Rain spoils Mumbai tie

IANS, *Bangalore*

Heavy and unabated rain washed out an exciting contest between spirited Mumbai Indians and South African Cape Cobras in the Champions League Twenty20 at the Chinnaswamy Stadium on Friday.

With no let-up in the rain even 90 minutes after the break and prospects of play resuming ruled out, the organisers abandoned the match and awarded one point to both the teams.

Within minutes after Mumbai set a defendable target of 176 for five wickets in 20 overs, dark clouds opened up over the city centre and started pounding the stadium even as the ground staff scampered to cover the 22-yard pitch in the middle and the circular green outfield with massive tarpaulin sheets.

Earlier, Mumbai put up the formidable score after they were put in.

Starting on a blazing note, Mumbai's openers Aiden Blizzard (19) and Sarul Kanwar (45) posted a breezy 65-run first-wicket partnership in 6.3 overs, with six sixes and four fours between them before Robin Peterson had them caught, both times by English player Owais Shah in the seventh and ninth overs.

Though Cobras got rid of Ambati Rayudu quickly, James Franklin (18) and Kieron Pollard consolidated the innings and accelerated the run-rate through the middle overs with a 69-run fourth wicket partnership.

After Kanwar smashed five sixes and three fours to score 45 in 21 balls, it was the turn of Pollard to hit three massive sixes and six fours for a cameo innings of 58 in 37 balls. For Cobras, Robin Peterson took two wickets, while Dale Steyn, Jean-Paul Duminy and Kemp shared one wicket each.

Liu becomes a communist

AFP, *Beijing*

China's Olympic and world 110m hurdles champion Liu Xiang has taken up a Communist Party Youth League post, as the state seeks to capitalise on the millionaire athlete's star status.

In a posting on China's Twitter-like Tencent microblog, Liu said he gave a speech at a Shanghai sports meeting Thursday as the representative of the youth league, an organisation widely seen as grooming China's future leaders.

According to Xinhua news agency, Liu was named deputy secretary of the Shanghai sports bureau committee of the Communist Youth League, which would make him a municipal-level official.

The report said Liu's official duties were unlikely to interfere with his training as an athlete.

China's President Hu Jintao, who reportedly joined the league at the age of 14, was chairman of the organisation in the early 1980s.

Liu became China's first track gold medallist at the 2004 Athens Olympics, set a world record of 12.88 in 2006 which remains the second fastest time in history, and went on to be crowned world champion in 2007.

Akhtar

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into the national squad. While he hasn't lied about other things, he won't be able to look at me in the eyes after he's said all that," Afridi said.

BJMC

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same venue.

Law, Justice and Parliamentary Affairs Minister Barrister Shafique Ahmed distributed prizes as the chief after the final.

PHOTO: AFP

Polish tennis player Agnieszka Radwanska celebrates winning the final of the Pan Pacific Open by defeating Vera Zvonareva of Russia in Tokyo yesterday.

Radwanska takes Pan Pacific title

Tennis

AFP, *Tokyo*

Agnieszka Radwanska kept up her immaculate winning record in finals this season by beating Vera Zvonareva of Russia to take the WTA Pan Pacific Open tennis tournament on Saturday.

The 22-year-old Pole, who claimed the title at Carlsbad in her first final of the season in August, when she also beat Zvonareva, repeated her excellent performance with a 6-3, 6-2 victory over the world number four.

"I'm really happy, because I really had tough matches here, it's very tough to play every day. I had very long matches, so I'm really happy," said Radwanska.

"To play against those like Vera, you just have to play your 100 per cent and your best tennis. I was always trying my best from the first point and actually I was very focused till the end. That's why I took the two sets.

"I was just feeling very good today and I'm happy about my performance, for sure," she added.

Radwanska shrugged off a 0-2 start, taking five games in a row as the Russian struggled to put away her first serves, hitting four double faults -- one on a break point.

Radwanska missed one set point in the eighth game and two more in the ninth, but cashed in on a fourth as the Russian hit a lob long.

The Pole jumped ahead 2-0 and then 4-1 in the second set and, although she dropped her serve in the sixth, she took the following two games, the match ending with the Russian hitting a forehand wide.

"It was my best tournament this year. It was a big tournament with all top players and also I had very good wins here. It means a lot for me, so I want to come back here next year," said Radwanska.

