## Manchesters' wings clipped

REUTERS, Manchester



The two Manchester sides who have made flying starts to their domestic seasons had their wings clipped in Europe

this week as their free-scoring ways were replaced by caution for United and nerves for City.

They have amassed 33 goals between them in a perfect start of four Premier League wins but could not match that in the Champions League, salvaging 1-1 draws in Wednesday's openers.

United's point at their main Group C rivals Benfica was a better one than City's one at home to Napoli, the least fancied side in a strong Group A, but both had to come from behind to draw so know it could have been worse.

Champions League debutants City put their profligacy in front of goal down to over-excitement and coach Roberto Mancini said they would have no such trouble in their next game away to Bayern

Munich later this month if they went back to basics.

"I think the second game will be more calm," he told a news conference after a 74th-minute free kick from Aleksandar Kolarov levelled the match. "Bayern Munich are a fantastic team but we have a team that can to do so. win very well.

"Did we show a bit of naivety? Yes, absolutely. But I'm happy with our performance. Every game in the Champions League is different and difficult, for us it's important to play simple football. If we do this we will play better football."

Inexperience was not a problem for former winners and last season's runners-up Manchester United whose equaliser in Portugal came courtesy of the Champions League's oldest goalscorer Ryan Giggs, who said. turns 38 in November.

"Our possession in the first half was too cautious in the first half," Ferguson told reporters. "It was the kind of possession that gives you a certain control but doesn't win you

"I think a draw was a fair result."

The pair now return to league action and despite Mancini's assertion that "it is impossible for a striker to score three or four goals every game" the likes of Sergio Aguero and Edin Dzeko, who have scored six each this season, will try

City travel to Fulham on Sunday while Manchester United entertain title hopefuls Chelsea in what is their stiffest test so far this season.

Ferguson had even rested some players for that big Premier League game, leaving out winger Ashley Young and keeper David Dea for the Benfica match.

"David De Gea will play on Sunday. That was the understanding we had before the Benfica game and it doesn't change," the manager

"We gave Ashley Young a rest tonight as I felt he needed a little break after the two games he played for England and the one for us at Bolton. He is new to the club and obviously every game is massive for him here, so he'll be nice and fresh for Sunday."



KUMAR AWAITS A TON OF TESTS: Sri Lanka's Kumar Sangakkara (L), who is set to play his 100th Test match, passes the ball away from Prasanna Jayawardene on the eve of the third and final game of the series against Australia at the Sinhalese Sports Club in Colombo.

# Final Test from today

#### Aussies drop Khawaja, Harris in Sangakkara's 100th match

Cricket

AFP, Colombo

Australia have left out injured fast bowler Ryan Harris and batsman Usman Khawaja for the third and final cricket Test against Sri Lanka starting in Colombo on Friday.

Harris, the most successful bowler in the series with 11 wickets, suffered a hamstring strain during the drawn second Test in Pallekele, and will be replaced by Peter Siddle.

Left-handed Khawaja was dropped to make way for former captain Ricky Ponting, who returns to the side after taking leave from the Pallekele Test for the birth of his second child.

Skipper Michael Clarke and the selectors had a tricky decision to make after Shaun Marsh, who replaced Ponting in the second Test, scored a century on debut to cement his place in the side.

"It's brilliant to have Ricky back, he was always going to walk back into the team," Clarke said ahead of a practice session at the Sinhalese Sports Club

[SSC] on Thursday. "It is hard for Uzzie [Khawaja]. It's obviously been a tough selection, but

with Shaun making 141 on debut, it was really hard to leave him out." Clarke said resting Harris was a precautionary measure considering the

heavy schedule ahead, which includes

Test series against South Africa, New

Zealand and India. "I guess we have to be safe, rather than sorry," the captain said. "I certainly don't think it's worth the risk of playing him here, because if that minor strain becomes a big tear he could be out for a lot longer."

