#### 'Pakistan will accept Hair'

REUTERS, London

Pakistan would accept an ICC decision allowing controversial Australian umpire Darrel Hair to stand again in international matches, Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Shaharyar Khan said on Sunday.

The International Cricket Council (ICC), of which Shaharyar is a member, removed Hair from this month's Champions Trophy in India after his central role in the balltampering row that marred Pakistan's recent tour of England.

The PCB have asked the ICC to omit Hair from any future games involving Pakistan.

Asked in a radio interview if he would like to see Hair retained in international cricket. Shaharvar said: "We would not oppose that ourselves.

"I wouldn't say that I am happy to see him (do so) but I would say that I have no objection to him umpiring matches that the ICC feels that he is secure. That is something to be decided later." Shaharvar told the BBC programme Radio Five Live.

The ICC said it removed Hair. now a hate figure in parts of Asia, from the Champions Trophy for "safety and security" reasons.

#### Zimbabwe set for brief vigil

AFP, New Delhi

Zimbabwe are braced for their latest trial by fire in the heat of the Champions Trophy.

Barring a miracle, their trip to India will be brief.

The besieged African side, still sitting out Test matches, have to play the qualifying tournament at the event with matches against Sri Lanka, West Indies and Bangladesh with just two sides making the latter

They go into the competition on the back of a 3-0 defeat by South Africa, a series which finished with their neighbours racking up 418 in Potchefstroom, only the fourth time 400 has been made in a one-day international.

But Zimbabwe skipper Prosper Utseya, just 21 years old, is looking on the bright side buoyed by a 3-2 win over Bangladesh earlier in the

"The good thing about our team is that the average age is around 21, so we're all learning. I've played with the guys for a long time, most of them since high school, so it's not that difficult for me to get respect. We're all young, we do well together, so respect comes along," said offspinner Utseva, who has already played 47 one-dayers.

He is his team's second most experienced player; only wicketkeeper Brendan Taylor, with 50 matches, has played more one dayers.

That win over Bangladesh was Zimbabwe's first series triumph

since November 2001. "That really boosted the morale

of the guys," said the captain who was thrown into the hotseat in the wake of the bitter split in the game in Zimbabwe which saw most of the white players in the squad initially purged.

"Now we're looking to play Test cricket, and if we can do that soon, it would be great. At the moment, the guys are excited and confident. They're starting to believe they can win rather than just competing every time. They're starting to believe more in themselves.

Zimbabwe coach Kevin Curran believes his young team will not be humiliated.

### Derby ends

FROM PAGE 20 win after drawing 1-1 Celta Vigo

Giant Serbian striker Nicola Zigic put Racing ahead with a header from a corner after 22 minutes but Celta equalised 10 minutes after the break when their Brazilian midfielder Iriney hammered home a stunning shot form 20 yards.

Racing then threw away a chance of victory five minutes into injury time when Christan Alvarez put his penalty against the post.

Real Sociedad slump to the foot of the table after conceding two late goals at Deportivo La Coruna, who won 2-0 after two strikes of individ-

ual brilliance. Former Liverpool player Antonio Barragan curled the ball into the net from the left hand edge of the penalty box after 78 minutes and then Riki Sanchez showed he had the same skills by spinning the ball home from the touchline two minutes before the whistle.

### Inter appointed

FROM PAGE 20

referees and high-ranked FIGC officials and resulted in the relegation of Juventus to the second division with a 17-point penalty.

The four other clubs found quilty of sporting fraud -- AC Milan, Lazio, Fiorentina, and Reggina -- kept their status in Italy's top division but were all deducted points

# Gayle licking his lips Akram wishes



AFP, New Delhi

West Indies opener Chris Gayle returns to his happy hunting ground hoping he will be at his explosive best in the upcoming Champions Trophy one-day tournament in India.

The left-handed batsman ruined bowlers' reputations on the West Indies' last tour of India in 2002, hammering three hundreds and a half-century to help his team clinch a one-day series 4-3.

"The last tour was a big success and I hope to carry on (in the same vein)," Gayle told reporters here on

"Conditions here won't be much different from those at home. I think you'll be entertained as long as I am at the crease."

Defending champions West Indies need an in-form Gayle to boost chances of making it to the main draw. They play Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and Zimbabwe in the qualifying rounds starting from October 7. The top two teams will

"It looks a bit strange playing in the qualifying rounds this time," said Gayle, who has scored 5,102 runs and taken 118 wickets with his offspin in the shorter version of the

Australia, India, England, South Africa, New Zealand and Pakistan have been given direct entry into the main draw based on their rankings in April this year

Gayle, 27, said his team could not afford to have an off-day.

