

INDIAN OPEN
Siddikur's
slow start

SPORTS REPORTER

Siddikur Rahman started the Hero Indian Open with a 2-under-par (70) score at the end of round one at the Delhi Golf Club yesterday. The first day score put him in joint 19th position along with 16 others, five shots adrift of leader Lin Wen-hong of Chinese Taipei. The Taipei recovered from last week's disappointing disqualification by putting in a flawless seven-under-par 65.

Australia's David Gleeson, a two-time Asian Tour winner, continued his superb form by posting a solid 68 in the 1.25 million dollar event.

SSP Chowrasia of India was bunched up in tied third with title holder Rikard Karlberg of Sweden, Thailand's Chapchai Nirat and Himmat Rai of India.

Siddikur, who is currently fourth on the Asian Order of Merit, would be looking to bounce back after two disappointing performances in Macau and Japan last month. Siddikur, who had finished 18th in the Omega Masters earlier in September, missed the cut in the Panasonic Open in Japan.

NAT'L YOUTH HOCKEY
Rajshahi,
Jessore
win big

SPORTS REPORTER

Rajshahi moved into the Super League of the Southeast Bank 22nd National Youth Hockey Championship with a massive 12-0 win over Kushtia in the Group G match at Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Rubel struck maximum four goals for Rajshahi while Prosenjit, Rup and Babu struck two goals each and Belal and Rana netted one each in the one-sided affair.

In the day's other match, Jessore also recorded a huge 11-0 victory over Panchagarh with Younus slamming three goals. Azmol, Bappi scored two goals each while Sweet, Sunny, Polish and Himel scored one apiece for Jessore. Faridpur defeated Comilla 1-0 with Rabbi Alam scoring the all-important goal in the second half.

Series

FROM PAGE 16
Ravindra Jadeja, after his impressive show in England, will be the bowling all-rounder at No 7.

The England side is also a batting heavy unit with the likes of Cook, Craig Kieswetter, Jonathan Trott, Ian Bell capable of playing big innings not to forget the devastating effect that Pietersen can have on bowlers.

Ravi Bopara and young Jonathan Bairstow are also in good nick which gives the batting unit a formidable look.

The bowling however will be largely dependant on pacers Tim Bresnan, Steven Finn and off-spinner Graeme Swann.

It will be interesting to see whether Andy Flower and Cook decide to unleash the new tearaway quick bowler Stuart Meaker. In all there are ingredients for a good contest throughout the series.

TEAMS

INDIA (from): Mahendra Singh Dhoni (captain), Gautam Gambhir, Parthiv Patel, Ajinkya Rahane, Virat Kohli, Suresh Raina, Ravindra Jadeja, R Ashwin, Varun Aaron, Umesh Yadav, Vinay Kumar, S Aravind, Rahul Sharma, Manoj Tiwary, Praveen Kumar.

ENGLAND (from): Alastair Cook (captain), Craig Kieswetter, Jonathan Trott, Ian Bell, Kevin Pietersen, Ravi Bopara, Jonathan Bairstow, Graeme Swann, Samit Patel, Tim Bresnan, Steven Finn, Stuart Meaker, Chris Woakes, Scott Borthwick, Jose Buttler, Alex Hales.



Rafael Nadal of Spain leaves the court after being defeated by Florian Mayer of Germany in the third round of the Shanghai Masters yesterday. Mayer won 7-6, 6-3.

PHOTO: AFP

Nadal again falls short of qtrs

Tennis

AP, Shanghai

Rafael Nadal was upset by Florian Mayer, 7-6 (5), 6-3 Thursday at the Shanghai Masters, the second consecutive year he's failed to reach the quarterfinals at the tournament.

Andy Roddick advanced with a 6-3, 6-4 win over Spain's Nicolas Almagro. Roddick had 11 aces and 23 winners to beat the seventh-seeded Almagro.

Roddick will play third-seeded David Ferrer, who saved three match points against Juan Carlos Ferrero in a 1-6, 7-5, 6-2 win.

Mayer pressured Nadal at the net throughout the match, winning 21 of his 29 approaches.

Nadal saved two set points while serving at 4-5 in the first, but then gave away several crucial points in the tiebreaker, which Mayer clinched with an ace.

