

Pakistan resuscitate Cup hopes

PERTH, Mar 11: Pakistan rekindled their World Cup cricket hopes and all but ended Australia's with a 48-run victory over the joint hosts and holders in day-night match on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

Pakistan now have five points from five matches with games to come against Sri Lanka and New Zealand, leaders of the nine-team standings on 10 points.

They need to win both to have any chance in the scramble for semifinal places while Australia, with four points from six games, must now beat Zimbabwe and West Indies and hope that other results go in their favour.

Facing Pakistan's 220 for nine from 50 overs, Australia capitulated from the solid-looking position of 116 for two in the 32nd over to be all out for 172 in 45.2.

Geoff Marsh and Dean Jones had rebuilt the Australian innings after the early departures of Tom Moody (4) and David Boon (5).

They put on 85 for the third wicket, taking the score from 31 for two to 116 before Jones lofted leg-spinner Mushtaq Ahmed to long on there Aaqib Javed took a good catch.

It was the vital breakthrough for Pakistan and the wickets of Marsh (39), Allan Border (1) and Steve Waugh (5) followed quickly to leave the Australians floundering on 130 for six and effectively out of the hunt.

An altercation between Australian tail-ender Mike Whitney and wicketkeeper Moin Khan, who vehemently appealed for a catch behind off Mushtaq, took some of the shine off Pakistan's win.

The players clashed when Whitney refused to walk, and both have been reported by the umpires.

Whitney fell shortly after, bowled by Wasim Akram.

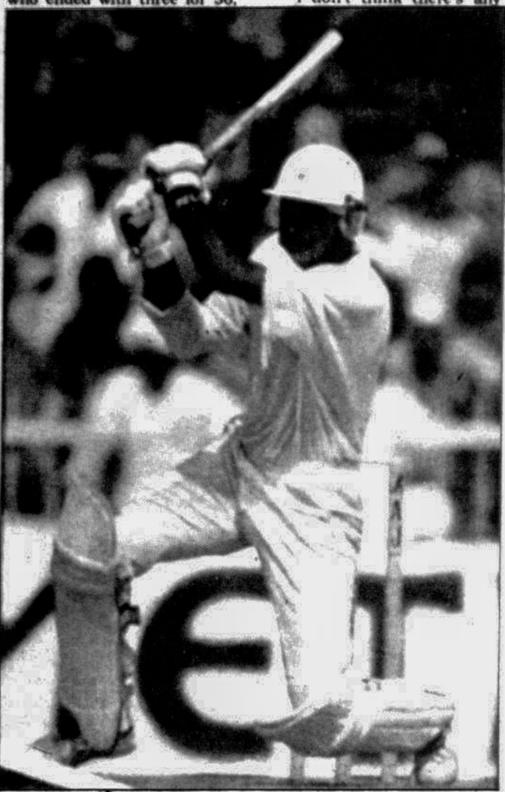
Pakistan's total of 220 for nine had looked to be 20 to 30 short of a winning one on the fast pitch.

At 153 for two with 15 overs left and Aamir Sohail and Javed Miandad batting beautifully, a huge total looked on the cards.

But Sohail's dismissal, caught by wicketkeeper Ian Healy off Tom Moody for a marvellous 76, ruined Pakistan's momentum.

Only 25 runs came off the last five overs, and six wickets tumbled for just 27 runs as the innings fell away.

A telling second spell by medium-pacer Steve Waugh, who ended with three for 36,



AAMIR SOHAIL...man-of-the match

checked Pakistan, and captain Imran admitted he had not thought the total was enough.

"We were aiming for 240 and we got 20 less," he said. "But I always thought we were in with a good chance. Winning the toss was very important because the ball swings about here at night."

Imran said it would be very

difficult for Pakistan to qualify for the semifinals, despite the win.

"It's an outside possibility but we need to win our last two matches, which won't be easy, and then hope other results go for us."

Meanwhile skipper Boarder has written off Australia's chances.

"I don't think there's any

Australians were probably tired from too much cricket before the tournament.

"Everyone's a bit jaded and perhaps we have played too much," he said. "But I don't want to start making excuses. We've been outplayed and it's as simple as that."

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard in the World Cup day-night cricket match between Australia and Pakistan today:

PAKISTAN

Aamir Sohail c Healy b Moody 76

Rameez Raja c Border b Whitney 34

Salim Malik b Moody 30

Javed Miandad c Healy b S Waugh 46

Imran Khan c Moody b S Waugh 13

Inzamamul Haq run out 16

Ijaz Ahmed run out 0

Wasim Akram c M Waugh b S Waugh 0

Moin Khan c Healy b McDermott 5

Mushtaq Ahmed not out 3

Extras: (lb-9, w-16, nb-2) 27

Total: (50 overs) 220

Fall of wickets: 1-78, 2-80, 3-157, 4-193, 5-194, 6-205, 7-205, 8-214, 9-220.