Zvonareva failed to keep back her tears when she returned to the dressing room.

"I felt like I started off really well. I was two up and had a break point [in the third game], and then something happened. I don't know what happened exactly," said Zvonareva, 27.

"It happens to everybody. I played really well on my way to the final, I started off really well, and I felt like somebody turned off the button and it was not me on the court any more."

It was Radwanska's third straight win against Zvonareva after losing their first two meetings.

It was also Radwanska's sixth career title, following victories at Pattaya City, Istanbul and Eastbourne in 2008 and Stockholm in 2007, as well as at Carlsbad.

The win brought Radwanska a winner's cheque for 360,000 dollars and she will move up to 12th in the world when the new rankings are announced next Monday.

Janko-Kei showdown

Tennis

AFP, *Kuala Lumpur*

Janko Tipsarevic saved Serbian pride on Saturday as he beat Japan's Kei Nishikori 6-4, 6-3 to set up a Malaysian Open final against Marcos Baghdatis.

Cypriot Baghdatis, who was runner-up to Roger Federer in the 2006 Australian Open final, had earlier defeated Serbia's second seed Viktor Troicki 6-3, 6-1, leaving Tipsarevic with a mission on court at the Putra Stadium

Tipsarevic has played -- and beaten -- Nishikori five times this season on hardcourt, clay, grass and now indoors.

The Japanese number one made a run at another upset scenario in the wake of his semifinal defeat of top seed Nicolas Almagro, but Tipsarevic was having none of it.

The Serb closed out the victory in just under two hours as he saved all six break points he faced to nullify the Nishikori attack.

The winner improved to 43-20 on the season as he enters his third 2011 final after Delray Beach and Eastbourne, both of which he lost.

Tipsarevic said he will have to be at the top of his game to claim the title against Baghdatis who has shown a return to form.

"Both Marcos and I are playing good tennis," said the Serb. "I know I have to play like I did today or better to have a chance to win the final tomorrow.

"Marcos is an experienced player -- he will not give me the final, I will have to take it from him and play aggressively.

"I'm here to win one more match -- if not then it's still been a good week overall."

Baghdatis is turning around a disappointing 2011 season in which he has dropped from 20th to 60th, reaching his first final since Moscow a year ago.

"It feels great to be in another final, but there's still one match to go," he said.

"Today was a strange first set from both of us, struggling with our serves.

"But I stayed calm and focused on what I had to and played the important points better in the first set. I'm happy with the way I fought, and to win without spending too much time on court."

Baghdatis has put in a patchy effort since January but he has not lost a set this week in the Malaysian capital on his way to eliminating two seeds, number six Alex Bogomolov and number four Jurgen Melzer.

Baghdatis, winner of four career titles, took just under 90 minutes for his semifinal victory, advancing to the title match on the first of two match points.

The winner saved five of the seven break points he faced while cracking the Troicki serve six times to take a 2-1 lead in their series, with the previous matches played in 2010.

Baghdatis, 26, improved to 25-22 on the season.

Watto mulls shift down the order

ANI, *Bangalore*

Australia all-rounder Shane Watson has said he is prepared to shift down the batting order if his increased bowling demands put a strain on his ability to compile big scores as an opening batsman.

Watson had been used extensively as a fourth fast bowling option in the recent three-match Test series against Sri Lanka.

"My role in the team has changed. I have additional bowling demands and I do have to consider whether my body will be able to handle it. I need to think about what will be the best for the team, and how to get the best out of myself, moving ahead," Fox Sports quoted Watson, as saying.

Young reaches maiden final

AFP, *Bangkok*

Donald Young needed nearly three hours to upset second seed Gael Monfils 4-6, 7-6 (7/5), 7-6 (7/5), reaching his first career final on Saturday with a victory over the Frenchman at the ATP Thailand Open.

The left-handed Young, who will move into the ranking top 50 as a result of his exploits this week in Asia, will play for the title against either top seed and world number four Andy Murray or French third seed Gilles Simon.

Young hung tough in the face of 13 aces from Monfils, who has not lifted a trophy in nearly a year.

The 22-year-old American, who has had a frustrating struggle from boy wonder to the senior ranks after once being tipped to succeed by John McEnroe, now has the chance for a further upset performance.

"I'm so happy to be in the final," said the winner. "I'd like to take it a step farther but either guy I play is going to be very tough.