Mayer got the first break of the match at 3-3 in the second set when Nadal hit a shot into the top of the net. He converted another break on match point, running down a drop shot and flicking it past Nadal at the net.

The top-seeded Spaniard lost in the third round in Shanghai last year to Austria's Jurgen Melzer, just a few weeks after winning his first US Open title.

It's also just the second time in 16 tournaments this year that he has failed to make the quarterfinals. In August, he fell in the second round of the Canadian Open to Croatia's Ivan Dodig.

Defending champion Andy Murray held off a late rally by Switzerland's Stanislas Wawrinka to advance to the quarterfinals with a 6-4, 3-6, 6-3 victory.

After dropping the second set, the second-seeded Scot broke Wawrinka twice to take a 5-0 lead in the third. But Wawrinka battled back to take the next three games before Murray finally closed it out.

"The first set I was up 3-0, two breaks, pretty quickly, and I went up 5-0 in the third set. Both sets got a little bit closer than maybe they needed to be," Murray said.

Roddick is trying to finish his season on a positive note after struggling with injuries, crashing out in the third round of Wimbledon.

After reaching the quarterfinals of the US Open last month, Roddick fell in the first round of the China Open in

Beijing and bristled at a question from a reporter about whether he was contemplating retirement.

His play against the 11th-ranked Almagro suggested retirement may be some way off: He won 91 per cent of points on his first serve -- 32 of 35 points -- and captured 10 of 12 points at net. He never faced a break point.

France's Gilles Simon, the No. 8 seed, was beaten by Matthew Ebden, a qualifier from Australia ranked 124th, 6-2, 2-6, 7-6 (8). Ebden, who had only won eight matches on the ATP tour before Shanghai, closed it out on his fifth match point.

Ebden plays Murray next for a spot in the semifinals.

"It will be a tough match," Murray said. "He's obviously just coming off the best win of his career, so he'll be confident."

Alexandr Dolgoplov dropped the first set against Australian teenager Bernard Tomic, then reeled off 12 of the last 13 games to win, 5-7, 6-1, 6-0. Kei Nishikori continued his good run -- he stopped Jo-Wilfried Tsonga in the second round -- by beating Santiago Giraldo 7-6 (6), 4-6, 6-3.

Splendid Simmons

FROM PAGE 16

wrap-up was only stopped by Shakib's resistance.

He added 55 for the fifth wicket with Alok Kapali who scratched around for 20, before the enigma of Bangladesh cricket gave Simmons an easy catch off his top-edge to a Ravi Rampaul short delivery.

If the batsmen didn't find their feet, the bowlers and fielders had a tougher time earlier in the piece.

Rubel's three wickets apart, none of the spinners or the other paceman, Shafiqul Islam, had an impact. Instead, their unnecessary eagerness had them trapped as wickets were at a premium. The first wicket since Barath walked off hurt in the 15th over came in the 42nd when Rubel ended the big Simmons-Samuels stand.

Simmons played the perfect anchor role earlier as he didn't let a hesitant start bother him. Having struck the game's first boundary after 35 balls, he added 67 with Barath who then pulled up with a hamstring injury and had to walk off as the new ODI rules do not allow runners.

It was even more trouble for the Tigers as Samuels launched into the bowlers, giving Simmons much needed confidence. The duo added 150 for what was effectively the first wicket with the underachieving Simmons reaching his first ODI ton. He ended up with 122 off 124 balls with the help of two sixes and eight boundaries. Samuels struck six fours and two sixes in his 78-ball 71 before Pollard launched into the Tigers, helping the West Indies to 109 runs from the final 10 overs.

Pollard struck three splendid sixes through midwicket and long-on -- in 25 balls that brought the party atmosphere of IPL to Mirpur, but it was never enjoyed by the capacity crowd who would rather have preferred another victory for the home side.

SCORES IN BRIEF

WEST INDIES: 298 for 4 (Simmons 122, Barath 21, Samuels 71, Bravo 20, Pollard 41, Rubel 3-65)

BANGLADESH: 258 for 7 (Tamim 21, Naem 52, Imrul 42, Shakib 67 not out, Mushfiqur 21, Kapali 20; Rampaul 2-35, Russel 2-44, Samuels 2-42)

Result: West Indies won by 40 runs.

