



The eighteen athletes who were selected by Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) to participate in a two-month long training camp in the sports facilities of Tata Steel in Jamshedpur, India. PHOTO: COURTESY

## Roger wishes time with Tiger

AFP, Shanghai

Tennis great Roger Federer said he hoped to find time for a beer with Tiger Woods while both are in Shanghai this weekend.

Federer is playing in the season-ending Masters Cup while Woods is here for Asia's richest golf event, the five-million-dollar HSBC Champions tournament.

"Maybe, if we have a chance, we may go out for a beer," Federer said.

The two dominant sportsmen in their field are known to enjoy a healthy mutual respect and Woods praised Federer as a "marvel" here this week.

"He's a marvel to watch. He just makes it look so easy. Maybe one day I'll have a hit at him, and maybe he's never seen anything coming at him that slow," Woods said.

The pair first met and compared notes during the US Open in New York in September, when Woods watched Federer beat Andy Roddick in the final.

## Windies toil in tour opener

AFP, Lahore

Opener Salman Butt hit an attractive century and Yasir Hameed piled up 92 runs as West Indian bowlers toiled hard in their two-day tour opener at Bagh-e-Jinnah Stadium here on Wednesday.

Butt, who smashed 106 before retiring at tea, scored 175 runs for the opening wicket with Hameed as Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) Patron's XI made 305-4 after winning the toss on the first day.

Captain Asim Kamal (33) and Misbahul Haq (38) were unbeaten at stumps.

Butt, who lost his place in the Pakistan team early this year, hit 19 boundaries during his 244-minute knock as none of the West Indian bowlers could find any assistance from an easy-paced wicket.

Hameed, recalled in Pakistan's 15-man squad for the first two Tests, had 12 fours and a six in his more aggressive knock which lasted 196 minutes.

After West Indies' three-pronged pace attack failed to provide a breakthrough, it was left-arm spinner Dave Mohammed who finally dismissed Hameed in the 45th over of the day.

Hameed missed a cut and was caught by wicketkeeper Denesh Ramdin.

Fidel Edwards then accounted for Shahid Yousuf (12) and Dwayne Bravo removed Bazid Khan (two) to end the tourists' day on a consolation note.

West Indies rested star opener Chris Gayle, Shivnarine Chanderpaul and Jerome Taylor for the match.

Gayle, who hit 474 runs in West Indies' runners-up finish in the Champions Trophy in India, was suffering from food poisoning.

Team management hoped Gayle would recover before the first Test which starts here from Saturday.

## NCL begins

FROM PAGE 17  
has taken initiative to ensure national players' participation in the country's lone first-class competition.

"The national players under the board's payroll would have to play the league except if anyone is declared unfit by the physio and we will punish those who refuse to play," he assured.

Managing Director of sponsors MM Ispahani Limited Mirza Salman Behroz Ispahani also spoke on the occasion.

"It is the successive sixth occasion that Ispahani Limited are sponsoring the National Cricket League and we hoped that the tournament would be a successful one," he said.

## Ganguly stays positive

Cricket

AFP, New Delhi

Former India captain Sourav Ganguly said Tuesday he had not lost hope of playing in next year's World Cup in the Caribbean after returning to form with a century in a domestic tournament.

The 34-year-old reminded national selectors that he had plenty of cricket left in him when he hammered an unbeaten 118 for East Zone against North Zone in a first-class Duleep Trophy match at Guwahati on Monday.

"If God permits, I'll play the World Cup," said Ganguly, who has not played a one-day international since September 2005.

The stylish left-hander was sacked as captain last year and later dropped from the national side following unfavourable comments from coach Greg Chappell, who branded Ganguly a "disrupting influence".

He was also axed from the Test squad after the tour of Pakistan in February despite leading the team for an Indian record of 21 victories.

Ganguly, playing domestic cricket this season in a bid to regain his place, managed to impress one of the selectors watching the match.

"It's just a matter of getting a couple of hundreds and Sourav will be on the plane to South Africa for the Test series," The Times of India on Tuesday quoted the unnamed selector as saying.

Ganguly has already been ignored for this month's one-day series in South Africa, but still hopes to regain a Test berth. The squad for a three-Test series will be named in the first week of December.