"Sri Lanka have been playing really well in recent months and we are not going to take Bangladesh and Zimbabwe lightly. Nothing can be taken for granted." he said.

Gavle said he was aware of his role and would do his best to rise to his team's expectations.

"I know I have a responsibility as a batsman, bowler and fielder. I have

"We have a young team, but I think we have the ability to do well and hopefully we will start dominating in future. We have the confidence and on a given day we can beat any

All-rounder Dwayne Bravo is the other West Indian expected to play a vital role on low, slow Indian pitches. He has been in the news recently with his deceptive slower delivery.

"It (slower ball) is a lethal weapon in one-day cricket," said Bravo, 22.

"I have developed it on my own. It's very effective when batsmen are going for runs, but it is not easy to bowl. You should know when to bowlit."

Bravo, who has scored 576 runs and grabbed 49 wickets, said he was not under pressure after his recent

"There is no pressure on me. I have a long way to go. I try to improve my game in every match." he said.

Star West Indies batsman Ramnaresh Sarwan was also looking to contribute to his team's success.

"I am looking forward to play in India because the conditions will be batsmen-friendly," said Sarwan, who has scored 3,587 runs in one-day

"I'll do my best to contribute to the team's wins. It'll be a great boost to our World Cup hopes if we win here," said

The World Cup will be held in the West Indies next March.



West Indies opener Chris Gayle speaks to the press during an open media session in New Delhi on Monday.

# **Ball-tampering hearing** hurt world: Benaud

Cricket

AFP, Sydney

Richie Benaud says last week's International Cricket Council (ICC) hearing into ball-tampering arising from last month's forfeited fourth Test between England and Pakistan has hurt world cricket.

The respected former Australian captain and cricket commentator said ICC hearing was "crass and unbecoming" and he criticised Pakistan's decision to refuse to reenter the field instead of accepting the umpire's ruling at The Oval.

Pakistan captain Inzamamul Haq was cleared of ball-tampering but found auilty by the ICC of bringing the game into disrepute over his side's refusal to play.

Inzamam was banned for four one-

day internationals, which effectively rules him out of next month's Champions Trophy tournament in India Benaud said he was angry about

the sentence imposed on Inzamam. "Why didn't he get a Test ban?" Benaud told Sydney's Daily Telegraph Monday. "His proven offence was committed in a Test.

"Instead, he got the minimum oneday ban of four matches when the minimum Test ban was 10 days of

more immediate effect in the Champions Trophy -- was lame. He could captain Pakistan in the final."

Benaud said the umpire's power will be even further eroded if countries tried to pick and choose umpires for their

Benaud said Australian umpire Darrell Hair and fellow umpire West Indian Billy Doctrove would umpire

again in international matches if there were fairness

"It depends on the degree of 'if'," he said. "There are two men with stilettos between their shoulder blades - the Pakistan manager Zaheer Abbas, who has been sacked - and Hair, the ICC

. "But at no point in any of this has Hair acted alone.

The issue has polarised opinion in

Former English batsman and now week lambasted Hair for attempting to "play God" in his handling of the forfeited

"Hair is the first man to apply the fiverun penalty for ball-tampering and he got it wrong," Boycott wrote in an English newspaper. "He is also the first man to call a Test match forfeited, and I believe he got that wrong too."

## Trophy gets star cast

Lumpur to remind the opposition that a long lay-off had not dampened their

West Indies captain Brian Lara described Tendulkar as an "exceptional talent" and "a sight to behold" and urged his players to learn from Australia skipper Ricky Ponting

said: "Sachin is the best player I have seen and the best player I have played against. "When I look at his overall record,

something like 75 hundreds (35 in Tests and 40 in one-davers) in international cricket, that is just an amaz-McGrath showed his form only in flashes, but it was enough to con-

vince India captain Rahul Dravid that his seamers would gain a lot by just watching the premier Aussie pace-

"He is fantastic. There are a lot of young bowlers in our team and just to watch McGrath is a great learning experience for them," said Dravid.

England will be playing in the tournament with their eyes firmly fixed on the Ashes. They desperately need a fit Flintoff, who has not played a one-day international since April

due to an ankle injury. Flintoff, instrumental in the Ashes triumph last year with 402 runs and 24 wickets, may not carry injury-hit England into the semi-finals but his fitness will be the key to fortunes in Australia

South Africa are at full strength with the return of ace all-rounder Kallis and skipper Graeme Smith, who were forced to skip a Test series in Sri Lanka in July due to injuries.

