

Gayle hails Tendulkar

West Indies batsman Chris Gayle is the latest addition to Sachin Tendulkar's fan club after he described the Indian as "league apart" from other players. Gayle said Tendulkar had impressed cricket lovers across the world by his prowess with the bat over and over again and felt both -- the Indian and West Indian captain Brian Lara -- "have a special gift from God".



Champion Tanima Parveen (L) receives a cheque from president of Bangladesh Chess Federation (BCF) and Secretary-in-Charge Ministry of Labour & Employment Syed Sajuddin Ahmed during the prize giving ceremony of the Begum Laila Alam Women's FIDE Rating Chess Tournament at the BCF hall room yesterday.

Dalmiya to run in BCCI polls

Complaining of harassment, former president of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) Jagmohan Dalmiya on Wednesday said he was contemplating putting up a challenge in the Board elections scheduled to be held later this month. "Whenever something is around, there is an effort to keep me preoccupied. This was done before the July 30 Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB) elections also and now they are doing this again," Dalmiya told PTI here, in the wake of his interrogation by the Economic Offences Wing (EOW) of Mumbai Police yesterday.

Midge a huge find: Lee



Brett Lee, one of the world's fastest bowlers, says new find Mitchell Johnson has raw pace that will make him a formidable asset in an Australian attack already boosted by the return of Glenn McGrath. Johnson, who is also known as Midge to his teammates, burst into the spotlight with a blistering four-wicket spell against India on Saturday before returning to Australia as part of a pre-planned decision to slim down their squad at the DLF Cup here.

after a long break, against the West Indies on Monday and took three wickets. He sees plenty of potential in Johnson. "Mitchell's a fantastic find for Australia, he's an awesome bowler, a great bloke to go with it, loves to listen, he's learned so much over the past 12-18 months," said Lee. "The way he bowled the other night was fantastic, so big things ahead for Mitchell Johnson. "All the senior bowlers in the bowling cartel have tried to pass on a fair bit to the young guys. "In particular I've told him that he's above all got the ability to bowl fast, so he should never lose that sight, and that want to bowl fast, so now he knows he can do that and consistently, it's just a matter of practicing." Lee, a peroxide blonde poster-

boy celebrity who has taken a combined 451 wickets for Australia, is also excited by the return of McGrath after nine months off. "He's taken close to 1,000 combined wickets for Australia, and his knowledge around the side is just brilliant, so it's great to have him back," he said. "I've always enjoyed bowling with Glenn, he's always been a bowler that ties a batsman up, and gives me an opportunity to do the same thing down the other end. "He's got that aura where batsmen are a bit wary of him, and that comes from a lot of hard work." Lee and McGrath are expected to open Australia's attack against India in their limited overs game here on Friday.

Men's singles TT title Hamlet's

Hamlet lifted the men's singles title of the Dayang Open Table Tennis Tournament yesterday, winning a cliffhanger final against Pappu 4-3 at the NSC Woodenfloo gymnasium. Hamlet, who blanked Rapon 4-0 in the semifinal, twice came from back to win the final 9-11, 12-10, 2-11, 9-11, 11-8, 11-7 and 11-7. Hamlet, teaming with Pappu, Edison and Gautam, helped Bangladesh Biman win the team event with a 3-1 victory against Rangpur in the final. The women's team title went to Abahani who rode on Saleha and Jayati to down Biman 3-0 in the semifinal and blank Patuakhali by same margin in the final. Rocky won the boys' singles title in the tournament, which was marred in the absence of the country's top seeded paddlers. Bangladesh Table Tennis Federation president Abu Solaiman Chowdhury distributed prizes as chief guest.

MSC off to flying start

Mohammedan Sporting Club brushed aside Win Star Sporting Club 6-0 in the opening match of the BOOST First Division Football League at the local stadium here yesterday. Deputy Minister for CHT Affairs Moni Swapan Dewan inaugurated the league as chief guest. A total of 14 teams divided into four groups are participating in the league. The teams: Brothers SC, Shaheed Shukkur AC, Mukul Fouz, Abahani, Mohammedan, Win Star, Rising Star, Chhadak Club, Prabhati, Srijan, Youth Sporting, Prabhas Sabuj Sangha and Balaka Club.

