

Asia Cup hockey Pakistan eyeing title

AFP, Lahore Pakistan's hockey team left for Malaysia Wednesday, hopeful of winning the Asia Cup and reviving the fortunes of the former giants of the game.

"We are very hopeful to clinch the gold medal in Asia Cup and this will provide a real boost to our efforts to revive our splendid past," Tahir Zaman told AFP, before the team left for the eight-nation tournament, which begins in Kuala Lumpur on September 21.

Pakistan, winner of three Olympic and four world titles, have not won the quadrennial Asia Cup since 1989 and finished a worst ever fourth in last years tournament in Busan, South Korea.

Defending champions South Korea are grouped with Malaysia, Japan and Hong Kong. Arch rivals Pakistan and India meet on September 24 in the last match of group B which also includes Bangladesh and China.

The winner of the Asia Cup will get direct entry into the 2006 World Cup in Germany.

India, with eight Olympic titles, beat Pakistan by a record scoreline of 7-4 at last months Champions Trophy in the Netherlands but Pakistan avenged through a 4-3 win in the play-off to finish third in the tournament.

India will sorely miss penalty corner expert Jograj Singh who is sidelined due to serious injuries he sustained in a car accident earlier this month.

Zaman expects a traditionally hostile contest.

"Even if Jograj is not there, I feel India has the strength to put a tough fight and it will be another mouth watering clash," said Zaman, a former captain and Olympian.

TEAM

Goalkeepers: Ahmed Alam, Salman Akbar Full-backs: Sohail Abbas, Ali Reza, Zeeshan Ashraf Half-backs: Ghazanfar Ali, Mohammad Saqlain, Mohammad Waseem, Dilawar Hussain, Adnan Maqsood Forwards: Rehan Butt, Mudassar Ali Khan, Kashif Jawwad, Mohammad Nadeem, Mohammad Shabbir Hussain, Shakeel Abbasi, Khalid Salim, Mohammad Asim. Coach: Tahir Zaman, Manager: Rasheed Junior

China mission

FROM PAGE 13 Mirja Farid Ahmed (technical official).

BANGLADESH MATCHES Sep 21: Pakistan v Bangladesh Sep 23: India v Bangladesh Sep 24: Bangladesh v China

Abdullah, Chumki

FROM PAGE 13 The athletes and officials were all unanimous in expressing their displeasure over the hand-timing process, which doesn't hold any value in international athletics.

"We need electronic timing system otherwise we can never judge our performances," said Abdullah.

Bangladesh had installed electronic timing device during the 1993 SAF Games but it later got damaged due to poor maintenance.

FINAL MEDAL TABLE				
TEAM	G	S	B	Total
Army	18	13	7	38
BJMC	11	10	12	33
BKSP	4	7	3	14
Navy	3	4	2	9
Khulna	0	1	2	3
Through	0	1	0	1
Noakhali	0	0	2	2
Jhenaidah	0	0	2	2
Rajshahi	0	0	2	2
BDR	0	0	2	2
Sylhet	0	0	1	1
Air Force	0	0	1	1

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 39 "Uncle Tom's Cabin" name 41 Indolent 45 Crocodile shrilly 47 Billy — 13 — Williams Got a Sacrot' 14 Marsh wader 15 Prohibit 16 They're spell-binding 18 Candle count 19 Perspire 20 Gridlock noise 22 Daddy Warbucks aide 23 Young follows 27 Tho whole enchilada 29 Fruit ice 31 Call 34 TV host Fuentes 35 Vile 37 Stitch 38 Impression

DOWN 1 It's full of shish 2 Representation 3 Blender setting 4 "— Congeniality" 5 Frank admission 6 Domotor's counter-part 7 Sharpen deg. 8 That lady 9 Infuriation 10 Postal Creed 11 USNA grad 17 Upper-case 21 Bamboo eater 23 Bench-clearer, maybe 24 Sapporo sash 25 "Absolutely" 26 Pigs' digs 28 Waikiki nockwear 30 Kotsian's opus 31 Omega preceder 32 Scuttle 33 Tramcar contents 36 Hide-aways 37 Jungle trek 40 Gerulaitis of tennis 42 Fess up 43 Football official 44 Long 45 Recognized 46 Send forth 48 Show sorrow 49 Flamenco cheer 50 Disen-cumber 51 Leading lady

