthan Royals -- from the 2011 IPL over allegations of breaking shareholding and ownership rules.

But the sides remained in the league after challenging the move in the courts.

The IPL revolutionised cricket when it burst onto the scene in 2008 with international stars, rapid-fire Twenty20 action and Bollywood glamour tapping into India's immense appetite for the sport.

But some observers say interest may already have peaked with reports of falling television ratings as well as some empty stands.

"The fourth edition of the IPL has been beyond the pale," cricket writer Peter Roebuck said in a column for The Hindu on Sunday.

"Sooner or later slapstick loses its appeal. Like rugby sevens and speed chess, it does not really matter, even in the sporting sense. It is an entertainment not an examination."

Other experts also complain that the tournament is failing to unearth new domestic talent.

"While it is argued that the IPL has given Indian first class cricketers a new life, it has also made money come easy to most of them," said Boria Majumdar, a cricket historian and writer.

"In terms of its ability to throw up good Indian talent, IPL season four has a negative record, a legacy it will do well to change in season five."

Upul fails dope test?

AFP, Colombo

Sri Lankan left-hand batsman Upul Tharanga failed a random doping test during the CricketWorld Cup, a Colombo newspaper said Sunday, though the ICC declined to confirm the report.

Tharanga has already retained a lawyer to defend himself at an upcoming International Cricket Council (ICC) inquiry, Sri Lanka's Sunday Times said, quoting unnamed sources.

It said Tharanga has claimed that he was given a steroid by a faith healer in Colombo who also treated other international players.

"There's nothing I can say at this stage," ICC spokesman James Fitzgerald told AFP in an email response to the report.

Sri Lanka Cricket, the sport's national governing body, said it was unaware of any failed dope test.

"We have not been informed of any allegation like this," SLC secretary Nishantha Ranatunga said.

Tharanga opened against England in the World Cup semifinals and scored an unbeaten century as Sri Lanka won by 10 wickets. He then played in the final, where Sri Lanka lost to India.

He is not part of the Sri Lankan side currently on tour in England.

Sk Russel

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dancing past two defenders and goalkeeper.

Sangkar Das pulled one goal back six minutes from time for Chittagong Abahani.

Roger, Novak could meet in last four

AP, Paris



Roger Federer set yet another record by reaching the French Open quarterfinals Sunday, and Novak Djokovic closed in on a pair of his own.

Federer extended his quarterfinal streak at major tournaments to 28 with a 6-3, 6-2, 7-5 victory over Olympic gold medal doubles partner Stanislav Wawrinka.

Shortly after Federer's match on Court Philippe Chatrier, Djokovic maintained his perfect season and stretched his overall winning streak to 43 matches by beating Richard Gasquet of France 6-4, 6-4, 6-2.

Federer and Djokovic could meet in the semifinals.

Also Sunday, Anastasia Pavlyuchenkova knocked out the highest seeded player remaining in the women's draw, beating No. 3 Vera Zvonareva 7-6, 2-6, 6-2 to earn a spot in the quarterfinals.

Federer, a 16-time major champion who completed a career Grand Slam at Roland Garros in 2009, improved on the record he shared with Jimmy Connors on Court Philippe Chatrier. The last time Federer failed to reach the quarterfinals at a major was at the 2004 French Open, when he was the top-seeded player but lost to Gustavo Kuerten in the third round.

Federer again dominated with his serve Sunday. He was broken once early in the third set, but broke back twice to remain one of four players to have won every match in straight sets.

Federer also beat Wawrinka, his Davis Cup teammate, in the quarterfinals of the Australian Open. In 2008, the Swiss pair teamed up to win the doubles gold at the Beijing Olympics.

Besides his record 16 major titles, Federer also set a record of 23 straight Grand Slam semifinal appearances. That run ended at last year's French Open, when he was beaten in the quarterfinals.

Federer set his quarterfinal streak in 28 consecutive Grand Slam tournaments, while

Connors skipped some in his run.

In the next round, Federer will face either No. 7 David Ferrer or No. 9 Gael Monfils.

Djokovic is 41-0 in 2011, including a pair of clay-court final wins over top-ranked Rafael Nadal. If he beats unseeded Fabio Fognini in the quarterfinals, he will match John McEnroe's record for the best start to the season.

With three more wins, Djokovic will equal Guillermo Vilas's overall Open era record of 46 consecutive wins.