After returning from the South African tour in January, India will play four one-day internationals each against Sri Lanka and West Indies at home before leaving for the Caribbean in the last week of February.

"My job is to score runs and the rest is up to the selectors in whom I have a lot of faith," Ganguly told the Hindustan Times.

Former Test captain Dilip Vengsarkar is India's new chief cricket selector, with former left-arm spinner Venkatapathy Raju

also joining the five-man panel.

"He (Vengsarkar) is someone who has played a lot of cricket and knows what it takes to compete and perform at the international level," said Ganguly, who has scored 5,221 runs in 88 Tests with 12 centuries.

"He is a former India captain and he knows what would make the best India XI. I have a lot of faith in him."

Ganguly said he was happy to return to big-scores after being under pressure for a long time.

"I was determined to play a big knock. I was under immense pressure to do well, but pressure is something I've faced all my life and I am happy that I came through this test. It was a very important century," he said.

"I always had faith in my abilities and knew it was only a matter of time before I would be back among runs." Ganguly's knock came just after India had lost eight of their last 12 one-dayers. Rahul Dravid's side were eliminated in the league phase of the recent Champions Trophy at home.

## Ponting says sorry

ICC CHAMPIONS TROPHY

AFP, Sydney

Australia cricket captain Ricky Ponting offered to apologise Wednesday to any Indian officials who felt insulted by his team's victory celebrations after the Champions Trophy final this week.

Ponting said the Australians intended no offence and admitted the flak they had received for allegedly manhandling Indian cricket chief Sharad Pawar off the presentation stage had marred their first successful Champions Trophy campaign.

"It probably has had a little bit of the gloss taken off, but I'll be doing the best I can to get my point across to the concerned people in India and let them know we were not trying to embarrass them or anything like that," he told reporters.

"We were all pretty keen to get

our hands on the trophy and celebrate accordingly."

Indian cricket stars Sunil Gavaskar and Sachin Tendulkar criticised the Australians' behaviour after the eight-wicket win over the West Indies in Sunday's final in Mumbai.

Ponting, visibly impatient after the long presentation ceremony, gestured towards Pawar with his forefinger, asking him to quickly give away the trophy which Australia had won for the first time in five attempts.

"I was standing just behind the guy waiting to be presented with the trophy and it wasn't coming my way so I reached around to accept the trophy from him," he said.

Indian newspapers displayed pictures of Australian batsman Damien Martyn pushing Pawar with his right hand, urging him to get off the stage so the team could pose with the trophy.

Ponting said he was aware the Australian cricketers were representing their country and promised they would be more aware of protocol in future.

## Gayle unwell

AFP, Lahore

The touring West Indies cricket team said Wednesday it hoped prolific opening batsman Chris Gayle recovered quickly from a stomach bug that forced him to miss a tour opener.

"Gayle caught a stomach bug during the final of the Champions Trophy in India and was resting for the two-day game and we hope he recovers in time for the first Test," West Indies media liaison officer Imran Khan told AFP.

Overseas players have a history of picking up stomach bugs while on tours to the sub-continent.

The 27-year-old Gayle, from Jamaica, was declared player-of-the-Champions Trophy in India earlier this week after he smashed 474 runs in eight matches with three centuries.

The left-handed opener led his team's charge to the final, where they lost to world champions Australia by eight wickets on Sunday.

Gayle has amassed 4,079 runs in 61 Tests since making his debut against Zimbabwe at Port of Spain in 2000.

## Akhtar files appeal

Cricket

AFP, Lahore

Banned Pakistan paceman Shoab Akhtar has filed an appeal against a two-year ban imposed after he tested positive for banned steroid nandrolone, Akhtar's doctor said Wednesday.

"We have lodged an appeal to review the ban with the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) through our lawyer Abid Hasan Minto and hope to hire some foreign experts to contest the case," doctor Tauseef Razaq told AFP.

PCB's three-member doping tribunal on November 1 banned Akhtar for two years and fellow paceman Mohammad Asif for one year after internally conducted tests showed A samples of their urine had excessive limits of nandrolone.

The pair appeared before the tribunal and accepted the reports, declining to have their B samples examined.

