Roger levels Davis Cup tie

Tennis

AFP, Sydney

Swiss maestro Roger Federer came back from losing the first set to see off an inspired Lleyton Hewitt and level the Davis Cup World Group playoff tie against Australia on Friday.

Playing on grass at the Royal Sydney Golf Club, 18-year-old Bernard Tomic gave the home side an early lead when he beat Stanislas Wawrinka 4-6, 6-4, 6-3, 6-3.

Federer then found himself under enormous pressure after losing the first set to a typically dogged Hewitt and going down a break early in the second.

But the world number three dug deep to break back and win the set on a tiebreak before pulling away to win 5-7, 7-6 (7/5), 6-2, 6-3.

Hewitt struggled to hold serve throughout the opener and never looked like breaking Federer until he seized his chance at 5-5, pouncing on loose play from the Swiss legend to take the advantage. The Australian held his nerve as he served

for the first set, taking the lead with two blistering cross-court forehands, then breaking Federer at the start of the second. But at 3-1 down in the second set Federer finally found his range and gradually took

control, taking the set in a tiebreak and then securing dual breaks in the third and fourth. Federer, who only arrived in Sydney on Wednesday after his US Open semi-final defeat to Novak Djokovic, admitted being tired and off

his game on what he described as an "old school" grass court. "I all of a sudden realised this was much

more difficult than I expected," he said. "I thought it was going to be tough but once

on court I was a bit afraid of hitting my shots because of all the bad bounces out on this grass court and I was just very happy to see that I got

so much better as the match went on."

Hewitt, who has slipped to 199 in the world after a series of injuries, will be slight favourite against Wawrinka in the reverse pairings after a disappointing display from the Swiss number two.

Wawrinka started well against Tomic, but the young Australian relaxed after the first set, playing the kind of grass court tennis that took him to the Wimbledon quarter-finals this year. His mix of touch, flat shots and moments of

pure power nullified anything the Swiss tried. Saturday's doubles will see Hewitt and Chris Guccione taking on Federer and Wawrinka.

The winner of the tie progresses to the World Group in 2012 while the loser will play zonal qualifiers in a bid to get back to the top tier



Swiss tennis legend Roger Federer celebrates after defeating Lleyton Hewitt of Australia in the second match of the Davis Cup world group play-off in

Sydney on Thursday. PHOTO: AFP

Hafeez stars in Pak win

AFP, Harare

Pakistan stamped their authority over Zimbabwe at Harare Sports Club on Friday, winning the first of two Twenty20 matches by a huge 85 runs.

Mohammad Hafeez was the star of the show, scoring 71 before taking four wickets.

Pakistan raced to 198 for four -- a record against Zimbabwe -- with the highest previously set by South Africa with 194-6 at Kimberley last year. Then they bundled out

Zimbabwe for 113 in the 16th over, condemning the home side to a fifth successive loss to the tourists, who also won the one-off Test as well as three one-day internationals.

SCORES IN BRIEF

PAKISTAN: 198 for 4 (Hafeez 71, Shafiq 38, Raja 23, Akmal 22 not out, Tanveer 17 not out; Jarvis 1-30, Price 1-35, Chibhabha 1-17)

ZIMBABWE: 113 (Chibhabha 28, Taylor 10, Masakadza 12, Coventry 30; Hafeez 4-10) Result: Pakistan won by 85 Man-of-the-match:

Mohammad Hafeez.

Clash of crisis clubs

FIXTURES

(1300 GMT unless stated)

Saturday

Cagliari v Novara (1600), Inter Milan v

Roma (1845)

Sunday

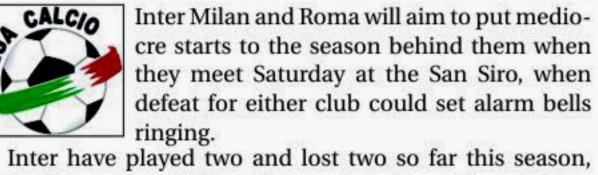
Atalanta v Palermo (1030), Bologna v

Lecce, Catania v Cesena, Lazio v Genoa,

Parma v Chievo, Siena v Juventus,

Udinese v Fiorentina, Napoli v AC Milan

AFP, Rome



including a humiliating home loss to rank outsiders Trabzonspor in the Champions Legaue on Wednesday.

Roma have two defeats and a draw from their three games and have already been eliminated from the Europa League.