Fognini, the first Italian to reach the quarterfinals at Roland Garros since 1995, overcame a cramping left leg and five match points to defeat Albert Montanes of Spain 4-6, 6-4, 3-6, 6-3, 11-9.

Milon's bronze

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In the same event, Bangladesh's other promising archer Sajib Sheikh lost to Hemanta in the quarterfinal.

The girls of Bangladesh were not as strong as the boys as Kaniz Fatema and Antara Chakma were both eliminated from the pre-quarterfinals stage. However, Shyamoli Roy moved to the quarterfinal where she lost to India's Mainaw.

Bangladesh could have won one more bronze in the senior event of the Grand Prix but Mathui Pro lost to Loh TZE Rong of Singapore in the bronze-deciding match to be content with a fourth-place finish.

Mathui earlier lost to India's Rimil Buriguly, who will face Malaysia's Adibah Tajuddin in the final on May 31.

Beauty Roy also suffered defeat against Rimil in pre-quarterfinal while their male partners Ziaul Haq and Debdas Roy were also eliminated from the pre-quarterfinals stage. In Compound Bow events, Sajjad Hossain Mohammad Sohel and Abul Kashem were eliminated from the pre-quarterfinals or quarterfinals while Namota Hajong, Nadira Khatun and Ayesha Parveen also failed to reach the semifinals.

Humble Pep shrugs A touching

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With his second European Cup triumph, Guardiola has become one of the hottest coaching properties in world football.

The 40-year-old deflected questions about his future on Saturday by stating that he would remain at Barcelona for at least another season.

He admitted though that joining another club after managing a side containing such peerless talents as Lionel Messi, Xavi Hernandez and Andres Iniesta would be a challenge.

"If you play this football you need these players. At another club maybe I would have a problem to find these kind of players," Guardiola said.

"I feel privileged to have these players. My future will be very tough as I'll be at another club with other players, thinking 'where are these kinds of players?' added Guardiola.

"A coach depends on the players. Obviously, you have girls falling at your feet when

you win, but that can change overnight."

And finding another player of the calibre of Messi, who scored the second of Barcelona's second goals before taking the man-of-the-match prize, would be practically impossible.

"He is the best I have ever seen and probably the best I will ever see," Guardiola said. "I don't think this team would have made the qualitative leap that we have made in the past few years without him."

"Messi is unique, he is a one-off. I just hope he doesn't get fed up. When he doesn't play well it is because something is wrong with his environment. Let's hope he can continue playing well."

June meeting

FROM PAGE 16
head coach who matches their requirements. "We will take the bowling and fielding coach after the appointment of the head coach and his consent will naturally be taken with a lot of respect," added Kamal.

A touching

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midfielder Xavi instead ordered Abidal to perform the ceremony in recognition of his inspirational comeback.

"It was such a special thing for him and Carles [Puyol] and [coach Pep Guardiola] to do," Abidal told Spanish television. "It made me full of emotion to think about it and everything I have been through and I could not hold [tears] in."

"This kind of thing is why this is such a special club. We are like a family and everyone treats each other with love and respect."

Gayle could

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select the players they feel will best represent the West Indies and within the selection policy," Hilaire said.

Hilaire said the selectors would be free to pick the squad and there would be no interference from the WICB officials.

"The directors do not sit at selection committee meetings, I do not interact with the selection committee when they are deliberating," Hilaire explained.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Sur-rounded by

6 "— the ramparts ..."

9 Periodical, short

12 Big name in grills

13 Catcher's place?

14 Lemieux milieu

15 Summarizing stanza

16 Stray

18 Absolutely

20 Unfavorable votes

21 "Eureka!"

23 1974 kidnap org.

24 Dodge

25 Green shot

27 Kazakhstan's — Mountains

29 Believer

31 "Gun-smoke" star

35 Watt power

37 World's fair

38 Wool eaters

41 IRS employee

43 Manhattan and —

44 Eastern bigwig

45 Shrimp recipe

47 Spread out from the center

49 Plank

52 Dance syllable

53 "Of course"

54 Lauder of cosmetics

55 "2001" computer

56 Type measures

57 Clarinetist's supply

8 Gun the engine

9 Cat's call (Var.)

10 Performed

11 Gaggle members

17 Queued

19 Cheer up

21 Suitable

22 "What?"

