

Proteas to have safety check in Pakistan

REUTERS, Durban

The United Cricket Board (UCB) of South Africa will send security experts to Pakistan before South Africa's tour later this month after government warnings about safety in some areas of the country.

Hasibul

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Meanwhile, Bangladesh had a light practice session in the afternoon in two groups. The players, who did not play in the first ODI, practised early while the rest joined them after 45 minutes.

Sami returns

FROM PAGE 13
England to complete his contract with Durham.

PAK SQUAD FOR 2ND ODI

Inzamamul Haq (captain), Imran Nazir, Mohammad Hafeez, Yasir Hameed, Younis Khan, Younis Khan, Kamran Akmal, Abdul Razzak, Shoaib Malik, Shabbir Ahmed, Umar Guj, Junaid Zia, Danish Kaneria and Salman Butt.

Ponting aims

FROM PAGE 13
He would stand him in good stead against the Indian spinners. "I'd be taking all the positives from the World Cup and my recent run with the bat," said Ponting, who hammered an unbeaten 140 in the final at Johannesburg to bat India out of the match.

India managed just 234 in reply to an imposing Australian total of 359-2.

But he conceded it would still not be easy for his champion side to tame India in their backyard.

"Playing against a team that has Sachin Tendulkar, Rahul Dravid and other young guns in their backyard is a real challenge," said the Australian, who has so far scored 6,325 runs in 178 one-dayers with 14 centuries.

"We have the guys to do the job, but it'll still be tough. We are all keen to play India and New Zealand here and hopefully the results will be in our favour."



PHOTO: AFP

New Sri Lanka cricket coach John Dyson (R) speaks to wicketkeeper-batsman Kumar Sangakkara during a practice session in Colombo yesterday.

ICC expects fresh start



AFP, New Delhi

The International Cricket Council (ICC) on Wednesday welcomed India's decision to resume cricketing ties with Pakistan at the junior level, saying it could lead to the revival of Test matches between the arch-rivals.

"The cricketing world welcomes this decision and I would hope that it will lead to the resumption of full cricketing ties between these two great cricketing nations," ICC president Ehsan Mani said in a statement.

"The match between these teams at the ICC Cricket World Cup 2003 was one of the most exciting games of the tournament, played with a lot of goodwill between the teams and clearly demonstrated the ability of cricket to bring the people of these two countries together.

"Sport has the capacity to build understanding between people and I would hope that the Indian government allows cricket to play a role in promoting goodwill between India and Pakistan," the statement from the sport's world governing body said.

The Indian foreign office on Monday cleared a visit to Pakistan by the Indian under-19 team to take part in a four-nation tournament also featuring Bangladesh and Sri Lanka on November 1-9. The government also cleared the

Pakistan second-string team's participation in a limited-overs triseries in India on December 13-21. The series will also include Sri Lanka.

A tour by India's academy team to Sri Lanka this month to play matches against Pakistan and the hosts was also cleared.

Along with the junior cricket tours, the government has allowed Pakistan to compete in the inaugurations.



EHSAN MANI

raf Afro-Asian Games to be held in the southern city of Hyderabad from October 24 to November 1.

"These steps have been taken in continuation of Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee's (peace) initiative and as part of promoting people-to-people contact and cultural exchanges," a government statement said.

Vajpayee extended a "hand of friendship" to Pakistan in April in a bid to improve bilateral ties between the hostile neighbours, who have

fought three wars.

The junior tournaments will be the first clash between Indian and Pakistani cricketers on the sub-continent since the senior teams met in the Asia Cup in Bangladesh in May 2000.

The Indian government banned bilateral cricket matches with Pakistan after that to political tensions, but allowed the teams to play in multi-nation events like the World Cup.

India played against Pakistan in the preliminary league of the World Cup in South Africa in March, a game that passed off without incident.

India has not played a Test match in Pakistan since 1989, while Pakistan played three Tests in India in 1999 and 2000 despite threats from Hindu fundamentalists to disrupt the tour.

