

Anand keeps his crown

Chess

AFP, Moscow

India's Viswanathan Anand on Wednesday retained his world chess title by outgunning his Israeli challenger Boris Gelfand in a quick-fire shootout forced after their 12-game Moscow epic ended all square.

Dubbed the "Battle of the Armageddon" in chess circles, the tie-break saw the two chess titans clash in four nail-biting speed chess games that lasted over four hours and left both players emotionally exhausted.

Three of the games ended in draws but a mistake by Gelfand in the endgame of game two as his allotted 25 minutes ran out proved decisive. Anand, known as the "Tiger of Madras", won that game and then doggedly resisted attempts by the Israeli to break through.

"It was incredibly tense," a drained Anand told reporters after the match. "I think that right now, the only feeling you have is relief. I am really too tense to be happy, but there is relief."

"Today, it is difficult to claim anything. I would simply say that my nerves held on better. I simply hung on for dear life."

With the players knowing one mistake could cost the championships, the match was marked by the almost unbearable tension of past great clashes like the epic world title match between Garry Kasparov and Anatoly Karpov in 1984-85.

The series had been staged at the Tretyakov art gallery in Moscow, the first time the Russian capital has hosted the world chess championships since the Kasparov-Karpov game that was called off due to fears for their health.

The thrilling tie-break was worthy of a tournament whose history also includes the historic 1972 clash in Reykjavik at the height of the Cold War between Bobby Fischer of the US and Soviet great Boris Spassky.

The Minsk-born Israeli had chances in all four tie-break games to put pressure on Anand and at times showed magnificently resourceful defence against the Indian's attacks.

Anand, dressed in his usual blue shirt, sat rooted to his chair as the more expressive Gelfand ran his hands through his hair and took long walks away from the board to think out his positions.

As tension mounted, Gelfand indulged in his favourite stress-busting habit of repeat-

edly rotating one of the taken bishop pieces in his right hand.

But he did not find a way to break down the Anand defence and seeing no chance of the victory he needed in the final fourth game Gelfand offered the draw which gave Anand the tiebreak by 2.5 points-to-1.5 and the title.

After four-and-a-half hours of extreme tension, the two men shook hands and immediately left the stage.

"Boris had his chances in each of the four tie-break games," commented Russian grandmaster Peter Svidler.

"Today has been a magnificent struggle, not without mistakes, but a lot of fight was shown by both players," he added.

Gelfand used up most of his allotted time in each of the games, leaving him under huge pressure as he made the endgame



India's Vishwanathan Anand ponders his next move during a tie-break of the FIDE World Chess Championship match against Israel's Boris Gelfand in State Tretyakovskiy Gallery in Moscow yesterday. PHOTO: AFP

moves with just seconds remaining.

"I think the decisive factor was that fact I did not use my time so wisely," he said.

The two masters displayed titanic control of the board in the regular 12-game series earlier this month but it ended level with just a win apiece and 10 draws.

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UK Minister meets Shagor

SPORTS REPORTER

The United Kingdom's Foreign Office Minister for South Asia, Alistair Burt MP, yesterday paid a visit to the National Swimming Complex in Mirpur to extend his support and cooperation to Bangladeshi Olympic swimmer Mahfuzur Rahman Shagor, who is training for the Games in London this summer.

Shagor will be a wild card entry into the 50m freestyle competition and as such has been undertaking intensive training in the National Swimming Complex.

"It was great to see Shagor in training and ask him about his prospects for the 2012 Olympics," said Burt.

"London is ready to welcome all the Bangladeshi competitors this summer," he said adding that all Bangladeshi athletes could expect to, "receive plenty of support from the half million strong Bangladeshi community in the UK."

The Minister spoke to Shagor on the occasion an enquired about his prospects in the upcoming Games.

"Participating in the Olympic Games is a great honour for any athlete. I hope Shagor will enjoy competing in the Aquatic Centre. He will inspire others in Bangladesh," said Burt.

