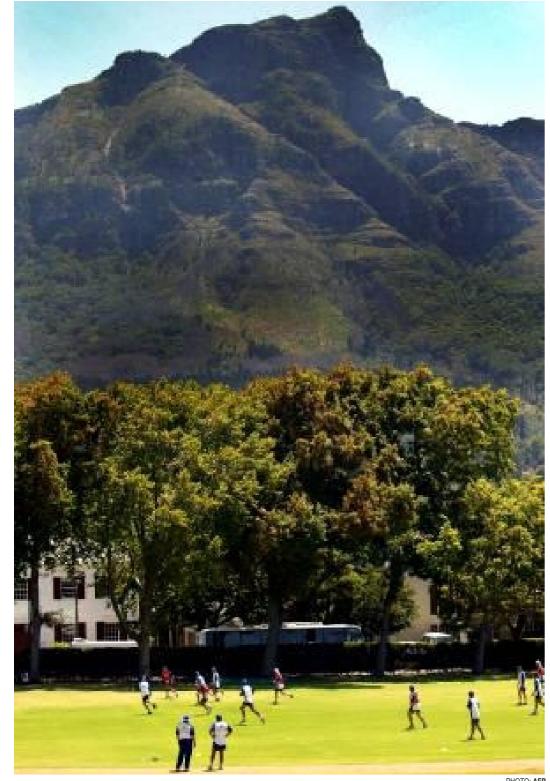
SPORT

The Daily Star



LET'S ENJOY OURSELVES! England cricketers play football under the shadows of Table Mountain in Cape Town on February 13.

Belated opener

AFP, East London

England's much-delayed entrance into the World Cup is due to take place on Sunday when they face minnows the Netherlands here at

Buffalo Park Nasser Hussain's men should have started the tournament against

England

"You receive a letter like that and it's a serious issue. It hit everyone very hard," Knight said.

not the ideal way to prepare for Sunday's match and, in another move that would have had oldtimers shaking their heads, England

Netherland

severe shock for the entire team. management as a key one-day performer and his lively swing bowling would certainly have suited a Buffalo Park pitch which, because

Several days of meetings were of coastal location. is well-known for assisting bowlers who can move the ball through the air. Veteran wicketkeeper-batsman

Alec Stewart has been continuing to receive ice-treatment for a persistent hand condition but is expected to be fit. And, in some good news for England, novice fast bowler

An act of stupidity? INTERNET, Sydney

As a disgraced Shane Warne returned home to face probably the biggest 'test' of his career for taking a pill that turned bitter, the media softened its stand allowing some benefit of doubt to the "stupid"

spinner The headlines in the media speculated: 'Was he stupid or scheming?', 'Victim or villain?' and 'Dopey or Snow White?'

"I'm still trying to pick the spin from the sin," Kerry O'Keefe, a cricketer-turned-commentator. wrote in The Australian.

"A former Australian team coach had once remarked to me: 'Shane is possibly the most indiscreet cricketer I have ever experienced. He will get caught many times before his career is over'," O'Keefe wrote.

Another headline cried. "May be it is time to give Warne out". The story said the Australians have a record of being quick to accuse others, especially the Chinese, of abusing the rules about drug use in sport but they tend to cry foul when one of their own is put under fire.

One of the articles quoted World Anti-Doping Agency chairman Dick Pound saying "diuretics are usually used in sports to mask something else that is why they are banned. don't care where he (Warne) says he got them from, he should be pun SEE PAGE 14

Sorry Sonn

South African cricket chief Percy

Sonn has issued an apology for his

behaviour during the World Cup

Sonn, the president of the United

Cricket Board of South Africa

(UCBSA), shocked people with his

language and offensive behaviour

during the match between India and

the Netherlands where it was

United Cricket Board of South Africa

I hold a high position of responsibil-

ity and authority and it is a position

that took many years of hard work

Boland Park on Wednesday fell

short of standards which people find

acceptable for a person in my posi

SEE PAGE 14

"I realise that my conduct at

"I know that as president of the

match in Paarl on Wednesday.

AFP, Johannesburg

claimed he was drunk.

and commitment to reach.

REUTERS, Kimberley Pakistan have occasionally lost games they were expected to win comfortably but there should be no sign of complacency when they take on tournament minnows Namibia in the World Cup on Sunday.

Taking no chances

World Cup was a mixture of good and bad but they showed they are

still one of the teams to beat with

their opening performance against Australia at Wanderers on Tuesday.

