

## Ervine to skip Tigers series

CRICINFO, Harare

Craig Ervine, Zimbabwe's leading run-scorer across all three formats on their recent tour of West Indies, has refused a winter contract and will not be part of the series against Bangladesh.

Ervine has instead opted to play club cricket in the UK. Meanwhile, the threatened player boycott has been averted after eight players signed winter contracts.

He is one of three players who decided not to take up Zimbabwe Cricket's offer. The other two, Sean Williams and uncapped Pakistan-born Sikandar Raza, are still in discussions with the board.

## Zia draws in Dubai

SPORTS REPORTER

Grand Master Ziaur Rahman drew against Yemeni IM Gameel Mohamed in the second round of the 15th Dubai Open Chess Championship which was held in Dubai, UAE on Monday.

The first draw in two matches saw Zia earn 1.5 points from. Zia was scheduled to play his third match against Mohammed Tarig Elther of Sudan last night.

## Heavy fine on Dravid

IANS, Jaipur

Rajasthan Royals captain Rahul Dravid has been fined 20,000 dollars after his side maintained a slow over-rate during their Indian Premier League (IPL) match against Kolkata Knight Riders here.

At the end of the match Monday, Rajasthan Royals were assessed to be two overs shy of the required rate after allowances were taken into consideration.

Since it was his first offence of the season under IPL's Code of Conduct relating to minimum over-rate offences, Dravid was fined only 20,000 dollars.

For the second offence, he can be fined 40,000 dollars while a third one would lead to a fine of 50,000 dollars and a one-match ban.

## THATCHER TWEET Irish Mooney seeks apology

INTERNET, London

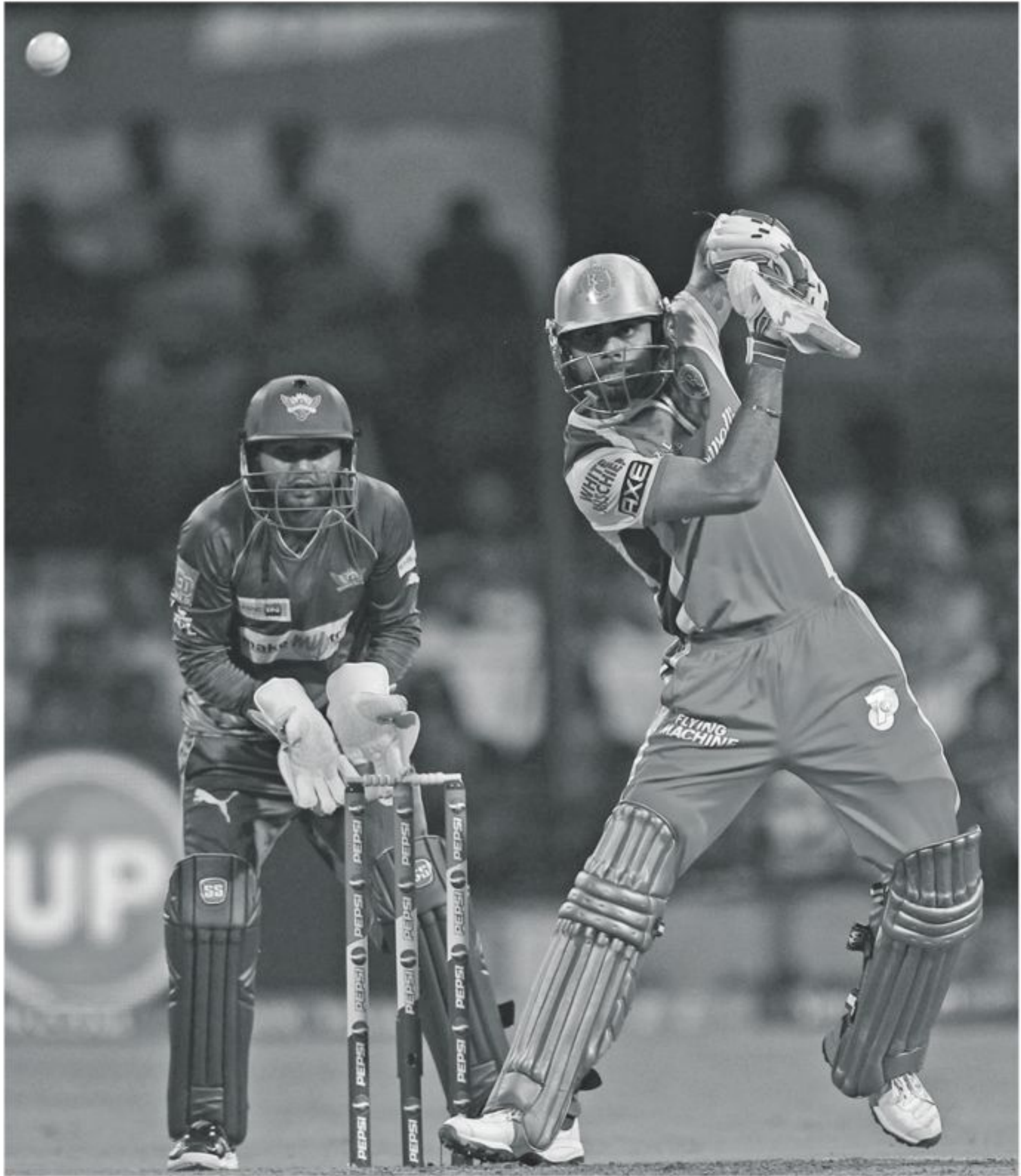
Ireland all-rounder John Mooney has issued an apology for tweeting that he hoped Margaret Thatcher's death was 'slow and painful'.