The Minister also took time to laud the London 2012 International Inspiration programme which is currently working with the Bangladesh Swimming Federation to teach survival swimming skills to upto 250,000 children. He said that this was a great way to showcase London 2012's global legacy.

Williams hits rock bottom

AFP, Paris

Serena Williams crashed to the worst Grand Slam defeat of her career on Tuesday when she slumped to a dramatic and thrilling 4-6, 7-6 (7/5), 6-3 French Open loss to France's world 111 Virginie Razzano.

It was the 30-year-old American's first ever exit at the opening round stage of her 47-event Grand Slam career and her earliest loss at a major since she was knocked out of the Australian Open in second round by sister Venus in 1998.

On a night of unbearable tension on Philippe Chatrier Court, Williams saved seven match points in the ninth game of the nerve-jangling decider.

"I'm disappointed, but that's life, things could be worse," said 13-time Grand Slam winner Williams, who missed last year's Roland Garros as she battled life-threatening blood clots in her lungs.

\$9.4m contract

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haven't made a decision on the tenders; I just let you know what is the highest we've got. The other items are small; this is three-fourth of what we will get totally," he said.

He also informed that Sahara were the only company to bid for the rights to sponsor the National Cricket Academy, at a price of 130,000 dollars per year. It will fetch more than 500,000 dollars during the four-year period.

Apart from the national team and Academy, the board had also floated the tenders for in-stadia rights, title sponsorship of all home series under the Future Tours Programme (for four years), the hover cover (priced at 20,000 dollars per year), giant screen, manual scoreboard, beverage partner, hospitality partner and clothing.

"Soon, we will also tender for our media rights," Kamal said, adding that the pavilions at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium will also be branded. The defeat saw BJMC saw remain on 23 points, but they were overtaken in third position by Sheikh Russel who defeated Brothers Union 4-1 in the other encounter at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday, thanks to a second-half hat-trick from midfielder Mezbahul Huq Manik. Sheikh Russel moved to third position with 24 points.

In the other match played at the Birseshtha Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur, Feni Soccer Club defeated Farashganj SC 1-0 with Rowland scoring the decider on 55 minutes.



Alistair Burt MP, UK Foreign Office Minister for South Asia speaks to Bangladeshi Olympic swimmer Mahfuzur Rahman Shagor at the National Swimming Complex in Mirpur yesterday. PHOTO: COURTESY

DL method or VJD system? ICC rules today on which to follow

Cricket

APP, New Delhi

An Indian engineer will learn Thursday whether his challenge to the English system for determining the winner of rain-affected cricket matches -- one of the most complicated rules in the sport -- has been successful.

The current method, devised by English statisticians Frank Duckworth and Tony Lewis and known as the Duckworth-Lewis (D/L) rule, was first introduced at the international level in 1996.

It uses mathematical formulas to calculate the winning target for the batting team when rain reduces playing time in limited-overs matches and was first adopted after World Cup rules made a mockery of the 1992 semifinal between England and South Africa in Sydney.

Jayadevan, an engineer in southern Kerala state, spent a decade work-

ing on his so-called VJD system, which has been used in Indian domestic matches since 2007 following a recommendation from batting legend Sunil Gavaskar.

The International Cricket Council will announce on Thursday if the VJD system will replace the Duckworth-Lewis method after discussions in London by the ICC's cricket committee, headed by former West Indies captain Clive Lloyd.

Jayadevan, a passionate statistician, calculates his chances of success in percentage terms.

"I think there is 90 per cent hope if members read it patiently," Jayadevan told AFP from his office in Thrissur.

"I will not be at the meeting because I was not invited, so I cannot immediately clear any doubts which a member may have. That is why I have taken away the remaining 10 per cent chance," he said.

Jayadevan insists his system of calculating revised targets is a vast improvement on the D/L method.

