



Olympic champion sprinter Justin Gatlin of the United States (R) crosses the finish line in the men's 100-meter race at the IAAF Japan Grand Prix in Osaka on Saturday.

Nazar appointed NCA boss

PTI, Karachi

Former all-rounder Mudassar Nazar has been appointed as Director of the National Cricket Academy, the Pakistan Cricket Board has said.

PCB Chairman Shaharyar Khan said names of Intikhab Alam, Mushtaq Mohammad and Jalaluddin were also considered for the job but finally it was Mudassar who got the nod.

The decision to appoint the 50-year-old Mudassar, who played 76 Tests and 122 one-day internationals from 1976 to 1989, was taken at an ad-hoc committee meeting of the Board on Friday.

"He is the best choice among the lot and we believe he will give his best to groom the talent. The terms and conditions of his contract will be announced in a couple of days," Shaharyar was quoted as saying in local daily 'The News'.

Gatlin finishes under 10

AFP, Osaka

Olympic champion Justin Gatlin of the United States ran a blistering 9.95 seconds Saturday in his first 100-metres of the new season.

It was a great start to 2006 for Gatlin, who has declared his goal this year is to break the 9.75 second barrier and smash the world record of 9.77 held by Asafa Powell. The Jamaican clocked 10.10 seconds a week ago in the US.

Gatlin said he was happy with his time as it set the tone for a season in which he hopes to run consistently under 10 seconds. It was also far quicker than the 10.15 seconds it took him to win the corresponding race last year.

"It felt good this year. All season long, I have been wanting to go sub-10. For my first meet, it sets the tone for that," said Gatlin, the winner of the 100m gold, the 4x100m relay silver and the 200m bronze medals at the 2004 Athens Olympics.

"Last year... I was more sceptical

Martin leads

FROM PAGE 17 Lost their last six wickets for 53 runs as the pitch again provided plenty of resistance to the pace bowlers.

Only a hard-hit 32 not out off 19 balls by Shaun Pollock prevented a complete rout of the South African lower order batting.

The collapse started in the third over of the day when left-arm James Franklin had AB de Villiers caught at second slip for two. Five balls later he trapped Mark Boucher leg before for nought.

Martin struck with the fifth ball of the next over when Ashwell Prince was caught behind for four. He followed up with the wickets of Andrew Hall and Dale Steyn, while Pollock went for his shots, hitting two sixes and three fours.

Pollock and Makhaya Ntini added 25 for the last wicket before Ntini was caught behind off Kyle Mills. It was Martin's seventh five-wicket haul in Tests. South Africa lead the series 1-0.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at tea on the second day of the third and final Test between South Africa and New Zealand at the Wanderers Stadium on Saturday: NEW ZEALAND: First innings 119 SOUTH AFRICA: First innings (overnight 133-4)

Table with 5 columns: Player, Runs, Wickets. Includes Dippenaar b Martin, Amla c Pappas b Styris, Kallis b Martin, Prince c McCullum b Martin, De Villiers c Styris b Franklin, Boucher lbw b Franklin, Pollock not out, Hall lbw b Martin, Steyn b Martin, Ntini c McCullum b Mills, Extras (nb-5), Total: (All out in 44 overs) 186

Table with 5 columns: Player, O, M, R, W. Includes Martin, Franklin, Oram, Mills, Aste, Styris, NEW ZEALAND: Second innings, Pappas c Hall b Kallis, How lbw b Steyn, Fleming c De Villiers b Kallis, Styris not out, Aste not out, Extras: (b-4, lb-14, w-2, nb-2), Total: (For 3 wkts in 40 overs) 148

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Clijsters reaches final

AFP, Warsaw

Kim Clijsters maintained her domination of Russia's Elena Dementieva on Saturday with a 7-5, 6-4 semifinal victory at the Warsaw Open which hands the Belgian her second final of the year.

Following her runner-up finish to Amelie Mauresmo in Antwerp, the top seeded Belgian will now face either fourth seed Svetlana Kuznetsova or unseeded Anna Chakvetadze.