Arsenal's coffers swelled

Arsenal's best-ever European Cup campaign helped the London soccer club's footballing turnover hit a record 132 million pounds (\$248.5 million) in the year to end-May. But less cash from property development, together with increased employment costs and other outlays, offset gains from selling players, and the club reported an 18 percent fall in pretax profit to 15.89 million pounds. The results highlight how the finances of Arsenal, which relocated to a new north London stadium this season after 93 years at nearby Highbury, combine football and property development. Arsenal's Champions League run, culminating in a 2-1 defeat to Barcelona, garnered the club 32.6 million pounds in revenues, 12.5 million pounds more than a year earlier. That helped pretax profit from soccer almost double to 16.8 million pounds, the club said in a statement on Wednesday. But net debt rocketed more than 100 million pounds to 262.1 million pounds, as Arsenal ploughed money into its new ground. A lack of major sales knocked property turnover to 5.1 million pounds from 23.3 million a year earlier, taking overall turnover to 137.2 million pounds. However Arsenal said the 23.5-million-pound sale of its Drayton Park site, near its new Emirates stadium, will count towards this year's revenues. "We've got a record football turnover, so we're very happy with our results," Arsenal Managing Director Keith Edelman said. "I think we'll have property profits in our figures right up until about 2010, and then ... it'll be much easier for everyone to understand what's going on," Edelman told Reuters. Last week Arsenal denied a report it had discussed a potential 350-million-pound takeover, and Edelman said it did not need to seek new investors. "We're a well-run business, we're in good financial health, our prospects are very good," he said. Edelman said decisions about new signings for the January 2007 transfer window would be left to manager Arsene Wenger, and the club had the resources to support him. "We've got 35-1/2 million pounds of cash (on the balance sheet). That should give you some indication of our free cash flow. Obviously we've got facilities on top of that as well, but that shows you the group is in good financial health," he said. The sale of star midfielder Patrick Vieira to Juventus helped player trading contribute 3.9 million pounds to pretax profits, against a 12.1 million pound cost a year earlier. In July, Arsenal sold 260 million pounds of bonds that were securitized, or backed by revenues from ticket sales, to help refinance debt associated with the new stadium's construction. Arsenal says the deal stretched its debt repayments out to 25 years from 13, and trimmed its annual debt servicing costs by two percentage points to 6 percent. "It significantly reduces our debt repayments every year, so we have more money to invest in the team. It's like taking on a longer mortgage," Edelman said.

Zelezny hangs up his javelin

Czech javelin legend Jan Zelezny announced on Tuesday he will not be able to compete in what would have been his final ever meeting at Yokohama on Sunday as he is suffering from a painful Achilles. The 40-year-old three-time Olympic and world champion said that he had decided to cancel his trip, to an event where he won for six successive years in the 1980's, on Monday night. "I took the decision on Monday night," said Zelezny, who holds the world record of 98.48 metres. "Another competition in a few days time would be too hard." Zelezny, who was speaking on the sidelines of an athletics exhibition event held in his honour in his birthplace of Mlada Boleslav, said he always wanted to bring down the curtain on his stellar career at home. "I began my career here and I always wanted to end it here," said Zelezny, who ended his career with a final throw of 82.19m. Several athletics luminaries showed up to pay tribute to him



JAN ZELEZNY and also the widow of legend and four-time Olympic champion Emil Zatoppek also watched his final throw. "Honza (Zelezny) has had a wonderful career. I give him all the congratulations I can for that," said

Zatopkova. Zelezny had an extraordinary career winning 148 of the 246 events he competed in and collected his last major medal (he won 11 in all) with bronze in the European championships -- a title he never surprisingly won. "Even yesterday (Monday) I felt nostalgic but today it is okay," said Zelezny, who was four-times Czech sportsman of the year and seven times voted their best athlete of the year. A member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Zelezny is set to devote the rest of his career to coaching and is undertaking a training course in Prague. However the former army officer is confident that even with his retirement Czech athletics has a bright future. "Young athletes must have a target," he said. "There are several young athletes who can one day win medals. Barbora Spotakova (silver medallist in the javelin at the recent European Championships) is excellent and will win a lot of medals."

