

Kallis's back gives away

REUTERS, Durban

South Africa's Jacques Kallis has been ruled out of the second Test against India in Durban on Tuesday because of a back injury.

A Cricket South Africa statement said the all-rounder felt a "sharp pain" in his back when he woke up on Sunday and had not recovered.

"Jacques has difficulty moving and will therefore not be playing in the second Test," the statement added.

All-rounder Andrew Hall has replaced Kallis in the team.

India lead the three-match series 1-0 after last week's victory in Johannesburg.

JU women beat teachers

UNB, Dhaka

Jahangirnagar University Women's team beat University Teachers and Officers combined team by five wickets in a friendly cricket match at the University playground yesterday.

Teachers' team batted first and scored 95 for eight wickets in 20 overs with Jami and Sohail Rana scoring 17 runs each.

Monisha grabbed three wickets while Fatema took one wicket.

In reply, JU Women's team reached their target of 96 runs for the loss of five wickets in 14 overs with Fatema scoring 26 and Dina 18 runs.

Pak stars off to Hajj

PTI, Karachi

The growing inclination of Pakistani cricketers towards religion has led to an increased number of former and present players leaving for Hajj pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia.

Shahid Afridi and Mohammad Yousuf are leaving for Jeddah on Tuesday, while former cricketers Rashid Latif and Jalaluddin have already gone for the holy trip.

Many of them left after playing in the domestic Twenty20 competition.

"Afridi and Yousuf will leave on Tuesday with a group that also includes former opener Saeed Anwar," Karachi coach Sagheer Abbas said.

Captain Inzamamul Haq and all-rounder Abdul Razzaq are also expected to leave for Saudi Arabia soon.

These players will miss the short conditioning camp beginning on Tuesday in Lahore for the probabilities of the South Africa tour.

India dominate

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Hall lbw b Kumble	0			
Nelb Kumble	0			
Morkel not out	0			
Extras: (lb-3, nb-13, w-1)	17			
Total: (For 8 wks in 73 overs)	257			
Fall of wickets: 1-8, 2-13, 3-28, 4-122, 5-222, 6-256, 7-257, 8-257.				
Bowler	O	M	R	W
Zaheer	18	6	61	2
Sreesanth	17	3	74	3
V Singh	13	1	60	1
Kumble	22	1	48	2
Ganguly	3	1	11	0

To bat: Ntini.
INDIA: R Dravid, V Sehwan, W Jaffer, S Tendulkar, V Laxman, S Ganguly, M Dhoni, A Kumble, Zaheer Khan, S Sreesanth, V Singh.
Toss: South Africa
Umpires: M Benson (ENG), Asad Rauf (PAK).
TV umpire: I Howell (RSA).
Match referee: R Mahanama (SRI).

Pardew has point

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secure his services."

The future of Charlton's on-field fortunes is now in Pardew's hands, and the club will be expecting him to steel the under-performing players for a determined battle against the drop.

In Reed, Charlton had a head coach who was well qualified, but in Pardew they have a manager with experience at the highest level.

"Les has Charlton in his blood but this decision is best for Charlton Football Club," said Murray.

Pardew led the Hammers to last season's FA Cup final, but recent upheaval at Upton Park appeared to have an unsettling impact on team affairs.

Results this season under Pardew were poor and he was unable to capitalise on the surprise signings of Argentina stars Javier Mascherano and Carlos Tevez.

