

SPORTS

CRICKET

Akmal's bat sees Pakistan beat Kenya

HAMBANTOTA, Sri Lanka (AP)—Umar Akmal hammered 71 off 52 balls and captain Shahid Afridi took 5-16 as Pakistan swept to an opening 205-run win over a wayward Kenya at the World Cup on Wednesday.

The 20-year-old's Akmal's belligerent display, followed by snick knocks from experienced Misbah-ul-Haq (65), Kamran Akmal (55) and Younis Khan (50) propelled Pakistan to 317-7 in the Group A match.

Kenya, which lost to New Zealand by 10 wickets after being dismissed for 69 on Sunday, never threatened in its run-chase and was dismissed for 112 in 33.1 overs at Mahinda Rajapaksa International Cricket Stadium.

"I am a bowler first, then a batsman," Afridi said with a big smile after his first five-wicket haul in a World Cup game.

The resounding victory at the end was a sharp contrast to the early jitters Pakistan displayed as it lost both openers for a total of 12.

"It was a slow track but we should have started more positively," Afridi said of the early dismissals.

"You should take a chance after five, six overs to disturb the line [of bowlers]. Otherwise, they will keep bowling on the same line if you don't take any chances."

Akmal capitalized on some fine rebuilding by his elder brother Kamran and Khan, as a blundering performance by Kenya's bowlers equaled the record of most wides in a one-day international innings by conceding 37 runs.

West Indies also gave away 37 runs off wide balls against Pakistan at Brisbane in an ODI in 1989.

"We gave [away] lot of extras, maybe because the guys were trying too hard," Kenya captain Jimmy Kamande said.

ICC reprimands Ponting

NEW DELHI (AP)—The International Cricket Council gave Australia captain Ricky Ponting a reprimand on Wednesday after he damaged a TV set in the dressing room following his dismissal against Zimbabwe at the World Cup.

The incident came after he was run out for 28 following a throw from Chris Mpofu at deep midwicket in his team's opening Group A victory over Zimbabwe on Monday.

The ICC said Ponting had accepted a breach of its code relating to "abuse of cricket equipment or clothing, ground equipment or fixtures and fittings during an international match."

The damage occurred when he threw down a piece of equipment which bounced off his kit bag and hit the corner of the television, the ICC said.



Arsenal's Sebastien Squillaci, left, scores against Stoke City during their English Premier League match at the Emirates Stadium in London on Wednesday.

CYCLING TO RWC: Couple meet legends in Japan

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30 or so punctures—but they eventually made it to Yokohama where they were treated to a hot shower and warm meal by the YC&AC—the club that introduced rugby to Japan.

Hosted by club president Simon Litster—who still holds the record for being the oldest player to participate at the Sevens World Cup when he represented Hong Kong in 1993 at the ripe old age of 37—the pair then spent a few days out of the saddle, totally immersing themselves in the local rugby and culture.

Having traveled across some of the most spectacular scenery on the planet and met rugby folks from all walks of life, Japan proved to be something special.

"Japan has been a standout. Incredible cycling, incredible people and incredible rugby," said Burton, who was left speechless when—for her 30th birthday—she was taken on a surprise visit to a game at Chichibunomiya Stadium, where the couple were treated as VIPs by the Japan Rugby Football Union.

Aside from the kindness shown by the JRFU officials, Hudson was also left in awe by the quality of the All-Japan Champi-

onship semifinal between Sanyo Wild Knights and Toshiba Brave Lupus.

"I was genuinely surprised and impressed," he said. "That was the best quality rugby we have seen on the trip and that includes the IRB Nations Cup we watched in Bucharest, which featured second-string sides from some of the top countries in the world."

Two days later it was Hudson's turn to get emotional when he and Burton met three legends of the game, who among them have won three Rugby World Cups with three different countries.

Japan coach John Kirwan (who won the first RWC with New Zealand) met the couple in the morning, before they headed out to the Suntory Sungoliath ground to meet George Gregan (a member of the Australia side that won in 1999) and Eddie Jones (a technical director with South Africa in 2007).

"That was one of the best days of my life, not just the trip," said Hudson. "I actually was ill in the morning with a case of pre-match nerves. To meet three of your heroes in a day is amazing."

The three legends added their names to the scroll of honor as well as presenting them with some signed shirts that will go

LONDON (AP)—Sebastien Squillaci's early goal gave Arsenal a 1-0 win over Stoke to move within one point of Premier League leader Manchester United on Wednesday.

The France centerback headed home from five meters out in the eighth minute but the Gunners, who have played one match more than United, also lost Cesc Fabregas and Theo Walcott to injury at Emirates Stadium.

Fabregas, the team's inspirational captain, trudged off with a hamstring injury in the 14th minute. Walcott was carried off on a stretcher in the 70th with what manager Arsene Wenger confirmed was a sprained ankle.

Walcott is "definitely out" of the League Cup final against Birmingham on Sunday, Wenger said. Fabregas will be assessed on Thursday but the manager said he is in doubt when the London side aims to end a five-year trophy drought at Wembley.