Kallis played three one-dayers against a depleted Zimbabwean side last month and became the first cricketer to complete 8,000 runs and 200 wickets in both forms of the

It was only a warm-up series for the South Africans, who now face sharper attacks from Pakistan, New Zealand and a qualifying team (probably either the West Indies or Sri Lanka) in pool matches. Fast bowler Akhtar has given Pakistan many victories as well as

headaches because of his frequent

breakdowns. He played just four oneday internationals this year, all in England. He has plenty of fans in India and his duel with Tendulkar has always been the talk of the town. It is as

eagerly anticipated as Tendulkar versus McGrath. "I still have to work hard to get

into my rhythm, hopefully it will come in India where the crowds give you the sort of encouragement you need to bowl at your best," said

# Ole, Ole' for United

limelight after saving a penalty just minutes before McCarthy's winner.

Emile Heskey had given Wigan a second minute lead with an impressive finish from Emmerson Boyce's

South Africa star McCarthy spurned a series of chances before David Bentley curled in an excellent equaliser on the stroke of half-time. Paul Jewell's side had a chance

to go in front when Andre Ooijer's 77th minute challenge on Heskey was adjudged to be a penalty.

But Svetoslav Todorov's spotkick was saved by Wales stopper Brown and Blackburn clinched a fourth successive win when McCarthy tapped in nine minute from full time after Jason Roberts set him up.

On Saturday Liverpool had suffered another away-day disappointment as they were beaten 2-0 defeat at Bolton, who scored through Gary Speed and Ivan

Robin van Persie marked Arsene Wenger's 10th anniversary as Arsenal manager with two goals, including a superb volley, as the Gunners won 2-1 at Charlton.

Gabriel Agbonlahor's header extended Aston Villa's unbeaten start under Martin O'Neill as they drew 1-1 at Chelsea, who had taken the lead through Didier Drogba.

Sheffield United won for the first time since their promotion last season as they beat Middlesbrough 2-1 at Bramall Lane. Micah Richards scored an injury

time equaliser for Manchester City at Everton after Andrew Johnson had given the home side the lead. But City's joy was short-lived as

midfielder Joey Barton faces a police investigation after being accused of celebrating Richards' goal by baring his backside at the home fans.

Watford will try to climb out of the relegation zone on Monday night when they play Fulham at Vicarage

and leads from the front which is a good quality for a captain, but only the upcoming Ashes will mature him," said Wasim, who led Pakistan in 25 Tests and 109 one-day

Wasim took 414 Test and a world record 502 one-day wickets and skippered in a similar style to Flintoff, who guided England to a 2-1 Ashes win last year, scoring over 400 runs and taking 40 wickets.

Wasim said responsibility will bring the best out of Flintoff.

"Every cricketer aspires for captaincy and players like Flintoff excel with responsibility on their shoulders. But he and the England team will have to be ruthless to defend the Ashes, which I fear Australia might not allow them to be.

"I had two tours of Australia as captain and realised that they play very tough on their home grounds. know their wickets and they are very hard for newcomers to adjust on." said Wasim who lost 2-1 in 1995 and 3-0 in 1999

Wasim said England's injury problems will mount in the Ashes.

They (England) are already without their key batsman Michael Vaughan and effective paceman Simon Jones and they might lose some other players through injury in the early part of the tour," said

"For me Australia are huge favourites and they would be at their

### Sanath sounds

'Now I just want to perform well in this tournament. I have always played my natural game and tried to win matches for my team. We first have to do well in the qualifying rounds and we cannot take chances against any team."

Sri Lanka play the West Indies,

Bangladesh and Zimbabwe in the qualifying rounds starting on October 7. The top two sides will join Australia, England, India, South Africa, New Zealand and Pakistan in the next round. Former Sri Lankan skipper

Marvan Atapattu returned from a back injury to boost batting. "Yes, I am raring to go," said

Atapattu, who played his last onedayer in March. "I did not play much cricket in

recent months, but the team's

confidence is high. It's a challenge for all of us to do well in the tourna-Wicketkeeper Kumar Sangakkara said the team were looking forward to playing qualifying matches because they were short of

against India at home in August. "It is a positive for us as we have not played much in recent months, he said. "We are treating all matches seriously because strange things can happen on the field in

practice after the rained off series

## Can Tigers do

up to the tournament.

Bowling spearhead Mashrafee bin Mortuza, who captured 12 wickets in the Kenya series including a Bangladeshi record of 6-26, was recovering from an ankle injury sustained off the field.