The two Russians were playing later on Saturday.

Rain washes out third ODI

AFP, Georgetown

International Cricket Council match officials decided to abandon the third one-day international between West Indies and Zimbabwe on Saturday.

After consultation with local officials, the decision to abandon the match was taken following persistent rain on the Guyana coastline over the past two days that left the outfield at Bourda Oval quite sodden.

Officials however, remain hopeful that play will be possible for the fourth one-day international on Sunday, but the weather forecast indicated further rain was possible on Saturday.

Chetram Singh, the long-standing president of the Guyana Cricket Board and a director of the West Indies Cricket Board, admitted officials had taken a chance with the scheduling of matches.

about how the (Osaka) race would go. I came here this year with a lot of confidence. I knew what I had to do," he said.

Gatlin's female compatriot Allyson Felix captured the women's 100m title at the IAAF Japan Grand Prix in a time of 11.11 seconds, though she said she felt "sluggish" after her long flight to Japan.

"The race felt OK. I felt a little bit sluggish. I was just trying to work on my start," Felix said.

"This year, I am working on my consistency. I definitely need a little bit more improvement on being consistent," she said.

Felix said she was not necessarily looking to try and break the 11-second barrier this year ahead of the World Championships.

"I am not going to focus on it. I will just be patient and let it come to me," she said.

Chinese world record holder Liu Xiang returned from an ankle injury to win his first 110m hurdles of the season easily in 13.22 seconds, a time he said was far better than expected.

Liu caused a sensation in Athens

in 2004 by equalling the world record of 12.91 seconds to win gold, becoming the first Olympic champion from Asia in a track event.

"I am very happy with the time. It was unexpectedly better than I thought," he said, admitting he had considered skipping the Osaka competition after spraining his ankle two months ago.

"This was the first race this year, and I had no idea the time was going to be as good as that," said an elated Liu.

The Chinese hurdler had a disappointing injury-racked season last year, though he managed to win silver at the Helsinki World Championships.

American 400m hurdler Bershawn Jackson cruised to a comfortable victory and promised to improve his times ahead of the 2007 World Championship also to be held in Osaka.

"I am very satisfied with my performance. This is my fastest season opener," he said. "Right now, I am ahead of the game."

Liu caused a sensation in Athens

SL slump to huge defeat

AFP, Worcester

Sri Lanka's final match before next week's first Test ended in a crushing 10-wicket defeat by England A with more than a day to spare at New Road here Saturday.

The tourists, who are set to begin their three-Test series against England at Lord's on Thursday, resumed at a lowly 68 for five in their second innings, still 12 runs away from making their opponents bat again.

But instead of some late resilience, Sri Lanka were bowled out for 118 and England A reached their victory target of 39 early in the second session.

England A seamers Liam Plunkett and Jon Lewis both bolstered their hopes of a call-up on Saturday.

Lewis, who took six wickets in the first innings, then tied down the Lankans with a six-over spell costing just four runs.

But it was Stuart Broad, the son of former England opening batsman Chris, who took the keystone wicket of Tillekaratne Dilshan for 42 as the England selectors, who were at the ground to meet to pick the Test squad, looked on from the boundary.

Broad finished the innings by having last man Lasith Malinga also caught by Cook at slip, ending with impressive figures of three for 17 from 11.3 overs.

Chasing 39 to win, England A needed just eight overs to reach their target with Cook 22 not out and Key unbeaten on nine.

Mexico down

FROM PAGE 17

Warm-up matches before their World Cup campaign. They play the Democratic Republic of Congo at the Aztec Stadium in Mexico City on May 12 and France in the Netherlands on May 27.

Mexico were chosen as one of the eight seeds for the World Cup finals in Germany, where they will also face Euro 2004 finalists Portugal and Angola in the group stage.

They are seen as potential dark horses after beating Brazil at the Confederations Cup, although their recent form against European sides under coach Ricardo La Volpe has been poor.