Solution time: 25 mins. ACROSS 39 U N C L E T O M ' S C A B I N 41 I N D O L E N T 45 C R O C O D I L E 47 B I L L Y — 13 — W I L L I A M S 14 M A R S H 15 P R O H I B I T 16 T H E Y ' R E 18 C A N D L E 19 P E R S P I R E 20 G R I D L O C K 22 D A D D Y 23 Y O U N G 27 T H O 29 F R U I T 31 C A L L 34 T V 35 V I L E 37 S T I T C H 38 I M P R E S S I O N

Gul Pakistan's McGrath



REUTERS, Rawalpindi

Hailing from a hamlet outside Peshawar, Umar Gul might well have followed in the footsteps of local squash greats Hashim, Jahangir and Jansher Khan who dominated their sport for decades.

Instead, the 19-year-old Gul was inspired by the sight of Australian paceman Glenn McGrath on television and attracted by the folklore of Pakistani cricket.

"I think McGrath is a great bowler," Gul told Reuters a day after another fine bowling performance enhanced his reputation as a quick bowler of great potential.

"Pakistan has also produced some great fast bowlers and I am proud to be following in their footsteps but McGrath has always inspired me and I have modelled my action and bowling on him."

The tall, well-built swing bowler destroyed Bangladesh in the third one-day international in Lahore on Monday with career-best figures of five for 17.

"There was bounce in the pitch and some movement. I got my outswinger going and I enjoyed bowling against them," he said.

Gul had played just nine first-class matches when the Pakistan selectors decided to entrust him with the new ball in the wake of their decision to sideline Wasim Akram and Waqar Younis after a disappointing World Cup earlier this year.

Gul's figures of 15 wickets in 10 one-day matches and 15 in three Tests might not have set the world on fire but his return of 51 wickets in nine first-class matches prompted the selectors to try him out.

Bangladesh captain Khaled Mahmud said after Gul's demolition act on Monday that he had caused problems for the batsmen because he was very consistent with his line - a trademark of the Australian fast bowler.

"Yes, I try to be consistent. I know that if I keep on bowling in the corridor on or around the off-stump the batsman will make a mistake," Gul said.

"I have learnt a lot from watching McGrath on television," he added. "He is so consistent and smooth. Our coach Javed Miandad has also been working with me on improving

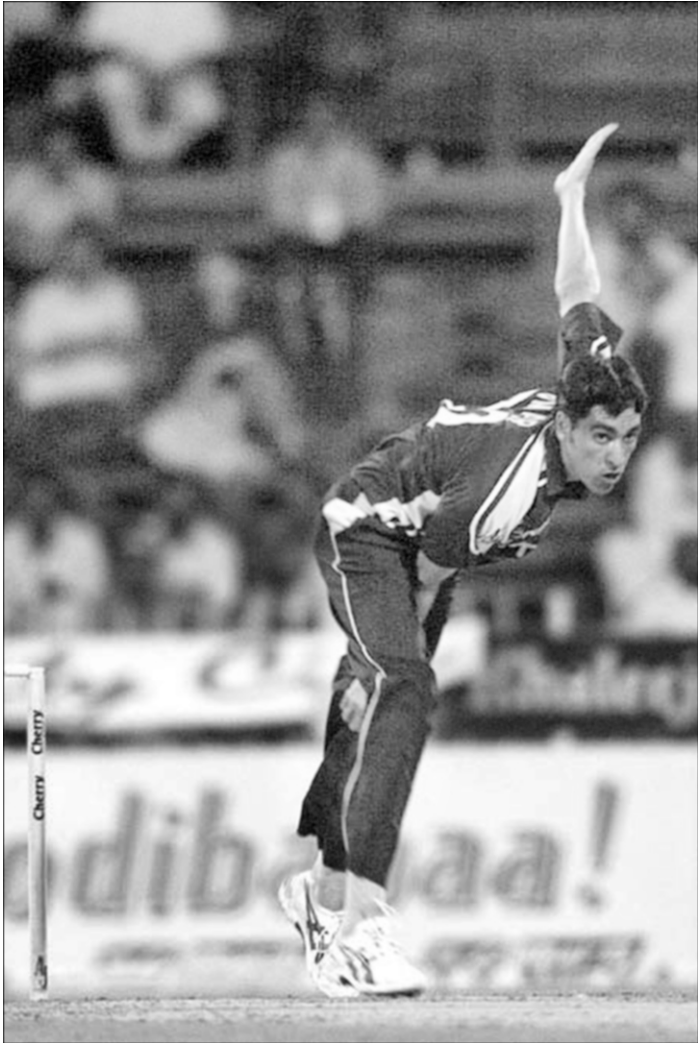
my accuracy and pace by making me bowl at one mark."

