

CHAMPIONS LEAGUE First win for Spartak

AFP, Moscow

Russian side Spartak Moscow gained their first win of this season's Champions League campaign after losing their first two matches with a hard fought 2-1 win over Portuguese opponents Benfica here on Tuesday.

First-half goals by Rafael Carioca and an own goal by his Brazilian compatriot Jardel gave the hosts the much needed three points after two successive 3-2 defeats away at Barcelona and then at home to Scottish champions Celtic.

Benfica, who had levelled through Lima, look highly unlikely to repeat their achievement of reaching the Last 16 last season as they have just a point after three games.

Barcelona host Celtic later with the Catalan giants on six points and the Scottish side on four.

Spartak caught Benfica napping in the third minute, taking full advantage of a poor pass by Nemanja Matijevic just inside the hosts half.

NSC saves

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true decentralisation of Bangladesh cricket.

The absence of such a provision is perhaps the only weakness of the present constitution.

Today, the new BCB president Nazmul Hassan Papon will have his first board meeting and he will definitely discuss the constitution. Cricket lovers hope he will at least keep in mind that the board's constitution is not changed and mutilated like the constitution of our country.

37 called

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said coach Saiful Bari Titu.

Defender Kesto Kumar and midfielder Mohammad Jamal are also virtually new faces in the national squad as they have previously been in the preliminary squad of the national team.

The 37-member preliminary squad comprised 17 players from Federation Cup champions Sheikh Russel and runners-up Sheikh Jamal DC while ten came from Abahani, six from Mohammedan, two from Team BJMC and one each from Muktijoddha Sangsad and Brothers Union.

Johnson still

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reporters at Bellerive. "I think he's started the season really well in terms of Sheffield Shield cricket.

"He bowled very well in our tour to Dubai in the one-day tournament."

Russel enjoy the morning after

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The players and officials along with their neighbours had a late-night celebration at the temporary club tent situated besides Hosni Dalan in Chankharpul. The players, coaching staff and officials were awarded a dinner by the club management at a city hotel for their triumph.

"It was a big day for all of us -- club, players, officials and fans. We enjoyed it very nicely as the neighbours of Old Dhaka also joined our DJ Party that continued till late night," said captain Biplob Bhattacharjee.

The players were also immediately rewarded with US\$ 6,000 (Tk5 lakh).

The Blue and White outfit with a bunch of national and experienced booters put up a brilliant performance to come from behind to beat Sheikh Jamal Dhanmondi Club 2-1 in the Federation Cup final to begin the season on the right foot.

"The onus was on our shoulder to prove ourselves and we did just that.



Perth Scorchers batsman and England veteran Paul Collingwood plays a square drive on his first appearance in the Champions League T20 against Auckland Aces at the SuperSport Park in Centurion yesterday.

PHOTO: INTERNET

Aces fail to pace it up

Daredevils, Titans in semifinals

INTERNET, Centurion

Auckland Aces let slip a slim chance to edge Nashua Titans out of the Champions League, crashing to a 16-run defeat to Perth Scorchers at the Supersport Park on Tuesday.

Perth were already out of the title hunt, and the best they could achieve from this game was beating Auckland and thus put Delhi Daredevils and the Titans in the semifinals.

Having restricted Perth to 140-7, Auckland needed to chase down the runs in under 15 overs to improve on their poor net run rate of -1.035. A quick win would have brought them level with the Titans on points and ahead of them on run rate.

But the Aces' chase never took off.

The reassuring presence of Martin Gupthill and Azhar Mahmood in the middle took the Aces to 61-1 in the 10th over. But both batsmen then fell trying to attack left-arm spinner Michael Beer.

Perth used the wickets to tighten things further, and on a sluggish batting conditions, the required rate shot past

Darker days await Lance



AFP, Paris

World cycling's decision to strip Lance Armstrong of his record seven Tour de France wins could cost the shamed US rider millions, amid calls for tougher action to restore the sport's shattered image.

The International Cycling Union (UCI) on Monday gave its backing to a damning US Anti-Doping Agency (USADA) dossier that placed the Texan at the heart of the biggest doping programme in sport, erasing his record back to August 1, 1998.

But as the 41-year-old's major triumphs were scrubbed from the history books and officials vowed to up the fight against banned substances, moves began to recoup his prize money, bonuses and

other pay-outs.