Clarke said Australia's 1-0 lead in the series after winning the opening Test in Galle by 125 runs had put the onus on Sri Lanka to call the shots.

"Our goal is to win the Test, but if we rectify. draw, we go home 1-0 winners," he said. "But there is probably a bit more pressure on the Sri Lankans, knowing they have to win to level the series.

"They have to bat a bit more positively than they have done in the series Thursday. so far and try and get a result." If the hosts need inspiration, they need

to look no further than their former captain Kumar Sangakkara, who makes his 100th Test appearance on Friday. Sangakkara, who turns 34 next

month, will be the fifth Sri Lankan to play a century of Tests after Muttiah Muralidaran (132 matches), Mahela Jayawardene (121), Chaminda Vaas (111) and Sanath Jayasuriya (110).

Clarke paid rich tributes to the prolific left-hander, but hoped Australia will get him out early.

"I've enjoyed watching him score runs for a long time," said Clarke. "But I don't like it when he scores them against Australia and I hope he gets a pair in this

In the 18 Tests Sangakkara has played at the SSC, he has scored 1,864 runs at an awe-inspiring average of 74.56, with seven three-figure knocks, including three double centuries.

It was at the same venue that Sangakkara (287) and Jayawardene (374) recorded the highest partnership ever in Test cricket: 624 for the third wicket in 2006 against South Africa.

But Sangakkara has never featured in a Sri Lankan Test win over Australia, something the star batsman hoped to

"The key is to score big in the first innings, which we have not been able to do in the two Tests so far," said Sangakkara, who met the media instead of skipper Tillakaratne Dilshan on

"I think we have a good enough team to win on any wicket. It is always challenging to play the Aussies, but we have not challenged them enough in the

"I hope that will change here."

#### **SQUADS**

AUSTRALIA: Michael Clarke (captain), Shane Watson, Phillip Hughes, Ricky Ponting, Michael Hussey, Shaun Marsh, Brad Haddin, Mitchell Johnson, Peter Siddle, Trent Copeland, Nathan Lyon. SRI LANKA (from): Tillakaratne Dilshan (captain), Tharanga Paranavitana, Kumar Sangakkara, Mahela Jayawardene, Thilan Samaraweera, Prasanna Jayawardene, Angelo Mathews, Suraj Randiv, Suranga Lakmal, Chanaka Welegedara, Lahiru Thirumanne, Rangana Herath, Shaminda Eranga, Dhammika Prasad, Seekkuge Prasanna.

#### DAVIS CUP TIE

#### Feeling-good Fed warns Australia

AFP, Sydney

Roger Federer said Thursday he was feeling "really good" as he prepared to face Lleyton Hewitt in the Davis Cup despite a long flight after a gruelling US Open semifinal defeat to Novak Djokovic. The world number three

has made the long trek to Sydney for Switzerland's World Group play-off against Australia. "I'm not sore -- sorry to

good, really good actually,' Federer said. He will face Hewitt on Friday, with a 17-8 record

disappoint you. I'm feeling

against the Australian working in his favour. The pair plays second after Stanislas Wawrinka takes on Bernard Tomic on the opening day of a tie on

grass courts at the Royal

#### Sydney Golf Club. Ash fires

FROM PAGE 16

didn't help win the game but was enough to claim the manof-the-match award.

Rubel Hossain bowled effectively, taking three wickets while Abdur Razzak did himself a favour by picking two. Kapali, Nasir and Nazmul Hossain all picked up a wicket each.

#### **BRIEF SCORES**

BANGLADESH: 311-9 in 50 overs (Ashraful 83, Tamim 65 Mushfigur 63, Nafees 50 Riyad 4-75, Sunny 3-33). BANGLADESH A: 234-8 in 39

overs (Naeem 101 not out, Result: Bangladesh won by 36 runs (D/L method).

