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# The Island Sports

Tuesday 30th June, 2009

## Mathews earns Test call-up



Sri Lankan captain Kumar Sangakkara, left, shakes hand with his Pakistani counterpart Younis Khan during a media conference in Colombo, Sri Lanka, Monday, June 29, 2009. The Pakistan team arrived in Colombo Sunday and will play three Tests, five One-Day Internationals and a T-20 game starting on Saturday.  
Pic by Nihan Chandrakumara.

by Richard Browne

Sri Lanka's squad for Saturday's first Test against Pakistan was named yesterday during the launch of the three Test series between the countries in Colombo. There was no place for Chaminda Vaas while Lasith Malinga's knee is still considered too weak to stand up to the

rigours of the five day game.

Angelo Mathews was included in the Test squad for the first time after his strong showing in England during the T-20 World Cup. Prasanna Jayawardena has cracked a finger and is out of the side for the first Test at least.

Reserve keeper Kaushal Silva also gets a call up to the Test squad, but new skipper

Sangakkara hinted that for the balance of the side he will probably don the gloves and remain in his favoured position at number three. "The balance of the side is the all important thing and the option of either an extra batsman at seven or Mathews as an all-rounder would give that balance to the side."

He went on to say "This is a

great chance for someone to make their mark both personally and for the team, and whoever gets the spot must take their chance."

Pakistan skipper Younis Khan still jubilant after leading his country to World Cup glory at Lord's was happy with his side's preparation in their current warm up match. "The guys are doing well, it is just good to be out playing cricket again and we are looking to utilize the next four days as much as possible."

Younis was also understandably very happy to have Muhammad Yousuf back now his ICL ban has been revoked. Speaking of the one time number one Test batsmen, Younis said, "My hands are always open to a player of his quality. With

Saturday.

When asked about the challenge of adapting so quickly from the shortest to the longest form of the game, Sangakkara said "It is a more of a mental than technical thing and I have every faith that the boys will be able to adjust without too many problems."

One cause of concern for the Sri Lankan skipper was the continued lack of crowds at home Test matches.

Sri Lanka have an inexperienced seam attack and even more than usual a lot will depend on the spin twins Muttiah Muralitharan and Ajantha Mendis. Pakistan in contrast seems to have a very well balanced attack and with the return off Abdul Razzaq have added depth to their batting line up. Shahid Afridi, the star performer during the T-20 World Cup, can still not find a place in the Test squad, while 17-year-old left arm seamer Mohammad Aamer will be looking to force a place in the starting line up.



**Sri Lanka squad:**

Kumar Sangakkara (captain) Muttiah Muralitharan, Malinda Warnapura, Tharanga Paranawithana, Mahela Jayawardena, Thilan Samaraweera, Tillekeratne Dilshan, Angelo Mathews, Chamara Kapugedera, Ajantha Mendis, Thilan Thushara Mirando, Nuwan Kulasekera, Damika Prasad, Kaushal Silva and Suranga Lakmal

only two or three years left in his career, he should be playing for Pakistan. I am always a positive person and look forward to captaining him."

Both captains were keen that the tour should be conducted in a spirit of friendship after the terrorist atrocities in Pakistan and predicted a closely fought series which starts in Galle on

## Lankans in Asian Youth Games today

Susil Premalal reporting from Singapore

Sri Lanka athletes Naveen Heshan Amarasinghe (100m), Dulaj Lahiru (400m), Akshana Chathubashini Maralanda (100m), H.H. Nadeeshani (400m) and Nimesha Madushani Siriwardena (high jump) will participate today at the first Asian Youth Games now in progress here in Singapore.

Nearly 300 athletes from the Asian region will compete in today's athletic events while Madushani Siriwardena will take part in the high jump final.

The manager of the Sri Lanka athletic team, Chandana Ekanayake said there was some kind of hope in the disciplines of Heshan Amarasinghe (100m) and Dulaj Lahiru (400m).

Sri Lanka is taking part in five events out of nine of the Asian Youth Games and will compete in five disciplines of athletics today.

Attractive opening ceremony

The Asian Youth Games for youth between 14-17 years commenced with an attractive opening ceremony yesterday.

Prime Minister of Singapore, Lee Nising Lung, declared open the games titled 'Asia's Youth, Our Future'. It was followed by a colorful cultural ceremony that highlighted both Asia and Singapore.

Sri Lankan athletes wore spe-



cially designed uniform for the first time in an International event yesterday. Incidentally, the five member committee who approved the uniform were also present to witness the event.

The International Olympic Committee's anti doping unit has taken steps to check athletes using performance enhancing drugs.

Medical officer of the Sri Lankan contingent Lal Ekanayake said the authorities have taken steps to conduct tests on a daily basis disregarding the heavy costs involved to stop the up coming athletes using performance enhancing drugs.

The Asian Olympic Committee has decided to 'think twice' before imposing punishments to young athletes as they are in the age group 14-17.

Swine flu

Channel News Asia of

Singapore reported that swine flu had spread in Singapore. They have decided to close down all International Schools for one week due to the outbreak. Channel News Asia also reported the number of swine flu patients had increased to 144.

Two football teams sent home

Meanwhile, the authorities have sent home the football teams of Philippines and Hong Kong after two of their players were positively identified with swine flu.