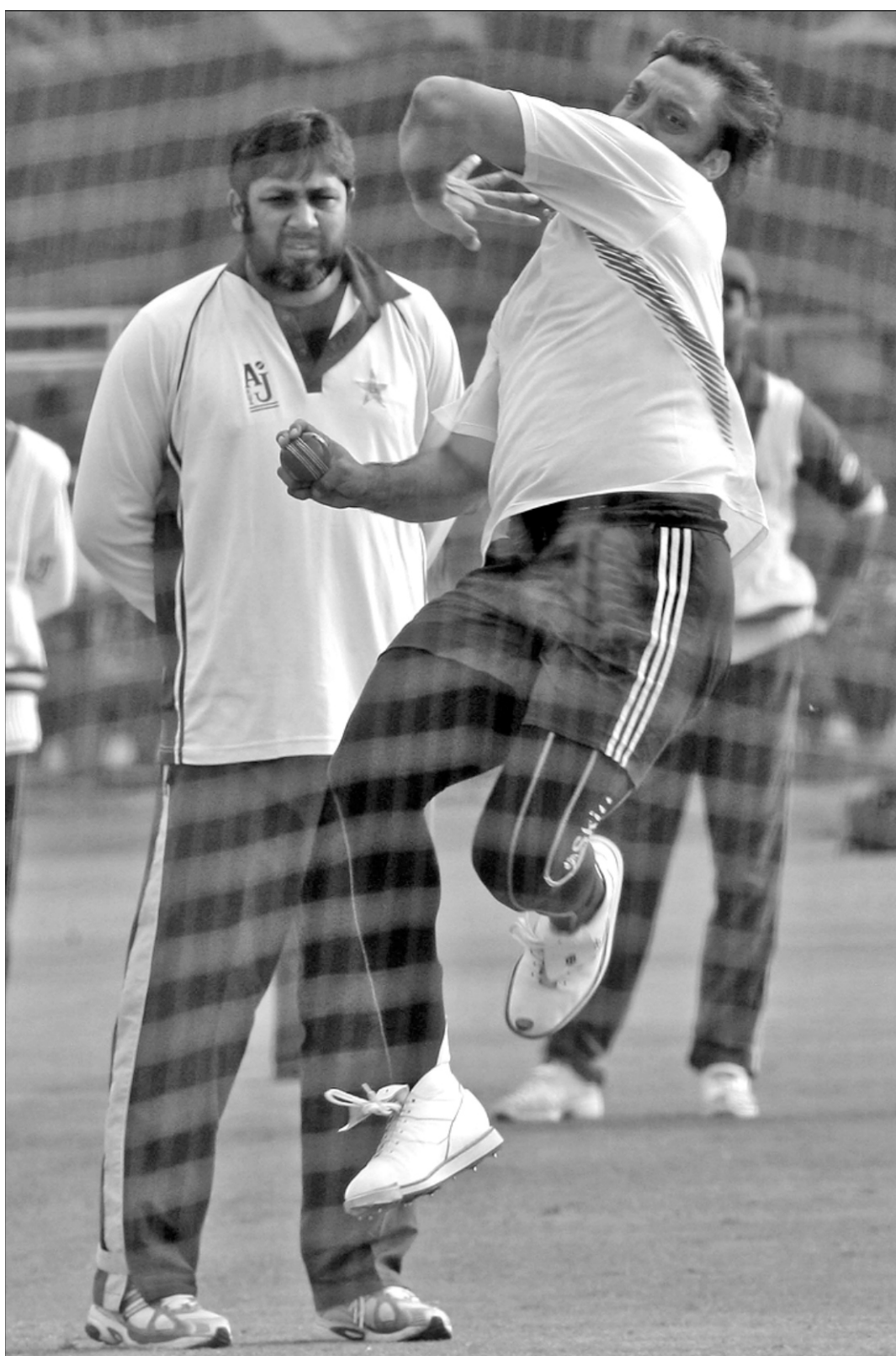
Charlton are unlikely to make any such eye-catching purchases during the transfer window, but Pardew may well want to shake up the squad.

Cafu hoping

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"I think it has to happen naturally, at the right time, with no pressure."

"If I'm named, it will be a pleasure for me to wear the national shirt again."



Pakistan fast bowler Shoaib Akhtar (R) delivers a ball as captain Inzamamul Haq looks on during a practice session in Lahore on Tuesday.

PHOTO: AFP

Nadal wants to forget 2006

AFP, Paris

Rafael Nadal is determined to kick-off 2007 at full throttle and make up for the bitter disappointment of his injury-ravaged start to 2006.

A crippling foot injury ruled the world number two out of the first six weeks of this year, an absence which also included the opening Grand Slam event in Australia.

But in 2007, the French Open champion is wasting no time in his build-up to Melbourne where the Australian Open begins on January 15.

