

Younis boost for Pakistan

BBC ONLINE, undated

Pakistan vice-captain Younis Khan is expected to re-take his place in the middle order after a knee injury.

"Younis is fit now so he will be playing the second Test," team manager Zaheer Abbas told Test Match Special.

Abbas is awaiting more information on Shoaib Akhtar, currently training with Warwickshire after an ankle problem.

Abbas added: "We have to wait for the doctor's report whether he is fit enough to play in the Test matches. If the reports are good, he will."

Colman gone

FROM PAGE 17 Since a second-place finish in the SAFF Championship in Pakistan last December, Poor results in the Asian Cup qualifiers and a 6-1 defeat to Tajikistan in the AFC Challenge Cup at home in April strengthened the claim to get rid of him as soon as possible and even his loyal supporters now believe that the SA Games could be his last act for Bangladesh.

"If he wins gold for us, we can fight for him. This will be the last chance he will get. It's true we need a good coach for long-term but can't keep him after three failures," said a member of the BFF yesterday seeking anonymity.

"Also, he has been irregular in the camp recently. So things are against him right at the moment," he added.

Bangladesh are pitted against old foes India, Afghanistan and Nepal in their group at the SA Games. Bangladesh, who won the gold at the Kathmandu Games in 1999, will open their campaign against Afghanistan on August 16.

This would be the second successive occasion that under-23 teams will participate at the Games instead of national teams.

Academy

FROM PAGE 17 Pakistan in August to play some matches against the Pakistan Academy team and the board is also negotiating with its Sri Lankan counterparts. So I see a big prospect with the Academy," Mahmud hoped.

BCB Development Committee chairman Jamiluddin Khondokar, however, was very much aware of the fact that they should transform the temporary idea into a permanent one.

"We have been searching for a land in the Mirpur area to establish the academy. We need a permanent establishment to make it successful. The board has a plan to make it an academy like in Pakistan or Australia," said Jamil.

"I think money is not a big problem right at the moment for the board. I don't know why BRAC backed away from sponsoring the academy but I have learnt that GrameenPhone has showed interest to be involved with the project," he informed.

Jamil also said that some major decisions about the academy will be taken in the next working committee meeting on July 23.

Germany lift

FROM PAGE 20 Hudson, Australia's captain.

Frank Murray, Australia's coach focussed on the lack of goals.

Australia managed just six field goals and converted one penalty corner from 38 awarded.

"We have got to score more goals," said Murray.

New Delhi may

FROM PAGE 17 defeated a joint bid by Australia and New Zealand in April.

Officials from the four countries have already agreed that the final will be staged in India, while Pakistan and Sri Lanka will host a semi-final each.

Bangladesh will host the opening ceremony.

This is the third time the World Cup will be held in South Asia, the commercial hub of the sport. India and Pakistan co-hosted the event in 1987 and again in 1996 with Sri Lanka.

The next edition of cricket's biggest tournament will be staged in the Caribbean in March-April next year.

Lesser lights

FROM PAGE 17 The 50-year-old will now have every reason to believe that the football gods may be on his side this coming term.

With the sudden carrot of European football now dangling, Parma may now decide to once more move into the transfer market in an effort to boost their European bid. Certainly, potential targets will be looking at Plioli's team in a different light now that they have boarded the European gravy-train.

Livorno are also now in the minor European competition along with Empoli, if they can acquire the required licence to play in Europe.

As they say: "It's an ill wind that blows nobody any good."

India adopts Twenty20



AFP, New Delhi

India has bowed to pressure from the international cricket community and agreed to play the popular Twenty20 version of the game after initially scoffing at it.

Indian cricket chiefs said Monday they would introduce the shortened slam-bang format at the domestic level and take part in the inaugural Twenty20 World Championships in South Africa in September next year.

"Yes, we were reluctant at first to adopt this version because we thought it would undermine the 50-overs-a-side game," secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) Niranjan Shah told AFP, referring to the traditional one-day game.

"But we were left with no choice after being out-voted 10-1 at the International Cricket Council (ICC) meetings.

"The new format will take time to get used to, but we don't want to be reluctant participants at the World Championships. We must play it at the domestic level first."

A domestic Twenty20 tournament will be played in May next year

after the traditional 50-overs-a-side World Cup ends in the Caribbean in April.

India will also ask for a Twenty20 international to be included in the itinerary when it tours South Africa later this year, Shah said.

Indian captain Rahul Dravid, who played a charity Twenty20 game in England earlier this month, said it needed to be introduced at the domestic level in India.