The Tests in Madras and New Delhi went off peacefully, but the third at Eden Gardens in Calcutta ended in front of an empty stadium after police were forced to clear the stands following crowd trouble.

The BCCI is still awaiting word from the government for the resumption of bilateral matches with Pakistan at the senior level following the recent upswing in diplomatic relations.

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has invited India for a Test series in March next year.

ACA gets Chappell

AFP, Sydney

Former captain Greg Chappell said he was looking for greater role in Australian cricket after joining the Australian Cricketers' Association (ACA) executive on Wednesday.

Chappell, Victorian pace bowler Mathew Inness and South Australian batsman Chris Davies were elected for two-year terms at the ACA annual general meeting in Hobart.

They replace former Test players Greg Matthews and Damien Fleming and Jeff Vaughan.

Chappell said he wanted a direct hand in Australian cricket.

All roads lead

FROM PAGE 13
advance to join this club. There's no possibility of a last minute change," said Nazrul.

It was party atmosphere at Brothers premises yesterday as players came in one after another. Sources close to the club management said that more than anything, the promise of lucrative contracts which other clubs couldn't even think about, was Brothers' main alluring tool.

It was learnt that Brothers have offered the highest Taka eleven lakh to Rajani while the other top names were likely to get Taka eight lakhs on an average.

As if roping in so many talented individuals was not enough, Brothers is all set to spring the biggest surprise by announcing the arrival of Indian superstar Baichung Bhutia.

"Our joint-secretary Sajjad Hossain Lablu is now in India and he has met Baichung who has given his consent. But we can only confirm a deal after we settle everything with his club East Bengal," said Brothers official Niaz Ahmed Khan.

The club has already signed a coach from the Czech Republic who will soon reach Dhaka along with two attacking midfielders.

Div III soccer

FROM PAGE 13
yesterday.

Bangladesh Football Federation president SA Sultan and general secretary Anwarul Haq Helal, chairman of Meghna Insurance Niaz Ahmed Khan were present.

GROUP A: Avijatrik Malibagh, Mirpur XI, Sunrise SC, Spondon KC, Little Friends Club, Eskaton Sabuj Sangha, Dilkusha SC, Sadesh SKS and Shahid Zia Smriti Sangsad.

GROUP B: Kasaituli SKP, Gov. Printing Press SERC, Matuail Udayan Sangsad, Rahmatganj SC, Rainbow AC, Karwan Bazar Progoti Sangha, Lalbagh SC, Dhaka SC, Adamjee SC and Gulistan Club.

White tests positive



AFP, Paris

World 100 metres and 200m champion Kelli White has been found guilty of doping, the sport's world governing body IAAF announced on Tuesday and if their findings are supported by a hearing by the US Anti Doping Agency (USADA) faces being stripped of her gold medals.

An IAAF spokesman told AFP they had not accepted the 26-year-old American's explanation as to

why she took the stimulant Modafinil.

If the USADA disagrees with the IAAF decision the case will probably end up in the Court for Sports Arbitration (CAS) in Lausanne, Switzerland.

It was at CAS last November that the IAAF lost a case brought against the American federation USATF which forbids them from publicising the names of American athletes who failed drugs tests between 1996-2000.

White, who became the first athlete since disgraced East German sprinter Katrin Krabbe in

1991 to do the sprint double, had said she took the product for a sleeping sickness, narcolepsy.

She had not listed it on the medicines she was taking because she didn't take it all the time and that it wasn't on the banned list.

However the IAAF called it into question under the 'related substances' list - whereby it is related to banned substances - and asked her for a further explanation.

"The IAAF can confirm that we received the athletes explanation for doping positive for Modafinil at the world championships in Paris and following examination of it has not accepted it," IAAF spokesman Nick Davies told AFP.

"In accordance with the IAAF's usual disciplinary procedures the matter is now referred to our member federation US Track and Field (USATF) who will hold a hearing on a date to be agreed with the athlete."

The USATF has delegated responsibility for the conduct of the hearing into doping cases to USADA.

Davies added that White would not be suspended during the process of the hearing and would keep her medals until the Americans announced their decision.