Italy 1934

FROM PAGE 20

On a San Siro pitch resembling a quagmire after a torrential storm, it was again Meazza, playing his fourth game in a week, who scored the winning goal and qualified his team for the final. Italy's opponents were to be Czechoslovakia, conquerors of Germany who themselves finished third beating Austria 3-2 in the third place playoff.

On the 10th of June 1934, the whole of Italy held their collective breath. 50,000 fitted into the Nazionale del PNF in Rome to watch the final.

In the only final with two goal-keeping captains Planicka was more prominent catching everything that the Italians threw at him. And it was to prove rewarding as with only twenty minutes left Czech striker Puc, who had just minutes before recovered from a tackle after having ammonia waved under his nose, silenced the crowd with a goal.

Italy fell apart even in defence and the Czechs wasted glorious opportunities.

However, with time running out and desperation settling in, Italy carved out an equaliser with eight minutes left when the Argentine Orsi waved his way into the box and sent a swerving shot past Frantisek Planicka's despairing dive.

The pressure was off and Italy got the goal they needed in extra time when Schiavio fought off the fatigue that was affecting most of the players to conjure up the winner with a marvellous finish.

Italy had won and Il Duce's wish had been granted. The Italian players pocketed a tidy 1800 dollars each (1,967 euros) and more importantly could breathe easy again.

Home fans

FROM PAGE 20

"We do not expect it to affect Germany," Endler said.

Endler did not rule out a repeat of last November, when 30 Germans and 55 Poles were arrested after a brawl in a forest near the countries' border. Hooligans could seek out places hidden from police to battle.

"Unless we get some very good information, there is nothing to prevent them from calling each other and meeting somewhere else. Nothing at all," Endler said.

Endler said that even at the 1998 World Cup, marred by a French police officer being beaten into a coma by German thugs, 61 of the 64 games were peaceful. He has no doubt that will be the case in Germany, too.

Nonetheless, Endler acknowledged he will be relieved when the World Cup is over after four years spent planning the effort to combat hooliganism.

"I am going to sit in my garden, light up a big cigar, pour myself a stiff cognac and read a book that has absolutely nothing to do with football," Endler said.

Vaughan sees chance for novices

BBC ONLINE, Undated

Injured captain Michael Vaughan says at least two unproven England bowlers will have a perfect opportunity to shine in the first Test against Sri Lanka.

With three leading bowlers unfit, he feels two of Liam Plunkett, Sajid Mahmood, Jon Lewis and Stuart Broad could get a chance on Thursday.

"If you are a seamer and you're going to make a debut you want to play in May at Lord's," Vaughan told BBC Five Live.

"The ball's going to swing and you have an opportunity to take wickets."

There will be interest surrounding the spin-bowling berth, while Vaughan's own position must also be covered.

But the regular captain, who hopes to be fit for the second Test, focused on the seam-bowling options.

Steve Harmison, Simon Jones and James Anderson are all missing through injury.

Vaughan said: "There's Mahmood and Plunkett, there's also Jon Lewis and there's a guy Stuart Broad at Leicestershire.

"Maybe a couple of them will get their opportunity."

Spin camp in Africa

AFP, Nairobi

Australian leg-spinner coach Terry Jenner will hold a four-day training camp in Kenya this month for young bowlers from eight African countries, Kenyan cricket officials said Friday.

Jenner, credited with transforming fellow Australian Shane Warne into the world's best leg spinner, will hold the clinic from May 15 to 19 during his first trip to Africa to check on the progress of Kenyan bowler Collins Obuya.

Pakistan A lift EurAsia Series

Cricket

CRICINFO, Undated

A century from Hasan Raza was the anchor for Pakistan A's 36-run victory over India A in the final of the EurAsia Series in Abu Dhabi.

Pakistan came into the final on the back of a defeat when the two sides met in the group stage, but they deserved their win after out-playing India in all departments.

Raza's unbeaten 106, made off 112 balls, came at a time the innings had lost some momentum after the loss of two wickets in quick succession reduced them to 88 for 3. Raza found valuable support in Misbahul Haq who made a vital 73 from 94 balls with four fours and a six. The pair, who came together at the end of 15th over, added 174 runs for the fourth-wicket which was only broken with Misbah's run out in the penultimate over of the innings.