"We don't have a domestic competition and I think it (Twenty20) has a place in domestic cricket," Dravid had said after the match in London.

The Twenty20 format gives each side 20 overs and ends in three hours, unlike the day-long 50-overs-a-side format.

Twenty20 matches, usually played after office hours, offer a feast of runs and have become highly popular in Australia, England, New Zealand and South Africa.

The Twenty20 format will increase cricketers' workloads in an already overcrowded calendar of Test and one-day matches, but many regard it as the game of the future.

Newly-elected ICC president Percy Spon of South Africa welcomed India's decision to embrace

the new format. "The BCCI's decision is excellent news for cricket as it ensures the inaugural Twenty20 World Championship will involve all ICC full members," said Sonn in a statement.

Besides the 10 full members, two leading associate member sides would also take part. The two teams would be decided from January's world cricket league involving hosts Kenya, Bermuda, Canada, Ireland, Netherlands and Scotland.

"That means the winning team can truly call itself the best in the world in this exciting new form of the game.

"Twenty20 cricket has been a huge success wherever it has been played and this short and sharp event of just nine playing days will provide a global focus for the new format.

"We congratulate the BCCI on joining the other full members in embracing the format and look forward to a world-class tournament in South Africa that will capture the cricketing public's imagination," said Sonn.

The format, venues and dates for the Twenty20 World Championships will be decided later.

Lance in hostile land



AFP, Gap, France

Former Tour de France winner Lance Armstrong was assured of a red-hot welcome in the Alps when he was to join up with his Discovery Channel team here Monday.

But this time, the 34-year-old Texan's exploits on a bike will not be the reason.

The now retired seven-time winner hit the headlines for all the wrong reasons a few days ago when he labelled the French football team "assholes".

And given some headlines and editorials in the French press ahead of his expected arrival, the American could find himself on a bumpy ride when he joins up with the team which he part owns, Discovery Channel.

France Soir newspaper took the most direct shot at the American with a headline on Monday which was equal to his outburst.

"Welcome in France asshole!"

Below a picture of the American, a small editorial read: "Lance Armstrong, the seven-time Tour winner, publicly insulted Zinedine Zidane's French football team. He's arriving tonight on the race, and he intends to stay until the final stage on the Champs Elysees."

Armstrong's record of seven straight wins on the Tour have also been accompanied by unfounded rumours of drug use throughout his career.

Only last month it was reported that when he contracted cancer in 1996, he admitted to a doctor that he had already used performance enhancing drugs.

Armstrong has always denied using drugs.

Despite making his fortune from winning the world's biggest race, he has always had a love-hate relationship with the French.

His outburst last week appeared designed to hit the French where it hurts most. France lost the World Cup final to Italy in a dramatic penalty shoot-out last week.

Armstrong is reported to have

said in his opening monologue at an ESPY awards ceremony: "All their players (France) tested positive... for being ass holes."

Armstrong said afterwards that he didn't regard his comments as being offensive.

"Well, if they'd live with me and heard me at home, they'd know that was a step down," Armstrong said.

Tuesday's 15th stage on the Tour is from Gap to the Alpe d'Huez.

It was on the Alpe, one of the race's most popular climbs that Armstrong often met with fans and detractors alike.

Having compared his outburst to "verbal diarrhoea", France Soir suggested he might come in for more serious abuse this time, but that his outburst was simply a publicity gesture.

In Armstrong's absence, Discovery Channel's best placed rider is Ukrainian Yaroslav Popovych, who is 11th overall at 5min 44secs behind race leader Oscar Pereiro.



Cycling legend Lance Armstrong gesturing at the 2006 ESPY awards in California recently.

PHOTO: AFP

Strauss makes history

FROM PAGE 17 "Let's see where we are at tea, but essentially we'll be looking to keep the series at 0-0." Woolmer added ahead of the second Test at Old Trafford starting on July 27.

England began the final session on 154 for four after Kevin Pietersen and all-rounder Paul Collingwood, whose Test-best 186 was the centrepiece of England's first innings 528 for nine declared, had fallen to Afridi and Kaneria respectively.

Strauss was 74 not out and Ian Bell, one of three first innings century-makers, unbeaten on four.

But with Strauss one away from his century, Bell was run out for 28 by Pakistan captain Inzamamul Haq's direct hit from mid-wicket after the England skipper hesitated after setting off.

"I was a bit of an idiot," Strauss admitted. "Being on 99 somehow manages to change pretty sane men into idiots at times and I feel very sorry for Belly."

However, the 29-year-old got the run he wanted when a single off Afridi took him to a 168-ball hundred with 11 foures.