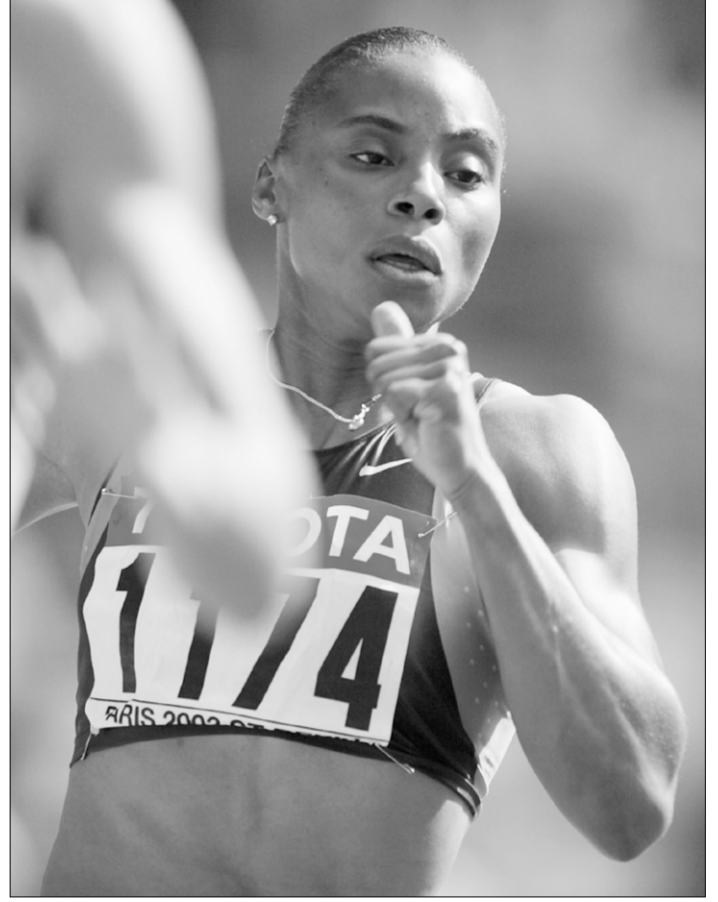
"The IAAF can confirm if it is confirmed after the hearing that the athlete has committed a doping offence the proper sanction under IAAF rules will be a public warning and disqualification from the entire competition.

"The athlete is not suspended during the procedure."

White, who also stands to lose her 120,000 US dollars prizemoney from the championships, said last week in Brussels she would fight to keep her medals which probably will lead to her lawyers contesting the decision.

"I do intend to fight to keep my medals," she said.

"I'm disappointed about losing my medals. I worked the whole season for it. My reputation has been tarnished."



KELLI WHITE

Struggling singles couple



AFP, London

Where singles is concerned, it has been a harrowing few months for Lleyton Hewitt and Kim Clijsters. But the most famous couple in tennis could find redemption in the sport's top team competitions, the Davis and Fed Cups.

World number one at the turn of the year, Hewitt has dropped to seventh in the rankings and he desperately hopes to salvage something from the wreckage of 2003 in the Davis Cup.

Hewitt leads Australia in the semifinal against Switzerland, led by Wimbledon champion Roger Federer, next week in Melbourne.

November's Fed Cup semifinal between the US and Belgium in Moscow could be one of the great sporting showdowns of the year if both teams turn up at full strength.

Clijsters and Justine Henin-Hardenne have taken Belgium to the top of the tennis rankings, usurping the Williams sisters, and won the cup in 2001.

Venus and Serena helped the US thrash the Czech Republic 5-0 in the Fed Cup first round but left the quarter-final against Italy in July to their understudies, who also won 5-0.

Both sisters missed this month's US Open due to injury, leaving the way open for Henin-Hardenne to win her second grand slam title of the year.

As at the French Open, Henin-Hardenne beat Clijsters in the final, leaving Clijsters as the world number one in name only - she has yet to win a Grand Slam and Serena, who beat her in the Australian Open semi-final from 5-1 down in the final set, is still the primary force in women's tennis.

