

## Stuart greets 6-sixer Yuvi

PTI, Colombo

The mere mention of 'six sixes' ranks England captain Stuart Broad, who was at the receiving end when Yuvraj Singh accomplished the feat in the 2007 World Twenty20, but the pacer was sporting enough to "welcome" the Indian batsman back after recovery from cancer.

"I know you don't want to remember but I have to remind you about the six sixes hit by Yuvraj Singh," quipped an Indian mediaperson at the pre-match press conference ahead of Sunday's India-England clash in the ongoing WT20.

"So, what's your question?" was the curt response from Broad, who has come a long way since that fateful September 19, five years back.

"Well, Yuvraj is a great player and we all welcome him having made such a strong comeback. Obviously, he is one of the most dangerous players but we will meet on the field tomorrow," Broad said when asked to comment on Yuvraj's comeback.

After having thrashed Afghanistan by a whopping 116-run margin, Broad hoped a repeat of this performance against India.

"It was a great innings by Luke [Wright]. I believe the match against India will be a good one. They have a huge fan following and hopefully it will be an exciting contest. Having played Australia and Pakistan in the two warm-up games, we are well-prepared to take on India," the skipper said.

## Fingers

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be an easy task for the Black Caps to beat Pakistan despite their easy sail against the Tigers. What the Chittagonian believes is that the 2009 champions Pakistan have all the necessary weapons to excel in the fourth version of the tournament.

All-rounder Nasir Hossain, who spoke to the Bangladesh media yesterday, however informed that they were not talking about this match but instead focussing on their next challenge against Pakistan on September 25. Bangladesh opted to take a rest yesterday which raised many eyebrows because many believe the coach should have at least given his charges a strong message stressing that a repeat of their shoddy performance against New Zealand, especially their fielding, will have dire consequences.

"We have not talked about it (about Pakistan-New Zealand match). It will become a straight equation if New Zealand win but we are thinking of September 25. We have to beat Pakistan to have any hope of staying in the tournament. We had a poor match yesterday and we dropped our standards. Everyone is keen to give a good account of themselves against Pakistan," said a confident Nasir, who made a fifty against New Zealand.

## Question

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in this format," observed Tamim.

"You know we are a better team only if we get some assistance from the conditions. But it was a true wicket and that's why the difference between the two teams was exposed. But what I believe is that we have the quality to play much better cricket than we did against New Zealand. You are bound to be helpless when a player like McCullum comes up with his best," added Tamim.

"Just look at Nasir's (Hossain) dismissal. His timing was perfect but still he could not clear it but if it were McCullum the result would have been completely different. So, we have to accept the reality. But I'm hopeful that Bangladesh's performance will improve if we continue to play matches in this format," continued Tamim.

It was painfully apparent on Friday, and these words from two of the country's best only confirm the notion; Bangladesh have a long way to

## Proteas pound on SL

REUTERS, Hambantota



A clinical performance from South Africa saw them beat Sri Lanka by 32 runs in a rain-curtailed Group C match of the Twenty20 World Cup at Hambantota on Saturday.

Heavy rain reduced the contest to seven overs a side and South Africa, put in to bat first, ran up an impressive total of 78 for four wickets.

Skipper AB de Villiers played a great hand to score 30 off just 13 balls and JP Duminy provided the finishing touches with a four and a six off the last two deliveries of the innings.

The hosts felt they had the game under control when they picked up both South Africa openers within the first three overs with 27 runs on the board but de Villiers turned the game around with a cameo that included two sixes and one four.

The total proved a steep ask for Sri Lanka and their chase was made even more difficult when flamboyant opener Tillakaratne Dilshan was run out without facing a ball.

The South African bowlers bowled a tight line, and helped by some sharp fielding, restricted Sri Lanka to 46 for five wickets as none of the hosts' batsmen were able to get a start.

Paceman Dale Steyn was the pick of the bowlers with two wickets for 10 runs off his two overs while his pace colleague Morne Morkel also stifled the scoring, conceding just nine runs off his two overs.

Dilshan Munaweera and Kumar Sangakkara top-scored with 13 runs each as the Sri Lankan batsmen could hit only four

boundaries off their seven overs.

Both teams have qualified to play in the Super Eight stage of the tournament.

