



PHOTO: AFP

Indian player Asunta Akra (L) tries to win the ball from Germany's Natascha Keller (C) during their Women's Hockey World Cup match in Madrid on Friday.

### Uttar Pradesh trounce Sialkot

AFP, Dharamshala

Experienced batsman Rizwan Shamsad outshone promising youngsters as Uttar Pradesh thrashed Sialkot by 316 runs to lift the Mohammad Nissar Trophy here on Saturday.

Shamsad, 33, top-scored in both innings with knocks of 84 and 88 after which the opposition were bowled out for a meagre 112 in their second innings of the match between the Indian and Pakistan national champions.

Shamsad, who had aggregated 6816 runs in 104 previous first-class games, helped set a massive 429-run target for Imran Nazir-led Sialkot but the injury-hit side folded up in just 35.5 overs on the final day.

Internationals Suresh Raina, Rudra Pratap Singh and Piyush Chawla turned out for Ranji Trophy champions Uttar Pradesh while Shoaib Malik, Mohammad Asif and Nazir were the big names for the Qaid-e-Azam Trophy winners.

Asif's participation was limited because of a sprained upper back while Nazir and wicketkeeper Khalid Hafiz joined Asim Butt and Inamul Haq in a long list of indisposed players that forced Sialkot to take local help for fielding.

### No place yet

FROM PAGE 20 like Scott Parker, it would make the job that much easier."

Wayne Rooney returns to the squad after serving a two-match suspension for being sent off in England's World Cup quarter-final defeat by Portugal. Darren Bent makes way to accommodate him.

Gary Neville is also back in the fold, at the expense of Luke Young, while Michael Dawson drops out to allow his Tottenham team-mate Ledley King to return after his recovery from knee surgery.

England are currently top of their Euro 2008 qualifying group after wins over Andorra and Macedonia earlier this month.

Peter Crouch's goal sealed a hard-fought victory in Macedonia and McClaren will expect a more comfortable match when the two sides meet again at Old Trafford on Saturday, October 7.

England then travel to Croatia for what is expected to be their toughest assignment in group E. The two teams last met during Euro 2004 with Rooney scoring twice in England's 4-2 victory.

### Hungarians

FROM PAGE 20 "The moral level of Hungarian football is unacceptable. The Hungarian stadiums, as well as everything else connected with the game, are rotten," said the statement read out to the demonstrators.

"At the current stage, we, the active fans of the major Hungarian clubs, cannot support the Hungarian bid for Euro 2012," the statement added promising further protests.

The fans' protests come at the end of two weeks of political demonstrations in the capital in which football hooligans were accused of playing a role in violence. The Hungarian national team, once among the greats of the game in the 1950s, have not qualified for a major international tournament since 1986.

Ukraine and Poland are also jointly bidding for Euro 2012 and face competition from Italy.

## Germany edge out India

### Hockey

AFP, Madrid

Unlucky India were beaten 3-2 by Germany in the women's field hockey World Cup here on Friday having briefly been in sight of victory.

Germany scored in the 21st minute from a corner variation flick from Anke Keuhn and they seemed to have the match under control until India's Surinder Kaur deflected the ball into the net seconds before half-time to equalise.

With nine minutes left in the match India snatched the lead when Mamta Kharb scored a great back stick goal as she ran across the face of goal.

This shocked the Germans into action and Mandy Haase levelled in the next minute followed by a vital goal from Natasha Keller with five minutes remaining.

German Coach Markus Weise was very relieved after the game. "I was impressed with the quality we showed after we were 2-1 down. We were worried about the match and we are happy to take a win."

World number one Netherlands had to fight all the way to scrape a 1-0 over England.

The young England side had the Netherlands hitting long from defence and matched them in midfield control right from the start.

But the Dutch found the target with the only goal of the game in the 13th minute when they won a corner and scored from a new precision, 'zig-zag' move.

A short pass to the right dragged the defence left, then a short pass across the goal, which included double-bluff shots at the target, found Janneke Schopman and she scored unchallenged at the left post.