Harbhajan

Table with bowling statistics for Harbhajan including runs, wickets, and economy rate.

Punish Hair

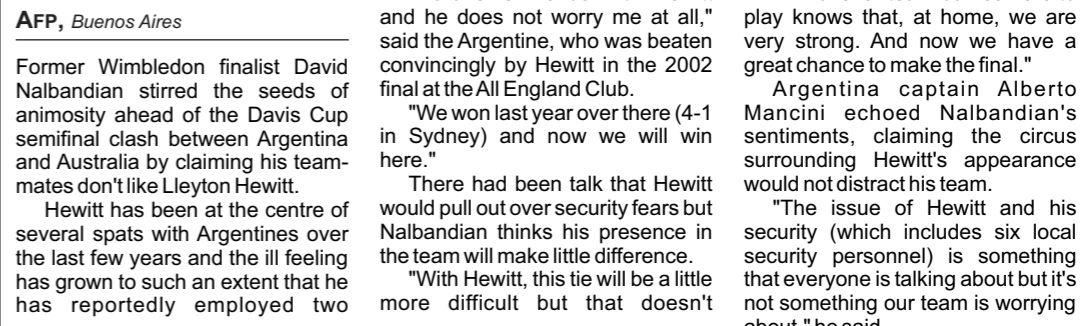
Wasim, who took 414 Test and a world record of 502 one-day wickets, urged the ICC to use more former players as umpires. "Since Hair has not played cricket he doesn't understand players properly and if the ICC uses former players as umpires the game will benefit more and more," said Wasim.

Can footballers

Colombo as well as for lack of fund. The decision to not send the football team has already been criticised by different quarters including footballers, coaches and officials who think exposure to this tournament will only help the young footballers in gaining experience even if they suffer huge defeats to big names of the continent. If lack of coordination of the sports ministry, BOA and BFF results in failure to send the team, football will be the ultimate sufferer.

'We don't like Hewitt'

Australian bodyguards for the trip to Buenos Aires this weekend. "No-one is friends with Hewitt and he does not worry me at all," said the Argentine, who was beaten convincingly by Hewitt in the 2002 final at the All England Club. "We won last year over there (4-1 in Sydney) and now we will win here." There had been talk that Hewitt would pull out over security fears but Nalbandian thinks his presence in the team will make little difference. "With Hewitt, this tie will be a little more difficult but that doesn't change much really," added the world number four. "Whichever team comes here to play knows that, at home, we are very strong. And now we have a great chance to make the final." Argentina captain Alberto Mancini echoed Nalbandian's sentiments, claiming the circus surrounding Hewitt's appearance would not distract his team. "The issue of Hewitt and his security (which includes six local security personnel) is something that everyone is talking about but it's not something our team is worrying about," he said. "We respect Hewitt but my players can beat him." Earlier, Argentine player Jose Acasuso blasted Hewitt for over-acting to the perceived animosity he will encounter. "Hewitt seems to think that he's come to Iraq, that they are going to plant a bomb," said Acasuso. "But we're not bothered because this is the circus that he wanted to set up. Nothing's going to happen and we shouldn't pay any attention to it. "We're just worried about Argentina. Whether Hewitt has one bodyguard, or 500 bodyguards, that's up to him." Former world number one Hewitt, who was named alongside Mark Philippoussis and doubles specialists Wayne Arthurs and Paul Hanley for the tie, had previously expressed reservations about playing in the tie because of security concerns. The bad blood between Hewitt and the Argentines began at last year's Australian Open when Juan Ignacio Chela took exception to the Australian's histrionics and spat at him as they changed ends in their third round match, picking up a fine for unsportsmanlike conduct. It continued later in 2005 when Hewitt and Guillermo Coria traded insults and accused each other of bad sportsmanship after an ill-tempered Davis Cup singles rubber in Sydney. Hewitt, though, preferred to focus on the tie.