Mooney, best known for hitting the winning runs in Ireland's sensational victory over England at the 2011 World Cup, has subsequently deleted the message, and followed up with an apology.

The chief executive of Cricket Ireland, Warren Deutrom, instructed the tweet to be removed, describing it as "crass, insensitive, and offensive".

"I would like to apologise to anyone that I upset with my tweets yesterday regarding the death of Margaret Thatcher.

"I realise now that they were offensive to many and have deleted them. I'd like to assure my family, friends, employers and ... teammates that I have learned a very valuable lesson and in future will stick to focusing on my game!"



Royal Challengers Bangalore skipper Virat Kohli powers a ball to the off side during his unbeaten 93 in the IPL match against Sunrisers Hyderabad at the M Chinnaswamy Stadium in Bangalore yesterday.

PHOTO: INTERNET

## RCB take revenge

AGENCIES, Bangalore



Virat Kohli led from the front with a breathtaking unbeaten 93 as Royal Challengers Bangalore made short work of a challenging target from Sunrisers Hyderabad winning by seven wickets in a Pepsi Indian Premier League match here on Tuesday.

Chasing a commendable target of 162, Kohli made a mockery of Sunrisers bowlers as he single-handedly guided his team to victory smashing 11 four and four sixes off 47 balls as they knocked off the runs with 14 balls remaining.

It was a sweet revenge for RCB who had lost to Sunrisers in a 'Super Over' two days back.

The match swung decisively in RCB's favour in the 16th over bowled by Amit Mishra after 'Strategic Time-Out' where Kohli smashed the bulky leggie for 21 runs. This included to straight sixes. In the next Thisara Perera over he got another 16 runs to close in on the match and couple of boundaries from Ishant sealed the issue.

He had a partnership of 66 with Moises Henriques (7) for the fourth wicket but it was Kohli who was in complete control as he paced his innings in brilliant fashion.

The play to open the bowling with Hanuma Vihari failed miserably this time as Agarwal hit him for a four and six to get him out of the attack. The local boy then pulled Ishant for a six over deep fine leg to get 15 runs from the over.

Ishant however got the big wicket of Chris Gayle (13) as he bowled one that moved a

shade after pitching and the Jamaican nicked it to Parthiv Patel behind the stumps.

Kohli's first scoring stroke was six over mid-wicket off Perera. Along with AB de Villiers, he added 49 runs but the South African failed to clear the fence off a rank long hop from leggie Cameron White as gave a simple catch to Hanuma at deep mid-wicket fence.

The turning point was the 16th over of the innings bowled by Moises Henriques that yielded 18 runs. The two bowlers who came out unscathed from the Perera-White onslaught were veteran spinner Muttiah Muralitharan (1/23) and India discard Rudra Pratap Singh (3/27) who gave away only 50 runs in their 8 overs taking four wickets between them.