Pakistan has produced fast bowlers such as Imran Khan, Wasim Akram, Waqar Younis, Shoaib Akhtar and Mohammad Sami, all with great pace and the ability to reverse swing the ball.

Gul is different. Lacking raw pace, he relies heavily on accuracy and consistency to unnervе batsmen.

Miandad believes Gul is destined for a great future.

"He works very hard on his cricket and fitness. He is improving every day. Pakistan, I think, have found an excellent pace bowler to back up Shoaib and Sami," Miandad said.



UMAR GUL

Minister plays down SA security fears



AFP, Islamabad

Pakistan Interior Minister Faisal Saleh Hayat Wednesday brushed aside security fears among South Asian cricketers, assuring that the squad will have a safe tour of Pakistan.

"The South African team will be safe in Pakistan because there are no security fears, they must tour our country without any fears," said Hayat.

"The Pakistan Cricket Board asked us to make arrangements for top-level security and I have directed the federal agencies and provincial administrations to leave no stone unturned and give the best security to South Africa," the minister said.

A three-member South African delegation left Pakistan on Tuesday after security checks in the southern port city Karachi and northwestern Peshawar, bordering Afghanistan, following a demand by the United Cricket Board of South Africa

(UCBSA) that Pakistan relocate matches in the two cities.

The delegation comprising UCBSA's commercial director, Ian Smith, and security director Bob Nicholas, and a senior South African police official Ben van Deventer, was briefed by Pakistani police and paramilitary officials about the security arrangements.

Smith said he was satisfied with the arrangements but a final decision would be announced by the South African government and the UCBSA on Friday.

"Our job was to inspect security arrangements for the South African team starting from the airport to hotels and the grounds. And I can say that we are satisfied with them," Smith, spokesman of the three-member delegation told reporters here.

"We will submit a detailed report on the security here to the United Cricket Board of South Africa (UCBSA) and to the government and it is up to them to take a final decision," said Smith.

"The Pakistan cricket board (PCB), police and rangers have put up a great display of arrangements

for us and we hope the same will be done for the team as well."

Pakistan has suffered a cricket drought in the past 18 months, with foreign teams refusing to tour the country following two suicide bomb blasts in Karachi during Test series in May and June last year.

Pakistan was forced to play two of its home series matches against the West Indies and Australia at neutral venues last year as both teams refused to tour the country.

UCBSA had demanded that the PCB relocate matches scheduled for the violence-prone southern port city of Karachi and the northwestern border city of Peshawar, bordering Afghanistan, over security concerns.

"We know there are no specific threats to the South African cricket team in Pakistan but we are not in a position to clear the tour," Smith said.

Police and para-military officials briefed the delegation on security and also showed them all the drills reserved for the team. The delegation is due to leave later Tuesday.

Davis Cup Aussies ready to roll

AFP, Melbourne

The Australian team of Lleyton Hewitt and Mark Philippoussis will be fit for the Swiss in their Davis Cup tennis semifinal, captain John Fitzgerald said here Wednesday.

Fitzgerald said Philippoussis, runner-up to Swiss star Roger Federer at Wimbledon this year, would be ready to play after coughing his way through several practice sessions ahead of Friday's first singles.

"Everyone's fine, we're almost ready to go. We'll be ready to go in 24 hours."

"They'll all hit for a short period tomorrow (Thursday) and make sure they're fresh."

Fitzgerald said Philippoussis would be "well enough to play and play to a high standard."

"I thought he hit the ball extremely hard today, even by his standards."

"I think the good thing about our guys is you can tell a couple of days beforehand - they start to get a few butterflies and they get a little bit more tense," he said.

Vaughan clarifies

AFP, London

England captain Michael Vaughan on Tuesday was forced to clarify his position over the future of domestic cricket after he was reported as saying that he favoured dropping two counties to help reduce the number of matches played every summer.

Parts of an interview - due to be published in the new Wisden Cricketer magazine on Friday - were made public on Tuesday and reported that Vaughan had called for the 18-team county championship to be reduced to 16, split into two divisions with each club playing each other once.