"Andy is world class, one of the best, and Gilles has beaten me a few times. It doesn't matter which guy I play, it won't be easy for me."

Young, who stunned Murray this year at Indian Wells but lost to him at the US Open, said he changed tactics after losing the first set against Monfils.

"I started trying to play the important points well. The first set was very physical and tough -- as was the match. But that's why you do the fitness. I'm excited with how what I've done. It's been long time coming," said the former teen prodigy.

More matches

FROM PAGE 17

Hossain, Abdur Razzak, Naeem Islam, Elias Sunny, Rubel Hossain, Shafiul Islam, Nazmul Hossain, Tanvir Haider, Mominul Haque.

BCB Green: Shahriar Nafees (captain), Shuvagata Hom Chowdhury, Sohrawardi Shuvo, Shahadat Hossain, Alok Kapali, Mohammad Ashraful, Sahagir Hossain (wicketkeeper), Robiul Islam, Nur Hossain Munna, Alauddin Babu, Nazmul Hossain Apu, Junaed Siddiqui and Rokibul Hasan.

Akram a Bhajji fan

Cricket

PTI, *New Delhi*

Pakistan pace legend Wasim Akram is surprised that off-spinner Harbhajan Singh has been left out of the Indian team for the ODIs against England as he feels the veteran tweaker does not deserve to be dropped despite being out of form.

"It is definitely a surprise for me that he is not in the team. He was expected to be fresh and eager to do well. I am all for youngsters but Harbhajan is only 31. He does not deserve this after just two or three bad series," Akram told Mobile ESPN.

The off-spinner, who is currently leading the Mumbai Indians in the Champions League Twenty20, missed a major part of the England tour due to an abdominal injury.

The feisty bowler has taken just 17 wickets in 17 ODIs this year at a less than impressive average of 41.29. But Akram feels that Harbhajan has a lot more to offer.

"Experience matters a lot. He has been a good servant to the Indian team for 15 years. He bowled really well in the World Cup. His batting too is an asset.

"I just hope this axing is a wake-up call for him and I am sure he is going to return. I have full faith in him, both as a cricketer and as a fighter," said the former Pakistan skipper.

Akram said India will benefit greatly from Harbhajan's experience when they tour Australia later this year.

"He would need to continually play cricket in order to make it to the big series against Australia. Currently he is excelling in his role as leader of a depleted Mumbai Indians team.

"He will surely derive a lot of confidence from their performance. He should play a couple of games in Ranji Trophy as well. I expect him to make a comeback very soon," said Akram.

India will field a depleted bowling attack with Praveen Kumar being the most experienced pacer among the younger lot. Akram fears this will put enormous pressure on Praveen.

"Praveen will be under a lot of pressure. He is an excellent new ball bowler. He was unplayable in England but these Indian wickets will be different.

"Had India played Varun Aaron in England on helpful tracks, his confidence would have been sky high going into this series. But there is a risk that he may be punished on Indian flat tracks against a strong England team. That may shatter Aaron's confidence," he said.

Monk lied last week!

Swimming

FP, *Sydney*

Australian swimmer Kenrick Monk on Saturday tearfully admitted to inventing a story about how he suffered an injury which could harm his Olympic chances, revealing that he hurt himself skateboarding.

Monk broke two bones in his elbow in what he initially claimed was a hit-and-run by a car which he said deliberately drove into his bike as he made his way to training in Brisbane on Wednesday.

But the 23-year-old admitted Saturday that he had made up the story in a panic.

"I was embarrassed. I didn't know what to do, I panicked, I freaked... basically to know that I've just fallen off a skateboard, something that a 10-year-old can ride," Monk said as he choked back tears.

"I was embarrassed something stupid."

Monk, whose coach Michael Bohl was by his side as he spoke to reporters, said he had agonised over his lie while recovering in hospital and eventually told his parents and police on Saturday morning.

The Commonwealth Games relay gold medalist, who also competed at the Beijing Olympics and the recent World Championships in Shanghai, denied that the emergence of a witness to the accident had prompted his confession.

"I can't handle it no more," he said. "I feel sick."

Of his story he said: "Basically it just kept snowballing and snowballing and more and more came out and it just got too much for me.

"It was just a stupid thing I've done and I do apologise big time."