Despite going down by 82 runs, Pakistan had the world champions

on the ropes early on, ripping

through the top order before a

brilliant century by Andrew Symonds swung the match back in

"It is just a matter of one good

"I tell you we can win the final -this is a great team and we can beat

Namibia, a team of amateur

players competing in their first World Cup, suffered a heavy loss to

Zimbabwe in their rain-curtailed

Zimbabwe opener Craig Wishart hit

Their bowlers were spanked to every part of the ground as

With no chance of a resumption,

SEE PAGE 14

method for interrupted matches.

tournament debut on Monday.

match and things clicking," Shoaib

Australia's favour.

anvone.

ended

Pakistan went on to reach the final of the 1999 World Cup after suffering a shock defeat to Bangladesh in the group phase but will have to be on their guard against Namibia this weekend.

The Group A match shapes up as cricket's equivalent of David versus Goliath, but victory is crucial for Pakistan following their loss to tournament favourites Australia in their Cup opener

Only three of the seven teams in the group will advance to the Super Six stage, and five countries --Australia, Pakistan, India, England and Zimbabwe -- are legitimate contenders. This means the high-profile Test

a commanding 172 not out in a total nations cannot afford to slip up of 340-2, and Namibia's batting against the pool's less accomshowed signs of frailty when they plished sides, Namibia and the slipped to 104-5 before the match Netherlands. "It is time Pakistan played as a

team and started delivering positive the game was abandoned but, since results," said fast bowler Shoaib the side batting second had faced a minimum of 25 overs, Zimbabwe Akhtar were awarded victory by 86 runs on "You can't expect to win the the Duckworth-Lewis scoring

World Cup on the basis of one or two bowlers or batsman, everyone has to contribute.' Pakistan's form leading into the

Pakistan wicketkeeper Rashid Latif

has announced his retirement from

international cricket following a 10-

The 34-year-old, who will play

his final one-day match at the 2003

World Cup, told the BBC on Friday

he will continue at domestic level

but thought it was time he handed

He announced his retirement

from Test cricket in November last

vear and hinted at calling it a day

altogether after one last try at World

Cup glory. Latif, who has competed with

Moin Khan over the last 10 years for

the role of keeper, was a key figure

His Test career suffered as a

in exposing the match-fixing scan-

dals of the 1990s.

over the gloves to someone else.

INTERNET, undated

year career.

Latif goes after WC

result of making claims against teammates following the 1994-95 tour to Zimbabwe.

He later gave evidence against some of the Pakistan players to the Qayyum commission, one of two judicial inquiries conducted into allegations of corruption against Pakistan players.

Salim Malik and Ataur Rehman received life bans as a result of the Qayyum inquiry, and six other players, including current Pakistan captain Wagar Younis, were fined. He has constantly been in and out of the Test and one-day Pakistan teams and missed out on picking up a World Cup winners medal in 1992.

Latif was picked for the 1996 squad but again missed out in 1999 SEE PAGE 14

FORM GUIDE Pakistan Namibia Form guide for Pakistan and Namibia ahead of their World Cup Group A lost to Australia by 82 runs Wanderers lost to South Africa by 34 runs Newlands

Dec 16 2002	lost to South Africa by 9 wickets Paarl			
Dec 13 2002	lost to South Africa by 62 runs	East London		
Dec 11 2002	bt South Africa by 182 runs	Port Elizabeth		
Dec 8 2002	lost to South Africa by 132 runs	Kingsmead		
Dec 1 2002	bt Zimbabwe by 70 runs	Harare		
Nov 30 2002	bt Zimbabwe by 8 wickets	Harare		
Nov 27 2002	bt Zimbabwe by 48 runs	Harare		
Nov 22 2002	bt Zimbabwe by 104 runs	Bulawayo		
Namibia (won 0 lost 1)				

Feb 10 2003, Harare: lost to Zimbabwe by 86 runs (D/L)

Shocks on cards

REUTERS, Johannesburg

Leading coach Bob Woolmer predicted another World Cup giantkilling on Thursday to follow Canada's shock victory against Bangladesh.

The former South Africa coach, who has been overseeing preparations by the minor teams for cricket's showpiece event, said: "I think that some of the minnows are going to win more games.

"I don't think we have scratched the surface, in terms of what we can achieve with amateur cricketers."

Cricket Council's (ICC) highperformance director, added: "The important thing is that they (the minor teams) are competing and not just being totally run over.

"Canada bowled and fielded very well in their first game. We are trying to put structures in place to give the smaller countries a better chance and get them to practise hard.

