

BCCB calls up 25 for ICC trophy

Bangladesh Cricket Control Board (BCCB) has selected 25 cricketers to form a national team which will participate in the ICC associate members trophy championship scheduled for next February and March in Kenya, reports UNB.

Three top teams of ICC trophy will qualify for the next cricket World Cup to be co-hosted by Pakistan, India and Sri Lanka.

The BCCB initially called 46 cricketers for trial in June and later picked up 25 from them in September. Divided into different groups the 25 cricketers took part in a good number of warm up and preparation matches in India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh.

Asia Cup tourney shifted to Sharjah

CALCUTTA, Nov 29: Pakistan has backed out of hosting the Asia Cup because of India's refusal to play there and the tournament has been shifted to Sharjah, Asian Cricket Council (ACC) secretary Jagmohan Dalmiya said on Sunday, reports Reuter.

"Pakistan said that without India they are not in a position to hold the tournament," Dalmiya said.

He said it would now be staged in Sharjah in October, but he was not sure if India would take part.

India refused to play in Pakistan after they withdrew from the Cricket Association of Bengal's diamond jubilee tournament saying Hindu militants were threatening their safety.

India has boycotted tournaments in Sharjah for the past two years, accusing organisers of being biased towards Pakistan and Dalmiya said no decision had yet been made whether India would play in the Asia Cup there.

The tournament is scheduled to feature India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, plus one other country to be decided by a knockout competition between Bangladesh, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Nepal and Fiji.

Former Pakistan captain Asif Iqbal, who coordinates tournaments in Sharjah and is an ACC member, said he would try to persuade India to take part in competitions there.

He told Reuters the shifting of the Asia Cup would in no way endanger India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka jointly hosting the 1996 World Cup.

Brothers stay ahead

Sports Reporter
Defending champions Brothers Union trounced Narayan-gonj Chess Club 4-0 to continue their all-win run after the tenth round in the First Division chess league at the chess room of the National Sports Council yesterday.

Grandmaster Neaz Morshed, Pakistani International Master (IM) Mahmood Lodhi, Indian player IM Shekhar Chandra Sahu, and local player Hasbul Hassan Hanif won their respective games.

Biman stayed second at the points table with 29 points when they beat Golden Chess Club 3.5-0.5.

Biman's Zia, Tahmid and Reza registered wins while Tanima drew with Shawkat of Golden Chess Club.

Bangladesh Ansars dropped down to third place with 28.5 points.

Ansars beat Pony Electronics 3-1.

Abahani keep on winning



Defending champions Abahani Krira Chakra maintained their unbeaten record in the Metropolitan Navana Premier cricket league after beating fancied Gulshan Youth Club by three wickets at

the Dhaka Stadium yesterday, reports UNB.

Star-studded Abahani KC, have secured full 18 points from nine successive wins, to open up a two-point gap over last year's joint runners-up Mohammedan SC and Bangladesh Biman, who have bagged 16 points each on completion of their nine league engagements.

Abahani won the toss and put Gulshan Youth Club into bat. They could only manage to score 150 runs for 7 in the stipulated 45 overs.

Former Indian Test-discard Arun Lal who came in at number four and contributed a fine 52 hitting four boundaries in 79 balls and promising opener Sajid Hassan, son of former national skipper Raqibul Hasan, with 38 runs off 84 deliveries were the notable scorers for Gulshan.

In reply, Abahani KC had the worse possible start losing four quick wickets for only 21 runs, but English cricketer Illingworth who scored an unbeaten 59 with two fours and hard-hitting batsman Akram Khan, who made 35 runs off 57 deliveries steered the boat and helped Abahani reach the target for the loss of three more wickets.

In the other match of the league, Victoria SC defeated Uddity Club by 23 runs at the Dhanmondi Cricket Stadium.

Sent in to bat early, Victoria SC made 200 for the loss of 8 wickets in stipulated 45 overs with Anup scoring 46 and Arup not out 35.