Asif on Monday appealed for a review.

The PCB has formed a three-member appeal committee comprising former high court judge

## Biman ahead early

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Biman rode on their all-star team to take solo lead in the Dutch-Bangla Bank First Division Chess League at the chess federation hall room yesterday.

Grand Master (GM) Ziaur Rahman, GM Reefat Bin Sattar, International Master (IM) Abdullah Al Rakib and FIDE Master (FM) Mehdi Hasan all won their respective matches in the fourth round as Biman trounced Rajshahi Daba Unnayan Sangstha 4-0.

Defending champions Leonine Chess Club were forced to a two-all draw in their encounter with Chittagong Mohammedan as their foreign recruit Uzbek GM Saidali was beaten by IM Enamul Haque. Leonine's GM Niaz Murshed and GM Safin Shukhrat also drew their matches on the day.

Narayanganj City Chess Club, Destiny 2000 Limited, Farashganj Sporting Club and Faith Chess Club all won their respective games on the day.

## Eyes on the ball, please!

REUTERS, Madrid

Male models being used as ball boys at this week's end-of-season WTA Championships need to keep their minds on the job and not be distracted by the female players, world number eight Elena Dementieva said on Monday.

"We were practicing the other day and I don't think they really know what they have to do on the court because they are too busy watching the players," the 25-year-old Russian told reporters ahead of the Madrid event, which starts on Tuesday.

"We'll have to see if it will work out or not but I think it will be a distraction for them to do their job."

"I don't think that they realize what they have let themselves in for and that they will have to be very careful about what they are doing on the court."

"The players are so focused and sometimes they get crazy with the ball boys so they don't know what they will be facing in a couple of days."

Organizers decided to use male models as an answer to criticism over the use of female models as ball girls at the men's Madrid Masters. Kim Clijsters, who won the tournament in 2002 and 2003, said the initiative had been a talking point among the eight players taking part.

"I was talking to Maria (Sharapova) in the taxi and she said they looked nice," the world number six said. "I'm excited about it, although it is going to be strange. As long as they do a good job, that is all that matters."

Belgian Justine Henin-Hardenne, who is bidding to wrap up the year-end number one spot at the Championships, joked that her husband had warned her to be on her best behavior.

"I'm very excited but I'm married so I can look but not touch," she smiled.

Martina Hingis added it would give her a chance to get even with boyfriend Radek Stepanek, ranked 19 in the world.

"Radek played here in Madrid in the past so now it's my turn," she said.

## Eng stronger

FROM PAGE 20

you're performing your role in the team well, it really doesn't matter about your age," he said.

"As long as we're playing good cricket and we're winning and we're fit, I don't think that'll come into it at all."

Warne was non-committal when asked whether the Ashes series beginning November 23 would be his last.

"If it's my last series it's my last series," he said.

"I don't know whether it will be or not, retirement is about enjoyment, it's very enjoyable playing cricket for Australia at the moment."

"We've won 11 out of 12 Tests since the Ashes, we've played well, I enjoy playing under Ricky and we've got a good group of guys together."

"How long that lasts, whether it's two years, three years, four years — who knows? I'm only 37."

## World Cup

FROM PAGE 17

fitness. Leipzig feels it could be "touch and go." Yuvraj is scheduled to meet Dr Anant Joshi, the Indian board's sports medicine consultant, on November 13 to reassess the nature of the injury.

Meanwhile, John Glover, current India physiotherapist, refrained from commenting on Yuvraj's injury till "the board makes an official statement on it after reassessing his fitness." Ratanakr Shetty, the BCCI's chief administrative officer, has also played down reports suggesting Yuvraj might have to sit out of the World Cup. "Yuvraj will be re-examined by Dr Joshi in the presence of team physiotherapist John Glover," Shetty told the Press Trust of India, "and only then can a correct picture emerge about the progress he has made. A media statement will be issued only then."

The situation got worse when Bangladesh Hockey Federation treasurer and Usha general secretary Abdur Rashid Shikder used abusive language against rival fans and provoked Usha supporters to attack them.

