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4th September

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The Island Sports

Friday 3rd September, 2010



Pakistan's Mohammad Asif arrives with teammates at the team hotel in Taunton, south western England, Monday Aug. 30, 2010. Newspaper reports on Sunday claimed to implicate key members of the touring team in illegal betting scams. The International Cricket Council has promised to take "prompt and decisive action" against any Pakistan player found guilty of fixing or manipulating matches. The ICC says that its Anti-Corruption and Security Unit is investigating newspaper allegations that fixing is endemic in Pakistan matches up to and including its current tour of England. (AP)

Pakistan cricketer Mohammad Asif dropped from film

Pakistani cricketer Mohammad Asif, who is under scrutiny for claims of spot-fixing, has been dropped from an Indian movie, its director has told the BBC.

Kaithapram Damodaran Namboodiri said he had hired Asif for his directorial debut, Mazhavillilinnattamvare (Till the edge of the rainbow).

Asif was to play a Pakistani cricketer who comes to a coaching camp in the southern Indian state of Kerala.

The film is about friendship told through the game of cricket, he said.

Mr Namboodiri said he had signed up the bowler two months ago after his son conducted a screen test with the cricketer in London.

"He is a friendly and nice guy. I was shocked to hear about the allegations, so I dropped him from the film," said Mr Namboodiri.

The director said Asif was supposed to come down to Kerala for a 25-day shooting stint next month.

The 27-year-old had been set for a

"major part" in the film, which is to be made in the Malayalam language, spoken in Kerala.

"He was to play a Pakistani cricketer who comes down to India to hold a coaching camp for Indian players," said Mr Namboodiri.

"He is a friendly and nice guy. I was shocked to hear about the allegations, so I dropped him from the film," said Mr Namboodiri.

The director added he had initially contacted former Pakistan captain Wasim Akram to play the role, but he had declined.

He said he was now seeking a replacement for Asif: "I have the names of two or three Pakistani cricketers in my mind."

Asif, along with team mates Salman Butt, Mohammad Amir and Kamran

Akmal, have all been questioned by police over claims of spot fixing during Pakistan's ongoing tour of England, although wicketkeeper Akmal is no longer under investigation.

Asif is one of the top Pakistani fast bowlers with over 150 wickets in Test and one day international games. (BBC)

Pakistan players claim innocence in fixing probe

LONDON (AP) - The three Pakistan cricketers at the center of fixing allegations have insisted they are innocent.

Bowlers Mohammad Asif and Mohammad Amir and test captain Salman Butt proclaimed their innocence in a meeting Thursday with Pakistan High Commissioner Wajid Shamsul Hasan in London.

Hasan said in a statement the players maintain "they are entirely innocent in the whole episode and shall defend their innocence as such."

Earlier, the players were omitted from the Pakistan squad for the rest of the tour of England.

Hasan said the players requested not to play the remainder of the tour "on account of the mental torture which has deeply affected them."

Asif's ex-girlfriend gives match-fixing evidence



Veena Malik

ISLAMABAD (AP) - The former girlfriend of Pakistan fast bowler Mohammad Asif met International Cricket Council officials investigating match-fixing after commenting on her suspicions of Asif's behavior.

Actress Veena Malik's manager, Sohail Rashid, said Thursday that she met ICC anti-corruption officials on Wednesday evening.

"She has shown whatever evidences she had to anti-corruption unit officials," Rashid said. "I can't comment on this matter further than this."

Malik had told Associated Press Television News that an Indian man frequently called and sent text messages to Asif, which she found suspicious

Defiant Cooray stands in the way of Joes

BY REEMUS FERNANDO

Left hander Sangeeth Cooray anchored St. Sebastian's College's innings with the bat when he made a dogged 68 runs that helped his team beat St. Peter's College by two wickets in the Inter School Under-15 Division I quarter-final played at CCC Ground yesterday.

After justifying their decision to field first by restricting Petes to 165 runs, St. Sebastian's commenced their run chase in disastrous fashion when both their openers departed without scoring. They slumped from 21 for three in the 13th over to 57 for four in the 20th over. As wickets kept falling at the other end, Cooray, who came to the middle in the fifth over avoided risky strokes to brace for a marathon innings.