However, Vaughan said that although he was worried about the amount of cricket played, he was not in favour of axing counties.

"I have developed through the county system myself, and I certainly do not support a reduction in the number of first-class counties," said Vaughan's statement released through the England and Wales Cricket Board.

"It's important that people all over the country have the opportunity to watch first-class cricket and the huge success of the new Twenty20 Cup shows there is a significant appetite for the game."

In Tuesday's Daily Telegraph, the England skipper said that the amount of cricket played on the county circuit was too much.

"For England to improve and the gap to close between domestic and Test cricket those higher up have to do something about a county structure which contains too much cricket," Vaughan said.

"You only have to watch county cricket to see the enthusiasm levels drained out of the players."

Speed to work at ICC until 2005

REUTERS, London

Malcolm Speed will remain as chief executive of cricket's world governing body, the International Cricket Council (ICC), until at least July 2005.

ICC president Ehsan Mani said in a statement on Tuesday that he was extremely pleased to finalise the terms of the new agreement after Speed accepted a contract extension.

"Since taking over in July 2001, Malcolm has led the ICC through a period of rapid and fundamental change," said Mani.

"He has achieved this by working very effectively with the board and building the organisation into a body which is now achieving its stated purpose of leading international cricket."

The 55-year-old Speed, chief executive of the Australian Cricket Board from 1997 to 2001, said he was looking forward to the challenge of continuing to lead international cricket.

"The past two years have seen significant change in international cricket but there remains considerable work to be done," said Speed.

"With the mandate the executive board has given to the ICC to lead, promote, develop and optimise the finances of international cricket, it's a terrific time to be leading the sport."

2012 Games bid London banking on Sebastien

AFP, London

London is counting on Sebastien Coe, the only man to win back-to-back 1500-metre Olympic titles in their bid to stage the 2012 Games.

Coe, athletics promoter Alan Pascoe, the 1974 European and Commonwealth Games 400m hurdles champion and 1972 Munich Olympic 4x400m silver medalist, and Granada chairman Charles Allen were appointed vice-chairmen.

The bid is spearheaded by American-born business woman Barbara Cassani.

Lord Coe's specific role will be to encourage support among the British sporting community and use his international influence abroad to help London's bid.

"The Olympic Games is the ultimate ambition for many of our young sportsmen and women, and I will do everything in my power to help them realise their ambitions of competing in front of a home crowd in 2012," he said.

Coe won gold at the 1980 Moscow and 1984 Los Angeles Olympics.

"I am delighted that Charles, Alan and Seb have agreed to accept the position of vice-chairmen," said Cassani.

"Their experiences span critical areas for our bid, which will be enhanced by their wise counsel over the next couple of years."

London's first priority is to make the 'cut' next year.

Nine cities -- London, Paris, New York, Rio, Leipzig, Madrid, Moscow, Havana and Istanbul -- have entered the battle for the 2012 Games and although IOC president Jacques Rogge has declared several times all nine could make it through to the final vote, three cities are likely to be rejected before the final bid.



PHOTO: AFP

Pakistan President General Pervez Musharraf (front row 4th from L) poses with eight surviving members of the cricket team that toured India in 1952. The Pakistan Cricket Board honoured them in a ceremony held in Islamabad on September 16.

'Resume Ind-Pak ties' PCB honours heroes of 1952



AFP, Islamabad

President Pervez Musharraf has urged rival India to revive bilateral cricket ties with Pakistan, saying this would benefit the two countries and cricket in the region.

Musharraf was speaking at a reception late Tuesday to honour eight of the surviving members of the Pakistan cricket team that made the first tour to India in 1952.

"Its very unfortunate that India has not played us for a long time, we need to leave the past aside, India should start playing us for the mutual benefits and for cricket in South Asia," Musharraf said.

Since the inaugural series, bilateral ties have faltered between the South Asian rivals, the latest breakdown following an attack on Indian parliament in December 2001, which New Delhi blamed on Pakistan-based militants.

"Cricket is a passion in South Asia which is so very rich in talent, and teams will improve if we play each other and sports can add interaction," said the Pakistani President.

The first Test team, led by the late Abdul Hafeez Kardar, were

honoured with medallions, green Pakistan blazers and 200,000 rupees (around 4,200 dollars) for their part in the five-match Test series which Pakistan lost 2-1, coming back to beat India in only their second Test at Lucknow.

