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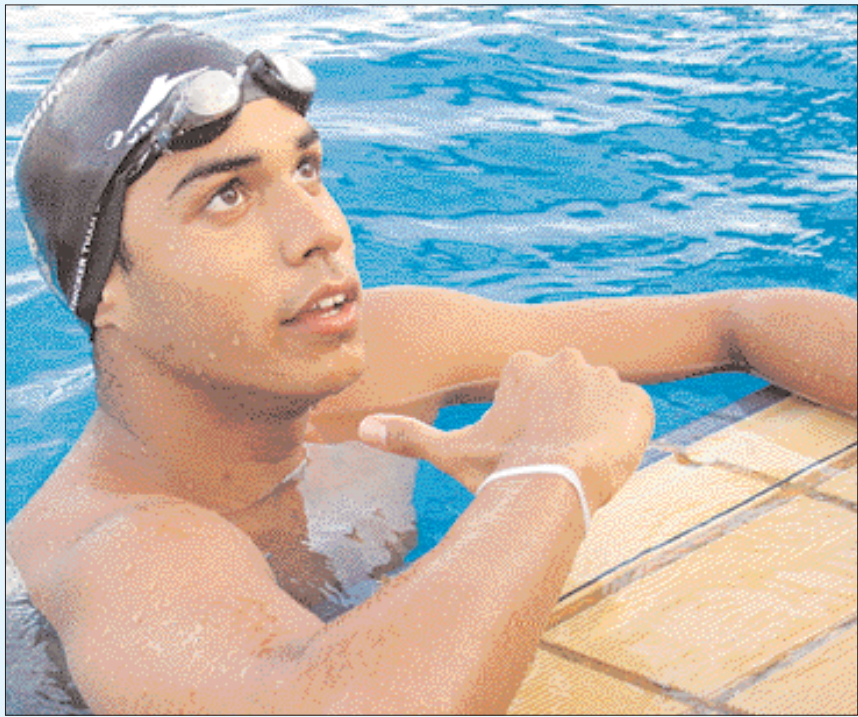
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The Island Sports

Tuesday 28th July, 2009



This picture captured by our staff photographer Dimuthu Premaratne shows Heshan Unamboowe just after breaking a record at the 35th National Age Group Aquatic Championship at the Sugathadasa Stadium early this month. Unamboowe established a new Sri Lanka record at the 13th FINA World Championships in Rome, Italy, yesterday.

Heshan sets new SL record at World C'ships

Sri Lanka's swimming sensation Heshan Unamboowe established a new Sri Lanka record at the ongoing FINA World Championships in Rome, Italy, yesterday.

According to Kiran Atapattu, a high

ranked official of the Swimming Interim Committee, Unamboowe had established the record in the 100 metres back stroke event.

Unamboowe had retained a timing of 59.47 seconds. (RN)

Sri Lanka 'A' win by 15 runs

Pakistan's winless run during their tour of Sri Lanka continued as Sri Lanka 'A' beat the tourists by 15 runs in the 50 over warm up game at the Welagedara Stadium in Kurunegala yesterday, the only warm up game for the tourists before the five match ODI series begins at the Rangiri Dambulla International Cricket Stadium on Thursday.

Sri Lanka 'A' choosing to bat first got off to a disastrous start as they lost two wickets off the first two deliveries of their innings. Upul Tharanga and Kaushal Silva were both out without scoring as Abdul Razzaq picked up two wickets.

But a fine 161 by Mahela Udawatta and a hundred by Chamara Kapugedara enabled them to a strong 348 for six in 50 overs.

Udawatta, who has not been named in the ODI squad, faced 135 balls in his knock hitting 19 boundaries and two

sixes while Kapugedara needed only 91 balls for his 101. He hit six boundaries and a six. Both batsmen fell to Razzaq, who finished with figures of four for 70 in nine overs. Captain Thilina Kandamby chipped in with 59.

Pakistan were bowled out for 333 in their allotted 50 overs with Umar Akmal, the younger brother of wicketkeeper Kamran Akmal making an unbeaten 103 in just 76 balls. Fawad Alam and Razzaq warmed up for the ODI series with half-centuries.