Did not bat: Aaqib Javed.

Bowling	O	M	R	W
McDermott	10	0	33	1
Reid	9	0	37	0
S Waugh	10	0	36	3
Whitney	10	1	50	1
Moody	10	0	42	2
M Waugh	1	0	13	0

AUSTRALIA

Moody c Malik b Aaqib 4

Marsh c Moin b Imran 39

Boon c Mushtaq b Aaqib 7

Jones c Aaqib b Mushtaq 45

M Waugh c Ijaz b Mushtaq 30

Border c Ijaz b Mushtaq 1

S Waugh c Moin b Imran 5

Healy c Ijaz b Aaqib 8

McDermott lbw b Akram 0

Whitney b Akram 0

Reid not out 0

Extras: (lb-7, nb-7, w-14) 28

Total: (45.2 overs) 172

Fall of wickets: 1-13, 2-31, 3-116, 4-122, 5-123, 6-130, 7-156, 8-162, 9-167.

Bowling	O	M	R	W
Aaqib	8	1	21	3
Akram	7.2	0	28	2
Imran	10	1	32	2
Ijaz	10	0	43	0
Mushtaq	10	0	41	3

Result: Pakistan won by 48 runs.

Man-of-the-match: Aamir Sohail.

way we can get through now, the way the points are," he said.

"In fact it might be a travesty if we did get through the way we are playing. Everyone's flat and we can't produce the good cricket we've been producing over the last four years."

Border admitted that the

CUP STANDINGS

World Cup cricket standings after Wednesday's match (Tabulate under played, won, lost, no result, points, net run-rate):

New Zealand	5	5	0	10	0.86
England	5	4	0	9	1.05
South Africa	4	2	0	8	0.18
West Indies	6	3	0	6-0.02	
India	6	2	3	1	0.29
Pakistan	6	2	3	1	0.10
Sri Lanka	6	2	3	1	0.57
Australia	6	2	4	0	-0.38
Zimbabwe	6	0	6	0	-1.12

Note: Net run-rate is difference between batting and bowling rates. Under competition rules, runs scored in no-result matches are not included in run-rate.

SA cricketers may fail to vote

CANBERRA, Mar 11: Many of the visiting South African cricket players in Australia for the World Cup will be unable to vote in the country's whites-only referendum, embassy officials said Wednesday, reports AP.

The team arrived in Australia on Feb. 6, just under two weeks before South African President FW de Klerk announced the March 17 referendum on dismantling apartheid.

Coloured cricketer Omar Henry was ineligible to vote, but many of his teammates found themselves in the same situation because they left without their 'Book of Life' South African identity document. The book, containing documents such as driver's licenses, birth certificates and blood group, is the only form of identification acceptable to the South African embassy in Canberra.

Embassy spokesman Andre Pelsler did not say how many cricketers voted on Tuesday, but a Sydney newspaper said it was only half of the 20-man World Cup roster.

"The team's presence in Australia makes a statement anyway," he said.

A last chance for India

DUNEDIN, New Zealand, Mar 11: India's cricketers must win their World Cup match against unbeaten tournament leaders New Zealand on Thursday or they will fail to make the semifinals, reports Reuter.

Conversely, Martin Crowe's New Zealanders are in the happy position of being sure of a semifinal berth with five wins from six games.

Indian captain Mohammad Azharuddin summed up his position simply after India's five-wicket loss to West Indies on Tuesday: "We have to win our next two matches or we are out of the competition," he said.

India, Cup winners in 1983, have points from six games and, with two fixtures left, even a possible maximum nine points may not give them enough to qualify.

New Zealand captain Crowe's focus is now very much on the semifinals and that could be the chink for Azharuddin's side to exploit.

"Our situation demands that we keep winning but I must admit that I am very concerned about the prospect of a semifinal against Australia," Crowe wrote in a newspaper column.

He said he wants to maintain the team's winning habit but has also indicated he will experiment with the team make-up.

Left-arm pacemen Murphy Su'a, who made his mark in the recent Test series against England but has not been used in the World Cup, will be included, Crowe said.

Su'a, who also bats usefully, will play in place of fast bowler Danny Morrison, who suffered groin strain against West Indies on Sunday.