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### wipe out two-Test series Cricket in his desire for a home-grown mentor to take

Kumar calls upon ICC to

CRICINFO, Colombo

On the eve of his 100th Test, Kumar Sangakkara has called on the International Cricket Council (ICC) to do away with two-Test series, describing such scheduling as "unsatisfying". The third Test against Australia at Colombo will offer Sangakkara and his team the chance to pull back a 1-0 deficit, but they have not always been so fortunate.

As a stylish batsman, successful captain and articulate statesman for Sri Lankan cricket, Sangakkara said he had taken part in too many series where the narrative felt unduly clipped due to the lack of a third Test. One of his imponderables is the 2007 series

in Australia, where the under-prepared visitors lost in Brisbane but then, through Sangakkara's own majestic 192 in the second Test, pushed the hosts far further. The prospect of a third match might have made a significant change to the script.

"It is unsatisfactory to play so many two-Test series," Sangakkara told ESPNcricinfo. "As a country, to be measured up as a Test country, you need to keep playing three to five Test match series as much as you can.

"I don't think five Test series are attractive anymore to TV networks, but I think Test series should be a minimum of three matches. I hope the ICC can stipulate that, I don't know if they can." Among forthcoming series, Australia's visit

to South Africa has been cut to two Tests to accommodate the Twenty20 Champions League, a move that has already been heavily criticised for marginalising Test cricket. "Test cricket is still, to my mind, the most

important form of the game out there," Sangakkara said. "There's nothing like it, there's nothing that comes close to it. This is the only arena where you can really make your mark as a cricketer. If you are successful at Test cricket, that is all that matters I think."

Sri Lanka's success since Sangakkara's debut in 2000 has been charted largely under overseas coaches, including Tom Moody and Trevor Bayliss. However Sangakkara is fervent

the role full-time, and cited the former opening batsman Chandika Hathurusingha as an ideal candidate. "I think we have a great opportunity to

have a completely Sri Lankan coaching unit. That will be amazing if we can do it," Sangakkara said. "And we've had candidates the calibre of Chandika Hathurusingha, who is now the assistant coach for New South Wales. He has been a great loss to us.

"He made an amazing contribution to our cricket, and he is an extremely capable coach. Rumesh Ratnayake has also been exemplary, unfortunately he has come at a time when we've had quite a bad series, but these two people have shown we have the quality in Sri Lanka to have a completely local coaching unit which we can be proud of, and second to none in the world.

"At the same time if the administration and the captain also think a foreign coach is the way to go, that is also no problem, because there are many excellent coaches around the world ... There is Graham Ford, Geoff Marsh and a lot of other coaches in the running for this job, they're fantastic people, they've got great records and have proven themselves all over the world. "Any one of them would be a great addition

to our cricket, but on a personal level, and it's not a sentimental thing, I think we have the quality in Sri Lanka as well, unfortunately not in Sri Lanka now. One of them is outside coaching NSW, but we have the Sri Lankans capable of also being national coaches and doing a great job."

#### India want

**FROM PAGE 16** claim for regional supremacy.

Not only the NTMC, the Bangladesh League Committee also has plans to defer the season till after the SAFF Championships as the BFF is eager for good results at the regional football extravaganza after Bangladesh were eliminated from the semifinal via a lone-goal defeat at the hands of ultimate champions India in the most recent edition of biennial championship held in Dhaka in 2009.

### Siddikur

FROM PAGE 16

Macau Golf and Country

At the other end of the table, the No.1 position was shared by four players with scores of five-underpar 66 by Anthony Kang of the US, Rikard Karlberg of Sweden, Englishman Nick Redfern and Chan Yih-shin of Chinese Taipei.

Yih-shin produced some magic, hitting an eagle on the last hole, to shoot up the table.

With three more rounds still to come, it is possible for Bangladesh's ace golfer to make something out of the Macau Open but he may need to replicate some of Yih-shin's exploits to achieve that.

### Trabzonspor

FROM PAGE 18

Real took their time to assert their authority over Croatian hosts Dinamo Zagreb, making their first appearance in the competition in 11 years, until Argentinian wing Angel di Maria struck in the 53rd minute.