England's hopes then suffered a cruel blow when captain Kate Walsh suffered an injured knee.

The battle raged on into the second half with ferocious tackling from both sides.

England, who performed way above their ninth place in the rankings, had more possession but it was the Dutch forwards who were more dangerous in attack.

The Netherlands finished with six shots at goal and three corners while England had three shots at goal.

Netherlands coach Marc Lammeris said: "The English have really improved in the last year so our tactics were to play more technical hockey. We played well but there is still room for improvement."

England coach Danny Kerry bemoaned his team's lack of firepower.

"After the goal went in our team settled down and played better as the game progressed. In the second half, despite increasing the pressure, we really did not threaten to score."

"Full credit to the Dutch, they made the best of their opportunities and I expect them to win this tournament."

Meanwhile, Spain goalkeeper Maria Jesus Rosa made seven brilliant saves to help her country to a 1-0 win over China.

Rosa was particularly strong thwarting the corner shooting of Ma YiBo.

Spain started strongly and their flair was rewarded in the 12th minute when Silvia Munoz scored a deflected corner goal.

After the break, China coach Kim Chang sent star strikers Gao Li Hua and Fu Bao Rong deep into their attacking quarter.

China forced four corners in 10 minutes and Ma forced brilliant saves by Rosa each time.

### Farashganj finish 2nd

UNB, Dhaka

Farashganj Sporting Club ended their Green Delta Insurance Metropolis First Division Hockey League as runners-up by outplaying close-rivals Bachelors SC by 3-0 goals in their last super-four match at the Maulana Bhashani National Hockey Stadium yesterday.

Shahjahan opened the scoring in the 10th minute before doubling his account on the hour mark. Mamun netted the other one for the winners.

Farashganj finished with 24 points while Bachelors claimed third place.

Champions Wari Club faces Dhaka Wanderers Club in the last super four game today.

### No WC ticket auctions

AFP, St John's

World Cup organisers are clamping down on tickets for next year's Caribbean showpiece being auctioned off on websites.

Organisers on Friday urged fans to ensure they acquire match tickets for next year's tournament through authentic sources.

This caution comes against the backdrop of the organising body's decision to cancel match tickets being offered for resale on the auction website, eBay.

The move, said World Cup commercial manager, Stephen Price, is being taken "to protect the integrity of the event and its pricing structure and policy for ticketing, which was designed to be as fair as possible and to afford everyone who wishes to attend a match the chance to get a ticket."

"We have been monitoring the sale of match tickets on eBay and have had significant success in tracking the individuals who are offering these tickets and who are, as such, indulging in an illegal activity."

"The 2007 World Cup is therefore exercising its legal right to cancel all these tickets."

The tournament's senior legal counsel, Derek Jones, added that since late August, when applicants started receiving notification of which matches they had been allocated tickets for, there has been an increasing number of tickets and packages being offered for sale on websites like eBay.

### Ex-Test star blackmailed

REUTERS, Sydney

A man appeared in an Australian court on Saturday charged with blackmailing former Australian Test cricketer Craig McDermott over explicit videos, local media reported.

Police have alleged that the man, described as a 38-year-old boat builder and father of two from the Gold Coast in tropical Queensland state, blackmailed McDermott for tens of thousands of dollars, Australian Broadcasting Corp. (ABC) radio said.

He appeared in a Gold Coast court on eight charges of extortion, which police allege occurred between December 2005 and this month.

He was caught collecting some of the extorted money during a covert police operation, the ABC said. The man was released on bail until his next court appearance in December.

### Crouchy's house

FROM PAGE 20

be targeted by burglars.

Thugs who broke into Everton star Andy Van der Meijde's home stole his car and even his pedigree dog, while in July mementoes belonging to Manchester United and England forward Wayne Rooney were stolen from his parents' home.

Other victims have included former Spurs goalkeeper Ian Walker and Chelsea's Frank Lampard.

### Le Guen

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As a former protégé of Domenech, Le Guen says he will be more than happy to take the call -- but admits he is also acutely aware Scotland is his new home.