Man-of-the-match: Lendl Simmons.

Wicket's faulty: Mushfiq

FROM PAGE 16

"In this kind of wicket it was easy for the West Indies batsmen to score runs but I must praise their good effort. They really batted well in this condition and their bowling was also good," Mushfiqur praised the West Indies batting.

The wicketkeeper-batsman also defended his decision of fielding first after winning the toss.

"You know naturally this wicket initially remains dry and in the latter part of the innings the dew becomes a factor. That's why we took the decision of fielding first but unfortunately the ball was coming on to the bat very well," he explained.

There was hardly anyone who believed that Bangladesh could chase down this big total but Mushfiqur said that it might have been possible if someone from the top-order could convert their innings into a big one.

"It was a very good batting wicket but we could not apply ourselves properly. If someone like Imrul [Kayes] or Naem [Islam] from the top-order could carry their innings to the end, it might be possible for us to chase down the total," said Mushfiqur.

Four share top spot

SPORTS REPORTER

Four players shared the lead in the Prime Bank 14th International Open Rating Chess Championship at the close of the third round at the Bangladesh Chess Federation hall room yesterday.

Leaders FIDE master Syed Mahfuzur Rahman, Jamal Uddin, Delwar Hossain and Abdul Momin won their respective third boards to collect the maximum three points. Seventeen players were at the top of the table jointly after the second round on Wednesday.

Mukitir Rahman is in second position with 2.5 points while fourteen other players are in third position with two points each.

A long wait

FROM PAGE 16

gave credit to the man who he said was an inspiration. "Marlon has some form at the current time and he is showing his abilities as a good batsman. He dominated the Twenty20 and today he showed his class again.

"He's an inspiration. All the guys see that he has form. Our partnership was a good one and it got us to a good score," Simmons added.

Marsh in for Lee

REUTERS, Melbourne

All-rounder Mitchell Marsh will replace fast bowler Brett Lee in the Australia squad for the one-day internationals in South Africa, the country's cricket board said on Thursday.

Lee, who was ruled out of Australia' one-day and Twenty20 fixtures in South Africa after being diagnosed with appendicitis, underwent successful surgery in Cape Town on Monday, Cricket Australia said in a statement.

Misbah fan of DRS

Cricket

REUTERS, Karachi

Pakistan captain Misbahul Haq has backed the enforcement of the umpires Decision Review System (DRS) in international cricket even as the ICC scrapped the mandatory rule for member boards.

"It is good that we will have the UDRS in our one-day series against Sri Lanka and England. Umpires are human beings and can make errors," Misbah told reporters in Lahore.

"It is good players have the option of getting such decisions reviewed," he added.

The Pakistan Cricket Board has secured sponsorship to have the DRS system for their coming series against Sri Lanka and England in the United Arab Emirates.

The International Cricket Council announced this week it was scrapping the mandatory rule of having member boards use the DRS in their bilateral series just four months after it was made compulsory by the sport's world governing body.

The ICC has now made the DRS optional and reverted back to its original idea of allowing the participating nations in a bilateral series to decide on using the system.

The system allows teams two unsuccessful television reviews per innings.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has opposed the mandatory use of the system insisting the current technology was not 100 per cent correct.

"But the purpose is that this system adds value to the sport," Misbah said. "Teams are now learning to make correct use of the reviews at their disposal."

"I am sure teams can benefit from it. Because errors will be made. Technology will also improve with test and trial."

The two teams play three Tests, five one-day internationals and a T20 match and then Pakistan also take on England in January-February next year.

The first Test against Sri Lanka is from October 18 in Abu Dhabi. Misbah said the coming series would be evenly contested.

"It is going to be a tough series for us but I am confident we can do well because the players have been improving with every series and we have to do our things right," he said.

"The bowling of the Sri Lankans has definitely been weakened with the retirement of Muttiah Muralidaran as he was a champion bowler but we can't take them lightly at all."

BFF COUNCILLORSHIP
Wari don't
buy BFF's
explanation

SPORTS REPORTER

Wari Club were not convinced about the Bangladesh Football Federation's councillorship issue that left the start of the second-tier Bangladesh League in limbo.

Wari are one of the six teams who are supposed to take part in the league scheduled to start in November.