With spinner Virangana Perera and Sahana Nanayakkara pressing hard with threatening spells, Cooray found a fitting partner in Lakshan Perera who helped him put the pressure back on Petes with a 46 run partnership. Perera robbed singles and turned singles in to twos with some quick running between wickets and hit a towering six in his 21 runs which came in 13 balls. Later a quick collapse sent Sebs skidding to 125 for eight, but Cooray defied Petes by combining with Shan Blackett for an unfinished 44 runs stand for the ninth wicket to reach the target in the penultimate over. Cooray batted for 46 overs (facing 159 balls) and stroked 9 fours in his innings.

Earlier, put to bat, first opener Janith Vimukthi and Chathuranga Rajapaksha put on a second wicket partnership worth 72 runs and were the top scorers. Both scored 46 runs each. None of the other batsmen could top 20 runs for them. Spinner Umeshka Morais and Shaveen Fernando were the pick of the bowlers with three wickets each.

St. Sebastian's thus prevented a mini 'Battle of the Saints' encounter in the semi finals. They will now face St. Joseph's in the semi final.

Scores:

St. Peter's 165 all out in 49.2 overs (Janith Vimukthi 46, Chathuranga Rajapaksha 46, Akalanka Palihena 19; Shan Blackett 2/31, Umeshka Morais 3/24, Shaveen Fernando 3/31)

St. Sebastian's 169 for 8 in 49.5 overs (Sangeeth Cooray 68, Anuk Fernando 15, Lakshan Perera 21; Virangana Perera 2/41, Sahana Nanayakkara 3/16)

Hughes recalled for India tour; Haddin ruled out

MELBOURNE, Australia (AP) - Opener Phillip Hughes and off-spinner Nathan Hauritz have been recalled for Australia's tour to India next month, but wicketkeeper Brad Haddin will continue to be sidelined with an injured elbow.

Australia will play two tests and

three limited-overs internationals against India immediately before returning to home and trying to regain the Ashes from England.

Young paceman Peter George and Josh Hazlewood were drafted into the 15-man squad, while 21-year-old legspinner Steven Smith

was retained as understudy to Hauritz.

Selection committee chairman Andrew Hilditch says "India is ranked No. 1 in test cricket and there is no harder assignment in Test cricket at the moment than playing India on their home soil."

Pakistan replaces suspected trio for rest of tour

LONDON (AP) - The three Pakistan cricketers at the center of fixing allegations were dropped for the rest of the team's England tour on Thursday, shortly before they appeared for questioning by investigators of the Pakistan Cricket Board.

Team manager Yawar Saeed said bowlers Mohammad Asif and

Mohammad Amir and test captain Salman Butt will not play in the remaining Twenty20 and one-day international matches.

He insisted they had not been suspended.

Saeed said that 13 players will be available for the two Twenty20 matches before three replacements arrive to bolster the squad for the

five-match one-day series.

"The T20 squad will remain what it is here this morning, i.e. 13 people," Saeed said in Taunton, where Pakistan was playing a warmup game against English county side Somerset. "When we play the one-day internationals, we will be asking for replacements to make the squad up to 16."

Carlton Cup Basketball Championship 2010

Thirty one teams vie for honours

BY MANJULA D. PHILLIPS

The second edition of the Carlton Cup Annual Basketball Championship, the most competitive competition in the National Basketball calendar, will get underway on September 5 (Sunday) at the Police Park Basketball Courts, in Colombo.

The event is organised and conducted by Carlton Sports Club, the Sports wing of 'Tharunyata Hetak'. Matches will be worked off from September 5 to 25. All matches are scheduled to be played at the Police Park Basketball Courts.

Of the 31 teams that will contest the tournament, 10 teams will compete in the 'A' Division while 21 teams will vie for honours in the 'B' Division segment. The defending champions, Colombo BC and last year's runners-up, Otter Aquatic Club, will contest the 'A' Division tournament in two separate groups.



In addition, an Under-15 Knockout tournament will be conducted during weekdays with the objective of developing the game at the early stages of players' career. Eight school teams from Colombo have confirmed their participation.

'A' Division Champions will receive a cash award of Rs. 150,000 while the runners-up will receive Rs. 100,000.

'B' Division Champions will take home a cash award worth Rs. 75,000 while runners-up will receive Rs. 50,000.

Muditha Wijethilaka, Senior Marketing Executive of Solex Engineering (Pvt) Ltd, hands over the Carlton Cup 2010 to Asiri Disanayake, Manager, Carlton Basketball Championship, at a media briefing held in Colombo.