"He was my teacher when I was learning to be a coach and I have a very good relationship with him," said Le Guen, who joined Rangers in the summer.

"If he wants to speak to me about this game, then of course I will be happy to speak to him. But I am also aware that I live in Scotland now!"

Confidence is high in the Scotland camp after morale-boosting wins over the Faroe Islands and Lithuania. But they know they face their biggest test yet in the shape of France, before travelling to the Ukraine four days later.

Le Guen has backed his compatriots to come out on top at the national stadium.

"France are the favourites," he said. "Scotland have a chance, but only a small chance."

## Ranjan calls for diplomacy

### Cricket

BBC ONLINE, undated

Senior official Ranjan Madugalle has warned umpires must do their utmost to prevent another forfeited Test.

Darrell Hair and Billy Doctrove ruled the Oval Test was over when Pakistan refused to come out to face England, after a penalty for ball-tampering.

Madugalle said umpires should, "do everything possible to defuse tensions by explaining that a team is entitled to raise any grievance through the ICC."

"It is not in the interests of the game for the team to interrupt play".

Madugalle, the International Cricket Council adjudicator at Inzamamul Haq's disciplinary hearing cleared the Pakistan captain on Thursday of changing the condition of the ball.

But he found Inzamam guilty of bringing the game into disrepute for his protest and banned him for four one-day internationals.

His subsequent comments will be seen as implicit criticism of the umpires at the centre of the furore.

"In my judgment, a difficult and sensitive situation such as that which arose in the present case requires handling with tactful diplo-

macy as well as firm adherence to the laws," said Madugalle.

He also suggested the umpires "should not return to the field of play and then declare the match to be forfeited unless and until they are



RANJAN MADUGALLE

absolutely sure that the team is refusing to play the rest of the match.

"All other options should first be exhausted, involving discussions with the team captains and management."

Australian Hair, singled out by Pakistan as being responsible for the furore, has been pulled out of the forthcoming ICC Champions Trophy and his career appears in doubt.

Doctrove emerged from the hearing at The Oval and said only: "I'm still an umpire".

Former England batsman Geoffrey Boycott launched a withering attack on Hair's part in the controversy.

"Hair is the first man to apply the five-run penalty for ball-tampering and he got it wrong," said Boycott, a key witness in the disciplinary hearing.

"He is also the first man to call a Test match forfeited, and I believe he got that wrong too."

"If he is going to make a decision which affects the whole fabric of the game he had better have some evidence."

Writing in the Daily Telegraph, Boycott accused Hair of taking advantage of his position of authority.

"All Hair had to do was go up to Inzamam and say: 'We're not too sure whether the ball has been tampered with, but if anybody is messing around, they had better cut it out.'"

"That is what most former players would have done in Hair's position."

"One knock-on effect is likely to be a change in the laws. We don't want umpires to be allowed to play God like this ever again."

## Reverse swing legal: Jones

### Cricket

CRICINFO, undated

Simon Jones, the England fast bowler, has hit out at suggestions that reverse swing is only possible when the ball has been tampered with. In an interview with Western Mail, he clarified that the entire process of generating reverse swing was a legitimate one.

"People who say reverse swing is not possible without ball-tampering obviously know nothing about cricket," Jones said. "Have they ever bowled with a ball that's reversing? Have they ever bowled with a normal ball?"

"If people make big statements they should be able to back them up. But I ignored those stories because I know what I did was legal. I would never ever do anything outside the laws of the game. And, anyway, how could you get away with scuffing the ball? In the Ashes series (in 2005) there was something like 40-odd cameras on the ground. You'd be picked up straight away if you tried something."

Jones also indicated that Troy Cooley, the former England bowling coach who is now handling the job for Australia, had the biggest hand to play in teaching him the art of

reverse swing. "It's taken me a long time to develop it. I did a lot of work in Australia with Troy Cooley and that's where I first learned it."

"It was great because it gave me an extra string to my bow. I was able to swing it conventionally but then I struggled with the older ball. The thing with reverse swing is that you don't need the ball to be in a big state. It will go if it's just a little bit scuffed up on one side."