Belgium thrashed the reigning Fed Cup champions, Slovakia, in their Fed Cup quarterfinal so the Belgians versus the Williams over four singles matches and a doubles in Moscow would be a tennis clash of seismic proportions.

But there are a number of question marks over the tie - will the players be willing to travel to Moscow in mid-November, will the Williams sisters be fit and will the Belgian duo be prepared to bury their personal differences to play as a team?

The two come from either side of the linguistic and cultural divide in Belgium and Clijsters and her camp have been sniping at Henin-Hardenne for months, accusing her of a lack of sportsmanship among other things.

Clijsters, regarded as one of the nicest women on tour, appears to lack Henin-Hardenne's grit and determination when the going gets really tough.

Her father's insinuation this week that something untoward lies behind Henin-Hardenne's rise is likely to poison the atmosphere even more

between the world number one and two.

Unlike Clijsters, Hewitt's form has been in steady decline since he won Indian Wells in March. A third round defeat in the French Open was followed by his shattering first round loss to Croatian Ivo Karlovic at Wimbledon.

He reached the quarter-finals at the U.S. Open where he lost to French Open champion Juan Carlos Ferrero, who leads Spain in the other Davis Cup semi-final against Argentina in Malaga, and the Australian also injured his left hip.

Hewitt is determined to make amends for the shattering defeat by France in the 2001 Cup final in Melbourne when he lost the opening singles to Nicolas Escude and the doubles with Pat Rafter.

"The Davis Cup is probably sitting at number one (in my priorities) at the moment," Hewitt said before his Open defeat. "We haven't won it for a few years so I'd love to win it this year."



KIM CLIJSTERS

LLEYTON HEWITT

Roddick joins elite club



AFP, New York

Andy Roddick served notice he belongs among the elite in men's tennis, blasting the sport's number one player into submission in the US Open final to join a new breed of Grand Slam champions.

Roddick's 6-3, 7-6 (7/2), 6-3 triumph over French Open champion Juan Carlos Ferrero brought the 21-year-old American his first Slam title and lifted him to second in the ATP rankings with a win streak that has reached 19 matches.

Together with Roger Federer, the Swiss winner of Wimbledon, tennis has seen a new set of stars surge to the top of the rankings, replacing the retired Pete Sampras and rivaling 33-year-old Andre Agassi, an eight-time Slam champion.

"It's certainly shaping up to be a really good year, with Roger winning and Juan Carlos winning,

now him becoming number one," Roddick said. "We're all kind of close. I think it's going to make for a real exciting year."

"I'm just pumped to be part of it."

Eight different players have won the past eight Slam titles, including Agassi at the Australian Open and Aussie Lleyton Hewitt last year at Wimbledon.

When looking for the next Agassi-Sampras rivalry, tennis fans are going to have to look to a larger global group of talent that could also include Russian Marat Safin and Argentina's David Nalbandian.

"There are always special matches like Sampras or Agassi," Ferrero said. "Right now there are a lot of players we can play who are so good like Andy, Roger, Safin, Hewitt. There are a lot of young guys. There's not two special guys who are going to play all the finals like Agassi or Sampras."

Spain's Ferrero, who took the top ranking from Agassi by beating the legend in the US Open semi-finals, expects Roddick will be among the



ANDY RODDICK

'Don't take BD lightly'

FROM PAGE 13
Lord's here Wednesday. Yorkshire fast bowler Gough, 32, retired from Test cricket after the second Test against South Africa at Lord's earlier this season but still made himself available for one-day international cricket.

But England's chairman of selectors, David Graveney, announcing the squads, said that Gough could be on England's tour of the West Indies in the New Year.

"Darren Gough still remains a selection option for the second part of the winter in One-Day cricket," said Graveney. "However, as part of our planning for 2007 (when the next World Cup takes place), the selectors needed to look at other options bearing in mind the playing conditions in Bangladesh and Sri Lanka."