Gian Piero Gasperini and Luis Enrique are both desperate for a victory to set them back on the right path, or else the already significant pressure building on each

Inter boss Gasperini has not only had to deal with two defeats but also sharp criticism of his tactics having chosen to play three at the back in their 4-3 defeat at Palermo last Sunday.

coach will only intensify.

He changed to a back four against Trabzonspor but to no avail as Inter, the European champions in 2010, succumbed to a 1-0 defeat to the Turks.

Inter president Massimo Moratti denied his coach's position was under threat, but he got rid of Rafael Benitez last season despite the Spaniard having just led Inter to victory in the Club World Cup.

Gasperini admitted time is of the essence: "I'm well aware the club's confidence is not unlimited, we have to get results quickly because if we don't our problems will grow.

"I need to find the key to getting results right now but after an unlucky match like the one (against Trabzonspor) it becomes even more difficult to understand how to win points." Roma's new American owners have publicly backed

Enrique but the overly demanding Roman press, and also the club's fans, have already been on his back.

As if getting knocked out of Europe by Slovakian minnows Slovan Bratislava wasn't enough, losing at home to a Cagliari side expected to struggle this season shows the task facing the Spaniard.

Enrique has also had to deal with the gripes of captain Francesco Totti, who made no secret of his displeasure against Bratislava when he was a substitute in one game and replaced in the other.

Roma icon Totti, however, has openly attempted to quash rumours of a rift with Enrique by urging supporters to get behind team and coach.

Elsewhere Napoli face an early test of their title creden-

tials as they host champions AC Milan on Sunday night.

Both sides earned impressive away draws in the Champions League in midweek, Milan securing a 2-2 draw in Barcelona and Napoli also claiming a point in a 1-1 draw at Manchester City.

Napoli started the league season rather better than Milan, who drew 2-2 at home to Lazio, as they won 3-1 at Cesena.

Last season Napoli's form against their title rivals was what ultimately cost them, picking up just one point from their four matches against the two Milan giants.

Taking away the direct clashes between the top three, Napoli garnered more points than both their rivals. After their midweek result they should be looking to pose a threat when up

against the best of domestic opposition this season. Leaders of the embryonic league table, Juventus will hope to continue their fine start to the campaign as they travel to

newly-promoted Siena. Another newly-promoted side, Atalanta, face Palermo --

currently being led by interim-coach Devis Mangia -- looking to close the gap at the bottom.

Following a draw at Genoa on the opening week of the season, Atalanta sit bottom with minus five points having begun the season with a six-point penalty for their role in a betting scandal.

U-16 AFC qualifiers

SPORTS REPORTER

The Bangladesh U-16 team suffered a second successive defeat in the AFC U-16 Qualifiers after conceding a 2-0 loss to Palestine in Iraq yesterday.

Bangladesh held their opponents to a goalless draw till the first half but conceded two goals in the 53rd and 68th minutes respectively in the second half.

Bangladesh who lost to Iraq 7-0 in the Group A opener, will now face Iran on Sunday.

Lax federation sees SCB withdraw sponsorship

SPORTS REPORTER

The Standard Charted Bank postponed its sponsorship from the School Chess tournament following their displeasure with the preparation of the tournament which was supposed to get underway from September 23.

"We are not happy with the preparation of the tournament as the Bangladesh Chess Federation have not sent their proposal till September 16 and we let them know that we have decided to postpone our sponsorship until we get the details of the tournament proposal," said Bitopi Das Chowdhury, head of Corporate affairs of SCB yesterday.

Standard Charted Bank, which has a good reputation of sponsoring sports at school level, has been sponsoring the school chess for the last 13 years so far but this time the international bank was forced to backtrack from its position following the reluctance of the ad-hoc committee led by Mokaddesh Hossain.

The School Chess generally takes place in May-June but the existing committee failed to stage the tournament on time, even failed to send proposal to SCB two

months later. BCF general secretary Mokaddesh Hossain was unreachable despite repeated calls but it has been learnt that the federation would also suspend the tournament following SCB's postponement of the sponsorship.