When the police took control of the situation, Abahani argued that Saqlain should also be yellow carded after the umpires had decided to hand Khokon a temporary ban. After a total of 25-minute

## Umrigar no more

Indian legends to miss the 'palm-tree hitter'

Cricket

PTI, Mumbai

Indian cricketing fraternity on Wednesday paid glowing tributes to former captain Polly Umrigar, describing him as a great player blessed with outstanding knowledge of the game.

Umrigar's death was not only a great loss for Indian cricket but also an "irreparable" loss to the game, cricketers past and present said, a day after Umrigar passed away after a protracted battle with cancer.

Cricket legend Sunil Gavaskar, who broke quite a few national records set up by Umrigar during his illustrious career, said he had learnt the nuances of the game from him.

"I have learnt so much from him that I can't pinpoint one particular thing. He once told me that I try and take my first run too early. He told me to take at least the first few runs safely," Gavaskar said.

Gavaskar said though Umrigar, the first Indian batsman to score over 3,000 runs in Tests and the first to cross the double figures in the number of Test tons, had achieved so much, he never once spoke about his feats.

"The only time he spoke about his cricket was when discussing strategies on how to get people out. Even that was a great learning experience," said the man who was

the first to scale cricket's Mount Everest of 10,000 Test runs.

Sachin Tendulkar described Umrigar as a perfect gentleman and said Indian cricket was "passing through a bad phase and the death of Umrigar was part of this cup of woes".

"The time is not good for Indian cricket and the passing away of Umrigar is another sad event. He was a great cricketer and even



POLLY UMRIGAR

more importantly a perfect gentleman," said the star batsman.

Chairman of Selectors Dilip Vengsarkar said, "He was our manager and I learned a lot from him. He was a fine human being apart from being a great cricketer. His death has left a void which will be difficult to fill." Fomer India captains Chandu Borde and Ajit

Wadekar and ex-Indian Cricket Board president Raj Singh Dungarpur, also hailed the all-round contributions to the game rendered by Umrigar.

"Two weeks ago I had visited his residence along with Raj Singh. There were tears in our eyes and I still remember him taking my hand in his and talking about incidents that happened during our playing days," said Borde.

"He was a simple man with an outstanding knowledge about the game. He knew the game inside out. He used to study each batsman and place fielders accordingly (as captain). He was always concerned about the team's performance." "Umrigar was one cricketer who was respected by all international cricketers. He was also a very religious man and used to visit Meher Baba (ashram) at Ahmednagar every year," the former India all rounder recalled.

Wadekar said that whatever little he did well as captain for India was all due to the guidance and mentoring that he received from Umrigar who was his first Ranji Trophy captain.

"His death is a great loss to Indian cricket. He was my first Ranji Trophy captain. I learned a lot from him. Whatever little I did as captain (he won three back-to-back Test series between 1971 and 1972) was because of the guidance, encouragement and inspiration received from Umrigar," Wadekar said.

## Woolmer plots WI fall

Cricket

AFP, Lahore

Pakistan cricket coach Bob Woolmer is out to spoil West Indies skipper Brian Lara's last tour of the country by winning the upcoming Test series.

Woolmer recalled Wednesday how Lara joked with him before West Indies upstaged South Africa in the quarterfinal of the 1996 World Cup in Karachi.

Woolmer was coach of the Proteas between 1994-99. He took on the Pakistan job in 2004.

"I remember Lara said 'sorry Bob this is my day' when West Indies had the better of us and I hope I can return the favour in the coming Test series," Woolmer told AFP.

"We would like to spoil his party but for that we have to play good cricket," said Woolmer ahead of the three-match series, which starts here on Saturday.

Lara Tuesday vowed to make his last tour of Pakistan, where he started his Test career, memorable. Woolmer agreed with Lara that

the absence of two key bowlers — Shoaib Akhtar and Mohammad Asif — would boost the tourists' chances. Akhtar is banned for two years and Asif for one year after both failed drug tests.

"Certainly I can understand where Brian coming from. Akhtar is one of the fastest bowlers and Asif is a very fine bowler and they have not played against them."

"Without (the) genuine pace of Akhtar and without Asif's terrific ability to make the ball move we will have to find bowlers to do the job. It would have been an advantage for us so, yes, it puts more pressure on our attack."