Also certain to get a game is highly-talented all-rounder Chris Cairns, whose bowling during the tournament has been one of Crowe's few worries. He may play in place of Willie Watson.

Azharuddin is one visiting captain who has not blamed slow pitches for New Zealand's success or for his own team's failure here.

He says professionals have to adapt to all conditions and India in any case are used to playing on slow surfaces at home.

But rain is another matter. India's tournament has been

Late.

The bowlers came back against a West Indian middle order intent on self-destruction in an unnecessary chase against the weather but later in the innings the attack appeared toothless.

How they fare against explosive New Zealand opener Mark Greatbatch on the small Carisbrook Ground may determine the outcome of the game and India's 1992 World Cup fate.

Meanwhile, an AP report adds: Indian cricket captain Mohammad Azharuddin has refused to give up hope, despite his team's almost hopeless position in the World Cup cricket tournament.

India's task of beating New Zealand on Thursday at Carisbrook has been made even more difficult by the hot form of Martin Crowe's team, which goes into the match with an ambition to remain unbeaten.

With the stakes so high, India will have to take risks.

"We've got to win both the matches to stay in the competition, otherwise the last game will become a formality," Azharuddin said.

India's poor effort against the West Indies does not bode well.

"They hatted well. We didn't bat at all well," Azharuddin said.

"In the last 10 overs we lost seven wickets for 31 runs."

The West Indies, meanwhile, revitalized its campaign by defeating the Indians and now faces Sri Lanka in Berrri, Australia, on Friday.

"We aren't going to take it easy, we aren't going to relax or underestimate Sri Lanka," said India captain Richie Richardson.

"We've got to win our remaining matches to qualify and I don't think you can underestimate anyone in this tournament."

"As soon as you have a lapse, somebody takes the advantage and capitalizes on it."



AZHARUDDIN

dogged by rain — bad weather affecting four of their five matches.

While the luck and the imperfect tournament rules have run both ways for India, the cold conditions can hardly have helped the cause of cricketers used to playing in hot weather.

In early autumn, Dunedin, one of the southern most cities in the world could easily turn on inclement weather.

The pitch is almost certain to be another to slow, low bounce.

Azharuddin said that until Tuesday's match, India had been playing close to their potential despite narrow losses to England and Australia.

But against West Indies their middle order batsmen failed to capitalise on a fine base built by Azharuddin himself, and the opening bowlers were put to the sword by Brian

Beating the ban

CANBERRA, Mar 11: South African cricket fans on Tuesday neatly sidestepped a ban on political advertising at a ground in the Australian capital Canberra by erecting their own messages for spectators at home, reports Reuter.

The fans put up two plastic banners — one on a fence behind a bank of terracing and the other at the back of a grandstand — at Manuka Oval during South Africa's match against Zimbabwe.

South Africa beat Zimbabwe by seven wickets to move within one win of a semi-final place.

The banners read: "South Africa — Vote Yes — on March 17," a reference to the whites-only referendum next Tuesday on whether South African President FW de Klerk should continue his constitutional reforms.

The displays followed a decision on Monday by the ground authorities to stop political advertising on billboards at the match, which is being shown on South African television.

A group of businessmen backing a 'Yes' vote in the referendum had tried to buy space for 1,000 dollars (750 US) to advertise on billboards around the boundary.

But the Australian Capital Territory Cricket Association dropped the advertisement after a man representing the 'Vote No' faction also asked to buy space.

It is the first time South Africa has been allowed to participate in the 17-year-old World Cup cricket competition.

The entry of South Africa into world cricket is seen as a benefit stemming from De Klerk's dismantling of apartheid.

Australian Cricket Board chief executive David Richards said the Board preferred to keep a low profile on the issue.

"We are just a cricket organisation and we try to keep out of politics, except domestically when it affects us," he told Reuter.

Richards said although he was not concerned about the banners, "Personally, I think it is best to keep the ground free of politics."

"We don't know what is going on over there," he said. "But I can see why they (supporters) would get excited over it."

Richards and the Board played a leading role in bringing South Africa back into international cricket, particularly the World Cup.

SA ready to rock England

MELBOURNE, Mar 11: South Africa are poised to wreck injury-hit England's unbeaten World Cup record, coach Mike Procter said Wednesday, reports AP.

England have since points from their five matches to date, while South Africa have eight from six.

England will go into Thursday's game against the South Africans at the Melbourne Cricket Ground without captain Graham Gooch, who has a hamstring injury.

Several other members of the England team also have nagging injuries and Procter said he expected the South Africans to take full advantage.

"England have had a fantastic run, but we have to look at it positively and may be they've peaked too early," Procter said.