24 Listener

26 Month after Elul

28 Florida city

30 Rds.

32 Atone (for)

33 Hot tub

34 Boar's mate

36 Entry

38 Parade

39 Nebraska city

40 Re ebb and flow

42 Caution-light color

45 Branch

46 Sit for a shoot

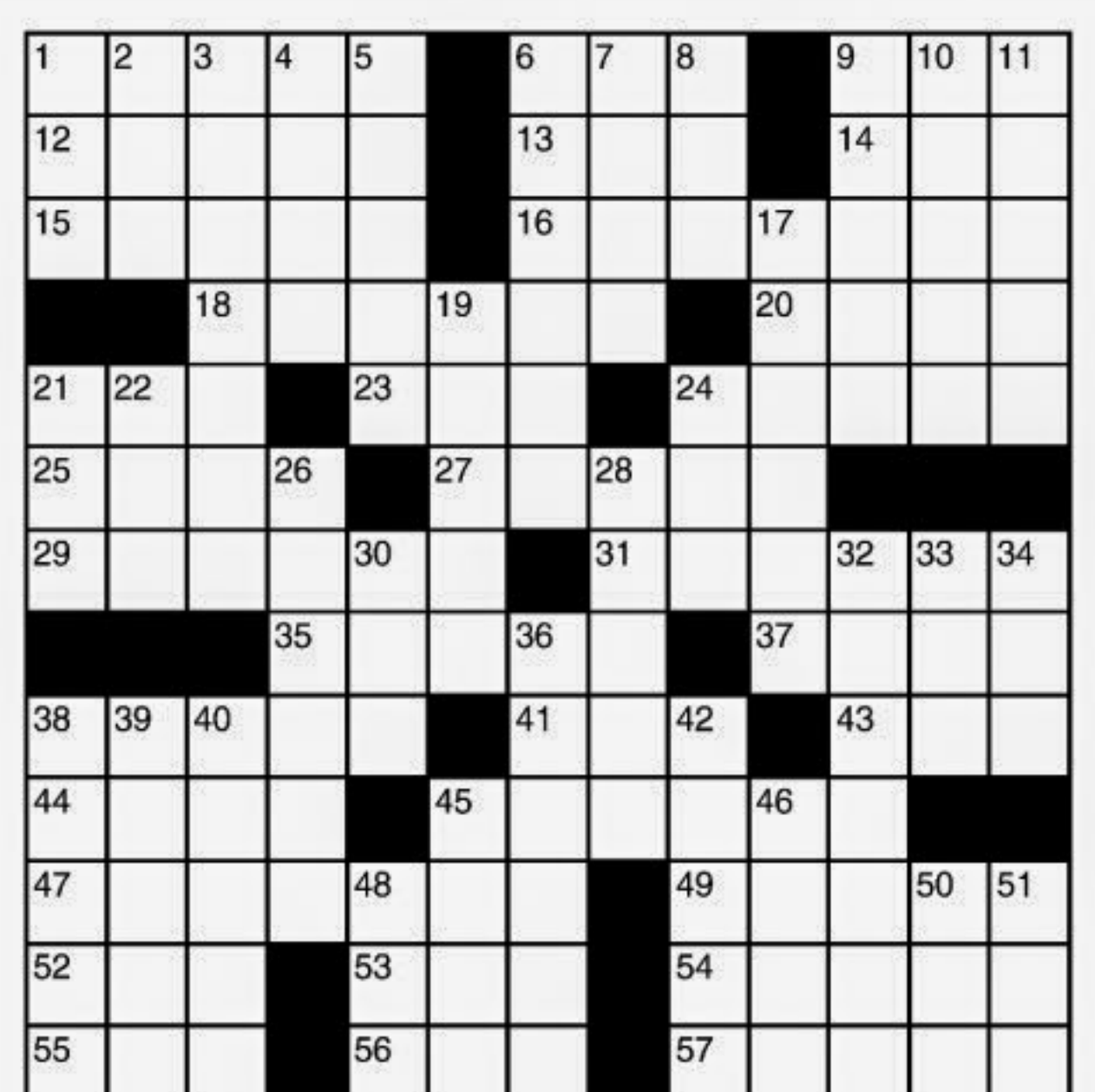
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CRYPTOQUIP

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B S N N E L P O T P S T H P F - E S N N O P T ?

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: THIS MARKETPLACE HAS PLENTY OF CRAZY ITEMS FOR SALE. MANY FOLKS REFER TO IT AS A BIZARRE BAZAAR.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: N equals L