Bayern Munich - who are motivated more than ever to win this season's edition as the final is at their home ground - made a dream start away at Villarreal with German international Toni Kroos shooting home.

They added a second through substitute Rafinha 15 minutes from time.

## Dravid's final ODI

in the third one-day international at The Oval last week when he made 78 and picked up two England wickets with his left-arm spin bowling.

Given how injuries have hurt India on this tour, it wouldn't be a bad idea to blood youngsters and mark their performance for future references. A win in the final game could only be token and wouldn't

make any material difference in a series already lost.

Some good performances from youngsters would also alert the seniors who would be looking to return in the home series against England next month.

England, ironically, wouldn't be in the best of spirits even though the series is already won for them.

Two key players, Eoin Morgan and Stuart Broad, have been injured and both would have been invaluable when England pay a return visit to India next month. Craig Kieswetter and Ben Stokes, two young talents, have-

n't covered themselves in glory and clearly there is a case for Kevin Pietersen's return in England fold next month. Fast bowler Jade Dernbach, despite the specialist role he

plays as a one-day bowler, hasn't put the skids under the Indian batsmen. Indeed, despite providing two green pitches in London and having asked India to bat first in both the matches,

the two matches at The Oval and Lord's. England clearly don't have the flair and the flamboyance of the Indian batsmen and hitting over the top doesn't come easy

to them. A case in point was the last match at Lord's where Ian Bell and Ravi Bopara prospered as long as they kept the score-

board ticking with ones and twos. The moment Bell and Bopara flexed their arms and went for big hits, they were caught in the deep and England were

just about lucky to escape with a tied match. The pitch here usually helps batters and England would struggle to contain the Indians. As has been the trend in the series, home captain Alastair Cook would once again hope to win the toss and insert the visitors in.

#### **TEAMS**

ENGLAND (from): Alastair Cook (captain), James Anderson, Ian Bell, Ravi Bopara, Tim Bresnan, Stuart Broad, Jade Dernbach, Steven Finn, Craig Kieswetter, Samit Patel, Ben Stokes, Graeme Swann, Jonathan Trott.

INDIA (from): Mahendra Singh Dhoni (captain), Ajinkya Rahane, Rahul Dravid, Virat Kohli, Manoj Tiwary, Suresh Raina, Praveen Kumar, Munaf Patel, RP Singh, Vinay Kumar, R Ashwin, Amit Mishra, Parthiv Patel, Ravindra Jadeja, Varun Aaron.

#### Cook cautious

FROM PAGE 16

of the threat posed by the wounded tourists heading into the match.

"The last two games have been very close, and have shown what a talented side India are," Cook said.

"We're going to have to play at the top of our game to try to win, and finish the summer on a high as a oneday team."

Cook however is satisfied with England's form in his first season in charge as skipper of the limited overs side, which also included a 3-2

series win over Sri Lanka. "It's been a good start, and I'm very happy with the way the lads have taken to me as captain and bought into the ideas," Cook said.

ning both series. We know how tough it's going to be in the next two months or so (in a England were lucky to leave London without losing either of return series in India), but this side has always responded well to challenges."

can improve.

trying to make progress," he said. "The exciting thing is I don't think we've played as well as we can.

have still won the games. That is very encouraging. Meanwhile Cook paid tribute to India batsman

one-day game. "He's scored 10,000 runs in

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"I'm very happy with win-

England's one-day squad "We are a very young side

Cook also believes

"We have been put under pressure in this series, but

Rahul Dravid, who will be playing his 344th and final 31 Detail

both forms of the game. He's managed to adapt his game to every surface," Cook said. "He is an all-time great."

## CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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## CRYPTOQUIP

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Yesterday's Cryptoquip: NOW THAT HE'S DECLINING IN ABILITIES, THE SPORTS TITLEHOLDER HAS BECOME THE WANING CHAMPION.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: Y equals F