"I think we are getting better and we may be playing them at the right time."

"They have a few injury worries and they might be ready to get beaten."

England are second on the World Cup ladder and are assured of semifinal.

Apart from Gooch, paceman Chris Lewis is also in doubt with a side strain while Ian Botham and Neil Fairbrother

are carrying minor muscle strains, but will both play.

Lewis will decide his fitness just before play Thursday but middle order batsman Allan Lamb could return for his first match after being plagued by a persistent hamstring injury for three weeks.



KEPLER WESSELS

Both Lamb and Robin Smith were born in South Africa and will be playing against their homeland.

South Africa have charged.

into contention with successive wins over the West Indies, Pakistan and Zimbabwe and Gooch said the Republic had lived up to his pre-tournament expectations.

"They were always going to be competitive," Gooch said.

"We didn't know much about them but they've done well."

"It will be a great performance from them if they reach the semifinals."

Veteran South African batsman Peter Kirsten will play, despite suffering from a minor calf strain, while all-rounder Brian McMillan will also take his place in the side, even though he is carrying an ankle strain.

TEAMS:

ENGLAND (From: Alec Stewart (captain), Ian Botham, Phil DeFreitas, Neil Fairbrother, Graeme Hick, Richard Illingworth, Allan Lamb, Chris Lewis, Derek Pringle, Dermot Reeve, Gladstone Small, Robi Smith, Phil Tuftell).

SOUTH AFRICA: Kepler Wessels (captain), Hanse Crone, Allan Donald, Andrew Hudson, Peter Kirsten, Adrian Kuiper, Brian McMillan, Meryck Pringle, Jonty Rhodes, David Richardson, Mark Rushmere, Richard Snell.

Peter Kirsten — an unlikely hero

MELBOURNE, Mar 11: Veteran batsman Peter Kirsten has emerged from obscurity to become the most consistent run-maker in the World Cup cricket tournament, reports AP.

The 36-year-old former Derbyshire player scored an unbeaten 62 Tuesday to help South Africa to a seven-wicket win over Zimbabwe in Canberra that took his team a vital step closer to a semifinal

spot.

Kirsten became the first batsman to move past the 300 run mark in the tournament. His five visits to the crease so far have yielded 304 runs at an average of 101.33.

Kirsten almost missed Tuesday's game against Zimbabwe — the selectors believing he needed more time to recover from a calf injury to his right leg.

"They've got to do a lot to keep me off the field," Kirsten said.

Kirsten said it would have been better for South Africa to have scored faster against Zimbabwe. Net run-rates will decide semifinal places if teams tie on points.

"But you can't just go out there and slog," he said.

Kirsten's value to the South African team is heightened by his ability as a part-time off-spin bowler. He took three crucial wickets against Zimbabwe.

South Africa can clinch a semifinal spot in the nine-nation tournament by winning against either England in a day-night match in Melbourne on Thursday, or against India on Sunday in Adelaide.

It would be a remarkable achievement after 22 years in the cricket wilderness.



PETER KIRSTEN

Fans storm powerhouse

NEW DELHI, Mar 11: Cricket fans stormed a powerhouse and battered engineers as electricity went for a six in Calcutta, blanking television sets during a crucial match between West Indies and India, a report said today, reports AFP.

The angry reaction by cricket fans followed a bank hold-up in Calcutta on March 4 in which armed robbers got away with thousands of dollars while guards remained glued to their sets, watching India beat Pakistan in the Cup.

One fan committed suicide after India lost to Australia by a run.

Kiwis intend to remain unbeaten

DUNEDIN, Mar 11: New Zealand cricket captain Martin Crowe has set his team a target of going through the World Cup tournament unbeaten, reports AP.

Crowe said Wednesday that he had abandoned plans to give inactive members of his 14-man squad some match practice before the semifinals.

New Zealand already are assured of a semifinal spot after winning their first five matches of the nine-nation tournament and faces India at Carisbrook on Thursday.

India needs to win the match to avoid elimination from the semifinals.

"We want two points tomorrow. We want to go 16 points if we can," Crowe said.

New Zealand, he said, needed to be ready to play anywhere, against anyone, in the semifinals and he wanted his key players to keep active.

"I guess we've just got to five out of five and I've realised we are here — so why not keep this going."

Crowe's policy means veteran John Wright will stay on the sidelines.

The opener lost his place to Mark Greatbatch when he was injured. Fast bowler Murphy Su'a, meanwhile, has yet to play a game in the tournament.

"It is ruthless on Su'a and Wright — but otherwise we could run the risk of losing the plot," Crowe said.