Nadal will begin his season on January 1 at the Chennai Open and then travel to Sydney for the Medibank International. At both events he will be top seed.

"I have a big motivation because when I come back to Australia it's one of my favourite tournaments and the weather is perfect for me," Nadal said in a teleconference to promote the Sydney event.

"I was in Sydney in 2004 just for one night. Melbourne is one of my favourite cities in the world, a special city for me, and as well it is a big motivation. It's one of my special goals for 2007 to play well in Australia."

The 20-year-old ended the 2006 season amid a title drought.

Nadal won 11 titles during 2005 and in 2006 he added five more from his first eight tournaments, including a second consecutive Roland Garros crown.

But the left-hander failed to win another title in his last eight tournaments of the season.

"The second half of the year was not bad," insisted Nadal.

Draw at the Bridge

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was enough to give them their first double in the top flight over the Hammers since the 1929/30 season, though they had to sweat a little after the hosts came back with a late effort from veteran and former Pompey striker Teddy Sheringham.

In the day's other early kick-off match Tottenham's victory over Aston Villa meant the Midlands club have now gone eight games without a win.

England striker Jermain Defoe struck twice for Spurs in the second-half before Villa captain Gareth Barry netted nine minutes from time.

Entertainment

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matches except Young Pegasus. We had to sweat to win a battle in the previous match despite scoring 226. That's why the tournament is still a mystery to me," said Bashar, whose side won a morale booster against archrivals Abahani in the group stage.

"I am really enjoying the tournament and hope that the pitch will be a good one at Mirpur," he added.

Victoria skipper Sabbir Khan, however, issued warning to Mohammedan saying that they have the ability to turn the tables on any opponents despite the fact that they are without any big names.

"We have already proved that we have the ability to win matches without star players compared to the other semifinalists. The team spirit is high and we have so far played the tournament as a team which is our real strength," said the tall off-spinner.

Bangladesh Television will not telecast the matches live although chairman of Cricket Committee of Dhaka Metropolitan (CCDM) Khondokar Jamiluddin had said before the tournament that the state-run BTV verbally agreed to do so. He, however, failed to give any explanation about the failure.

Warne's beautiful

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Panesar c Symonds b Warne 4
 Hoggard not out 9
 Extras: (b-2, lb-1, nb-3) 6
 Total: (All out in 74.2 overs) 159
 Fall of wickets: 1-23, 2-44, 3-101, 4-101, 5-122, 6-135, 7-136, 8-145, 9-146, 10-159

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Lee	13	4	36	2
McGrath	20	8	37	1
Clark	17	6	27	2
Symonds	7	2	17	0
Warne	17.2	4	39	5

AUSTRALIA: First innings
 Langer c Read b Flintoff 27
 Hayden not out 17
 Lee c Read b Flintoff 0
 Ponting not out 10
 Extras: (lb-1, nb-3) 4
 Total: (For 2 wks in 11 overs) 48
 Fall of wickets: 1-44, 2-44

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Hoggard	6	2	27	0
Flintoff	5	1	20	2

Toss: England
Umpires: Aleem Dar (PAK) Rudi Koertzen (RSA)
Match referee: Ranjan Madugalle (SRI)

Astle hastens

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first match in Wellington on Friday by 18 runs on the Duckworth-Lewis calculation method.

The two teams play the first of five one-day matches in Napier on Thursday.

Better than a movie

Cricket

AFP, Melbourne

Shane Warne said his final flourish as a Test great had turned out like a well-written script after claiming his 700th Test wicket on an astonishing opening day of the fourth Ashes cricket Test against England here Tuesday.

The mercurial leg-spinner, who will finish a fantastic 15-year Test playing career at next week's fifth Sydney Test, bowled England opener Andrew Strauss with a leg-break to become the first bowler to capture his 700th Test wicket.

The 37-year-old Warne then added four more wickets to finish the England innings with 5-39 off 17.2 overs and swell his career tally to 704 wickets in his 144th Test match.

England were all out for 159 after winning the toss and Australia reached stumps at 48 for two in reply.