Two balls later Geraint Jones fell to Kaneria, Strauss nicked him to slip Imran Farhat.

Earlier, England wrapped up Pakistan's first innings for 445 - a lead of 83 - after Mohammad Yousuf was last man out for a superb 202.

Yousuf's innings was the highest Test score by a Pakistan batsman at Lord's, surpassing Mohsin Khan's 200 of 1982.

It was the 31-year-old's fourth Test double hundred and second in as many matches against England after he'd made 223 at Lahore in December.

In all Yousuf, who last year converted to Islam from Christianity, batted for 10 minutes short of eight hours, facing 330 balls with one six and 26 fours after arriving at the crease with Pakistan in trouble at 28 for two.

He also matched the 2003 achievement of South Africa's Graeme Smith (277 at Edgbaston and 259 at Lord's) in making double centuries in successive Tests against England.

After play resumed Harmison hit Afridi a painful blow on the thumb, a worry for a Pakistan side already without injured pacemen Shoaib Akhtar (ankle), Navedul Hasan (groin) and Mohammad Asif (elbow) as well as batsmen Shoaib Malik (elbow) and Younis Khan

(knee).

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the fourth day of the first Test between England and Pakistan at Lord's on Sunday:

ENGLAND: First innings 528-9 declared (Collingwood 186, Cook 105, Bell 100 not out; Kaneria 3-119)

PAKISTAN: First innings 445 (Yousuf 202, Inzamam 69, Akmal 58; Harmison 4-94, Hoggard 3-117)

ENGLAND: Second innings Trescottick b Gul 18 Strauss c Farhat b Kaneria 128 Cook c Yousuf b Gul 4 Pietersen st Akmal b Afridi 41 Collingwood c Butt b Kaneria 3 Bell run out 28 Jones c Akmal b Kaneria 16 Plunkett not out 5 Hoggard not out 0 Extras: (b-4, lb-6, nb-5) 15 Total: (For 7 wks in 77 overs) 258 Fall of wickets: 1-38, 2-64, 3-141, 4-146, 5-203, 6-250, 7-253 To bat: S Harmison, M Panesar

Table with columns: Bowler, O, M, R, W. Rows include Sami, Gul, Kaneria, Razzaq, Afridi, Farhat.

Federer, Nadal still at top

AFP, Paris

Wimbledon champion Roger Federer and his closest rival Rafael Nadal are still comfortably the world's top two players after the latest ATP world rankings were released on Monday.

Federer cemented his place at the top following his fourth successive Wimbledon triumph last week.

Australia's Mark Philippoussis made the biggest leap in the rankings as his Newport grasscourt victory in the United States saw him move up 89 places to 125 in the world.

RANKINGS

- 1. Roger Federer (SUI) 7260 pts
2. Rafael Nadal (ESP) 5125
3. David Nalbandian (ARG) 3185
4. Ivan Ljubicic (CRO) 3125
5. Nikolay Davydenko (RUS) 2210
6. James Blake (USA) 2155
7. Tommy Robredo (ESP) 2050
8. Mario Ancic (CRO) 1985
9. Radek Stepanek (CZE) 1925
10. Marcos Baghdatis (CYP) 1857

Cannavaro set

FROM PAGE 20 Prosecutor Stefano Palazzi could also launch an appeal claiming that the sentences handed out were too lenient.

He had demanded Juventus be relegated into the third division and wanted the others all dumped into the second tier.

The appeals process could start on Friday with a decision having to be made by July 27, the deadline set by UEFA for teams to register for the Champions League.

Razzak for African

FROM PAGE 17 mance of Mehrab. I think Mehrab has the quality to become a good Test player, that's why we will definitely try him first in the Test squad," he added.

Bangladesh will leave Dhaka on July 23 to play a five-match one-day series against Zimbabwe before visiting Kenya to play three one-day internationals.

SQUAD

Habibul Bashar (captain), Shahriar Nafees, Javed Omar, Rajin Saleh, Mohammad Ashraf, Aftab Ahmed, Alok Kapali, Mohammad Rafique, Khaled Mashud, Mashrafe Bin Mortaza, Syed Rasel, Shahadat Hossain, Mushfiqur Rahim, Forhad Reza, Sakib Al Hasan and Abdur Razzak.

Panesar strikes

FROM PAGE 17 had figures of two for 45 from 15 overs, while even part-time slow bowler Kevin Pietersen was looking a threat on a wearing pitch.

Pakistan captain Inzamamul Haq was 20 not out and Abdul Razzaq one not out at the interval.