The new found determination and confidence in the New Zealand team poses a tough hurdle for India.

With only five points from six matches, the Indians have reached the desperation stage.

Their precarious position, Crowe anticipates, will bring the best out of the 1983 champions.

"I'm expecting them to come out hard, because they've got to, and that will be a good challenge for us," he said.

"The harder the game the better."

Crowe said New Zealand had great respect for the Indians. "They are quite dangerous," he said.

"They are a bit like the West Indies, a bit unpre-

dictable."

Krish Srikkanth, Mohammad Azharuddin and Sachin Tendulkar are great players, so we'll have to try and do what we did against the West Indies."

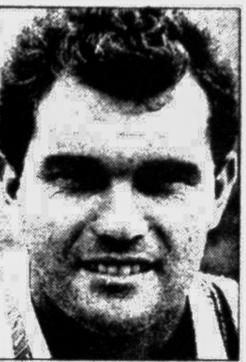
"We'll have to negate their strengths and work hard on their weaknesses."

He ended speculation that New Zealand would drop a game, if only to avoid meeting Australia in a Sydney semifinal.

"We've changed track on the thought that we want to avoid Australia," Crowe said.

"If we draw them and we have to go to Sydney, then we have to start thinking Fine, we'll take the challenge on and get on with the job."

"Otherwise, it would be dangerous to be disappointed



MARTIN CROWE

The cool Kiwi quartet

WELLINGTON, Mar 11: They will never strike fear in the hearts of opposing batsmen but Wobby, Dobby and Dobby are helping to turn the World Cup cricket form book upside down, reports Reuter.

They are the nicknames given by team mates to the New Zealand bowling foursome who have baffled opponents and helped to put their side at the top of the standings.

Such was New Zealand's form earlier in the season that they were given little chance of even qualifying for the semifinals of the nine-team tournament.

But the medium pace of Willie Watson, Gavin Larsen, Chris Harris and Rod Latham — called Dobbys by England all-rounder Ian Botham — has frustrated rivals and contributed to five consecutive Cup wins for New Zealand.

They may not be able to bounce the ball far past the top of the batsman's pads but five teams, including Australia, South Africa and West Indies, have come to grief against their accurate, seaming and swinging deliveries.

"Wobby" is 22-year-old Harris, who has the ability to achieve considerable swing

right at the end if we do happen to end up playing them. So now we're looking at either a semifinal in Sydney or Auckland regardless of the opposition."

"We'd rather be prepared if we have to play there," he said.

India are likely to field an unchanged side, although spinner Ravji Shastri could return to give the team more flexibility.

TEAMS:

New Zealand (from), Martin Crowe (captain), Rod Latham, Mark Greatbatch, Andrew Jones, Ken Rutherford, Chris Harris, Chris Cairns, Dipak Patel, Ian Smith, Gavin Larsen, Willie Watson, Murphy Su'a.

India (from) Mohammed Azharuddin (captain), Kris Srikkanth, Ajay Jadhava, Sachin Tendulkar, Sanjay Manjrekar, Kapil Dev, Praveen Amre, Kiran More, Manoj Prabhakar, Jawagal Srinath, Vankatapaty Raju, Ravi Shastri, Subroto Banerjee.

Nirman cricket semis today

Sports Reporter

Saint Joseph's High School and Dhanmondi Govt Boys High School will clash in the semifinals of the Dhaka zonal championship of the ninth Nirman schools cricket competition today at the Dhanmondi Club ground.

Saint Joseph's School registered a six-wicket victory over Mohammadpur Govt Boys High School while Dhanmondi school beat Willies Little Flower School by 42 runs in their respective quarter finals at the Dhanmondi Club ground yesterday.

On the eastern side of the ground, sent into bat, Mohammadpur School made a paltry 83 for nine wickets, thanks to Rezwana, Shamim, Rehan and Ronny, the St Joseph's bowlers, who took two wickets each.

Tipu and Sham got 29 and 12 respectively for Mohammadpur School.

In reply, St Joseph's made 85 for the loss of four wickets in 15.2 overs, skipper Anadil put scoring with 49 off 45 deliveries while Shamim got 13.

Khaled took three wickets and Babu the other for Mohammadpur School. On the western side of the ground, Put into bat, Dhanmondi School scored 181 for nine wickets in their allotted 35 overs with Tarek making 38, Chayan 30 and Bappi 22.

Opi with three wickets and Pavel with two were the pick of the Little Flowers' bowlers.

In reply, Little Flower School could muster only 139 in 31.1 overs, thanks to Chayan of Dhanmondi School claiming four wickets for 27 runs.