Warne has always produced his greatest performances on the biggest stage and Tuesday he was feted by an Ashes record crowd of 89,155 as he savoured one of the special days of his trailblazing career.

"Whoever writes my scripts, he's doing an unbelievable job," Warne said.

Strauss defends toss-call

Cricket

AFP, Melbourne

England vice-captain Andrew Strauss defended the decision to bat first after his side was routed for just 159 on the first day of the fourth Ashes Test against Australia at the MCG.

On another dark day for the embattled tourists, captain Andrew Flintoff called correctly and resisted the temptation to insert the Australians on what shaped as a lively deck.

But England's batsmen again failed to do the job and the tourists lost their last eight wickets for just 58 runs.

Speaking after play here Tuesday, Strauss said the English still believed they made the right call in batting first, but admitted it might not have been a bad toss to lose in retrospect.

"We felt the right thing to do was bat and I think we still feel that," he

"I've been sitting there just shaking my head, not believing it actually happened, to be honest. It was a pretty amazing day."

"The way it's all planned out, to retire and have two games left, end up coming to Melbourne on 699 Test wickets with the Ashes in the bag... there are some special days in your life and that's definitely one of them."

Warne had to bid his time up until the 41st over of the innings as Australia's pacemen revelled in the seaming conditions before getting his chance to make history.

"We're enjoying ourselves at the moment, it's just a good time to be playing cricket, there's only a couple of games left, so we're all trying to enjoy it as much as we can," he said.

"It's not about myself and Glenn McGrath, it's about the side and a series whitewash is what we want and we want to continue to play good cricket."

"Days like what happened today (Tuesday), all the guys said enjoy yourself, enjoy the moment, it's a pretty special time, so I was trying to do that."

"To knock them over for 150, take five-for, get your 700th wicket, it's pretty hard to keep those emotions in, it's a pretty exciting time."

Warne first struck with the second ball of his fourth over to trigger a huge roar from the near-capacity

crowd.

Strauss had reached his first half-century of the series but was befuddled by the delivery, which knocked over his middle stump.

West Indian batting great Brian Lara, who had many batting duels with Warne, was at the MCG to watch Warne create history.

"He's not only someone for Australian cricket, but someone for world cricket," Lara told national radio.

"I was very surprised to hear that Warne was retiring, he's younger than me and I feel he has a couple more years of cricket left in him."

"He knows everything, he continued to grow in confidence when you played him and he could bowl the unplayable ball, he always seemed to have something up his sleeve."

Warne captured Lara's wicket seven times in Test cricket.

The Australian team surrounded Warne and individually congratulated him before captain Ricky Ponting gave him the ball to raise to the delighted home-town crowd in recognition of becoming the first bowler in Test history to pass 700 wickets.

Warne went on to claim the wickets of Chris Read (3), Steve Harmison (7), Kevin Pietersen (21) and Monty Panesar (4).

was nipping around, and we got ourselves in a position where we could maybe go on and post a decent score.

"Unfortunately, we lost wickets at crucial times at the back end and we are somewhere short of where we wanted to be."

However, Strauss said the late two wickets to Flintoff had rejuvenated England's spirits.

"It was a frustrating day for us, but it was good to get a couple of wickets at the end," he said.

"It is the sort of wicket you can go bang, bang, bang on and get two or three early tomorrow (Wednesday) morning. If we do that, we are right back in the game."

Strauss went into the history books when he became Shane Warne's 700th Test victim, but not surprisingly didn't take much solace from it.

"It was a great moment for a great bowler," he said.

"From my point of view, that's not much consolation as you are trudging off the ground."

Crowd almost the best

Cricket

AFP, Melbourne

The biggest-ever Ashes crowd turned out for the first day of the fourth Ashes Test here Tuesday, but the world record Test attendance set almost 50 years ago remains intact.

The official attendance of 89,155 that turned out at the MCG was the biggest ever for a single day of a Test between England and Australia and also the highest Boxing Day attendance.

On a historic day, it was the second-biggest crowd ever for a day of Test cricket, but fell tantalisingly short of the record of 90,800 people that attended the venue in February 1961 to see Australia play the West Indies.

