

# Cricket goes IPL from today

PTI, Chennai



Sights firmly set on a hat-trick of titles, defending champions Chennai Super Kings will open their campaign against last year's Champions League Twenty20 winner Mumbai Indians in the inaugural match of the Indian Premier League on Wednesday.

The season's lung opener at the MA Chidambaram Stadium could not have got any better as two of the strongest teams in the tournament will set the tone for the high-octane Twenty20 tournament over the next eight weeks.

Banking on their home advantage which enabled them to win back-to-back titles, the Chennai outfit, led by talismanic Mahendra Singh Dhoni, will be hoping for their third consecutive IPL crown, but for that to happen they will have to pull out all stops to ensure a winning start to their campaign as their rivals -- Mumbai Indians -- appear to hold a slender edge.

Dhoni, who led Chennai to two IPL titles and final and semi-final appearances once, besides the 2010 CLT20 crown, however, would like to put behind Team India's recent poor run and utilise the Twenty20 event to ease the pressure.

Besides the big-hitting Dhoni, Chennai's batting looks solid with Suresh Raina, S Badrinath and M Vijay being joined by all-rounder Ravindra Jadeja, whom the India Cements-owned team bought for a whopping \$2 million during the IPLV auctions.

However, Chennai would miss the services of opener Mike Hussey and fast bowler Ben Hilfenhaus for the initial part of the tournament as they are busy representing Australia in the Caribbean till the end of this month.

Another Australian Doug Bollinger, who has recovered from an injury, and South Africa's Albie Morkel are expected to form the pace attack for now, while the spin department will be spearheaded by local boy Ravichandran Ashwin.

Mumbai Indians, on the other hand, will be under a new captain in Harbhajan Singh after Sachin Tendulkar relinquished the position on Monday.

With a few new additions to the team, Mumbai looks a solid side this year and would be desperate to annex their maiden IPL title, which eluded the outfit for the last four years.

Mumbai's confidence is high after Harbhajan led it to the CLT20 victory last year in the absence of an injured Tendulkar.

For Tendulkar, who would play a pivotal role in Mumbai's batting line up

along the likes of Rohit Sharma, it would be a special moment to play on his favourite ground in what is his first appearance on Indian soil after completing the historical 100 international centuries.

With the pressure of 100 international ton off his back now, Tendulkar is expected to fire on all cylinders and entertain his fans in the upcoming event.

Mumbai, owned by Reliance Industries, had strengthened their team by bringing in wicket-keeper batsman Dinesh Karthik and left-arm spinner Pragnan Ojha through transfer window.

Mumbai also added Herschelle Gibbs, Mitchell Johnson, Robin Peterson, R P Singh and Thisara Perera to their squad through the auctions, while Sri Lankan speedster Lasith Malinga and Munaf Patel will hold the aces in the pace department.

In big-hitting Kieron Pollard, Mumbai has a devastating batsman who can change the complexion of any match single-handedly.

Though any team would like to start on a winning note, newly-appointed Mumbai skipper Harbhajan has downplayed the factor, saying he believed in finishing well.

The wicket also holds the key to the outcome of the match with indications that it would offer bounce and aid to speedsters and spinners alike.



PHOTO: STAR

A goalmouth scramble during yesterday's S Alam Group-First Security Islami Bank Second Tribal Hockey Tournament match between Dinajpur and Rangamati at the Maulana Bhasani Hockey Stadium.

## Saber new Baridhara chairman

SPORTS REPORTER

Saber Hossain Chowdhury, the former Bangladesh Cricket Board president, has been nominated the chairman of Baridhara Dazzlers Cricket Club.

The ruling party lawmaker will be the figurehead of the club which is now in the Dhaka First Division Cricket League.

Baridhara Dazzlers was formerly Young Pegasus Club before owners of Asia-Pacific Blossom Hotel, bought the team several years ago.

