

Corey clubs fastest ton

NZ blow away Windies in 3rd ODI

AFP, Queenstown



New Zealand all-rounder Corey Anderson cracked the fastest century in one-day international cricket history on Wednesday as New Zealand thrashed the West Indies by 159 runs in a rain-shortened third ODI.

His whirlwind performance in partnership with Jesse Ryder, who smacked the sixth fastest century of all time in that form of the game, took New Zealand to 283-4 in a match reduced to 21 overs each side.

The West Indies then wilted when faced with a daunting run rate of nearly 13.5 an over and could only manage 124-5 in reply.

The series is now all square at 1-1 with two matches to play.

Anderson -- who finished not out 131 -- took a mere 36 deliveries to reach his century, beating the previous record set by Shahid Afridi, who needed 37 balls to reach three figures playing for Pakistan against Sri Lanka in 1996. Ryder faced 46 deliveries to reach his ton.

The burly Anderson hit 14 sixes, the third highest in an ODI innings behind Rohit Sharma (16) for India against Australia two months ago and Australia's Shane Watson (15) against Bangladesh in 2011.

"Some of the batting we saw was once in a lifetime stuff and it was great to watch," New Zealand captain Brendon McCullum while West Indies skipper Dwayne Bravo said he was powerless to rein in the batsmen.

"It was a fantastic innings both by Anderson and Ryder. There's nothing you can do as a captain and bowler when those bats hit the ball so clean and everything goes their way."

Anderson and Ryder put on 191 for the fourth wicket as they hammered the West Indies attack.

After the start of the game was delayed five hours because of the weather, Ryder set

the tone for the New Zealand innings when he cracked a boundary from the first ball he faced.

The demise of fellow opener Martin Gupthill (one) was only a matter of time. He was all at sea against the bounce generated by Jason Holder and after surviving two caught behind appeals there was no mistake

Ravi Rampaul went for 64 runs off his three overs -- his economy rate of 21.33 was the worst for any bowler to have bowled more than one over in an ODI.

with the third.

Brendon McCullum belted 33 off 11 deliveries as New Zealand raced past 50 in just 26 balls and Ross Taylor came and went quickly for nine.

That brought Anderson to the wicket to join Ryder in a rollicking partnership for which the West Indies had no answer.

Anderson took 20 deliveries to reach his 50, passing the milestone in an over in which he hit four sixes in a merciless attack on the usually tight bowling of spinner Sunil Narine.

In a near chanceless innings he only faced 47 balls for his 131, while Ryder faced 51 balls for his 104 which included five sixes.

After New Zealand's outstanding innings, McCullum said he made sure his bowlers raced through their 21 overs to complete the game before the rain returned.

SCORES IN BRIEF

NEW ZEALAND: 283 for 4 in 21 overs (Ryder 104, B McCullum 33, Anderson 131 not out; Holder 2-48)

WEST INDIES: 124 for 5 in 21 overs (Walton 17, D Bravo 56 not out, Deonarine 29; McClenaghan 2-7)

Result: New Zealand won by 159 runs.

Player-of-the-match: Corey Anderson.

Chelsea incur £49.4m loss

AFP, London



Chelsea made a £49.4million (\$81.8m, 59.9m euro) loss in the last financial year, the English Premier League club announced on Wednesday.

Turnover for the year ending June 30, 2013 was a record £255.8m (\$424m, 308m euro), but the club's early Champions League exit contributed to the loss in income.

Jose Mourinho's side will still however satisfy UEFA's Financial Fair Play (FFP) regulations as the two-year monitoring period includes the £1.4million (\$2.3m, 1.6m euro) profit made in the 2011/12 season.

The club also saw a 19 per cent rise in commercial income from £67m (\$111m, 80m euro) to £79.6m (\$132m, 95.8m euro) as they won the Europa League.

Chelsea chief executive Ron Gourlay said: "For Chelsea FC to achieve a record level of turnover despite our first group-stage elimination from the Champions League shows we have structured our business and are growing in the correct way for long-term stability.

"Our philosophy is we build upon success on the pitch and although in these financial results we haven't repeated the sizeable profits made the previous year from player transfers, we believe the age profile of the existing squad means we will benefit from that investment for many years to come.

"A successful team builds awareness around the world and our increased commercial revenues in 2012/13 and new or extended partnership deals demonstrate we are working hard to capitalise on that."

Toure makes final shortlist

AFP, Abuja

Ivory Coast and Manchester City midfielder Yaya Toure remains on course for a third straight CAF African Player of the Year Award after he made the final three-man shortlist on Tuesday.

"The Ivorian pair of Yaya Toure and Didier Drogba make the final three for a second successive year and will be joined by John Obi Mikel of Nigeria," the Confederation of African Football (CAF) said on their website.

The 30-year-old Toure won the award in 2011 and 2012.

Compatriot Didier Drogba, 35, who plays for Turkish club Galatasaray, has also won the award twice, in 2006 and 2009.

It is the first time that 26-year-old Chelsea midfielder Mikel has made the final three.

The 2013 winner will be announced at a ceremony in Lagos, Nigeria, on January 9.

Schumacher 'stable'

AFP, Grenoble



Formula One legend Michael Schumacher remained "stable" Wednesday after spending a third night in hospital with severe brain injuries sustained while skiing in the French Alps.