It continued the healthy attendances for the most anticipated Ashes series ever, with the three

previous Tests, in Brisbane, Adelaide and Perth, all setting ground records for overall attendances for a Test match.

Melbourne's infamously fickle weather foiled the bid to attract a world record Test cricket crowd at the revamped MCG in its 100th Test.

Despite the series already being decided, the day's play was a sell-out many months ago due to the unprecedented hype surrounding Australia's bid to reclaim the Ashes.

Boxing Day is the most eagerly anticipated day of cricket in each Australian summer and with champion leg-spinner and local hero Shane Warne set to claim his 700th Test wicket, it was hoped more than 98,000 people would turn out on Tuesday.

However, Melbourne is in the midst of an unseasonal cold snap and showers were forecast for the day, undoubtedly keeping many

people away despite the prospect of seeing Warne become the first Test bowler to reach 700 wickets.

The promised rain arrived, forcing players from the ground twice, and made for bitterly cold conditions for many spectators.

The weather matched the mood of the disappointed Barmy Army, but the failure to break the world record was the only disappointment for Australian fans.

In his final Test on his home ground, the soon-to-be-retired Warne delivered one of the memorable moments in 100 MCG Tests when he clean bowled Andrew Strauss to claim his 700th scalp.

The leggie received a standing ovation just for stepping up to the bowling crease, again when he dismissed Strauss, another from his adoring fans when he claimed his fifth scalp to end the England innings, and a final one as he left the field.

Packer's noble initiative

Cricket

AFP, Melbourne

Media tycoon James Packer Tuesday unveiled a 10-million-dollar (7.8 million USD) foundation to help both Australia's former and promising cricketers to mark the anniversary of his father's death.

Packer, Australia's richest man whose Publishing Broadcasting (PBL) holdings include the Nine television network and 60 magazines, said the Kerry Packer Foundation would help retired Australian international players who had fallen on hard times.

It would also help young cricketers in Australia who needed financial assistance, he said.

Packer, 39, inherited majority position in the media empire after his father, Kerry, died of kidney failure aged 68 on Boxing Day last year.

Packer told a lunch on the opening day of the fourth Ashes cricket Test at the Melbourne Cricket Ground that the guidelines of the foundation would not be too strict, with veteran first-class players also eligible.

"My father loved cricket and he actually loved the people associated with the game, particularly the players," Packer said.

"I am satisfied that this, in a small way, is something in which his love for the game can linger and provide some useful support for its participants and administrators."

Packer said Boxing Day was a momentous occasion for his family, who were grateful for how the game paid tribute to Kerry Packer a year ago.

"Today (Tuesday) is an emotional day for me," he said.

"A year ago today, my father died and our families were greatly honoured by the manner with which this ground and cricket in general honoured him by way of a minute's silence."

"It was a moving ceremony for all of us at home and this is the best opportunity I have to publicly express my family's gratitude."

"For some time, we have given some thought and been seeking some advice on how best to commemorate his name throughout cricket."

"My family and I have decided to create the Kerry Packer Foundation with a 10 million dollar fund."

Packer said he along with Cricket Australia chairman Creagh O'Connor and former CA chairman Denis Rogers would be directors of the foundation, with Rogers acting as the chairman.

"The intention of the fund is

provide assistance for former Australian Test and one-day international players who have fallen on hard terms and may need some help," Packer said.

"I am not precluding long-standing first-class players in Australia who have served their states faithfully."

"It is also our intention for this fund to be used to assist promising young men and women who may be precluded from pursuing a career in cricket because of financial constraints."

Packer said he also wanted to help ensure young cricketers could pursue their studies while trying to develop their sporting careers.

He said he did not intend to make the recipients public and said the foundation would be self-funding.

Ponting urges

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two days. He's worked on his run-up a bit because he's felt that he's been a little bit flat in his delivery stride and struggled for a bit of rhythm in the first few Tests.

"I think we saw in Perth, particularly in the second innings, where he started to swing the new ball again, which is really pleasing. That goes to show that some of his technique things are starting to pay off."