Yousuf, whose first innings 202 was the highest individual score by a Pakistan batsman in a Lord's Test, fell for 48 to a fine Panesar delivery.

The tourists resumed after lunch on 43 for two with Faisal Iqbal eight not out and Yousuf 10 not out.

In his first over Panesar beat the outside edge of Iqbal's bat. However, Iqbal later lofted the first Sikh to play Test cricket for England for six.

Yousuf rode his luck against Stephen Harmison, playing and missing before edging England's quickest bowler just short of the slip cordon.

But it was Panesar who captured the wicket England craved, pitching the ball on leg-stump and spinning it back across the right-hander to have Yousuf, who'd struck eight boundaries, lbw with Pakistan now 116 for three.

Inzamam on one, then inadvertently guided Panesar past the right hand of Marcus Trescothick at first slip before almost playing on to him when 12.

Matthew Hoggard, doubtful for this match after injuring his right hand while warming up for England A against Pakistan, had taken both wickets to fall before lunch, dismissing Salman Butt lbw for a first-ball nought and then having fellow opener Imran Farhat (18) taken at third slip by Paul Collingwood.

England resumed Monday on 258 for seven in their second innings, a lead of 341 and some lusty-hitting from tail-ender Liam Plunkett, who made a Test best 28, boosted their total.

But when he was caught behind off Razzaq, England stand-in skipper Andrew Strauss declared with his side on 296 for eight.

Juve facing

FROM PAGE 20 private investments of around 125million euros (86million dollars) a year for perhaps the next two or three years to keep going.

Juventus' ticket revenue is incredibly small for a club of its size and many sponsors will not want to be associated with the club. With the loss of income, Juventus will not be able to command a premium.

"I do think the Juve image will recover over time, because of the history of the club. Juve does have a bit of magic about it, and I expect that to help carry it through, but it will take years."



Belgian Fed Cup team members (from L-R) Kirsten Flipkens, Caroline Maes, Kim Clijsters and Leslie Butkiewicz celebrate qualifying for the final after beating the US in Ostend on Sunday.

PHOTO: AFP

Belgium, Italy in Fed Cup final



AFP, Paris

American tennis slumped to another low point on Sunday when their woefully under-powered team were beaten by Belgium in the Fed Cup semifinals.

Missing the Williams sisters, as well as Lindsay Davenport, the Americans lost 4-1 in Ostend against a Belgian side stripped of triple French Open champion Justine Henin-Hardenne.

Kim Clijsters, the world number two, steamrolled Vania King 6-0, 6-1 to send the 2001 winners into the final, on September 16-17, where they will face Italy, who reached the title match for the first time with a 3-1 win over Spain in Zaragoza.

The USA, who won the last of their 17 Fed Cup titles in 2000, endured a demoralising weekend with their defeat coming hot on the heels of the country's worst Wimbledon showing since 1911.

Belgium went 4-0 up when Mashona Washington was forced to retire with a strained ligament in her right knee midway through the second set against Kirsten Flipkens. Washington was 6-2, 1-3 ahead at the time.

Jill Craybas and Vania King salvaged a little pride for the United States by beating Leslie Butkiewicz and Caroline Maes 6-1, 6-2 in the doubles.

Italy defeated Spain 3-1 and the two countries decided not play the 'dead' doubles rubber following Flavia Pennetta's 6-2, 6-4 defeat of Lourdes Dominguez.

Italian captain Corrado Barazzutti said it would take time for the ramifications of the "historic" victory to sink in.

"We will be able to appreciate later what we have achieved," he said.

Like her compatriot Anabel Medina Garrigues, who lost 6-3, 6-2 to Pennetta on Saturday, Dominguez was unable to return the fire of the world number 18 on clay.

Trailing 2-0 after Saturday's opening singles rubbers, Spain's comeback hopes were increased thanks to Anabel Medina Garrigues's 6-2, 6-2 victory over Francesca Schiavone, but they wilted in the intense heat with Pennetta's victory over Dominguez.

In the World Group play-offs, with the winners guaranteed a place in the elite section next season, there were wins for China, Japan, France and Russia.

China reached the World Group for the first time when they beat Germany 4-1 in Beijing.

Li Na, who became China's first Grand Slam quarter-finalist at Wimbledon this month, beat Kathrin Woerle 7-5, 7-5 to establish an unbeatable 3-0 lead in the play-off.

Tatiana Malek scored a consolation win over Sun Tiantian before Wimbledon doubles champions Zheng Jie and Yan Zi beat Kristina Barrois and Jasmin Woehr in the dead rubber.