"Both are two different ways of approaching a problem, two different mathematical models," he said. "There is nothing wrong with D/L system, but many times the targets set by it are not reasonable or sensible."

"In my report to the ICC, I have pointed out the mathematical and statistical flaws in the D/L system and how that has been corrected in my method."

In the World Cup game that prompted the adoption of the D/L method, South Africa needed a gettable 22 runs off 13 balls before rain stopped play, but that became a ludicrous 21 off one ball when the match resumed.

In England, the challenge has been seen by some as another attempt by India, the game's superpower, to chip away at the influence of England, the former colonial power and inventor of the game.

"There could be no more symbolic example of India's challenge to surpass England in every aspect of cricket's world order," noted the Guardian news-paper.

No water in swing theory!

Cricket

APP, Wellington

The widely-held belief that moisture in the air during humid conditions helps make a cricket ball swing has been clean bowled in a scientific study.

Swing bowling -- when a delivery curves sideways in mid-air -- has long been regarded as one of the game's dark arts, not only deceiving hapless batsmen but also puzzling cricket-loving scientists.

Researchers from Britain's Sheffield Hallam University and the University of Auckland in New Zealand reviewed scientific literature on the subject and conducted their own tests to try to get to the bottom of the mystery.

From the earliest studies of the phenomenon in the 1950s to the "semi-

nal review of sports ball dynamics" by NASA scientist Rabindra Mehta in 1985, they found humidity was consistently cited as a crucial factor in achieving swing.

The researchers tested the theory using 3D laser scanners in an atmospheric chamber to measure the effect different humidity levels had on deliveries using balls which had been "aged" to simulate match conditions.

While altitude and the age of the ball both increased swing, the scientists did not discover any link between moisture levels in the air and sideways movement of the ball.

"This study shows that there is no direct or indirect manner in which humidity can significantly affect the ability of the bowler to make the ball swing," they concluded in research published in the online journal

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 38 "Monty Python" opener 20 Really fast

5 Workout venues 22 Mass hysteria

9 Craze 42 Embrace 24 Should

12 Drive- 44 Approximately 25 Seuss' hat-wearer

13 Waikiki wingding 48 Early bird? 3 Walked (on)

14 Exist 49 Former frosh 4 Boss

15 Hens' housing 50 Night light? 5 Glistens

16 Deserve 51 Every last crumb 6 Taiwanese dollar

17 Spy novel org. 52 Jog 29 Compass dir.

18 Steven- son villain 53 "American" 30 Geologi- cal period

19 Pismire 54 "30 Rock" cast 31 Game, —, match

20 Celebrity 21 Spinning stat 35 Pakistan city

23 Ad- dressee 55 Longings 36 Leggings

25 Painter's surface 56 Rabbit 39 Un- hearing

28 Money of India 57 Host 40 Swan mode

32 Once more 41 "Fairy tale preposi- tion

33 Literary category 42 Start over

34 Adenoid neighbor 43 Any time now

36 Menace 44 Sibling- less

37 Goose (Sp.) 45 Pigs' diggs

Solution time: 27 mins.