The bowler who went for maximum was Ranganath Vinay Kumar who gave away 43 in his four overs. Normally, considered as a safe bet in T20 matches, Vinay Kumar's length deliveries were sent soaring into the stands by Perera.

The start wasn't a good one for the home side as they lost Akshath Reddy (12) caught by Vinay Kumar at the edge of the circle at mid-off RP's bowling.

**SCORES IN BRIEF**  
**SUNRISERS HYDERABAD:** 161 for 6 in 20 overs (Reddy 12, Patel 20, Sangakkara 23, White 52, Perera 40; RP Singh 3-27)  
**ROYAL CHALLENGERS BANGALORE:** 162 for 3 in 17.4 overs (Agarwal 29, Gayle 13, Kohli 93 not out, De Villiers 15; Ishant 1-30, White 1-14)  
**Result:** Royal Challengers Bangalore won by 7 wickets.  
**Player-of-the-match:** Virat Kohli.

## Eng focus on World Cup

INTERNET, London



Champions Trophy tournament director Steve Elworthy believes it is vital this summer's competition is a success for English cricket and used as a platform to build for the 2019 World Cup.

England are hosting the premier event in six years' time using what will be a similar format to this summer's eight-team competition. The 15-game Champions Trophy will take place over 17 days at Edgbaston, The Oval and the Swalec Stadium this June.

"It's incredibly important it is a success now so we can build for 2019, when we host it," said Elworthy. "It's a shame it [the Champions Trophy] is pencilled in to be the last one, it really is a fantastic tournament. I think it will reflect a lot closer to what the 2019 World Cup will be -- a 10-team tournament."

He added: "I definitely think it is about that shorter period, getting a global event played within a month -- and that is definitely an attraction."

"It can tend to drag on, but this particular tournament is three weeks and has the top eight teams, it has an attraction. "From a media, promotion and broadcaster's perspective it is absolutely appealing."

That appeal could have been dampened with the tournament taking place during an Ashes summer, but with seven of the matches sold out barring returns, there is certainly interest.

"At the back of your mind there is always going to be a bit of a niggle -- I would be lying if I said that wasn't the case," Elworthy said.

"It does attract the other nations. The Ashes of course is a huge event in itself, but the Sri Lankans, Pakistan, West Indies fans are drawn. Those supporters are very passionate and will come out in their thousands to support their team."

## Brothers

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in vain due to the failure of the strikers. On 70 minutes, Eleta Kingsley advanced into the box from the right to cut the ball back for unmarked Bangoura, who saw his feeble attempt from the six-yard box cleared from the goalline by a Brothers defender.

Seven minutes later, BJMC produced another good chance with Eleta and Bangoura unsettling the Brothers backline but Abdullah Parvez shot miles off the target, with only the goalkeeper to beat.

In the dying moments, Brothers almost stole the show when Kingsley side-volleyed on a low cross from Khan Sharif, but the goalbound shot was cleared by BJMC defender Ramjan Ali.

Dutch coach Lodewijk De Kruijf and Rene Koster, along with their spouses, watched the match and later Kruijf talked to the BJMC defender Kesto Kumar and striker Toklish Ahmed, the two members of the national team, and Brothers midfielder Jamal Hossain.

## Second win for Mumbai

PTI, Mumbai

Dinesh Karthik and Rohit Sharma's blazing half centuries set the platform for Mumbai Indians to claim a 44-run win over Delhi Daredevils in their Pepsi Indian Premier League match on Tuesday.

Deciding to bat, Karthik's 48-ball 86 and Sharma's unbeaten 50-ball 74 powered Mumbai Indians to an imposing 209 for five before the hosts produced a disciplined bowling effort to restrict Delhi Daredevils to 165 for nine in their allotted 20 overs at the Wankhede Stadium.

Australian opener David Warner waged a lonely battle for Delhi with a 37-ball 61 but none of the other batsmen showed intent to grind it out and bind time at the wicket.

The pressure of mounting run-rate weighed heavily on Delhi batsmen as they kept on losing wickets at regular intervals.

Defending the target, Mumbai bowlers kept a tight leash over Delhi's scoring rate to earn their second successive win in the tournament after losing their first match against Royal Challengers Bangalore.