In reply, Uddity Club closed their innings at 177 runs or 9 after playing full the 45 overs with Munir making 42 and Tnku 40.

Indian cricketer Arup Bhat-tacharjee claimed five wickets giving away 18 runs with two maidens in his nine over spell.

Taylor has a heart-to-heart

LONDON, Nov 29: Graham Taylor's wife and family saved the former England manager from killing himself, he told a British tabloid newspaper on Sunday, reports AFP.

Taylor, breaking his silence on his resignation five days after quitting, admits in the News of the World newspaper to telling his wife Rita: "Without you and the family I'd have been a suicide boy by now."

Taylor, a loyal family man, revealed that he resigned because he felt he could not put them through any more torment.

"She'd had enough of watching me suffer unnecessary agony," added the former Aston Villa boss, whose worst moment came recently when a Leeds hooligan jumped on his car outside Eland Road and spat on the windscreen.

"Rita didn't say a word," he added. "She didn't have to. The look on her face said it all."

Taylor, who was in charge for 38 games, said he had been "emotionally drained" by the job and felt he had also been "betrayed."

Waqar to lead in Akram's absence

KARACHI, Nov 29: Pakistan captain Wasim Akram is a doubtful starter for his country's first-ever cricket Test against Zimbabwe starting on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

All-rounder Akram is nursing a fractured wrist sustained in last month's Sharjah limited overs tournament and is to decide after a medical checkup on the eve of the match whether he can play.

If Akram is pronounced unfit, his vice-captain and fellow fast bowler Waqar Younis is set to lead the side.

"I will play if, and only if, I'm 100 per cent fit," Akram said on Sunday. "If I am having a little bit of a problem, then I will opt out."

"At present I am running and bowling but what really worries me is that my batting is likely to be hampered."

Akram predicted a clean sweep by his team in both the three-Test series and three-match one-day contest against Zimbabwe, who are making their first tour of Pakistan after gaining Test status last year.

Zimbabwe draw first tour match

PESHAWAR, Pakistan, Nov 29: The three-day match between Zimbabwe and the Bank of Khyber XI ended in a draw on Sunday, reports Reuter.

Scoreboard on the third and final day of the three-day match between Zimbabwe and the Bank of Khyber XI on Sunday.

ZIMBABWE: First innings 405-5 declared (A Campbell 135, A Flower 103)

BANK OF KHYBER XI: First innings (overnight 59-0): Shakeel Ahmed c and b Whittle 50

Shoaib Mohammad retired 101
Atif Rauf b Peall 32
Shahid Javed not out 50
Ejaz Ahmed not out 1
Extras: (b-5, lb-6, w-2, nb-7) 20
Total: (for two wickets) 254
Fall of wickets: 1-89, 2-168
Did not bat: Muhammad Asif, Tahir Rasheed, Irfan Bhatti, Ishaq Ahmed, Kabeer Khan, Shahid Hussain.

Bowling: O M R W
Brain 19 6 68 4
Rennie 22.5 10 56 0
Whittle 17 4 31 1
Peall 25 6 42 1
Flower 6.1 1 9 0
Dekker 10 2 22 0
Campbell 4 0 19 0
Result: Match drawn

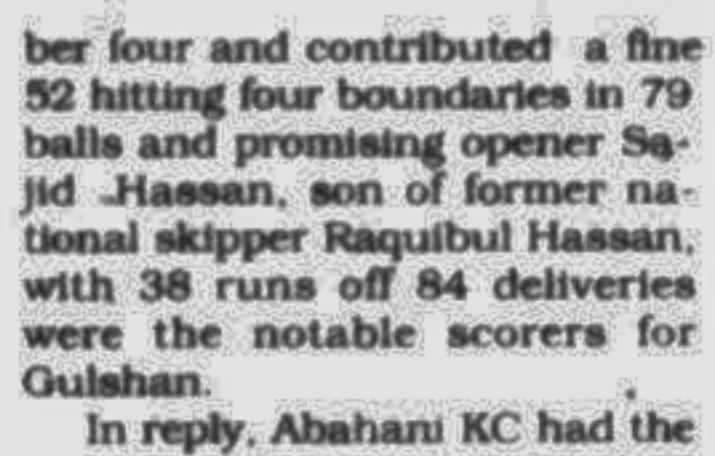
Lock pleads innocent

PERTH, Nov 29: Former England Test spin bowler Tony Lock pleaded not guilty on Monday in Perth District Court to charges of indecently assaulting a girl he coached six years ago, reports Reuter.