No Indian team has visited Pakistan for a Test series since 1989-90 but the recent peace overtures and India's recent clearance for a series junior level series have raised hopes New Delhi may green light a cross-border match in February-March next year. Pakistan Cricket Board chief executive Rameez Raja flew to Bombay earlier in the morning and is likely to meet Indian cricket officials on the sidelines of an ICC (International Cricket Council) meeting on September 18 and 19.

"Cricket is a tradition in both Pakistan and India and I pay tributes to all pioneers of Pakistan cricket," Musharraf said.

Of those who went on the inaugural tour Kardar, Amir Elahi, Maqsood Ahmed, Mahmood Hussain, Anwar Hussain and Nazir Mohammad have died and their family members received the awards.

Those alive are Fazal Mahmood, Hanif Mohammad, Imtiaz Ahmed, Israr Ali, Khan Mohammad, Waqar Hasan, Wazir

Mohammad, Rusi Dinshaw, Zulfiqar Ahmed, Khalid Ibadullah, Khursheed Ahmad and Khalid Qureshi.

Indian coach blasts players

AFP, New Delhi

India's hockey team left for Malaysia on Wednesday to take part in the Asia Cup, chastened by a stinging rebuke from their coach to concentrate on the task at hand.

Coach Rajinder Singh revealed his team was low on morale ahead of the eight-nation tournament in Kuala Lumpur from September 21-28 which also features arch-rivals Pakistan and Asian champions South Korea.

"I don't think the team is in the right frame of mind to play in the tournament," the former international said before the team's departure.

"A few players are peeved at not getting commercial endorsements, others are more concerned about talking to the media than concentrating on their game."

"This is no way to prepare for such a major tournament."

Flower-less Zimbabwe

FROM PAGE 13

ditions. Bruce will help the bowlers come to terms with the bounce at

the WACA, as well as the turn they are likely to encounter at the SCG. I

will obviously be doing the same for the batters."

ITINERARY			
Date	Match	Venue	Competition
Oct 2003			
Oct 1	Cricket Australia Chairman's XI v Zimbabwe	Lilac Hill Park, Perth	Tour match
Oct 3 - 5	Western Warriors v Zimbabwe	WACA Ground, Perth	Tour match
Oct 9-13	Australia v Zimbabwe	WACA Ground, Perth	1st Test
Oct 17-21	Australia v Zimbabwe	Sydney Cricket Ground	2nd Test
Jan 2004			
Jan 1	Australia A v Zimbabwe	WACA Ground, Perth	Tour match
Jan 4	(D/N) Western Warriors v Zimbabwe	WACA Ground, Perth	Tour match
Jan 7	(D/N) Australia A v Zimbabwe	Adelaide Oval	Tour match
Jan 11	(D/N) Australia v Zimbabwe	Sydney Cricket Ground	VB Series
Jan 14	India v Zimbabwe	Hobart	VB Series
Jan 16	Australia v Zimbabwe	Hobart	VB Series
Jan 20	(D/N) India v Zimbabwe	Brisbane Cricket Ground	VB Series
Jan 24	(D/N) India v Zimbabwe	Adelaide Oval	VB Series
Jan 26	(D/N) Australia v Zimbabwe	Adelaide Oval	VB Series
Jan 29	(D/N) Australia v Zimbabwe	Melbourne Cricket Ground	VB Series
Feb 2004			
Feb 3	(D/N) India v Zimbabwe	WACA Ground, Perth	VB Series



PHOTO: AFP

Indian star batsman Virendra Sehwag (L) talks with teammate Rahul Dravid during a practice session in Madras yesterday.

Chappell to bat for refugees

CRICINFO, Adelaide

Ian Chappell, who led the Australians with considerable verve and imagination in the 1970s, is about to embark on a tour of the country in support of asylum seekers. Chappell's travels will be in aid of A Just Australia, a refugee support organisation.

It targets the issue of temporary protection visas, with many Afghans coming to the end of their three-year visas now applying for permanent status.

Speaking in Adelaide before embarking on his journey, Chappell spoke of his experiences with asylum seekers.

"These have been sobering experiences, some of them not pleasant," he said.

"It's not a pleasant feeling when you feel you've got to apologise for your country, when you've been pretty proud of your country all your life."

Along with Lowitja O'Donoghue -- a prominent figure in the movement for aboriginal rights -- Chappell will address the public in Melbourne and Sydney.