Tour de France director Christian Prudhomme on Monday said they would seek the repayment of nearly 2.95 million euros (3.8 million dollars) from Armstrong's successes in cycling's most gruelling and celebrated race between 1999 and 2005.

During Armstrong's dominant period, Tailwind Sports, the parent company of his US Postal Service team, took out a policy with sports insurance firm SCA Promotions, paying a premium to cover bonuses paid for his Tour victories.

SCA withheld a 5-million-dollar bonus due after Armstrong's sixth Tour win in 2004 because of doping allegations in Europe. The rider took the Dallas, Texas, firm to court and was awarded the cash, plus 2.5 million dollars in legal fees and interest.

with the players who have match temperament as well as experience of winning trophies in past. And they gave their dream a real shape after roping in nine national players along with some experienced players.

And it has already started to pay off in the beginning of the season through clinching the maiden title of the Federation Cup.

"It has been proved that the inclusion of experienced and national players was a right decision," said Sheikh Russel KC president Nurul Alam Chowdhury over the phone from China yesterday.

"Look at the semifinal and final, it would not have been possible to come back in those matches without the national and experienced players after conceding a lead in both games," said Chowdhury.

Coach Maruful Haque believes the spectators will see an improved Sheikh Russel in the upcoming Bangladesh Premier League as they have kept their sight on the remaining domestic titles.

Dead rubber abandoned due to rain

INTERNET, Centurion

The final group fixture of the 2012 Champions League T20 between Delhi Daredevils and Nashua Titans was abandoned without a ball being bowled, after being washed out by rain at the Supersport Park on Tuesday.

The game was rendered inconsequential after both teams made it to the semi-finals, courtesy Auckland's loss to Perth by 16 runs in the first match of the day. This was the fourth game in the tournament that failed to generate a result because of rain.

Delhi Daredevils will now take on the Highveld Lions in the first semifinal on October 25 in Durban, while the Sydney Sixers will take on the Nashua Titans on October 26 in Centurion.

Warne will

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inaugural season the same year and has continued playing with them.

"I have to never say 'never' because in 2007 I said I'd never play cricket again," Warne told reporters in Melbourne.

"But 18 months later the IPL came up, so that was something that interested me, to captain-coach and do it the way I always thought it should be done."

Warne, who remains Australia's highest ever wicket-taker with 708 Test scalps, said each time he thought he might have played for the last time, another competition came along that sparked his interest.

"I do love cricket, I'm passionate about the game and if I can help Australian cricket in any way, shape or form then I will," he said.

Warne returned to training on Tuesday ahead of the BBL, which will kick off on December 7 when the Melbourne Stars play the Melbourne Renegades.

Zia NIT

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with seven points while FM Taibur Rahman, FM Mehdi Hasan Parag, FM Debaraj Chatterjee and FM Nasir Ahmed finished 44th, 47th, 48th and 50th respectively. Taibur, Parag, Debaraj and Nasir earned 6.5 points each.

CSA rejects PCB plea



CRICINFO, Cape Town

Cricket South Africa (CSA) has turned down the Pakistan Cricket Board's (PCB) request to alter the dates of Pakistan's tour to South Africa starting February 2013 citing busy international schedule as the reason.

The PCB had requested the change to expand the current 12-day window for its proposed Twenty20 league that follows the South Africa tour in March.

"We wanted to expand our window [for the T20 league], but they [CSA] didn't agree so we decided to continue as per the Future Tours Programme," Zaka Ashraf, the PCB chairman, told ESPNcricinfo.

"CSA told the PCB that they had already announced and sold tickets and it was not possible to make any change."

Pakistan are set to launch their T20 premier league in March and were hoping to have a bigger window while avoiding a clash with the 2013 season of IPL that starts from April 3. They are scheduled to play

three Tests, five ODIs and two T20s between February 1 and March 24, 2013 and wanted the dates to be advanced. However, South Africa will be busy hosting New Zealand in December and January.

"They [PCB] asked us to move the tour earlier but it was just not possible because of our schedule," Jacques Faul, the acting CSA chief executive, told ESPNcricinfo.

"We always try to accommodate other countries but we can't always manage. The programme is very busy these days. We also play our domestic competitions while tours are ongoing."