## Sachin quits

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Tendulkar, who has brushed aside any speculation about his retirement, holds four batting world records -- most runs and centuries in Tests and one-day internationals.

Mumbai, who lost to Royal Challengers Bangalore in the play-off last year, will clash with defending champions Chennai Super Kings in their opening match in Chennai on Wednesday.

Harbhajan said he was looking forward to leading the team.

"Mumbai Indians is a great team with explosive talent and promising youngsters," said Harbhajan.

"I am committed to do the very best and look forward to leading the team to play to its full potential during the season."

Harbhajan is not new to captaincy, having already led the Mumbai Indians to the Twenty20 Champions League triumph last year.

## LOCAL SNIPPETS

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identical 1-0 margin with Saddam scoring the decisive goal in the 50th minute.

## School Football

Eight Upazilas of Sunamganj moved into the district-level competition of the National School Football Islami Bank tournament after emerging upazila champions yesterday.

They are Rasulganj Abdul Kadir Meherunnisa High School of Jagannathpur, Tahirpur Govt High School, Mitali Public High School of Doharabazar, Technical School & College, Dhal Public High School of Dirai, Hazi Karam Ali High School of Chatok, Surma High School of South Sunamganj, Palash High School of Nichchintapur.

## School Handball

Sunnydale recorded a massive 23-0 win over Agrani School & College in the Polar Ice-Cream 20th School Handball Stadium yesterday.

Dhanmondi Tutorial thrashed Motijheel Govt High School 14-2 in the girl's section while Banani Biddyaniketan defeated Dhanmondi Tutorial 12-9 in the boy's section, which also saw Willis Little Flower School beat Summerfield 25-12.



A Banani Biddyaniketan player is about to shy at the goal during their Polar Ice-Cream 20th School Handball Tournament match against Dhanmondi Tutorial at the Handball Stadium yesterday. PHOTO: STAR

## Ron Gaunt no more

CRICINFO, Brisbane

The fast bowler Ron Gaunt, who played three Tests for Australia in the 1950s and 1960s and was later a valuable bowling coach for a young Merv Hughes, has died at the age of 78. Gaunt took seven wickets in his three Test appearances and was a formidable presence in domestic cricket for Western Australia and Victoria, collecting 266 first-class victims at an average of 26.85.

In Durban in January 1958, Gaunt took a wicket in his first over of Test cricket, that of the South African opener Dick Westcott, and it was all the more remarkable because he had only just flown in to South Africa to replace the injured Ian Meckiff. Australia's captain on that tour, Ian Craig, described Gaunt as a "top-rate fast bowler" and a fine team man.

## Ricky likes Kiwi formula

Cricket  
PTI, Melbourne

Ricky Ponting has suggested that cricket boards across the world take a leaf out of New Zealand's book and avoid scheduling international fixtures around the time the Indian Premier League (IPL) is on.

With the amount of money on offer, the former Australian captain felt it is difficult for players to ignore Twenty20 competitions, especially the IPL.

"You can understand the players that are opting out of international cricket to go and play IPL," he said.

"New Zealand's a good case study there, they just don't schedule any international cricket when the IPL's on for the simple reason they would have lost most of their players to IPL and been left with next to nothing. I think there's something to be learned there," Ponting was quoted as saying by the 'Australian Associated Press' (AAP).

Ponting, who played in the inaugural season of the IPL in 2008 for the Kolkata Knight Riders, rued that explosive batsman

Chris Gayle would be once again missing from the West Indies squad during the Australia-West Indies Test series.

Gayle will be representing the Royal Challengers Bangalore in the IPL.

"A West Indies side without Chris Gayle in it will struggle but that's the modern game and it'll probably happen more and more with the amount of money that's being spent in those Twenty20 competitions around the world," he said.

As far as Michael Clarke's decision to play in the IPL was concerned, Ponting said the current Australian skipper must have given ample thought.

"I'm sure he would have weighed up everything before he'd even have considered playing in the IPL.