"It's also about helping with video

Kenya are regarded as the

strongest side outside the 10 Test

nations and themselves recorded

one of the great shocks in World

Cup history when beating West

analysis and equipment like bowling machines. They won't have had that before. They would have bumbled through as they had always done. It proves they work."



PHOTO: INTERNE LETS GET THE BASICS RIGHT: Pakistan batsmen Yousuf Youhana (L) and Shahid Afridi batting in the nets at Kimberley yesterday.

AFP, Kimberley

clash here on Sunday: Pakistan (won 5 lost 5) Feb 11 2003 Dec 18 2002

AFP, East London

Form guide for England against the Netherlands ahead of their World Cup Group A clash here on Sunday England (won 3 lost 7)

FORM GUIDE

V

Jan 25 2003	lost to Australia by 5 runs	Melbourne	
Jan 23 2003	lost to Australia by 10 wickets	Sydney	
Jan 19 2003	lost to Australia by 4 wickets	Adelaide	
Jan 17 2003	beat Sri Lanka by 19 runs	Adelaide	
Jan 13 2003	lost to Sri Lanka by 31 runs	Sydney	
Jan 11 2003	lost to Australia by 7 runs	Hobart	
Dec 20 2002	beat Sri Lanka by 95 runs	Perth	
Dec 17 2002	beat Sri Lanka by 43 runs	Brisbane	
Dec 15 2002	lost to Australia by 89 runs	Melbourne	
Dec 13 2002	lost to Australia by 7 wickets	Sydney	
Netherlands (won 0 lost 3)			
Feb 12 2003	lost to India 68 runs	Paarl	
Sept 16 2002	lost to Sri Lanka by 206 runs	Colombo	
Sept 21 2002	lost to Pakistan by 9 wickets	Colombo	
Note: There are n	no other recent matches for the Ne	etherlands or head-to-head	

co-hosts Zimbabwe in Harare on Thursday but, after months of agonising, finally decided in the wake of death threats to boycott the fixture on security grounds.

Meanwhile, England opener Nick Knight, one of the team's most consistent one-day performers having scored more than 3,500 runs at an average in excess of 41. admitted the threats had been a

also spent over two hours with a sports psychologist on Thursday.

Adding to England's off-field problems is the left side injury to Craig White, which is set to sideline the all-rounder from Sunday's match White has a history of side prob-

lems and they cut short his pre-World Cup tour of Australia. He is considered by the England

Bull said the Zimbabwe issue

Giles conceded that not all the

players had been convinced of the

value of the session, which was also

attended by the team management.

has happened during the last two

"We need to refocus a lot, a lot

"Even if the guys don't necessar-

believe in the use of sports psy-

On psyche's couch

Thursday.

weeks," he said.

REUTERS, Cape Town

Nasser Hussain's England World Cup squad delayed a training session on Thursday, choosing instead to spend almost three hours with the team psychologist.

"The morning session has been about drawing a line under the difficult circumstances of the last week and refocusing on the cricket and the World Cup," psychologist Steve Bull said.

"The players have spend many hours in difficult meetings over the chology, it was still a useful session. last week and yet they were fully Everyone had an input and it's up to prepared to engage in these discusindividuals how much you take on sions for two and three quarter board...it's not applicable to everyhours to ensure that they achieve one some positive outcomes," Bull

Stephen Harmison is over the ankle problems that affected him in Australia while a quick dash back to Durham see his new-born daughter appears to have helped with his homesickness

Ashley Giles' place as England's premier spinner came under threat in Australia from fellow left-armer Ian Blackwell, who appeared to turn the ball more than his rival.

However, Blackwell's hardhitting batting suffered with a run of low scores, once again raising questions about whether any of the several England players with allround pretensions are the genuine article

The Netherlands captained by former Somerset paceman Roland Lefebvre bowled India out for just 204 in their opener at Boland Park.

The Buffalo Park surface, where the ball can stop on the batsman, is likely to be equally helpful to what the Netherlands' star in Paarl, Tim de Leede, called their "militarymedium style of bowling." De Leede finished with career-

best figures of four for 35 against India and, allied to their enthusiastic fielding, England will do well not to under-estimate the Dutch attack.

"Holland are no mugs. They're ready to compete in the World Cup," Knight said.

But Lefebvre admitted that the India match had been their best chance of causing an upset.

"If ever there was going to be an had not been mentioned on upset in the World Cup, that was the day," he said. England left-arm spinner Ashley

His side's Achilles heel remains their batting -- they were dismissed for 136 against India and this is where even an under-prepared England should have the edge on Lefebvre's plucky performers.