India started badly, losing both openers six balls after they had laboured to 42 in the 11th over, but Venugopal Rao (69) and Reetinder Sodhi (70) put them back on course with a stand of 147 in 29 overs.

The decisive moment came when Mansoor Amjad dismissed them both within four balls, and with an asking rate of ten-an-over and no set batsman at the crease, India folded, losing their last six wickets for 40 in six overs.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the EurAsia Series final between Pakistan A and India A in Abu Dhabi on Friday:

Table with 4 columns: Player, Runs, Wickets, Extras. Includes Hafeez c Karthik b Sodhi, Umar st Karthik b Chawla, Yousuf c Uthappa b Chawla, Raza not out, Misbahul run out (Karthik), Bazid not out, Extras: (lb-8, w-6, nb-2)

Table with 4 columns: Player, O, M, R, W. Includes Samiullah, Gul, Arafat, Amjad, Hafeez

Total: (For 4 wkts in 50 overs) 288 Fall of wkts: 1-46, 2-85, 3-88, 4-262. Did not bat: Mansoor Amjad, Yasir Arafat, Zulqarnain Haider, Umar Gul, Samiullah Khan.

Result: Pakistan A won by 36 runs.

Man-of-the-match and series: Hasan Raza

Toss: Pakistan A

Umpires: R Martinezs (SL) and SS Prasad (Singapore)

TV Umpire: BB Pradhan (Nepal)



Pakistan A players celebrate after winning the EurAsia Cricket Series defeating arch-rivals India in the final in Abu Dhabi on Friday.

BITS AND BOBS

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Sweden are grouped with England, Paraguay and Trinidad & Tobago at the finals which begin on June 9.

No shocks in Serbia squad

REUTERS, Belgrade

Serbia and Montenegro manager Ilija Petkovic said there would be no new names in his 23-man World Cup squad to be announced on May 15, the B 92 website reported on Saturday.

"There will be very few surprises, if any. The group of players who qualified for Germany have earned their places in the squad and I think they ought to be rewarded for their efforts," he said.

"It would be unfair of me and my staff to come up with some sensational changes, we have every confidence in these lads."

Serbia and Montenegro topped their qualifying group with six wins and four draws, having set a record of conceding only one goal. They scored 16 and consigned top-seeded Spain to the play-offs.

In the June 9-July 9 finals in Germany, the Serbs are in Group C with The Netherlands, Argentina and this year's African Nations Cup finalists Ivory Coast.

Free tickets for scoring against England!

REUTERS, Berlin

Irish low-cost airline Ryanair could offer free tickets for each goal scored in the World Cup against England, the company's outspoken chief executive Michael O'Leary has told a German newspaper.

"That's something we can envision doing," O'Leary, an Irishman with a flair for publicity and known fondness for soccer and rugby, told weekly Welt am Sonntag.

"100,000 tickets for each goal against England or something like that."

If he proceeds with the plan, O'Leary will have to hope that British passengers, who are responsible for a big portion of Ryanair's revenues, do not abandon the airline. Ireland did not qualify for the World Cup, which starts in Germany on June 9.

Gilardino looks to hit form

INTERNET, undated

AC Milan's Alberto Gilardino struggled in front of goal in the Champions League but he doesn't

Uthappa c Bazid b Umar 23 Dhawan c Bazid b Samiullah 17 Sodhi c Haider b Amjad 70 Rao st Haider b Amjad 69 Karthik b Arafat 11 Sharma c Umar b Amjad 14 Badrinath c Yousuf b Arafat 5 Chawla c Gul b Amjad 1 Vikram c Raza b Gul 8 Jadeja not out 5 Rudra c Arafat b Gul 4 Extras: (b-1, lb-3, w-18, nb-3) 25 Total: (All out in 47.5 overs) 252 Fall of wickets: 1-41, 2-42, 3-189, 4-192, 5-212, 6-219, 7-221, 8-231, 9-240, 10-252.