SPORTS POLL WEEKLY QUESTION

Who should be the Bangladesh cricket

Visit the sports page of www.thedailystar.net to cast vote

Follow The Daily Star Sport on www.twitter.com/dssport

Indian GP to cash in on cricket fatigue

AFP, New Delhi

After years of steady patronage, corporate India is showing signs of cricket fatigue and the country's maiden Formula One race next month looks like being the immediate benefi-Indian companies have long loosened the

purse strings for cricket while responding frugally to other sports, ensuring the cricket board remains a rare national federation that does not accept government grants. "My feeling is that it's going to change, at

least for motorsport," Mahindra and Mahindra marketing and automotive senior vice president Vivek Nayar told Reuters. "You have the most prestigious motorsport

event coming to India next month and I know there will be a change in perception after Oct 30 (race day)." Nayar's company will supply the official

intervention and support vehicle to the Buddh International Circuit, helping transport marshals around the track. The 2010 World Championship enjoyed a

527 million global television audience but Formula One is seen in India as a niche sport, followed primarily by youngsters. That is precisely the segment Indian

telecom giant Bharti Airtel was looking for, said

CEO (India and South Africa) Sanjay Kapoor. "We wanted to establish the brand as proyouth and dynamic. After all, 65 percent of our population is below the age of 30," Kapoor said after his company bagged the title sponsorship, reportedly at a price of 8.5 million dollars

for a three-year period. "Formula One is very relevant at this juncture when we are trying to transform our business and trying to be a global brand. It fits very well with our overall strategy."

That strategy has meant dropping a high-

off the inside edge by Suranga Lakmal.

double figures.

63-2 by lunch.

making six.

Prasanna.

Eranga and Herath.

Thirumanne, Herath, Eranga.

Shaun saves Australia

partner, Phil Hughes, had fallen for a second-ball duck, bowled

Ponting, returning to the side after missing the second Test

Television replays confirmed there were no edges off the bat

Ponting fell in the afternoon session when he attempted to

The 36-year-old, the third highest run-getter in Test cricket

Ponting's last three-figure knock was the 209 against

Michael Clarke, Ponting's successor as captain, also contin-

Clarke has not hit a Test century since his 168 against New

Australia made two changes from the last game, dropping

Sri Lanka, looking for a series-levelling win in Kumar

They were replaced by batsman Lahiru Thirumanne,

SRI LANKA: Dilshan (captain), Paranavitana, Sangakkara, M

Jayawardene, P Jayawardene, Mathews, Lakmal, Welegedara,

injured fast bowler Ryan Harris and middle-order batsman

Sangakkara's 100th Test appearance, axed senior batsman

Thilan Samaraweera and spinners Suraj Randiv and Seekkuge

Usman Khawaja to play Ponting and seamer Peter Siddle.

Australia won the first Test in Galle by 125 runs.

ued his poor run when he was caught behind off Eranga after

due to the birth of his second child, survived two confident

appeals for catches behind the stump before he had reached

and Ponting grew in confidence to help Marsh take the score to

drive a wide ball from Lakmal and only managed to edge an

behind the Indian duo of Sachin Tendulkar and Rahul Dravid,

easy catch to wicket-keeper Prasanna Jayawardene.

has now gone 22 innings without a Test century.

Pakistan at Hobart in January last year.

Zealand in Wellington in March last year.

profile cricket tournament like the Champions League Twenty20. Airtel has turned its back on a title sponsorship midway through a five-year deal they had landed in 2009, reportedly for 40 million dollars. "While creating the right mix, some of the

old sponsorships would get dropped and some new would come in. It's part of managing the portfolio," said Kapoor. India's first Formula One driver Narain

Karthikeyan is convinced motorsports can be a viable alternative to cricket. "It will happen, slowly but definitely. New

corporates like Hero Motors would be getting in and they would get high return from their investment too," Karthikeyan, who is also backed by India's powerful Tata Group, told Reuters.

The 34-year-old Chennai driver has signed a sponsorship deal with Hero Motors, part of the Hero Group which has been a steady and generous sponsor of cricket tournaments.

"For them, the exposure is going to be quite high. Our corporates are realising that F1 can be a good alternative to cricket," said Karthikeyan who has been replaced at Hispania but will race in the Indian Grand Prix.

India could have two drivers on the grid, with Karun Chandhok in the frame with Team Lotus, while the Force India team's billionaire boss Vijay Mallya is involved in both sports as owner also of IPL cricket franchise Royal

Challengers Bangalore. Cricket, however, is certain to remain the number one sport in the world's second most populous nation for a long time, something Formula One boss Bernie Ecclestone has acknowledged.

"We will never catch cricket, I'm quite sure about that, but we've got to try our best to do that. I'm sure eventually we will get very close," He told reporters in Delhi last month.

Holistic

After the four practice

matches against the U-21, the

U-22 team will reach BKSP to

play another five matches

against the U-19 team from

The U-19 team will also

play two short-duration

matches against the national

team on September 25 and

play the practice matches.