"At Old Trafford (where he took Test-best figures of 6-53 against Australia) it went massive. The square was so rough that the ball was old after 17 overs. There's no need to tamper with the ball, it will reverse swing because of the condition of the ground. No problem. It's all above board."

Jones was one of the main bowling stars in last year's Ashes, taking 18 wickets in four Tests at an average of 21, but has since been on the sidelines with a knee injury which has ruled him out of the Ashes later this year in Australia.

Jones hasn't played in the last year, but was one of the 13 players who was handed a central contract by the England board. Jones confessed in the interview that he wasn't sure he would be one of the chosen ones. "It was at the back of my mind that I wouldn't get it," he said. "I haven't played for a while but England have been very good to

me. They've supported me through my injuries and given me the backing that I needed."

"I got injured playing for England and they've looked after me really well. But you don't find out until that week and you're obviously thinking, 'Am I going to get one?' If I hadn't got one I'd have played for Glamorgan and pushed for another, but it's a nice feeling to know England have backed me."

Talking about the injured left knee, on which he underwent a keyhole surgery in June this year, Jones said he was happy with his recovery, and that he was still in with a chance of playing next year's World Cup. "The bone has healed really well. I've been advised to take as long as possible with the knee. I've had the operation now and I don't want another one."

"If that means me missing the Ashes, then so be it -- even though the series is going to be as big as the last one. My next seven or eight years is what's important to me and it's my career at the end of the day. I could push it now, go out there and injure it. The knee is feeling really good at the moment and if it stays like that I'll push on a bit more. The World Cup is still a possibility for me."

## Blake sends Safin packing

### Tennis

AFP, Bangkok

James Blake denied Marat Safin a place in his first final in more than a year as he staged a comeback to pip the Russian 3-6, 6-4, 7-6 (7/3) at the Thailand Open Saturday.

Blake, the third seed with titles this season in Adelaide, Las Vegas and Indianapolis, rallied to set up a Sunday showdown with the winner

from Thai hero Paradorn Srichaphan and Croatian top seed Ivan Ljubicic.

The mercurial Safin smashed a racket at a heated moment in the second set as he was broken for the first time to drop to 2-3.

The former world No. 1 and two-time Grand Slam winner last played a final against Roger Federer at Halle, Germany, in June, 2005, just before a knee injury began to plague his game.

Safin, competing in his third

semifinal of this comeback season, drew level at two-all with Blake, who also beat him last Sunday in a dead rubber at the Davis Cup semifinal in Moscow won by Russia.

"When he's on his best he can give everyone fits," said third-seed Blake, ninth in the world.

"I had to weather the storm. Often, you are at his mercy. I've had a few more matches than he has this season," said the American, 49-21 this season.

Safin, who has lifted his ranking from 104 during the summer to its current 55th after a knee injury, said he had no luck in the struggle lasting nearly two hours.

"It slipped away," said the 26-year-old. "I was up a break in the third and it slipped away, he broke back and then the tiebreak was a disaster."

"I was so close to being in the final. This is the third time this year it's happened like this for me."

"I wish I could break through that barrier."

Safin came up short as he aimed to defeat his seventh Top 10 opponent of the year.

Blake came good in his sixth semifinal of the season, now a perfect 6-0 at the last-four stage.

After winning the first set and successfully nullifying four break points, Safin began to fade when Blake broke in the fifth game of the second, going on to level the match on a third set point.

Safin against lost a break in the third set then turned in a forgettable tiebreaker to lose after saving a pair of match points before Blake put away the win.

### I forgive

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"I am convinced that the team can deliver its best. We have a very good chance of winning the Trophy," said Inzamam, who vowed to return with a bang.

"We have a home series against the West Indies, then a tour of South Africa and finally the World Cup, so I will conserve my energies for these future assignments -- especially the World Cup, which we dearly want to win."



PHOTO: AFP

Talismanic Russian star Marat Safin smashes his racket in frustration during his match against American James Blake at the Thailand Open in Bangkok on Saturday.