Dilhara Fernando and Farveez Maharooof picked up three wickets each for Sri Lanka 'A'.

Brief Scores:
Sri Lanka 'A' 348/6 (50)
M. Udawatte 161, C. Kapugedara 101, T. Kandamby 59, A. Razzaq 4/70.
Pakistan 333 all out (50)
F. Alam 85, U. Akmal 103*, A. Razzaq 56, D. Fernando 3-50.

Doctor says Massa's life no longer in danger

by Paul Logothetis

BUDAPEST, Hungary (AP) - The neurosurgeon who operated on Felipe Massa said Monday his condition was no longer considered life-threatening, although damage to his eye and other injuries could prevent him from returning to Formula One.

Robert Veres said Massa was in stable condition and remained sedated "to protect his brain," which had experienced some swelling. Massa has been woken up from time to time for tests, and his motor skills seemed to be functioning properly, Veres said.

However, he said Massa would definitely not return to the track this season, and that his long-term future in the sport was in doubt.

"I don't know (if he can return)," Veres said. "It's too early to say anything concerning his future, regarding the race."

Veres was one of three surgeons who operated on Massa's multiple skull fractures Saturday, following his high-speed crash during qualifying for the Hungarian Grand Prix. Massa was struck by a loose part from another car that bounced up and hit him in the helmet, concussing him and sending his car into the protective tire barrier.

Several fragments of bone from the skull had to be removed during the operation, Veres said. Doctors were



Ferrari Formula One driver Felipe Massa of Brazil is brought to a helicopter after his accident during the Qualifying session at the Hungaroring circuit near Budapest, Hungary, Saturday, July 25, 2009. (AP Photo/Gero Breloer)

particularly concerned about injuries to the 28-year-old Brazilian's left eye, but Veres said they didn't yet "know the quality of this damage."

"We don't know exactly because without operation it's very hard to evaluate function," Veres told reporters from the AEK military hospital, where Ferrari president Luca di Montezemelo was also visiting Monday.

Veres said no more operations were planned at the moment, but couldn't rule out further surgery in the future if his condition deteriorates.

"Anytime can be worse because of the complications,

the nature of these injuries," he said. "He has a brain contusion. It's fine now. A focal contusion because of the impact of the metal piece."

Veres remained hopeful that Massa would walk again, as he was slowly recovering his motor skills and responding to doctors requests to move limbs. He remained on a respirator and would be sedated until his condition improved further.

Di Montezemelo said that Ferrari's first priority was Massa's health, but that the Italian team doesn't "want to wait too long" to decide on finding a driving replacement.

"Our first priority is Felipe's recovery, Felipe's progress and so on," said di Montezemelo, who was accompanied by team principal Stefano Domenicali, hospital director general Istvan Szilvasy and chief surgeon Lajos Zsiros. "Felipe's been an important member of the Ferrari family for many years, since he arrived as a kid. We all hope that he can come back soon."

Di Montezemelo said that Domenicali would remain with Massa and his family - which included pregnant wife Anna Rafaela - on Tuesday.

"Domenicali has to think and make good proposals for the future," Di Montezemelo said. "We don't want to wait too long for Felipe. First priority now is to find out about Felipe, only at that moment will we take a decision."

Massa will remain in Budapest for at least several days, although he could be moved within a week depending on his progress.

F1's governing body is investigating the crash, which comes amid a string of safety mishaps, including the death of an F2 driver last weekend after he was struck in the head by a loose tire from another car and crashed into a barrier.

No F1 driver has died on the track since Ayrton Senna's crash at Imola 15 years ago. The three-time champion died from head injuries after a violent crash.

Akhtar in trouble again

ISLAMABAD (AP) - The Pakistan Cricket Board has asked paceman Shoaib Akhtar to explain his comments in a TV interview, where he threatened to sue the PCB for disclosing a medical condition.

Zakir Khan, the PCB's director of operations, told The Associated Press that the comments violated a contract that bars him from openly criticizing the cricket board's decisions.

"We have asked Akhtar to

explain the contents of the interview by July 31," Khan said Monday.

The PCB disclosed Akhtar's skin infection in a statement when he was omitted from the team for last month's Twenty20 World Cup.