LINE-UPS ENGLAND (from): Nasser Hussain (captain), James Anderson, Ian Blackwell, Andrew Caddick, Paul Collingwood, Andrew Flintoff, Ashley Giles, Stephen Harmison, Matthew Hoggard, Ronnie Irani, Nick Knight, Alec Stewart, Marcus

SEE PAGE 14

PHOTO: INTERNE

IT'S TIME FOR ME TO GO: Pakistan wicketkeeper Rashed Latif (L) announcing his retirement at a press conference in Kimberley yesterday while captain Wawar Younis listens.

destabilising influences.

has forged a tremendous bond and

1999," he said. "And, on the other

side of the coin. I think we lost our

the scenes, but this time we are a lot

more relaxed, even though there is

a lot of media pressure on and off

"We have trained really well and I

first two or three games back then.

United Australia

England.

the field.

REUTERS, Centurion

Australia batsman Darren Lehmann believes the controversies that have surrounded the team in recent weeks have made the World Cup champions a stronger unit.

The left-hander, who hit the winning runs in the 1999 final, also rates the current side as more relaxed and focused than the triumphant one of four years ago.

"It has been a tough six weeks for the Australian cricket team," he told reporters on Wednesday. "More so off the field than on it, but it has made us a closer unit.

"All the media pressure has meant a lot of to-ing and fro-ing and a lot of discussion about issues -and mostly not nice issues -- but it has meant we have pulled together as a side.

"We stick together off the field as well as on it and we are all working think that helps but I just feel we are towards one goal, winning the World more focused than when we left the shores of Australia. In adversity, you Cup.'

stick together and that is what is There have been injuries to key

personnel, the on-going question of happening at the moment," he whether to play against Zimbabwe added.

in Bulawayo on February 24 and Adversity has affected Lehmann Shane Warne's return home to face more than most as he has had to a drugs hearing -- all potentially come to terms with the fall-out of his remark after being dismissed But Lehmann feels that adversity against Sri Lanka in January.

It was the latest problem to team spirit within the side, with the confront him after he missed last mood in the squad even better than year's Champions Trophy with a it was for the last tournament in broken finger and then was sidelined with an infection that "We are a younger side than in caused him to miss the last two Tests of the recent Ashes series against England.

However, far from driving him "We were very uptight at that last into his shell, the 33-year-old World Cup, very tense. There were Lehmann has emerged more all sorts of things going on behind relaxed than ever.

"I'm not putting too much pressure on myself and I'm just enjoying it." he said. "I've missed so much cricket over the last six months that I'm just looking to enjoy every moment.

"It doesn't take blind Freddie to work out I probably won't be playing SEE PAGE 14

Canada's 60-run win over Test nation Bangladesh in Durban on Tuesday was a major surprise, with the Canadians regarded as the weakest of all 14 sides in the tournament.

Dreadlocked Austin Codrington a 27-year-old plumber, took five for 27 as Bangladesh were skittled for 120.

Woolmer, the International

Indies in 1996. The East Africans disappointed in their first game, though, losing by 10 wickets to South Africa in Paarl

on SEE PAGE 14

.earn from Healy

REUTERS, Johannesburg

South Africa wicketkeeper Mark Boucher took a lesson from one of the best glovemen in history on Friday as the hosts prepared for their World Cup Group B match against New Zealand on Sunday

Boucher spent the early part of Friday's practice session alone with Australian Ian Healy, holder of the record for Test dismissals by a wicketkeeper with 395.

The South African keeper was widely criticised for his performance in the 10-wicket win over Kenva on Wednesday, in which he put down two chances and missed a stumping opportunity.

But Boucher, who lies sixth on the all-time list with 227 victims, said that was not the reason he had sought Healv's advice.

"He's probably one of the best keepers in the world ever," Boucher told reporters.

"Anything I can get from him is great.

"I don't think there's anything wrong with my keeping at the moment, as some people have written. People are allowed to have bad days and I had a bad day against Kenya.

"I'm very confident about my keeping and know that I'll be able to lift myself for Sunday's game. South Africa coach Eric Simons

explained why the 38-year-old Healy, whose 11-year international career ended in 1999, had been brought in to work with Boucher.

style of keeping is closer to lan Healy's than most other keepers. He has worked with Mark in the past and I asked him in Cape Town if he would come and spend some time with Bouch "They were looking just to

"I spoke to Bouch about who he'd like to work with some time ago. His

improve on movement and body position to make sure he doesn't get into bad habits. So much about



IAN HEALY

cricket is about where you start from," Simons said.

"If you start from a good base you're okay. I know they worked on getting the foot movement quicker so that you can cover more ground without having to dive."