The 58-year-old coach said other bowlers would have to fill the void.

"We have to find different ways of taking wickets and finding ways to play Test cricket well so that we don't let West Indies in with a chance. It is not only about getting 20 wickets but it is also about getting (a) good total."

Woolmer said leg-spinner Danish Kaneria was an important part of Pakistan's plans.

"Kaneria has been our number one strike bowler but every bowler

will have to chip in with wickets. Whoever plays (will) have to take wickets. Shahid Nazir had a terrific tour of England and left-armer Samiullah Niazi is impressive."

Pakistan have included uncapped Niazi, second leading wicket-taker in the past domestic season, in a 15-man squad for the first two Tests.

Woolmer, who refused to understate the West Indies, admitted the tourists' poor record of one win in the past 14 Tests was pleasing.

"That is nice to know they have won only one Test, but I always say yesterday is history and tomorrow is a mystery and you can't always pick a statistic. It might mean they are probably due to win a Test now."

"West Indies have got some good players in Chris Gayle, Lara, Ramnaresh Sarwan and other up and coming bowlers. We can't underestimate them at all."

The second Test is scheduled for Multan (November 19-23) and the third in Karachi (November 27-December 1). The Tests will be followed by five one-day internationals.

## Asif too simple: Lifson

Cricket

AFP, Lahore

Pakistan cricket physiotherapist Darryn Lifson said Wednesday that naively led to banned paceman Mohammad Asif taking dietary supplements without realising their possible consequences.

"I would say Asif was a victim of innocence. When he injured his elbow he took an injection for that, otherwise he was taking a powder which I was not aware of. When I came to know about it I stopped him," Lifson told AFP.

Asif told a doping tribunal last month that while in England with the Pakistan team in June 2006 he was given an injection for his elbow injury which did not work.

He received two more injections during his stay. After his return he had been using a nutritional supplement called Promax-50, he told the tribunal.

The 23-year-old Asif was

banned for one year and fellow paceman Shoaib Akhtar for two years after internally-conducted tests revealed both had excessive limits of banned steroid nandrolone in their urine samples.

The tribunal in its verdict last week justified the lesser ban on Asif as he had little knowledge of doping and was never tested before, unlike Akhtar who was tested twice previously.

Akhtar and Asif were pulled out of Pakistan's Champions Trophy squad in India last month. They accepted the results of the tests before a three-member tribunal, which imposed the bans in line with the regulations of the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA).

Lifson described Asif as serious and honest player.

"Asif takes training very seriously and is a fantastic guy to work with, honest, hard-working and a very good man," Lifson said.

Lifson, 26, who specialised at the University of Cape Town, South Africa, said news of

pacemen testing positive was a shock.

"I was shocked and my first opinion was that there must be something wrong with the testing programme. It was my opinion that there was something going on that Asif wasn't aware of, that he was given some supplement that I was not aware and may have given possible positive test."

Lifson said the Pakistan team management was taking effective measures to increase awareness of doping.

## Proteas retain ODI squad

REUTERS, Durban

South Africa have taken a wait and see approach to their one-day series against India by retaining their ICC Champions Trophy squad for the first match of the rubber.

Selection convenor Haroon Lorgat told Reuters on Wednesday that his panel had left the squad intact for the first game, in Johannesburg on Nov. 19, in anticipation of good performances from other players in imminent matches.

The semifinals of the domestic one-day championship will be played on Friday and Sunday with the final scheduled for next Friday.

India will play a tour match against a Rest of South Africa XI in Benoni on Nov. 16.

South Africa lost to West Indies in the semifinals of the Champions Trophy, one of their two defeats in the four matches they played in the tournament.

The Rest of South Africa squad of 15 will be captained by Ashwell Prince, and includes 10 other players who have been capped at international level.

**SQUAD**  
Graeme Smith (captain), Loots Bosman, Jacques Kallis, Herschelle Gibbs, AB de Villiers, Mark Boucher, Justin Kemp, Shaun Pollock, Robin Peterson, Andre Nel, Makhaya Ntini, Boeta Dippenaar, Andrew Hall, Charl Langeveldt.

After eight matches, Mohammedan pushed their collection to 16 points.