The controversial paceman said in an interview on Express News this month that he considered suing Pakistan's cricket management for making his condition public.

Olympic 1500-meter champ Ramzi faces doping panel

by Graham Dunbar

LAUSANNE, Switzerland (AP) - Olympic 1,500-meter champion Rashid Ramzi faced an IOC disciplinary hearing on Monday to explain why he tested positive for the blood-boosting drug CERA after the Beijing Games.

The Morocco-born Bahraini was one of five athletes who had their cases heard by the International Olympic Committee panel. They were caught this year in new tests using blood samples taken at the games, but all deny doping.

The others are Italian cyclist Davide Rebellin, who won silver in the road race, German cyclist Stefan Schumacher, Croatian 800-meter runner Vanja Perisic and Greek race walker Athanasia Tsoumeleka.

The IOC can strip athletes of their results and medals, and ban them from the 2012 London Olympics.

Disciplinary panel member Denis Oswald said rulings were expected when the IOC executive board meets in Berlin on Aug. 13-14.

"Some of the cases have

to go to the executive board and the intention is to announce all the results together," Oswald told the Associated Press after the near 7-hour session. "There's quite a lot of arguments and we now have to study them."

Ramzi emerged from the IOC headquarters with his Los Angeles-based lawyer Maurice Suh around 90 minutes after the hearing started.

Suh, whose previous clients in doping cases include former Olympic 100-meter champion Justin Gatlin and cyclist Floyd Landis, told the AP he could not comment on the hearing.

Rebellin's lawyer Fabio Pavone said on arriving that the Italian was "completely innocent" of doping.

"He has always been a clean athlete and he intends to demonstrate that. He is confident because he has nothing to hide," Pavone said through a translator.

Schumacher said he was "hopeful" after a 90-minute hearing.

"I have to fight for my rights because I know I didn't do anything wrong," the 28-year-old German said.

Strauss: Flintoff will be fit for 3rd Test

LONDON (AP) - England captain Andrew Strauss expects Andrew Flintoff to be available for the third Ashes test against Australia.

Flintoff has been troubled by a knee problem that threatens his participation in the remaining three matches of the series, which resumes in Birmingham on Thursday.

But Strauss is encouraged by the all-rounder's fitness and is confident he will continue to spearhead England's attack.

"All the indications are that Andrew will be fine. We need to see how he goes over the next couple of days during practice," Strauss said Monday. "But at this stage we are very confident and obviously he will want to build on his performance at Lord's."

"I spoke to him the day after the second test at a charity dinner and he said then he was recovering well.

That's encouraging. He won't have bowled until practice tomorrow but has been in constant contact with our medical team."

England leads the series 1-0 and Strauss confirmed that Ian Bell will bat at four as a direct replacement for the injured Kevin Pietersen, who will sit out the rest of the series following Achilles surgery.

"Ian Bell will come in for Pietersen at four. We're very clear on that," Strauss said. "It causes the least possible disruption to other members of the side. We're all very excited for Ian. He was left out of the team and had to work very hard to get his place back."

"He's done a huge amount of work on and off the field. He's very hungry. We're excited to have him back in the team."

Bell backed his captain's decision to throw him in at four.

"It obviously makes a lot of sense with the team playing so well at Lord's. Just to swap straight in for KP makes a lot of sense," he said. "The team's been playing some very good cricket, and it's just nice to be in the XI. It's been great to be in the squad, but now to get out there on the field is going to be nice."

The Warwickshire batsman has come in for some criticism from the Australians in the past and has averaged just 25.10 in 10 tests against them - far below his career mark of 40.59.

Bell acknowledged he has much to prove against England's Ashes rivals.

"Of all the countries I've played, I've played well apart from against Australia. I know that - it's in the back of my mind," he told Sky Sports. "This is a different Australian team than I've played in

the past, but a very fine one as well. But cricket's a stats game, and I've got those stats to put right and to improve on."

Meanwhile, the England and Wales Cricket Board today announced Brit Insurance will become the principle team sponsor of England cricket in a partnership that begins in January 2010.

The contract will last four years with Brit Insurance replacing Vodafone, sponsors since 1997.



Flintoff

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