"It's impossible to say [how long he will be out]," Wenger said of the Spain midfielder. "It's a concern that he's injured but it can happen. It's part of sport and we have to face it."

Arsenal, which is still in contention for all four trophies this season, climbed seven points clear of third-place Manchester City and piled the pressure back on United, whose game in hand is against Chelsea on Tuesday.

SOCCER

Gunners top Potters

"We are all feeling pressure going into March. It's part of being in the position we are in," Wenger said. "We did the job here in a very professional way. We were intelligent, calm, patient and overall we were resilient when Stoke had their strong moments."

Despite the match coming only four days before the League Cup final, Wenger selected his strongest possible side, although he may now wish he hadn't.

Chief striker and top scorer Robin van Persie was already missing through injury, but the Gunners' attack didn't struggle in the Netherlands international's absence early on against a one-dimensional Stoke team that had limited ambition all match.

Walcott smashed a shot against the post after little more than a minute before Nicklas Bendtner, Van Persie's replacement, got on the end of a deep corner by Jack Wilshere to cross for Squillaci to head in his first league goal of the season.

Fabregas, who struggled with hamstring problems in December, was then forced to come off, having signaled to Wenger two minutes earlier that he was struggling. Wenger also has the second leg of the Champions League last-16 match at Barcelona on March 8 to worry about.

The rest of the half saw Arsenal dominate possession without finding a cutting edge as mid-table Stoke sat back with 10

men behind the ball, appearing to settle for a policy of damage limitation. The visitors' only chance was a vicious volley by lone striker Jon Carew that was beaten away one-handed by goalkeeper Wojciech Szczesny in the 36th.

Arsenal dealt with the trademark long throws of Rory Delap well in the first half but found them difficult to defend after the break, with German defender Robert Huth heading one of them over in the 58th.

"Nobody likes to play Stoke," said Wenger, whose team's fluent passing style is the opposite approach to that of Stoke. "They have a very special way of playing the game."

Roma downs Bologna

MILAN (AP)—Roma beat Bologna 1-0 on Wednesday to give Vincenzo Montella a winning start to his tenure as coach.

The former Roma and Italy striker took over from Claudio Ranieri on Monday. Ranieri resigned on Sunday after the club had slumped to four consecutive losses.

Daniele De Rossi scored the only goal of the game just before halftime after Mirko Vucinic took advantage of poor Bologna defending.

The game was the continuation of the match that was called off due to heavy snow on Jan. 30 and so began at the point it finished with a Bologna corner kick in the 16th minute.

RUGBY UNION

Crusaders forced to move all Super home games

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand (AP)—The Crusaders have been forced to move their Super 15 home matches from AMI Stadium following a deadly earthquake this week, but the Christchurch mayor still hopes the city and stadium will be ready to host Rugby World Cup matches in September.

The team had earlier withdrawn from Saturday's game in Wellington against the Hurricanes after a board member died in the devastating earthquake. Nelson, at the north of New Zealand's South Island, is the leading candidate to host the eight Super 15 matches but Crusaders chief executive Hamish Riach said Thursday that "every stadium in Australasia" is an option. Riach said a decision was likely to be made Friday.

Nelson is about 430 kilometers from Christchurch, or about a six-hour drive.

The Crusaders were expected to host the Waratahs on March 4 at home.

Christchurch mayor Bob Parker, meanwhile, said that the city was desperate to host World Cup matches, telling Australian Associated Press: "I'm determined that we have the Rugby World Cup here."

"The reason I say that is that our stadium appears to be fine and we will desperately need it," Parker said. "It's not just the physical property which is damaged, it's the psychological damage which is huge."

Meanwhile, the Stormers, who had a first-round bye, will open their season with flyhalf Peter Grant on the bench.

Grant started training with the team in Cape Town this week after returning from Japan, where he had been playing with Kobe Kobelco Steelers.

FOR THE RECORD

BASKETBALL

Table with NBA Eastern Conference, Atlantic Division, Central Division, Northwest Division, Pacific Division, Houston, and Philadelphia sections.

Table with Western Conference, Southwest Division, San Antonio, Dallas, Memphis, Houston, Northwest Division, Oklahoma City, San Antonio, Phoenix, Sacramento, and Houston sections.

Table with NHL Eastern Conference, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, New York Rangers, New Jersey, Toronto, Boston, Montreal, Buffalo, Dallas, and Washington sections.

Table with NHL Western Conference, Vancouver, San Jose, Colorado, Los Angeles, Dallas, Phoenix, and San Jose sections.

Table with ATP Top 25, Doha, and ATP Top 25 sections.