### SCORES IN BRIEF

**SOUTH AFRICA:** 78 for 4 in 7 overs (De Villiers 30, Amla 16, Du Plessis 13; Kulasekara 1-9, Perera 1-12).

**SRI LANKA:** 46 for 5 in 7 overs (Munaweera 13, Sangakkara 13; Steyn 2-10, A Morkel 1-8).

**Result:** South Africa won by 32 runs.



**South Africa captain AB de Villiers provided the fireworks in a rain-reduced World T20 match against hosts Sri Lanka at the Mahinda Rajapakse Cricket Stadium in Hambantota yesterday. He struck a 13-ball 30.**

PHOTO: AFP

## Hsieh robs Robson

AFP, Beijing

Taiwan's Su-Wei Hsieh beat Briton Laura Robson in the WTA Guangzhou Open final on Saturday, ending the teenager's attempt to become the first British woman to win a main tour title in 24 years.

Hsieh won the match 6-3, 5-7, 6-4 in two hours and 48 minutes, leaving the 18-year-old Robson still waiting for a maiden tour win.

Robson, the world No.74, had defeated Chinese second seed Zheng Jie and Romanian third seed Sorana Cirstea on her way to becoming the first British woman to reach a main tour final since 1990.

But her attempt to follow up her Olympic mixed doubles silver with compatriot Andy Murray by taking her first senior tour title ended in failure.

She broke early on in the first set but her opponent hit back with a run of games to take a 5-2 lead, and Robson committed three double faults before finally holding serve in the eighth game.

Hsieh wrapped up the set in 49 minutes.

At first it was a similar story in the second set, with Robson breaking first but the 26-year-old Taiwanese, the world No.53, again hitting back with two breaks of her own.

Left-handed Robson looked to be on the ropes but fought long and hard to hold serve in the ninth game, saving several champion-

## Pak-Kiwi clash

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them come the next match."

After blowing hot and cold in the warm-up matches where they beat arch-rivals India but lost to England, Pakistan captain Hafeez said his team was ready for the serious business.

"We tried out various combinations in the warm-up matches and now we are ready for the big event," said Hafeez. "I am satisfied with the preparation of the team and we are ready for the big challenge."

Hafeez played down the hype around his spin quartet.

"We know conditions here suit seamers so we are not going to rely on our spinners alone," said Hafeez. "We also have good seamers led by Gul so we will have a balanced combination for a winning start."

The top two teams from each of the four groups will qualify for the Super Eight rounds.

Defending champions England and India have already qualified for the next round from Group A. Hosts Sri Lanka and South Africa have also progressed from Group C.

## Wanderers confirm super four

SPORTS REPORTER

Dhaka Wanderers Club confirmed the super four berth in the Green Delta Insurance Metropolis First Division Hockey League beating Barnak Samaj 1-0 at the Maulana Bhashani National Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Mohammad Sajib scored the match-winning goal in the 57th minute from a penalty corner.

The day's other match between Shishu Kishore Sangha and Combined SC ended in a 1-1 draw in the afternoon. Nizamuddin Shimul scored for Combined SC in the 36th minute which was cancelled by Mohammad Hridoy in the 57th minute. Both goals

## De Villiers and Mahela hail Kallis

ANI, Johannesburg

South Africa captain AB de Villiers along with Sri Lanka captain Mahela Jayawardene have paid glowing tributes to veteran Proteas all-rounder Jacques Kallis.

Kallis returned career-best figures of 4-15 to take the player-of-the-match award as South Africa thrashed Zimbabwe by 10 wickets on Thursday.

De Villiers said he feels jealous of Kallis for still performing brilliantly at his age of 37, and added that it's their great luck to have such an amazing player in the team.

"Jacques is an amazing player, one of a kind. Obviously I've no idea how he keeps doing it," Sports24 quoted de Villiers, as saying. "I am jealous at what he gets right at this old age, I can't think of myself doing that at that age. He is a wonderful player and we are grateful to have him in the squad," he added.

Meanwhile, Jayawardene branded Kallis as the best all-rounder of their generation in every form of cricket.

"I don't think anyone would disagree that Jacques would be the best all-rounder in our generation in all forms of the game,"

## Rubel, Safina's

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6-2 to win the title. There was some solace for Afrana as she paired up with Safina to beat Rusna Binte and Rebeka Sultana pair 6-4, 6-0 in the doubles final.

Later, Secretary for Youth and Sports Ministry Mahbub Ahmed distributed prizes among the winners as the chief guest of the occasion.

## One of Brendon's best

AFP, Pallekele



Dashing New Zealand batsman Brendon McCullum Saturday showed pleasure over his record-breaking knock against Bangladesh, saying contributions to team wins are significant.

The 30-year-old right-hander hit 123 off just 58 balls -- the highest individual score in all Twenty20 Internationals -- to guide New Zealand to 191-3 before restricting Bangladesh to 132-8 in 20 overs at Pallekele on Friday.

"Obviously I am very pleased to be able to make that contribution," said McCullum, declared player-of-the-match after New Zealand's 59-run win in the opening Group D match.