Table with 4 columns: Player, O, M, R, W. Includes Samiullah, Gul, Arafat, Amjad, Hafeez

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expect to have the same problem at this summer's World Cup.

The former Parma star, who struck 17 times in his maiden Serie A campaign with the Rossoneri, said: "I had my chances to score in the Champions League but I was unlucky."

"I think the goals will come this summer with the national team."

Gilardino is desperate to be a part of the Azzurri line-up in Germany.

"It's incredible to have the chance to play in my first World Cup at 23," he added.

"This is a great opportunity and I want to make a name for myself at international level."

"I have confidence in my own abilities and I think that I could be the man of the World Cup."

Gilardino will battle fellow AC Milan star Filippo Inzaghi for a starting berth as Fiorentina's deadly Luca Toni has secured the number one striking role.

Inzaghi has been prolific for the Rossoneri this season and recently returned to train with the national team after a two-and-a-half year absence.

And his inclusion has been warmly greeted by his direct rival.

"I don't have a problem," said Gilardino.

"I am happy that Inzaghi is here because he is doing really well and deserves to be in the national team."

Dutch turf for German grounds!

REUTERS, Amsterdam

Harvesting of the turf for seven of Germany's 12 World Cup stadiums begins next week at a closely-guarded farm in the Netherlands.

News that their arch soccer-rivals would provide the grass for the tournament starting on June 9 stoked fury in the German media and prompted turf manufacturer Hendriks Grasdozen to keep the location of the grass a secret in case of sabotage.

"It was a big shock in Germany, with German papers saying 'we've lost already if we have to play on Dutch grass'," said John Hendriks, one of four brothers managing the business in the east of the country.

Turf for the other five stadiums will be sourced in Germany.

While stressful, it was an honor to be supplying turf for the world's biggest soccer tournament, said Hendriks who has spent a year cultivating the grass on a farm the size of 450 stadiums.

"We started 30 years ago and went from producing turf for family gardens, step by step, to making grass for stadiums."

Specialist machinery can strip a

field of turf and roll it up within 30 minutes so it can be transported in as fresh a condition as possible in a fleet of up to 20 trucks per stadium.

"To keep it as cool as possible it will travel overnight," said a company spokeswoman. The cost of each stadium's supply of turf is yet another closely-kept secret.

The distances the grass must travel range from just 90 minutes to Dortmund in the west of Germany to more than nine hours to Munich. For that journey the grass will be put in special refrigerated trucks.

"The Germans also have good grass but the stadiums we are supplying are long-standing customers and they have confidence in our company," the spokeswoman said.

"Dutch grass is just that one bit better," she joked.

'Cole to peak at World Cup'

INTERNET, undated

Arsene Wenger is convinced Ashley Cole will be back to his best just in time for World Cup duty with England.

The Arsenal left-back has not featured for his country since the qualifying defeat against Northern Ireland in September last year after suffering a stress fracture of his foot which was followed by a succession of nagging injuries.

However, the 25-year-old made his first Arsenal appearance since January 14 when he came on as a second-half substitute against Sunderland at the Stadium of Light on Bank Holiday Monday and followed that up with playing the whole of Thursday night's 3-1 win at Manchester City.

Wenger is set to field Cole again on Sunday on the final day of the Premiership season against Wigan, which will mark Highbury's last match before the famous old ground is redeveloped ahead of the club's move to Ashburton Grove.

With England centre-half Sol Campbell having also produced consistent displays on his return from surgery on a broken nose, Wenger feels there are plenty of positives in defence for national team boss Sven-Goran Eriksson as he prepares to name his provisional squad on Monday.

The Arsenal manager said: "Ashley needs some more practice, but he has done enough in the first game for having been out so long."

"You could see with Sol on Thursday night after three games there was a big difference."

The Arsenal boss revealed: "I had a brief chat with Sven. I believe he had reassurance for Sol and Ashley as well."

"We are at the beginning of May, and the competition does not start until June. You have five weeks, and in five weeks, you have a different Ashley Cole."