The German racing great entered the new year in an induced coma and a critical condition, with his family at his bedside in the French Alpine city of Grenoble and doctors unsure of his future.

The 44-year-old's fight for survival after he fell and slammed his head on a rock while off-piste skiing on Sunday has shocked legions of sports stars and fans used to seeing him brave death on the racing tracks.

"At the moment, he is stable," the seven-time world champion's manager Sabine Kehm told reporters massed outside the hospital in Grenoble on Wednesday, in a

brief update before heading back inside.

Initially described as serious but not life-threatening after the accident in the upmarket resort of Meribel, Schumacher's condition rapidly deteriorated and by Sunday evening, doctors said he was in critical condition and had undergone an emergency operation.

On Tuesday, they said a slight improvement in his condition had allowed them to perform a second nearly two-hour long procedure to remove bleeding in the brain, but warned he was "not out of danger" yet.

"We cannot speculate on the future," said Jean-Francois Payen, head of the intensive care unit at the hospital. "We cannot say he is out of danger but we have gained some time."

Doctors have so far ruled out any transfer from the hospital, which they say would be "dangerous".

But they have pointed out that Schumacher, due to turn 45 on January 3, has age and physical fitness on his side.



New Zealand's Corey Anderson salutes the spectators as he walks off the pitch at the end of his innings in which he broke the record for the quickest century in ODIs in Queenstown on Wednesday.

PHOTO: AFP

Afridi hails new record holder

AFP, Karachi

Pakistan all-rounder Shahid Afridi today hailed New Zealand batsman Corey Anderson, who broke his long-standing record for the fastest one-day century -- but admitted he had never heard of him before.

Anderson bettered Afridi's 17-year-old record by one ball, reaching the three-figure mark off just 36 balls against the West Indies in Queenstown in the third one-day international.

Afridi set the mark aged just 16, in only his second limited-overs match, against Sri Lanka in Nairobi in October 1996.

He said he had never heard of Anderson before today. "I never heard his name and early morning my nephew told me about his feat and I sort of said the first news of 2014 is of my record being broken," Afridi told AFP.

"But I must say it's a great achievement and Anderson deserves all the praise. It needs a super effort to score a hundred off 36 balls," Afridi said.

Arsenal thump Cardiff

AFP, London



Nicklas Bendtner and Theo Walcott scored last-gasp goals as Arsenal edged Cardiff City 2-0 on New Year's Day to preserve their place at the Premier League summit.

With former Manchester United striker Ole Gunnar Solskjaer in attendance, amid reports he is due to succeed the sacked Malky Mackay as Cardiff manager, Arsenal dominated the game but looked destined to drop points until Bendtner's dramatic intervention.

Wilshere struck the base of the post in the second half, before substitute Bendtner slammed home in the 88th minute after Cardiff goalkeeper David Marshall parried a header from Bacary Sagna.

Walcott added a second goal in injury time to rubber-stamp Arsenal's return to first place, after Manchester City had taken temporary possession of top spot by winning 3-2 at Swansea City.

City's Brazilian midfielder Fernandinho scored the first goal of the new year in the 14th minute at a rain-soaked Liberty Stadium, drilling home right-footed after Swansea partially cleared a Samir Nasri corner.

Ivorian striker Wilfried Bony equalised with a well-placed header in first-half stoppage time, but his international colleague Yaya Toure restored the visitors' lead with a deflected shot in the 58th minute.

City's Serbian left-back Aleksandar Kolarov added a third eight minutes later, lashing a powerful strike past Swansea goalkeeper Gerhard Tremmel, before Bony

RESULTS

Arsenal 2 (Bendtner 88, Walcott 90) Cardiff City 0 Crystal Palace 1 (Puncheon 44-pen) Norwich 1 (Johnson 39)

Fulham 2 (Sidwell 32, Berbatov 66) West Ham 1 (Diame 7)

Liverpool 2 (Agger 36, Suarez 50) Hull 0 Southampton 0 Chelsea 3 (Torres 60, Willian 71, Oscar 82)

Stoke 1 (Assaidi 49) Everton 1 (Baines 90-pen) Sunderland 0 Aston Villa 1 (Agbonlahor 15)

Swansea 2 (Bony 45, 90) Manchester City 3 (Fernandinho 14, Toure 58, Kolarov 66)

Solskjaer rumoured for Cardiff

AFP, London

Former Manchester United striker Ole Gunnar Solskjaer attended Cardiff City's game at Arsenal on Wednesday, fuelling speculation that he is to be appointed as the Welsh club's new manager.

Solskjaer, the current coach of Norwegian club Molde, was pictured on Sky Sports News arriving at Arsenal's Emirates Stadium in north London in the company of Cardiff owner Vincent Tan.

Cardiff, promoted from the Championship last season, have been without a manager since Malky Mackay was sacked on December 27 after his relationship with Tan broke down.

Solskjaer, 40, spent 11 years at United after signing from Molde in 1996, notably scoring a famous injury-time winner against Bayern Munich in the 1999 Champions League final in Barcelona.

He joined United's coaching staff after retiring in 2007 and was appointed manager of Molde in 2010.

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