**SCORES IN BRIEF**  
**MUMBAI INDIANS:** 209 for 5 in 20 overs (Karthik 86, Sharma 74 not out, Pollard 13, Rayudu 24; Nehra 2-49)  
**DELHI DAREDEVILS:** 165 for 9 in 20 overs (Warner 61, Juneja 49, Pathan 10, Morkel 23 not out; Johnson 2-49, Ojha 2-34, Pollard 2-25)  
**Result:** Mumbai Indians won by 44 runs.  
**Player-of-the-match:** Dinesh Karthik.

## Wari beat Victoria

SPORTS REPORTER

Wari Club tasted their first victory in the Premier Bank Bangladesh Championship League after thrashing Victoria SC 5-0 at the Birshreshtha Shaheed Mostafa Kamal Stadium in Kamalapur yesterday.

Wari led the first half 2-0 with Rabby, Tenjing striking one each before Titu, Jewel and Sujan increased the margin to ensure their maiden victory.

## Pak captains deny rift



Cricket

AFP, Lahore

Pakistan's Test and one-day captain Misbahul Haq and Twenty20 skipper Mohammad Hafeez again denied reports of a rift Tuesday, saying the rumours were damaging the team.

Misbah had already denied similar reports on the team's return from South Africa where Pakistan were routed 3-0 in Tests and were edged out 3-2 in the one-day series, defeats which local media blamed on differences within the side.

But former chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Ijaz Butt reignited the controversy on Tuesday, alleging Hafeez and team's head coach Dav Whatmore had formed a nexus that left Misbah sidelined.

"Both Hafeez and Whatmore support and back each other and that has put great pressure on Misbah, affecting his performance," Butt told local media.

Pakistani cricket has a long and sorry history of infighting and Hafeez said Butt's accusations were bad for Pakistan.

"Ijaz Butt is a respected person and he should have thought that such a statement

affects a country's image," Hafeez, sitting alongside Misbah, told a press conference. Misbah said Pakistan lost because South Africa played better.

"I said this in South Africa, I repeated this on the team's return and now I say this again -- we lost because South Africa were a better team and the reason of our defeat was not differences," said Misbah.

Hafeez, who replaced Misbah as one-day skipper in May last year, said the Pakistan team needed better and more positive support.

"Such baseless reports of differences do not help," said Hafeez, who flopped with the bat in both Tests and one-dayers.

Pakistan's next assignment is the eight-nation Champions Trophy in England in June, and Misbah was upbeat.

"Pakistan has done well in England so I am quite hopeful that we will achieve good results in the Champions Trophy," he said.

Pakistan face India, South Africa and the West Indies in the group stage of the tournament, while defending champions Australia, England, Sri Lanka and New Zealand make up the other pool.

## ECB makes IPL plea



Cricket

CRICINFO, London

David Collier, the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) chief executive, has urged the BCCI to reschedule future IPL seasons to dovetail more successfully with the England first-class season in response to pressure from England players who are clamouring to participate in the event.

In an interview with the Times, Collier revealed that he had recently held talks with officials from the BCCI (Board of Control for Cricket in India), Cricket Australia and Cricket South Africa with a view to finding a solution to the tensions created within international cricket by the growth of domestic T20 leagues.

Collier has contended that, in future years, the IPL can be completed before the end of April to allow England players to participate without compromising their involvement in England's international schedule which starts in mid-May. This year's IPL ends on May 26.

"We have had very fruitful talks with India," Collier said. "In an ideal world, we would like the IPL to be concluded by April 30, which is the cooler season for India. We have put that to them, they are doing their best, but they realise there are some limitations."

"It would make things a lot easier for us. We still have to get the workload balance right, but it would make it a lot easier for our players to be available for that period and certainly the BCCI are fully aware of that. There is a willingness on the part of both boards to see if we can make any progress."

The talks come in the context of the ECB re-negotiating the value of central contracts with England players. The players' union, the Professional Cricketers' Association, is requesting substantial pay increases to compensate its members for their non-appearance, or at best fleeting appearance, in the IPL, and have argued that Australian players earn far more from their Board and

have more opportunity to appear in T20 leagues such as the IPL and Big Bash.

As a consequence, the ECB, eager not to raise the value of the contracts above sustainable levels, are seeking other ways to allow its players to supplement their incomes. Collier's India discussions have perhaps carried most importance in openly displaying a willingness to negotiate a better deal for England's players as they make their impatience clear about their exclusion from such a high-profile tournament.