Meanwhile, the PCB is expediting the staging of the inaugural T20 premier league. One of the purposes of the league is to take steps towards the revival of international cricket in Pakistan by inviting overseas players to participate. The confidence has increased after the success of the matches played between International XI and Pakistan All Star XI in Karachi recently that saw international players for the first time in Pakistan since the attack on the Sri Lankan team bus in March 2009.

Smith being humble

PTI, Durban



Coming into Champions League T20 as the defending champions, Mumbai Indians might be leaving South Africa without a single win under their belt but for Dwayne Smith the experience has been fulfilling personally as he got a chance to open the batting with Sachin Tendulkar.

"At MI you open the batting with Sachin Tendulkar. From the time I was young, I've always admired him as a batsman and to open the batting with him is a big achievement for me. I feel a lot more confident when I'm batting with him," he said.

"He keeps chatting to me while batting. Especially if I play a bad shot, he comes up to me and tells me it wasn't the right shot to play and explains me how to go about the game," Smith added.

Stating that there was a small technical issue that he was facing before coming to CLT20 but has now managed to sort it out with the help of Tendulkar and MI coach, Smith said, "He [Tendulkar] has been talking to me in the nets as well. I had a

little glitch coming from World T20. Sachin and coach Robin Singh have been of great help to me in sorting it out.

"I don't have any problems anymore. I just want to move on from it," Smith was quoted as saying by clt20.com.

Smith said that he had thoroughly enjoyed his stint as an opener during the CLT20.

"From the time I started opening, I've enjoyed this role and I still am enjoying it. As an opener you get the better part of the game.

"It's challenging as sometimes you have to build the innings, while at times you have to go after the bowling. The first six overs are the opportunity for me to play to my strength and attack the ball. It's good for me and I like it.

Meanwhile, speaking about his Mumbai Indians' dismal performance during the tournament, Smith said that the team failed to click as a unit.

"I just think we didn't play as a team. The batting or bowling didn't come together. We know where we went wrong. We will all go back to the drawing board and learn from our mistakes," he insisted.

Tamim show goes on

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KHULNA vs BARISAL

Slow-left arm spearhead Abdur Razzaq ran through Barisal's batting order as the visitors crumbled under pressure in Khulna. Barisal, who had an overnight score of 95 for 2, lost six wickets for just 60 runs as they failed to chase down a moderate target of 257. Barisal's Shohag Gazi who had earlier scored a century and picked up 9 wickets in the game, was adjudged man of the match.

CHITTAGONG vs DHAKA METRO

The batsman-friendly wicket at Bogra saw five centuries and one double-century, including hundreds in each innings by Tamim Iqbal. The dashing left-hander's exhilarating innings ended the game with

a bang. Tasamul Haque was the other centurion of the day with an unbeaten 135 for Dhaka Metro, who declared the innings after scoring a mammoth 632. In reply, Chittagong played out the day with the score at 163 for 1. Tamim was declared the man of the match for his twin tons. Rangpur vs Sylhet

The last day of the game witnessed half centuries by Nasir Hossain and Sohrawardi Shuvo as Rangpur ended the day at 258 for 6. Enamul Haque Jr staked his claim for a call-back to the national side with six wickets in the game. Naeem Islam, who scored a total of 181 runs in the match, including an unbeaten 137 in the first innings, was declared the man of the match.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

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5 Reverberate	36 Handle the expense	54 Wapiti	10 Chicken —
9 — out a living	37 Gun the engine	55 Favorites	11 Duel tool
12 Type of pit	38 Exploit	56 Toward the sunset	20 "Hia-watha" writer
13 Got bigger	39 Metropolis		22 Put your two cents in
14 Guacamole, often	42 Early bird?	DOWN	24 Ducks work
15 Roughly	44 Chantilly, e.g.	1 Andy's pal	25 Half a dance?
16 Exceptional	48 Commotion	2 Sported	4 O. Henry specialty
17 Born	49 Lotion additive	3 Being, to Brutus	26 Once around
18 Crystal gazer	50 Story teller	4 Herons' kin	27 Melody
19 Swelled head	51 Cattle call?	5 Rugged rock	29 To and —
20 Wash	52 Luminary	6 Brave	30 Always, in verse
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CRYPTOQUIP

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D N K C M H L D Q M S C D V L K C ?

Yesterday's Cryptoquip: AFTER I NOTICED SUCH A HIGH DOLLAR AMOUNT ON THE TAXI'S METER, I EXCLAIMED "FARE ENOUGH!"

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: P equals Y