Pakistan are the third team in the group, from which the top two will qualify for the Super Eights stage.

"There have been a couple of innings which I remember for various reasons," said McCullum, whose other Twenty20 century came against Australia at Christchurch in 2010. "This one is really up there among my best."

Tim Southee (3-16) and Kyle Mills (3-33) then ended Bangladesh's chances with some accurate seam bowling.

McCullum stressed a successful start was

much needed.

"You need to turn up and play incredibly well in your first game to give yourself the best opportunity of qualifying. Also the fact that left arm spinners have posed us some problems in the past it was nice to put them out to pasture for a while," said McCullum.

Bangladesh included three left-arm spinners but all were put to sword by McCullum who hit seven sixes and eleven boundaries, pacing his innings well.

"I was just trying to maximize the last couple of overs for the team. We had discussed the need to put on partnership early on so I wanted to make sure that we try to maximize ourselves but certainly not the records," said McCullum.

South African Richard Levi's 117, ironically against New Zealand at Hamilton earlier this year, was the previous best score in Twenty20 internationals.

"I think I am pretty lucky there's only a short shelf life so far in this format.... it's a game which does suits me and my style of play and temperament as well. I always want to try and be aggressive when I am out there," said McCullum.

New Zealand next play Pakistan here on Sunday.

## 'No game is a dead game'

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It knocked the minnows out of the tournament and lifted both England and India into the Super Eights round from the group even before they clash in the last league match on Sunday.

With no points carried forward into the next round and the Super Eights groups to be formed on the basis of pre-tournament seedings, both teams will be playing for nothing more than personal glory.

But England captain Stuart Broad said his team will not take the game lightly.

"It is hard to call any international game a dead game," said Broad. "We will be fired up and wanting a win against India. Actually, we need to be at our best if we want to beat India."

"They are a very dangerous opposition. In this format of the game, everything depends on how the team performs on that particular day."

"We need to make sure we have a nice relaxed day on Saturday and turn up fresh and excited for Sunday."

Wright, who may not have been in the side if Pietersen had been around, seized the opportunity by smashing six sixes and eight fours,

helping England plunder 87 runs in the last five overs.

England's 196-5 after being sent in to bat proved too much for Afghanistan, who folded up for 80 in 17.2 overs under lights at the Premadasa Stadium.

Afghanistan were at one stage in danger of falling below the lowest ever total in T20 internationals of 67 by Kenya against Ireland in 2008, when they were reduced to 26-8 in nine overs.

But Gulbodin Naib and tail-ender Shapoor Zadran provided unexpected resistance by adding 44 for the ninth wicket.

Naib, who came to bat at number eight, scored more than half of his team's runs before he was last man out for 44 off 32 balls that included five fours and three sixes.

"It was a thoroughly professional performance from the guys," said Broad. "It is awesome to start the tournament on a winning note. We battled with maturity."

"Luke Wright's innings was outstanding. Towards the end, the guys came in and struck the ball really well. It was exciting to see such a

## Confidence earned

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free-kick as well as coming close two more times to increasing the score, feels Bangladesh should have won the game and should have won by a big margin.

"We were a little apprehensive to begin with. But after 10 or 15 minutes, we found that they were not a difficult proposition. But for the poor pitch conditions we would have won by at least 2-3 goals," felt the wingman who proved too hard for the Nepalese defenders to contain.

Coach Saiful Bari Titu believes Bangladesh would have won the match if the referees played a more neutral role, but was happy with his team's performance.

"We would have won the match had their goalie being sent off for bringing down Zahid (Hossain) outside the box. But anyway I am happy with my team's performance as they played according to

strategy. The boys played with tremendous courage and conviction," Titu said after the team's arrival in the afternoon.

The main concern for the coach prior to the match was a nervous defence which often cracks under pressure. But the defence line on that day held their own. The only blemish of the match was a fumble by the debutant goalkeeper Maksudur Rahman Mustak which allowed the Nepalese to draw level.

However, more than that gaffe, the players are disappointed at the fact that they did not get another opportunity to play due to rain since international fixtures are quite a rarity for them. The BFF are reportedly planning to host Nepal for a return fixture next February. Having played a crucial role in the draw, a confident Zahid feels the need for more international fixtures like this.

"We need to play more international matches. If that can be arranged, we can bring more good news and reasons to celebrate for the country," said the Tangail-born gifted winger.

## Bird doing better in hospital

ANI, London

Legendary Test umpire Dickie Bird was rushed to a hospital for an emergency surgery after a blood vessel burst in his nose when he was in the bathroom.