"It's a personal decision for him, doesn't really matter what everyone else thinks about it. He's just got to work out what's best for him and his body as far as his cricket is concerned over the next few years," Ponting said.

Clarke was signed by Pune Warriors as replacement for Yuvraj Singh, who is recovering after his treatment for a rare germ cell cancer.

## BOA polls in November

SPORTS REPORTER

The current executive committee of Bangladesh Olympic Association is all set to overstay as an emergency executive committee meeting approved the recommendation of International Olympic Committee to hold its polls after the completion of the 2012 Olympic Games.

"Following our appeal, the IOC instructed us to hold the election two months after the completion of the London Olympic but the election might be deferred by another one month in November due to the Eid-ul-Azha, Hajj and Puja," said BOA CEO Col (ret) Waliullah after the meeting yesterday.

The four-year tenure of the Kutubuddin Ahmed-led committee will expire on April 6 but the committee sought more time to the IOC in a bid to ensure the elected representatives of different federations at the BOA EC committee.

Asked whether the representatives of different ad-hoc committees would be eligible if they fail to complete their elections before November, Wali said it would depend on the situation and that they would inform about it later.

## British side in Pakistan

Cricket  
AFP, Lahore

A British Universities cricket team arrived in Pakistan on Monday for two one-day games, with their captain stressing the troubled country badly needs international matches to return.

The cricket-mad nation has not hosted an international match since militants attacked the Sri Lankan team bus during the Lahore Test in March 2009, killing eight people and injuring seven.

The Universities team will play two 50-over games against a Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Under-19 XI in Lahore on Wednesday and Friday, and the tourists' captain Kamal Alam said he hoped the trip would encourage other sides to visit.

"One of the main things of the tour is not just cricket, but more to show that Pakistan really needs cricket because

cricket is the most important thing in the country and it keeps everyone going," he said at a press conference.

"It's almost like taking the oxygen out of the country when you don't have international cricket."

Alam said it was hard to judge the situation in Pakistan from media reports.

"There's a lot of high propaganda either way, this is the second tour that we have brought here in the last seven years from the British Universities and we are here as a charity team, and it's also a goodwill gesture between Britain and Pakistan," he said.

PCB director of international cricket Intikhab Alam said he hoped the British team's visit would help improve Pakistan's image.

The PCB have also invited Bangladesh to play a limited-overs series later this month, though clearance from Dhaka is still pending.

## Mahela salvages Lanka

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Bresnan, but there was no respite for the England bowlers who toiled gamely under the hot sun.

Angelo Mathews, returning to the side after missing the first Test with a calf injury, was unbeaten on 41 after adding 62 runs for the fifth wicket with his skipper.

Prasanna Jayawardene was caught behind off Steven Finn for seven, but Suraj Randiv saw out the day on five.

Anderson struck in his third over when he forced Tillakaratne Dilshan to edge a catch to wicket-keeper Matt Prior after the previous two balls had been driven for boundaries.

Kumar Sangakkara was dismissed first ball for the second match in a row when he was snapped up by Strauss in the slips, the England captain taking the

catch at second attempt. Jayawardene once again prevented a hat-trick, as he had done in Galle, and went on to master the England attack on a dry wicket that is expected to crumble in the later stages of the match.

Lahiru Thirimanne padded up to a straight ball from Anderson and was given out leg-before by umpire Bruce Oxenford, a decision upheld by the third umpire after the batsman asked for a review.

The tourists went in with a three-man seam attack, bringing in Bresnan and Finn to partner Anderson with the new ball. Spinner Monty Panesar was dropped, while Stuart Broad has flown home with a calf injury.

Sri Lanka made two changes from the side that won in Galle, as a fit-again Mathews and Dhammika

Prasad returned in place of Dinesh Chandimal and Chanaka Welegedara.