PEP AUTO PESO

OAR GREW RILLE

PRODIGAL CRAIE

PALE OMEGA

SNORE DADO

HOST FELDSFRAN

AMA SELAMS RIO

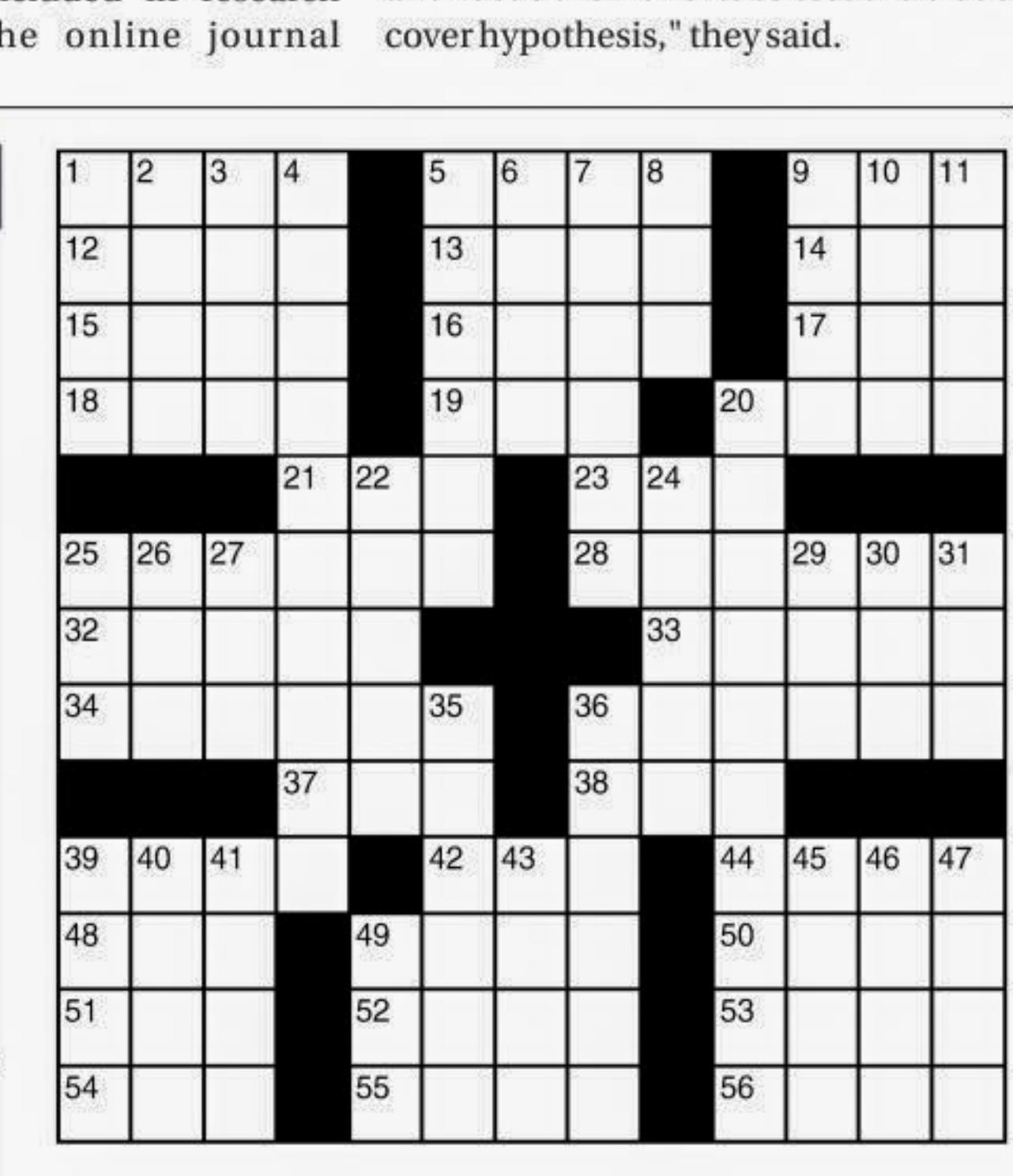
DOLPHINS FOLYIP

RALEIGH WACO

ALLEGOW PROVINCE

AFRO SORE GUT

BEEN ICED SEA



CRYPTOQUIP

B WK V WNBS BP W NM GH K GL NG

C T B X UK F M D B C N DB V U F F

U Z B F X - V N G C D U H K V C K G L

Z C U C B S B G C: "W U D U H N P F N Z C."

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: BECAUSE THIS FRAGILE FABRIC RIPS SO EASILY, I GUESS PEOPLE OUGHT TO CALL IT TEAR-Y CLOTH.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: C equals T