There appears to be little scope for the IPL finishing before the end of April for the next three years. The World Twenty20 in Bangladesh is scheduled to run from March 16 to April 6 in 2014, with the World Cup in Australia and New Zealand likely to run from February until the end of March 2015 and the World Twenty20 of 2016 scheduled to run in India until mid-April.

While some have suggested the IPL could be shortened by scheduling three games per day, it seems unlikely that the BCCI would accept the subsequent reduction in advertising and sponsorship revenues.

ESPNcricinfo understands that tentative exploratory talks have also taken place with a view to the ECB being compensated for discontinuing one of their May Tests in return for allowing players to participate in the IPL. Such a move would bring the ECB into dispute with its broadcast partners, however, and so would be unlikely to happen in the short term.

## Tendulkar to go 3D

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the series," Tendulkar was quoted of saying in the release.

"It will indeed be a different experience to see one's own rendition on the animated screen, performing larger than life action much beyond the limitation of the real world," he added.

The adventurous Master Blasters series, featuring Tendulkar, along with twelve kids, is animated with fun filled, 3D comedy action and cricket.

## CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

<b>ACROSS</b>	<b>40</b> Accumulate	<b>2</b> Concept	<b>23</b> \$ dispenser
<b>1</b> Soybean paste	<b>43</b> Empty spaces	<b>3</b> Harmonization	<b>24</b> Born
<b>5</b> Young fellow	<b>47</b> Time away	<b>4</b> Senes-cence	<b>25</b> Homer's neighbor
<b>8</b> In the thick of	<b>49</b> Largest of the seven	<b>5</b> A cat has nine —	<b>26</b> Fun 'n' games
<b>12</b> Pastoral poem	<b>50</b> TV trophy	<b>6</b> Mil. sch.	<b>27</b> Compete
<b>13</b> Hockey surface	<b>51</b> Conk out	<b>7</b> Nov. follower	<b>28</b> "— was saying, ..."
<b>14</b> Start over	<b>52</b> Trawler equip-ment	<b>8</b> Melodious	<b>29</b> Anti
<b>15</b> Tear	<b>53</b> Actor Rogier	<b>9</b> List of options	<b>31</b> Dinner for
<b>16</b> Some inocula-tions	<b>54</b> Peculiar nit	<b>10</b> Mid-March date	<b>34</b> English composi-tions
<b>18</b> Left the premises	<b>55</b> Citrus drinks	<b>11</b> Medicinal amount	<b>35</b> Expan-sive
<b>20</b> Grown-up	<b>DOWN</b>	<b>17</b> Satiated	<b>36</b> Twitch
<b>21</b> Petrol	<b>1</b> Nuclear missile acronym	<b>19</b> Levy	<b>37</b> Galapa-gos lizard
<b>22</b> Jan. and Feb.	<b>Solution time: 21 mins.</b>	<b>22</b> Baer or Schme-ling of boxing	<b>39</b> Subsidized
<b>23</b> Building wing			<b>40</b> State
<b>26</b> Battery brand			<b>41</b> Jerry Herman heroine
<b>30</b> Golf prop			<b>42</b> Pinnacle
<b>31</b> Whammy			<b>43</b> Null and —
<b>32</b> Equal (Pref.)			<b>44</b> Second-hand
<b>33</b> Combat-zone helicopter			<b>45</b> Teeny bit
<b>36</b> Connec-tion			<b>46</b> Back talk
<b>38</b> Express			<b>48</b> Aflar affirma-tive
<b>39</b> Peruke			

Yesterday's answer

3-5

1	2	3	4		5	6	7		8	9	10	11
12					13				14			
15					16			17				
18				19				20				
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23	24	25				26			27	28	29	
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47					48				49			
50					51				52			
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### CRYPTOQUIP

Y V G Q J W H D N C L H D K S ' K  
R V G X G V V G B S C R G W X  
B V Y H J Y H N Z G K K G F Q W T F B  
Z G V C F Y J G F C P G D S T L P F G V .

**Yesterday's Cryptoquip:** PHRASE RELEVANT TO A HORSE WHO IS GIVEN SOME WINE TO CELEBRATE AN EVENT: CHAMPAGNE AT THE BIT.

Today's Cryptoquip Clue: P equals B