## SCOREBOARD

SRI LANKA: First innings				
Thirimanne lbw b Anderson	8			
Dilshan c Prior b Anderson	14			
Sangakkara c Strauss b Anderson	0			
M Jayawardene lbw b Swann	105			
Samaraweera lbw b Bresnan	54			
Mathews not out	41			
P Jayawardene c Prior b Finn	7			
Randiv not out	5			
Extras: (b-4)	4			
Total: (For six wickets in 90 overs)	238			
To bat: Herath, Lakmal, Prasad.				
Fall of wickets: 1-21, 2-21, 3-30, 4-154, 5-216, 6-227.				

<b>Bowler</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>W</b>
Anderson	17	2	52	3
Finn	18	3	43	1
Bresnan	15	2	32	1
Patel	16	3	32	0
Swann	22	2	71	1
Pietersen	2	0	4	0

## Inter-district

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six wickets. In Pabna, Sirajganj beat Joypurhat by eight wickets while away in Barisal, Patuakhali defeated Barguna by seven wickets, Narayanganj edged out Sherpur by three wickets while Chuadanga beat Kushtia by 67 runs.

## Cloud removed

FROM PAGE 16

been found since they were asked by the committee if they would be happy to play with four foreign players, as opposed to the three that has been the rule this season.

## Muktis fell Jamal

FROM PAGE 16

place of Aminul Haque, was caught in two minds as to whether to clear Zahid Hasan Emily's long ball from outside the box and Sunday capitalised on Piru's hesitation to place the ball home from the edge of the box. Sunday's latest strike put him at the top of the scorer list with six goals in nine games.

Sheikh Jamal's best scoring chance came in the

79th minute through a fine combination among Everton, Abdul Baten and Kester but the Nigerian hitman's final drive was well off-target.

"I am happy for the victory but not happy the way the boys played in the second half. They might feel relaxed after scoring two goals in the first half," said Muktijoddha Sangsad coach Shafiqul Islam Manik.

## CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

<b>ACROSS</b>	<b>DOWN</b>
1 Mexican peninsula	1 Emeril's interjection
5 Mussolini's title	2 — Khan
9 Scoundrel	3 It holds the mayo
12 Culture medium	4 William Tell, notably
13 Composer Khachaturian	5 Willy Wonka's creator
14 Past "USA Today" party guest	6 Caspian feeder
15 Tea illustrations	7 Auto-mobile
17 Regret	8 May birthstone
18 Corridor	9 Movie action scenes, often
19 Indy 500 entrant	10 Chills and fever
21 Sorts	11 Active part
24 Conk on the noggin	
25 Frost	
26 Guaranteed to work	
30 Bobby of hockey fame	
31 Technophiles' magazine	
32 Blue	
33 Comfy chair	16 Owns
35 Existed red deer	20 Donkey
36 Female maniac's crime	21 Explorer Heyerdahl
37 Pyromaniac's crime	22 Bygone times
38 Packing heat	23 Old paper
40 Saga-cious	24 Coffin stand
42 Spelling contest	26 Locate
43 Some "USA Today" illustrations	27 100 square meters
44 Some "USA Today" illustrations	28 Gambling game
45 Pismire	29 Paradise
52 Pentagon	31 Talkative one
53 Barrel	34 Falsehood
	35 Christmas door decoration
	37 Blond shade
	38 "Waterloo" quartet
	39 Check
	40 Small songbird
	41 Chills
	44 Hearty quaff
	45 Pi follower
	46 Overly
	47 Dine

## CRYPTOQUIP

I R O U F R X H Y V H P V B R O E  
R D M B W D U B V E K R H J D E W J  
H Y J K R X ? W X R O D M E V I E Y J E  
V S J V D N J V E H R P N R S M J F .

Yesterday's Cryptquip: PERKY SONG ABOUT A BLUESMAN WHO LIKES MAKING DOUGHNUT-SHAPED ROLLS: "BOOGIE WOOGIE BAGEL BOY." Today's Cryptquip Clue: E equals S