In the Test squad, which will play two Tests in Bangladesh and

three in Sri Lanka, England have included four uncapped players: Worcestershire off-spinner Gareth Batty, Surrey all-rounder Rikki Clarke, Durham all-rounder Paul Collingwood and Kent

wicketkeeper Geraint Jones.

"The inclusion of Paul Collingwood and Rikki Clarke will also give us the option, where necessary, to strengthen our batting line-up still further and build

totals which the captain can defend with what is a young and relatively inexperienced attack." England omitted seamers Martin Bicknell and James Kirtley, both of whom played in the 2-2 drawn Test series with South Africa concluded Monday.

Instead Yorkshire's Matthew Hoggard, fit again after a knee problem, was preferred.

"Martin Bicknell and James Kirtley both made strong contributions in the recent Test series but Matthew Hoggard was preferred as we feel that his type of bowling will be most effective in the conditions we are likely to face on the sub-continent," said Graveney.

Surrey batsman Graham Thorpe, who made 124 on his Test comeback at The Oval in England's nine-wicket fifth Test win against South Africa and Durham fast bowler Stephen Harmison, who

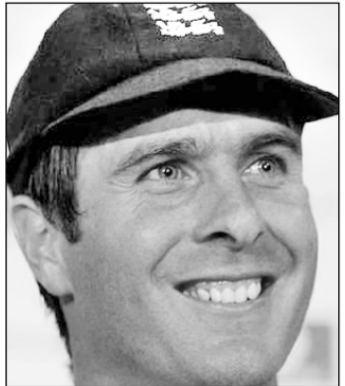
took a Test-best four for 33 in the same match, were both included in the Test squad.

TEST SQUAD

Michael Vaughan (captain), James Anderson, Gareth Batty, Mark Butcher, Rikki Clarke, Paul Collingwood, Andrew Flintoff, Ashley Giles, Stephen Harmison, Nasser Hussain, Matthew Hoggard, Geraint Jones, Chris Read, Marcus Trescothick, Graham Thorpe

ONE-DAY SQUAD

Michael Vaughan (captain), James Anderson, Gareth Batty, Ian Blackwell, Rikki Clarke, Paul Collingwood, Andrew Flintoff, Ashley Giles, Richard Johnson, James Kirtley, Anthony McGrath, Chris Read, Vikram Solanki, Andrew Strauss, Marcus Trescothick



MICHAEL VAUGHAN



DARREN GOUGH

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid and clues including: 1 Fly-by-night bunch?, 5 Ever-green, 8 Mafia, 12 Henry, 13 JFK info, 14 Etcher's fluid, 15 Pinnacle, 16 Cleo's slayer, 17 Strong desire, 18 Maddox or Pearson, 20 In which case, 22 'Carefull', 26 Abbot's head-dress, 29 Pub order, 30 Pirouette pivot, 31 Paradise amount, 33 Beatles' moter maid, 34 Vast expanse, 21 Adversary, 23 Greek New Age musician, 24 Title, 25 Blue hue, 26 Network, 27 Thought, 28 Earring shape, 31 One more partner, 33 Honest politician, 36 'The Amazing Race' segment, 38 Squat, 39 Bucket of bolts, 42 Nab, 43 Killer whale, 44 Amorphous mass, 45 Radio and TV agy, 46 'What have we here?', 48 Khan title

Cryptogram grid with letters and numbers for solving.

CRYPTOQUIP

K O B U A N S R A T U B V Y Z E W
O Z N T Z P S K Z N W N , Z P I
Y A N K Z I B I Z P D K O B V K D
O L N E O D M M L P C R L N K .
Yesterday's Cryptquip: SINCE I WATCH MY WEIGHT CONSISTENTLY, PEOPLE MIGHT SAY I PRACTICE GIRTH CONTROL.

Today's Cryptquip Clue: N equals S

The Cryptquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.



PHOTO: STAR

Football's national champions Muktijodha Sangsad Kriya Chakra brought out a colourful rally in the city yesterday to celebrate their victory. They defeated Mohammedan Sporting Club 3-2 in tie-breaker in the final at the Mirpur Sher-e-Bangla Stadium on September 5.