Assistant coach Golam

Jilani informed that Illievski

was putting emphasis on

tactical matters and the coach

was keen to work on the mis-

takes the players made during

Jamal Dhanmondi Club to a 1-

Saikat Bhumik, Saikat, Russel,

and Biplob (strikers).

The U-19 national team

the practice match.

l draw.

FROM PAGE 16

September 28.

Premier Div kabaddi

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Air Force, Fire Service and Dhaka Wanderers Club won their respective matches in the Premier Division Kabaddi League at the Kabaddi Stadium yesterday.

Bangladesh Air Force thrashed Dilkusha Sporting Club 39-14, Fire Service team overwhelmed Jurain Janata Club 54-19 and Wanderers Club defeated Jatrabari Faruque Smriti Sangsad 52-8.

Bin Hammam loses appeal

AFP, Zurich

Ousted Asian football chief Mohamed bin Hammam on Thursday lost his appeal against a lifetime ban from football, world governing body FIFA announced.

The Qatari was slapped with the ban in July after he was found guilty of trying to buy votes in the FIFA presidential race by offering Caribbean football officials \$40,000 each.

He denied all the charges.

"The FIFA Appeal Committee, under the chairmanship of Francisco Acosta (Ecuador), has confirmed the decisions taken by the FIFA Ethics Committee on July 23, 2011 regarding the ban on FIFA Executive Committee member Mohammed bin Hammam for a breach of the FIFA Code of Ethics," said a FIFA statement.

"The appeal made by Mohammed bin Hammam has been rejected and the decision of the FIFA Ethics Committee confirmed. The sanction of being banned from taking part in any kind of football-related activity (administrative, sports or any other) at national and international level for life has therefore been maintained."

Azharuddin's son dies

September 28 at the BNS. On Former India captain September 28, there will be Mohammad Azharuddin's son three short-duration matches Ayazuddin has died in among U-19, U-21, U-22 and Hyderabad, succumbing to injuries sustained in a motorcy national team as all players cle accident on Sunday. will be given thechance to

> ous injuries to the head, chest and abdomen, and hadn't regained consciousness since the accident. A medical bulletin on Thursday said that tests indicated a brain dysfunction. Ayazuddin's 16year-old cousin, Ajmal, who was riding pillion, had died on Sunday, hours after being taken to the hospital.

played a practice match Ayazuddin, the younger of Azharuddin's two sons from his where they held Bangladesh first wife Naureen, had been a League champions Sheikh promising cricketer on the Hyderabad school circuit, noted for his stylish batting similar to THE U-21 PLAYERS ARE: his father's. Sohel, Karim (goalkeepers),

Siddikur

Saidur, Nahid, Moklesh, Jewel **FROM PAGE 16** Rana, Shohag, Sohel Rana, superb nine-under-par in the Shahed, Bipul, Towhid and Sukhain Marma (midfielders), Wahed, Sohel

Puyol angry at critics injuries to Andres Iniesta and Alexis Sanchez.

AFP, Bacelona



Puyol has hit back at critics who insist that the European and Spanish champions are struggling to maintain their high standards of last season. The Catalan giants face

Osasuna on Saturday after drawing 2-2 against Real Sociedad, despite having gone two goals up, before they squandered a 2-1 lead over AC Milan in the Champions League by conceding a goal during injury

Having won three straight Spanish leagues, as well as two Champions Leagues in three years, the spotlight has been Sporting Gijon v Valencia, Granada v Villarreal, Mallorca v Malaga, Barcelona on whether Barca can retain the same ambition but Puyol is

"We are fine and we are not listening to what people are saying from outside the club.

left a bad taste in the mouth (after the Milan game) but we have already turned the page. Before we were not the best and now we are not the worst," said Puyol.

that we need to be concentrated especially at set-plays. We need to ensure that the opposition don't get the ball and they don't score." Part of the problem has been a makeshift

defence with Gerard Pique injured and Puyol himself only fit for a substitute's role against Milan following a long spell on the sidelines.

Coach Pep Guardiola has also been hit with

In contrast, there is a mood of optimism in the Real Madrid camp.

"We want to compete for all the competitions and I don't want to pick between the league and the Champions League over which would be more important," said Xabi Alonso, as

his team prepare to face Levante. "We were not at our best in the last league match against Getafe as we lacked control over the game but it is good to be able to make corrections while still having won."