Bird said he nearly choked on his blood, but assured his fans that he is improving now after spending nine days in the hospital.

"I spent nine days in hospital but now I'm getting better," the Daily Star quoted Bird, as saying.

## CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

### ACROSS

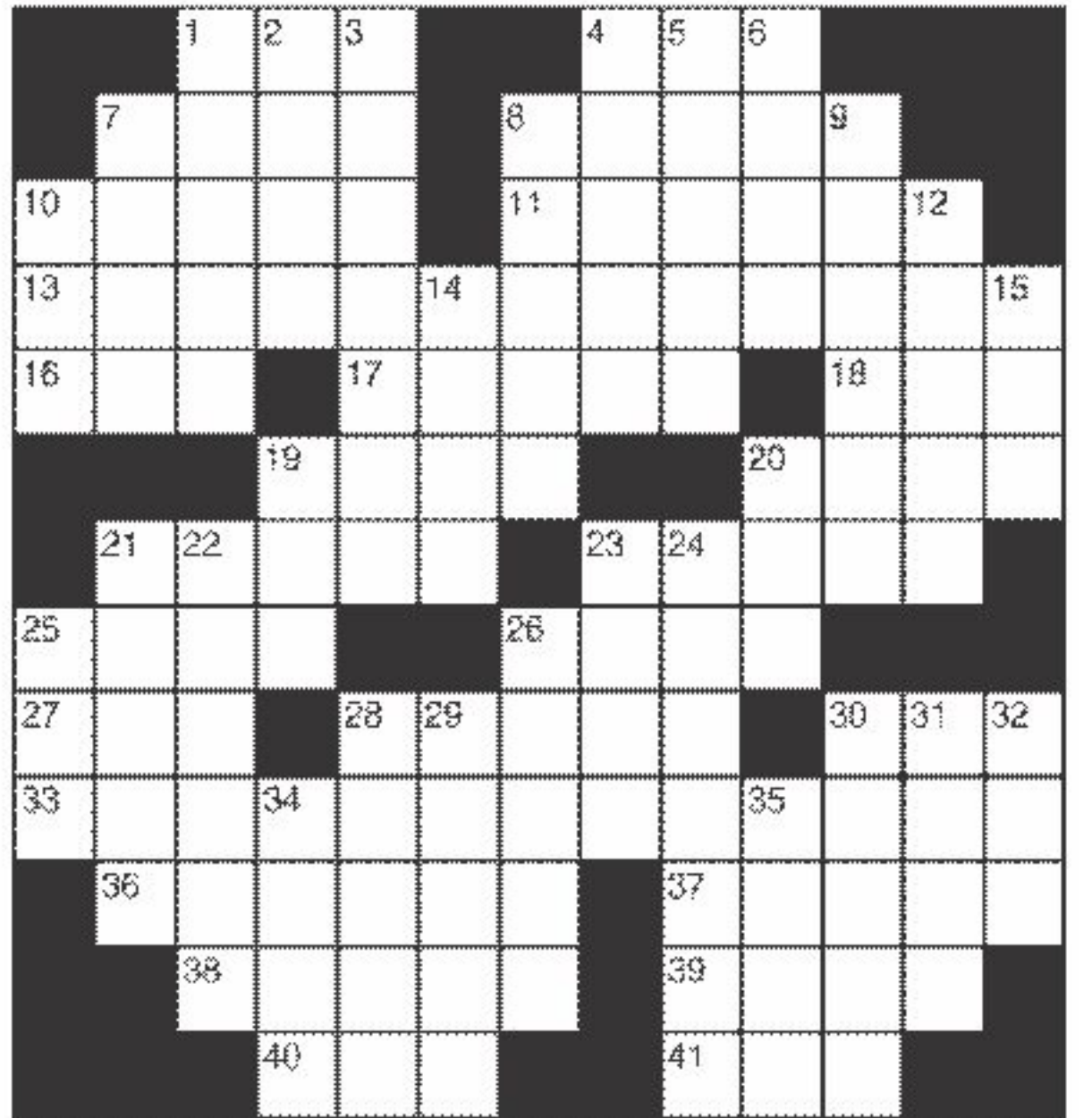
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25 Unescorted  
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27 Branch

28 Surmise  
30 Macabre author  
33 Easy task comparison  
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37 Soap opera extra, often  
38 Beat  
39 Advertising award  
40 Dog's doc  
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### CRYPTOQUIP

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**Yesterday's Cryptquip:** WHEN TECH TYCOON GATES BECOMES WORLD-WEARY, I'M GUESSING HE COULD LISTEN TO BILL-BORED HITS.

Today's Cryptquip Clue: C equals B