Table with 2nd Round, 3rd Round, 4th Round, 5th Round, 6th Round, 7th Round, 8th Round, 9th Round, 10th Round, 11th Round, 12th Round, 13th Round, 14th Round, 15th Round, 16th Round, 17th Round, 18th Round, 19th Round, 20th Round, 21st Round, 22nd Round, 23rd Round, 24th Round, 25th Round, 26th Round, 27th Round, 28th Round, 29th Round, 30th Round, 31st Round, 32nd Round, 33rd Round, 34th Round, 35th Round, 36th Round, 37th Round, 38th Round, 39th Round, 40th Round, 41st Round, 42nd Round, 43rd Round, 44th Round, 45th Round, 46th Round, 47th Round, 48th Round, 49th Round, 50th Round, 51st Round, 52nd Round, 53rd Round, 54th Round, 55th Round, 56th Round, 57th Round, 58th Round, 59th Round, 60th Round, 61st Round, 62nd Round, 63rd Round, 64th Round, 65th Round, 66th Round, 67th Round, 68th Round, 69th Round, 70th Round, 71st Round, 72nd Round, 73rd Round, 74th Round, 75th Round, 76th Round, 77th Round, 78th Round, 79th Round, 80th Round, 81st Round, 82nd Round, 83rd Round, 84th Round, 85th Round, 86th Round, 87th Round, 88th Round, 89th Round, 90th Round, 91st Round, 92nd Round, 93rd Round, 94th Round, 95th Round, 96th Round, 97th Round, 98th Round, 99th Round, 100th Round.

Table with WTA Top 25, Doha, and WTA Top 25 sections.

Table with World Cup, Group A, Group B, Group C, Group D, Group E, Group F, Group G, Group H, Group I, Group J, Group K, Group L, Group M, Group N, Group O, Group P, Group Q, Group R, Group S, Group T, Group U, Group V, Group W, Group X, Group Y, Group Z, Group AA, Group AB, Group AC, Group AD, Group AE, Group AF, Group AG, Group AH, Group AI, Group AJ, Group AK, Group AL, Group AM, Group AN, Group AO, Group AP, Group AQ, Group AR, Group AS, Group AT, Group AU, Group AV, Group AW, Group AX, Group AY, Group AZ, Group BA, Group BB, Group BC, Group BD, Group BE, Group BF, Group BG, Group BH, Group BI, Group BJ, Group BK, Group BL, Group BM, Group BN, Group BO, Group BP, Group BQ, Group BR, Group BS, Group BT, Group BU, Group BV, Group BW, Group BX, Group BY, Group BZ, Group CA, Group CB, Group CC, Group CD, Group CE, Group CF, Group CG, Group CH, Group CI, Group CJ, Group CK, Group CL, Group CM, Group CN, Group CO, Group CP, Group CQ, Group CR, Group CS, Group CT, Group CU, Group CV, Group CW, Group CX, Group CY, Group CZ, Group DA, Group DB, Group DC, Group DD, Group DE, Group DF, Group DG, Group DH, Group DI, Group DJ, Group DK, Group DL, Group DM, Group DN, Group DO, Group DP, Group DQ, Group DR, Group DS, Group DT, Group DU, Group DV, Group DW, Group DX, Group DY, Group DZ, Group EA, Group EB, Group EC, Group ED, Group EE, Group EF, Group EG, Group EH, Group EI, Group EJ, Group EK, Group EL, Group EM, Group EN, Group EO, Group EP, Group EQ, Group ER, Group ES, Group ET, Group EU, Group EV, Group EW, Group EX, Group EY, Group EZ, Group FA, Group FB, Group FC, Group FD, Group FE, Group FF, Group FG, Group FH, Group FI, Group FJ, Group FK, Group FL, Group FM, Group FN, Group FO, Group FP, Group FQ, Group FR, Group FS, Group FT, Group FU, Group FV, Group FW, Group FX, Group FY, Group FZ, Group GA, Group GB, Group GC, Group GD, Group GE, Group GF, Group GG, Group GH, Group GI, Group GJ, Group GK, Group GL, Group GM, Group GN, Group GO, Group GP, Group GQ, Group GR, 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Group SH, Group SI, Group SJ, Group SK, Group SL, Group SM, Group SN, Group SO, Group SP, Group SQ, Group SR, Group SS, Group ST, Group SU, Group SV, Group SW, Group SX, Group SY, Group SZ, Group TA, Group TB, Group TC, Group TD, Group TE, Group TF, Group TG, Group TH, Group TI, Group TJ, Group TK, Group TL, Group TM, Group TN, Group TO, Group TP, Group TQ, Group TR, Group TS, Group TT, Group TU, Group TV, Group TW, Group TX, Group TY, Group TZ, Group UA, Group UB, Group UC, Group UD, Group UE, Group UF, Group UG, Group UH, Group UI, Group UJ, Group UK, Group UL, Group UM, Group UN, Group UO, Group UP, Group UQ, Group UR, Group US, Group UT, Group UY, Group UZ, Group VA, Group VB, Group VC, Group VD, Group VE, Group VF, Group VG, Group VH, Group VI, Group VJ, Group VK, Group VL, Group VM, Group VN, Group VO, Group VP, Group VQ, Group VR, Group VS, Group VT, Group VU, Group VV, Group VW, Group VX, Group VY, Group VZ, Group WA, Group WB, Group WC, Group WD, Group WE, Group WF, Group WG, 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