Other seamers Sved Rasel and Shahadat Hossain had foot injuries close to the championship which they open against Sri Lanka in the northern Indian city of Mohali on

But they have on the ranks players like Mohammad Ashraful, Aftab Ahmed and veteran allrounder Mohammad Rafique, all capable of turning a match

### Roma, Palermo

FROM PAGE 20

three strikers to start the match, on the half hour after the Argentine striker appeared to pull a hamstring when stretching for a cross. Inter then reverted to a 4-4-2

Maicon's right-wing cross was flicked on by Adriano and Fabio Grosso arrived at the back post to side-foot home.

formation and equalised in the 38th

Alberto Gilardino hit the bar and Andrea Pirlo had a goal ruled out for offside as AC Milan were frustrated by a well-organised Siena side at the San Siro. Lazio, who started the season

with minus 11 points for their

involvement in the match-fixing

scandal, moved closer to wiping out

their deficit with an emphatic 4-0 win

at newly-promoted Torino on Lazio captain Massimo Oddo scored twice and Tommaso Rocchi and Stefano Mauri grabbed the other goals as the Rome club comfortably secured their third straight

# **Record-happy Asians!**



AFP. New Delhi

If statistics alone won matches, Asian teams would win every oneday tournament in the world including the Champions Trophy starting in India on Saturday.

The Asians are unsurpassed when it comes to piling up records but fall short of what matters most -winning matches and titles consistently and dominating the rest of the

Eleven of the 12 spots in most

one-day appearances are held by Asian players led by Indian superstar Sachin Tendulkar and Pakistan captain Inzamamul Haq's record tally of 367 apiece.

The lone man out is former Australian captain Steve Waugh who played 325 one-dayers.

Of the top 10 batsmen in the game, eight are Asians. Among bowlers, seven of the top 10 hail from the region. Yet, in the eight World Cups played so far, Asian teams won only

three with India taking the title in

1983, Pakistan in 1992 and Sri Lanka in 1996. Of the four Champions Trophy tournaments featuring the Testplaying nations together for the only time outside the World Cup, Asians lost out three times. India and Sri

Lanka shared the trophy in 2002

when the final in Colombo was

won the World Cup three times, including the last two editions in 1999 and 2003. West Indies won the first two tournaments in 1975 and 1979 with their all-conquering team under Clive Lloyd.

Are Asians too concerned about statistics to bother about winning?

India celebrates a century from Tendulkar, one-day cricket's leading batsman, even though the team may have lost the match, as happened in the recent Malaysian tri-

The nation went wild over

Tendulkar's 40th hundred on his return to competitive cricket after shoulder surgery. Forgotten was the fact that India had been beaten by the lower-ranked West Indies. Legendary all-rounder Kapil Dev,

who captained India during its lone World Cup success 23 years ago, said any defeat should hurt the players so much that they come back strongly next time.

"I am not sure that happens every time," he said. "Records may impress fans and the media, but the important thing is to win."

Former India batsman Naviot Sidhu, who has made his mark as a witty television pundit, compared statistics to a drunkard leaning on the lamp post.

"He is leaning for support, not for illumination," said Sidhu. "We do tend to get carried away with statistics sometime.

Australian captain Ricky Ponting, whose magnificent century won his team the last World Cup against India in Johannesburg, said in a recent television interview that

he never bothered about records.

"Taking note of your records means you are looking back. That could distract from what lies ahead." he said. "I prefer to concentrate on

what lies ahead." Tendulkar, who has scored more one-day runs (14,370) and centuries (40) than any other batsman in the game, agreed winning was what

mattered most. "If you play as long as I have, the records will be there," said the 33vear-old, now in his 17th year in

nternational cricket. "I think the public is more keen on my records than I am. The more important thing is to contribute to your team's victory. That makes me

So what will it take for an Asian team to win the next major one-day

happy."

"All-rounders." stresses Kapil Dev. "They are the key. They give the team more options" "When we won the World Cup,

we had all-rounders like Roger

Binny, Mohinder Amarnath, Madan Lal and myself who could contribute with both bat and ball. "Pakistan had Imran Khan and Wasim Akram in 1992 and Sri Lanka

had Sanath Jayasuriya and Aravinda de Silva in 1996. The ageing Jayasuriya is still around for Sri Lanka, but India don't have a genuine all-rounder and Pakistan has only one in Abdul