To prevent the spread of swine flu among athletes and media personal, authorities have distributed surgical masks with a digital apparatus to check body temperature every five hours.

Apart from those self tests, every person entering the sports stadiums are checked for swine flu symptoms at the entrance.

pany the team on and off the field."

Sri Lanka's team was attacked on its way to play a test against Pakistan on March 3 in Lahore by more than a dozen heavily armed gunmen in an ambush. Six police officers and a driver were killed and seven members on Sri Lanka's bus were wounded.



Sri Lankan Cricket XI batsman Lahiru Thirimanna, left, and teammate Chamara Kapugedera run between wickets during a three day practice match between Pakistan and Sri Lanka Cricket XI in Colombo, Sri Lanka, Monday, June 29, 2009. (Pic by Eranga Jayawardena)

## Thirimanne sizzles in warm up match

Former Sri Lanka Under-19 opener Ramesh Lahiru Thirimanne top scored with 116 runs while Upul Tharanga with a half-century and Chamara Kapugedera with an unbeaten 90 runs helped Sri Lanka Cricket XI post 278 for three wickets at close against Pakistan in the three day match that commenced at Colts Cricket Ground yesterday.

Thirimanne scored nine fours and two sixes in his knock and built partnerships of 78 and 170 runs for the second and third wickets joining his senior partners.

The former Prince of Wales College batsman came to the crease after opener Tharanga Paranawithana was dismissed for six runs when the score

was on 27 and built a 78 runs partnership with Tharanga for the second wicket.

He then added a valuable 170 runs for the third wicket with Kapugedera. He had faced 171 balls for his 116 runs when he departed caught by Mohammad Aamer off the bowling of Fawad Alam.

Kapugedera was unbeaten on 90 with skipper Thilina Kandamby yet to score when stumps were drawn on day one.

Only 66 overs of the scheduled 90 were possible on day one due to rain.

**Brief Scores:**

**Sri Lanka** 278/3 (66)  
U. Tharanga 50, L. Thirimanne 116, C. Kapugedera 90\*.

## Sri Lanka likely to send wildcards for IAAF World Championships

by Reemus Fernando

After top athletes failed to achieve qualifying standards for the IAAF World Championships at the trials held at the Sugathadasa Stadium over the weekend, Sri Lanka is likely to field two sprinters as wildcard entrants for the IAAF World Championships at the Lusophony Games to be held in Lisbon, Portugal.

With none of the top athletes coming even close to qualifying standards the selectors as their last resort are hoping to see whether any athlete would earn required standard in Portugal.

"Selectors had to opt for the next best athlete as wildcards due to the failure of top athletes at the trials" sources close to the SLAAA said.

The IAAF recognises only the qualifying standards achieved during the period January 1st 2008 to August 3rd 2009 and the last recognized meet that some of the best Sri Lankan athletes take part before the expiry date is the Lusophony Games which is to be held from July 11-19 in Lisbon, Portugal.

In the event of not achieving the required qualifying standards there, selectors might opt for Shehan Ambepitiya and Chandrika Subashini who are the only athletes to have shown promise at recent international events, sources said. The IAAF's qualifying rules allow member federations to send two unqualified athletes, one male and one female when they do not have athletes who had earned qualifying standards.

The weekend's trials saw Menaka Wickramasinghe and Rohan Pradeepkumara who represented Sri Lanka on numerous occasion being beaten in their pet events. The two have also not impressed in local events as of late.

In the Women's 400 meters Subashini beat Menaka Wickramasinghe, her closest rival by almost a second while in the 200 meters, D.D.P Priyadarshani beat her pushing her to the second place.

Rohan Pradeep Kumara was beaten to be placed second in the men's 200 meters by S.M. Weerasooriya of Sri Lanka Navy.

The IAAF World Championships will be held from August 15-23 in Berlin, Germany.

## Kandy beat CR 17-12

It was erroneously reported in *The Island* on the 29th June that Kandy beat CR by 29 points to nine in the inter-club rugby tournament fixture played at Longden Place on Sunday. The score should have read Kandy beat CR by 17 points to 12. We regret the error.

## Federer reaches quarterfinals at Wimbledon

WIMBLEDON, England (AP) -

Roger Federer found himself in a serving contest Monday at Wimbledon - and won.

The five-time champion hit 23 aces, never lost his serve and advanced to the quarterfinals by beating familiar foe Robin Soderling 6-4, 7-6 (5), 7-6 (5).

Federer improved to 11-0 against Soderling, including a victory in the French Open final to complete a career Grand Slam three weeks ago.

This time the No. 2-seeded Federer came through on a handful of key points. He earned the only service break of the match in the ninth game of the opening set, when Soderling committed five unforced errors to fall behind for good, 5-4.

Soderling led in the final tiebreaker but double-faulted on the next-to-last point, then hit an errant return.

"Today was hard to get through, a really dangerous match," Federer said. "Robin served great throughout the match. Thank God he served a double-fault in the breaker at the end. Otherwise it could have gone easily four sets."

With all 16 fourth-round matches scheduled on another no-rain, no-roof afternoon, the Williams sisters remained on course to play an all-family final for the second year in a row.