A DIFFERENT AKRAM: Pakistan legend Wasim Akram follows through on a drive during a game of golf in Islamabad on Tuesday.

Holding hits Gordon hard

Michael Holding has reacted angrily to comments made by Ken Gordon, the West Indies Cricket Board (WICB) chairman, regarding his recent resignation from the board's cricket committee. On Monday, Gordon dismissed allegations made by Holding, adding: "I regret that one whom I have long admired as one of our cricketing greats should have so readily descended to personal abuse and even defamation without regard to the facts." But Holding told CricInfo: "I have this to say, Ken Gordon asked me to be a part of one committee and one committee only. What was supposed to be a 'cricket committee' which he refers to as an advisory committee. If this was rejected by the WICB, then when did he ask me to be a part of this 'Win World Cup' committee?"

Storm may help Europe

The stormy conditions that have hit the Ryder Cup could work to Europe's advantage, team captain Ian Woosnam said on Wednesday. The K-Club that will stage the biennial match against the United States for three days from Friday has been drenched by heavy rain and battered by winds and the wild weather is forecast to last into the weekend. That will affect both sets of players but Woosnam believes that his men will be better equipped to cope with the conditions. "I think it's favourable for us because we've played much more in these conditions than the Americans," he said. "The air is much heavier over here. When the ball moves, whether you hit a slice or a draw, it moves twice as much as what it does in America." Woosnam also believes that European players were more accustomed to hitting the lower trajectories required to play in strong wind. The Welshman's comments were rejected though by American spearhead Tiger Woods who said that these days players were used to all kind of conditions. "We've played in bad weather all around the world. So that's not anything new," said the world No. 1. "I certainly have and all of the



Robert Karlsson as well as Spaniard Jose Maria Olazabal. The Americans decided to stay indoors during the morning but they were due out to play nine holes in the early afternoon. Woods said that the US team had bonded well and he was enjoying the leadership role he has taken along with Phil Mickelson and Jim Furyk. "The longest anyone has been on the team is Phil, '95," he said. "So I think the three of us -- Phil, myself and Jim -- we're the guys who have been on the most cups." Anceiotti aims FROM PAGE 20 Several adjustments will be made to the line-up that beat Parma 2-0 on Sunday, with Alessandro Nesta and Alberto Gilardino out injured. The ex-Gialloblu striker required three stitches to a head wound suffered at the Tardini. "The basic foundations of the team are confirmed, but if everyone can be trusted to do a job, then I won't have difficulties allowing some players to rest. Dario Simic is playing consistently now, while Daniele Bonera and Marek Jankulovski proved they were up to the task." Paolo Maldini, Marcos Cafu, Giuseppe Favalli, Pippo Inzaghi and Marco Borriello are expected to start on Wednesday evening.

FA promises

FROM PAGE 20 said: "Because I haven't seen anything of the programme I need to have a look at that and to take a view of that before I make any comment whatsoever. But if there are things saying wrong about Sam Allardyce believe you me, I will be fighting them." Sports minister Richard Caborn has insisted that transfer bungs can be eradicated from football, just as drug abuse has been tackled in sport. "Everyone was saying we would not root out cheats in sport on anti-doping but we are doing that now systematically," he said.

Managers

FROM PAGE 20 Dirty Secrets", also made allegations regarding indirect approaches to players involving Portsmouth manager Harry Redknapp and Chelsea's director of youth football, Frank Arnesen. Allardyce's son Craig was also accused by the programme makers of receiving secret payments for the transfer to Bolton of three players. Craig also told a BBC reporter that his father knew about these payments and has also denied any wrongdoing in his Bolton deals or in his relationship with the club, the BBC said. All those accused in the programme have denied any wrongdoing.

Lid lifted

FROM PAGE 20 integrity of sport needs to be upheld and there are proper rules for managers and agents. These allegations damage the integrity of football and need to be looked at properly."