# Bob looks beyond Inzi



Pakistan's cricket coach Bob

Woolmer Monday urged his young

side to learn to live without banned captain Inzamamul Haq at this month's Champions Trophy. "Obviously losing Inzamam is a

captain, but in a way at some stage Pakistan will have to learn to live without Inzamam." Woolmer told Inzamam was handed a fourmatch ban by the International Cricket Council (ICC) last week for

big loss, both as a player and as

The Oval in August. But he was acquitted of ball-

"What happened at The Oval and

bringing the game into disrepute after he led his team's refusal to play in the fourth Test against England at tampering, the allegation which led

cricket, with Younis Khan stepping in as captain, and whoever steps in as Inzamam's replacement has a big challenge," said Woolmer. "Inzamam is a great leader of players but as I said this young team will, at some stage, have to learn to

live without him. Younis will have to

show he is equal to the challenge

in the last week's hearing is now

behind us. We are now focusing on

and so is the team." Pakistan last week announced Younis will lead the team while Inzamam's replacement as a player would be announced later Monday. The squad assembles here on

Wednesday for a short training camp before flying out to Jaipur, India on October 7 where they play their first match against a qualifier on October 17. The qualifying rounds, involving four teams, begin from Saturday Two teams from the qualifying

rounds will join Australia, South

Africa, India, Pakistan, New

Zealand and England, who all

gained automatic berths due to their

Woolmer, a former England batsman who also coached South Africa, said the Champions Trophy would be good for Pakistan.

"Various teams treat this biennial

event in a different way. You have a

good chance to assess what other

teams are doing six months before the World Cup so it's a great test," said Woolmer, referring to the World Cup in the Caribbean next year. "I was there with South Africa when we won the tournament in 1998 and they went on to play the semi-final in the 1999 World Cup.

Champions Trophy winners have gone on to win the World Cup," said Woolmer reckoned paceman Mohammad Asif, who suffered back

But history shows no ICC

# Japan hold Australia

Hockey

to Pakistan's protest.

Monday.

Australia missed a great opportunity to seal the top spot in Pool B when they where held to a goalless draw by Japan in the Women's World Cup

The undefeated Australians needed maximum points to clinch a place in the final four and put as much pressure as possible on their main rivals Argentina. Australia have 10 points from

four matches and should qualify for

the semifinals, with their two main

field hockey tournament here on

rivals Argentina and South Korea playing later Monday. Australia and Argentina meet in the last Pool match on Wednesday.

Japan, meanwhile, came into the

game with one point from three matches and needed to improve their position for the ranking games

Australia winning the only corner of the first half after two minutes. But the Japanese tactics were clear immediately - massed defence, occasional breakaways

and giving Australia no room.

The game started brightly with

In the second half Australia again had one corner which was saved by Rie Terazono. Wendy Beattie had a chance to break the deadlock after 50 minutes

when she hit a clear chance across

the face of goal but Australia gave

away too much possession under

Australia coach Frank Murray said: "The team was disappointing today as our midfield did not



Japan's Sakae Morimoto (L) vies with Australia's Rebecca Sanders (R)

trouble last week, would be fit before the team's departure.

#### Japan play South Africa on Wednesday and on form they should win.

**DUTCH DOUBLE UPSETS HOSTS** 

Spain with a 2-0 win which put them top of Pool A. And England drew 1-1 with India after two goals were controversially disallowed.

Earlier on Sunday, the Netherlands

ended the unbeaten run of hosts

out, with India finding out their goal by Asunta Lakra, awarded seconds prior to half time, had been disallowed after an umpire conference during the break.

Both teams had a goal cancelled

The more experienced Dutch

opened after six minutes through Eefke Mulder to take control of the game with superior skills. Esther Termans and Racquel Hertas were outstanding for Spain but the Dutch engine of Fatima De

Booij controlled midfield.

with an early second half goal to Naomi Van As who continues to show real class in attacking build up and finishing Spain kept trying to the end but

the Netherlands delivered a hockey

Melo, Minke Smabers and Minke

The Netherlands sealed victory

lesson all over the pitch with four corners to nil for Spain. Dutch coach Marc Lammers said: "This was a difficult game for us as Spain defends strongly. The key to the match was the first goal

and from then on the match was

won with patience and no mistakes.

Spanish captain Sylvia Munoz remains positive about her team's chances. "Our nerves betraved us. We overcame those in the second half

but by then it was too late." she

explained. India Coach MK Kaushik, when asked about the umpire's decision in their draw against England, said: "The match was spoiled by a partial decision. We were not told of the decision until we came back on the

"If you are going to have a TV

Umpire the technical people should watch the cassette. I am not happy about the process."

#### during their Women's Hockey World Cup match in Madrid on Monday.

Is that bad news for Asia?