Along with Real Madrid, Valencia and Real Betis have also taken maximum points from

their first two games. The form of Roberto Soldado, who has

scored four of their five goals, has been crucial for Valencia. They now play pointless

> Sporting Gijon while Betis are away to Athletic Bilbao who are still finding their feet under new coach Marcelo Bielsa. Granada are the other side

which are yet to pick up a point so far and they will be hoping that Villarreal arrive tired after their exertions in the Champions League where they lost to

Bayern Munich.

clicked into gear with a 4-0 trouncing of Granada in their last match and now travel to Mallorca.

the league.

Zaragoza and Getafe have also made slow starts with just one point so far and they face Espanyol and Rayo Vallecano respectively.

AFP, Berlin



massive goal difference of 15

after last Saturday's 7-0 ham-

mering of Freiburg.

than chasing Bayern.

at least 24 hours.

van Buyten.

on Saturday.

Werder Bremen boss Klaus Allofs insists his side are hunting points rather than German league leaders Bayern Munich as they prepare to

take on Nuremberg

Bremen are second in the Bundesliga behind Bayern as both sides have won four of their first five games this season, but Bayern already have a

Werder flirted with relegation at the end of

last season and managing director Allofs said

the club is more interested in getting back into

the Champions League for next year, rather

midfielders Tim Borowski and Marko Marin

who are both carrying leg injuries and Bre-

men's ex-Nuremberg midfielder Mehmet Ekici

Sunday, victory would send Bremen top for

Mario Gomez, who has scored seven goals in

his last two league games, and defender Daniel

Freiburg after also netting a hat-trick at

With leaders Bayern at Schalke on

Bayern are waiting on the fitness of striker

is expected to come into the starting line-up.

Saturday

Sunday

Bayer Leverkusen v Cologne, Hamburg v Borussia M'gladbach, Nuremberg v Werder Bremen, Hoffenheim v VfL Wolfsburg, Hertha Berlin v Augsburg, Kaiserslautern v Mainz 05

Hanover 96 v Borussia Dortmund, Schalke 04 v Bayern Munich

their way and they manage to beat bottom side Hamburg, who have yet to claim a win this season after four defeats and a draw.

'Gladbach game with a knee injury, while South Korean teenager Heung-Min Son is back in the squad and the 19-year-old striker may start. 'Gladbach are waiting on

Striker Paolo Guerrero will miss the

goalkeeper Marc-Andre ter Stegen, who broke two teeth in training on Thursday.

League leaders Dortmund are at Hanover on Sunday and will again be without suspended midfielder Mario Goetze.

Dortmund will have to do without defensive midfield international Sven Bender

after he picked up a hip injury against Arsenal

in the Champions League draw on Tuesday.

Sachin hails

Bremen have injury concerns in FROM PAGE 16

"He is the perfect team man. He has opened for the team, batted at number three, batted down the order, and batted wherever required. It truly has been one remarkable journey," Tendulkar said. England one-day captain Alastair Cook also

lauded Dravid ahead of the match in Cardiff, calling him "an all-time great."

BCB Cup

FROM PAGE 16 Gomez, who scored four goals against

Mahmudullah Riyad.

Bangladesh team will play GP-BCB National Cricket Academy team tomorrow at the same venue.

Meanwhile, it's all but confirmed that the Third-place Moenchengladbach can also go final match, which is scheduled on September 21, will be played under the floodlight.

captain?

SCORES IN BRIEF AUSTRALIA: First innings 235 for 5 (Marsh 81, Ponting 48, Hussey 63 not out, Haddin 21 not out; Lakmal 2-39, Eranga 2-52) CRICINFO, New Delhi

Ayazuddin, 19, suffered seri-

Kaiserslautern, has complained of a sore groin, second round to climb up to while van Buyten has pain in his Achilles tendon. the second position with an overall score 134, just one top of the table this weekend if other results go stroke behind leader Chan.

Barcelona captain Carles

time despite dominating the match.

quickly.

angry they are being judged so

The team was frustrated and it

"We want to win as much as ever but it is true

Saturday

v Osasuna, Sevilla v Real Sociedad

Sunday

Getafe v Rayo Vallecano, Zaragoza v

Espanyol, Atletico Madrid v Racing

Santander, Levante v Real Madrid,

Athletic Bilbao v Real Betis

Malaga's expensively-assembled team

Real Sociedad will be on a high against Sevilla after their comeback against Barca but in contrast Atletico Madrid take on Racing Santander still looking to score their first goal in

Bremen hunting pts