Monk, who repeatedly apologised for his actions, had earlier told police that a young driver had deliberately hit him.

"I remember the guys in the car yelling 'oi' and laughing. I turned and I got whacked on the side -- that was it," Monk said last week.

He said police were deliberating on whether they would take the matter further and he did not know whether Swimming Australia would seek to penalise him. Doctors are also still deciding on whether to operate on his elbow.

Swimming Australia chief executive Kevin Neil said the entire matter was regrettable and he would be making no further comment until the full details of the incident were known.

Coach Bohl said it was up to Swimming Australia to determine whether the incident would affect Monk's chance of making the Olympic team.

"I think he'll certainly be interviewed and they'll discuss what happened and why it happened and I'm sure they'll make some sort of decision either positively or negatively from there," he said.

Bohl said Monk was under pressure with the Olympic trials in March.

Monk, who specialises in the 200m freestyle, believes he will never be able to fully straighten his right arm as a result of the accident, which could keep him out of the water for up to two months.

Jamal finish registration

FROM PAGE 17

another. No one can convict us without any concrete proof." Well, if Iran's submission wasn't proof enough, then what could be?

Chanchal's complementary question was: "Would you believe the man's statement that he gave to a TV channel or would you believe what he said before the league committee and taking oath on Holy Quran?"

Three months after the verdict, Sheikh Jamal are yet to pay the Tk 20 lac fine imposed on them for their involvement in the 11 June, 2010 affair. Chanchal said even though they don't admit of involvement in the match-fixing scam, they might pay the fine and take to the field for the greater interest of the game.

REGISTERED PLAYERS:

Goalkeepers: Aminul Haque (Own), Pearuzzaman (Feni), Ashim Kumar Das (Own).

Defenders: Mintu Sheikh (Own), AH Sheikh Vasani (Farashganj), Yusuf Ali Khan (Brothers), Saddam Hossain (Own), Arup Kumar Baidya (Abahani), Atiqur Rahman Meshi (Own).

Midfielders: Asif Hossain Rimon (Rahmatganj), Abdul Baten Komol (Own), Khalid Saifullah (Arambagh), Enamul Haque Sharif (Mohammedan), Monaem Khan Razu (Sk Russel), Sohel Rana (Feni).

Strikers: Sohel Rana Sohel (Farashganj), Tawhidul Alam (Own), Yoko Samnick (Own), Femi Orunimi (Own), Everton Souza (Brothers).

CROSSWORD *By Eugene Sheffer*

ACROSS

1 Six-pack muscles
4 "Huh?"
8 Slender
12 Speck
13 Ginormous
14 Last few notes
15 Good poker hand
17 Stead
18 Possess
19 Weapon collection
21 San Fernando, for one
24 Melody
25 Have a bug
26 Witnessed
28 Stickum
32 March 15, e.g.
34 Central
36 Bring to a halt
37 Bold
39 Roscoe
41 Regret
42 Conger, e.g.
44 Coy
46 Puts in the wrong place
50 Tatter
51 Help slyly
52 Vigor
56 Paddock papa
57 "My bad"
58 Writer Buscaglia
59 Despot
60 Dalai —
61 Tackle's teammate

DOWN

1 Billboards
2 Automaton, for short
3 Modern-day pram
4 Complains feebly
5 Embrace
6 Ottoman bigwig
7 Aquarium fish
8 Eyeball coats
9 Pork cut
10 Concept
11 Manhandle
16 Piercing tool
20 Taste
21 Futile
22 Staffer
23 Sweet potato kin
27 Peruke
29 Fight
30 Go sightseeing
31 Duel tool
33 Less corpulent
35 Old man
38 Verily
40 Singer Brewer
43 Disinfectant brand
45 Chap
46 Spar
47 Wading bird
48 Antitoxins
49 Old portico
53 Spinning stat
54 Coffee break hour
55 Scuttle

Solution time: 25 mins.

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

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				■	57				■	58		
59				■	60				■	61		

CRYPTOQUIP

HVWRTO PYLVIM-YE-UMO EFVPZ UAYTD U DOOI NJY WDUHDW TK U FVRTYH PYLKUIC: "NJVWZOC ATWVIOWW."

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: I BELIEVE THE ROAD CREW GUYS WHO LOVED GROOMING THEIR HAIR WERE BUSY ARRANGING TRAFFIC COMBS.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: T equals U