Wari Club general secretary Sirajul Islam Bachchu was summoned by the Bangladesh League Committee yesterday at the BFF (Bangladesh Football Federation) House and the committee assured him of BFF councillorship if his team took part in the second-tier Bangladesh League. But Bachchu, who is also a BFF member, was not convinced with the explanation of the league committee.

The committee also summoned Victoria Sporting Club over the same issue yesterday but no official turned up and both the clubs have been asked to give their final decisions by Sunday next.

Wari and Victoria decided to pull out of the six-team second-tier league in apprehension that they would lose their BFF councillorships as there is no particular word about the teams of the second-tier league in the BFF constitution.

CA hires
ex-Wallaby

Cricket

REUTERS, Melbourne

Cricket Australia (CA) have named former rugby union international Patrick Howard as general manager of team performance in a newly created role, recommended by a review panel in August after the country's Ashes defeat to England.

The 37-year-old, who represented the Wallabies in 20 Tests during the 1990s, would start in his new role in mid-November, the country's cricket board said in a statement on Thursday.

The Australia team head coach, captain, chairman of selectors, team manager and centre of excellence manager would all report to Howard, the statement added.

CA chief executive James Sutherland pointed towards Howard's strong background in sports.

"He has a background of success as a player, selector and coach, including 20 Tests as an Australian player, as well as playing and coaching success with the Leicester Tigers in England and was a high performance GM with the ARU," Sutherland said in a statement.

"His priority will be ensuring that all of Australia's high performance cricket programs dovetail in a manner that helps us produce the best men's and women's teams in the world."

The disastrous Ashes campaign at the start of the year prompted CA to order a review by a panel chaired by prominent businessman Don Argus, who recommended a number of sweeping reforms following the 3-1 series defeat.

Howard will now play an important role in the appointment of a new head coach following Tim Nielsen's resignation last month after the tour of Sri Lanka.

"We're very aware that the [Southern Hemisphere] summer is approaching and we want to have someone on board as quickly as possible," Sutherland told reporters.

"We have a clear focus right now on appointing a new head coach... and a selection panel with a full-time national selector and supporting selectors with that."

"We will very quickly work into the pointy end of that process." Howard admitted it would be a tough job and he would have to get used to cricket and the people involved with the sport, despite his strong background.

"I have a great interest in cricket. I love the game," he told reporters. "I've lived in England. I actually got to field as 12th man for Leicestershire in county cricket."

"I've got to get my head around the culture of cricket and the personalities involved. Regardless of what your title is, you've got to earn respect and that takes time."

"Am I nervous? Yes. It's going to be tough."

The expectations from the Australian people will be another challenge he would have to deal with, Howard said.

"The Wallabies need to win... the Australian test team needs to win. As an Australian public we don't accept anything less, so it's a great challenge," he said.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Neighbourhood
5 List-ending abbr.
8 Food
12 Donated
13 Islander's neckwear
14 Huron or Michigan
15 Eave, e.g.
17 Wife of Geraint
18 Mensa member
19 Old sayings
21 Superlative ending
22 Nevada city
23 Part of the load for 47-

DOWN

1 Awestruck
2 Carry on
3 Still
4 Eagle's nest
5 Stretchable
6 X rating?
7 Stogie
8 Removed dirt
9 Drinker's woe
10 Dust Bowl refugee
11 Makes two into one
16 "Be quiet!"
20 Society newbie
23 Priestly garment
24 Extinct bird
25 Seder time
27 Chart
29 Ostrich's cousin
30 High shot
32 The 3 in 3-2=1
34 Sadden
37 Varnish ingredient
39 Penniless
42 Picture
44 Expire
45 "Hi, sailor!"
46 "— Las Vegas"
48 Comical
49 Wife of Osiris
50 Catch sight of
53 Bigwig, for short

Solution time: 21 mins.

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CRYPTOQUIP

J W G K Q Y L G T K Y S H N L G T L
Y Q Y J A R G H D K Y O W R R Y H D Y
V M R F T L S V O S H D M V H S G R G K A :
W T L Y N - T L Y N F J W G H .

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: SUPPOSING A SIDEWALK HUCKSTER WENT ON A DRINKING BINGE, I'D HAVE TO CALL THAT A VENDOR BENDER.
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: N equals W