The complainant, now 21, told the court Lock indecently assaulted her in 1987 after inviting her to his Perth home for a bowling lesson.

The woman said she did not return to Lock for coaching and did not tell her mother of the incident until four years later.

Warne weaves more magic as Australia take 1-0 lead



HOBART, Australia, Nov 29: Australia trounced New Zealand by an innings and 222 runs with a day to spare in their second cricket Test today to take a 1-0 lead in the series, reports Reuter.

Leg-spinner Shane Warne took the last four wickets for three runs in just 14 balls to end the Kiwis' misery at Hobart's Bellerive Oval.

It was Australia's biggest-ever winning margin against their rivals and New Zealand's worst defeat in 221 Test matches dating back to 1962-63.

New Zealand captain Ken Rutherford, who took over as skipper two weeks ago when Martin Crow flew home for knee ligament surgery after the drawn first Test, said his country was at a crossroads in Test cricket.

"We are now playing not only for the credibility of this team but for the credibility of New Zealand cricket," he told reporters.

"It is vital for the financial future that the Test team performs so that we continue to be invited to England and Australia for Test series."

"I do not want to spend the next five years touring Zimbabwe and Sri Lanka," he added.

Rutherford said he was bitterly disappointed by the way his players collapsed against Australia, describing their performance as no better than club cricketers.

"I don't mind losing if you give 100 per cent, fight, show some determination and fight and show some guts. Most of those elements were missing here," said Rutherford.

"The time of talks is open, it's time for the individual players to take a long hard look at themselves and decide whether they want to play Test cricket. On the last three to four days it's been club cricket from us," he added.

The New Zealanders were thoroughly outplayed in all departments.

After losing the toss, they dropped five catches, missed two stumping chances and fluffed one run-out opportunity as the home side piled on a daunting 455 for six declared.

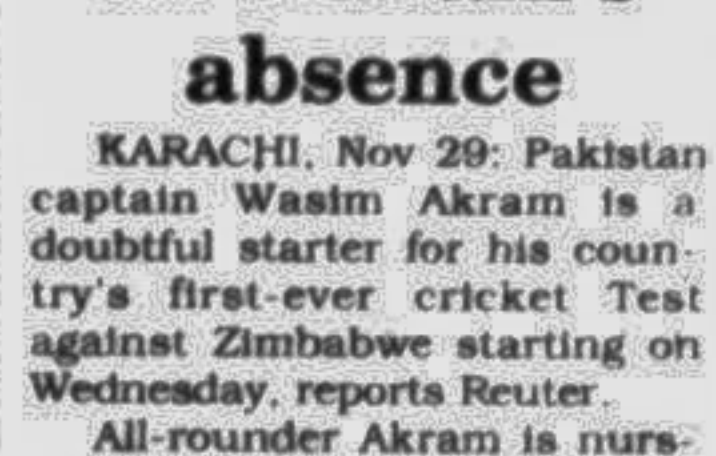
Century-makers Michael Slater, Mark Waugh, who was named man-of-the-match, and local hero David Boon all survived chances early in their innings.

Spinners Shane Warne and Tim May then took charge.

never giving the batsmen a chance to relax," said Border.

"They each seem to play better when the other one is in the side as well and they are our best chance to beat South Africa in the upcoming series here in Australia."

Border's intentions clear



SYDNEY, Nov 29: Australian captain Allan Border warned he would unleash a devastating spin attack against South Africa as the Springboks arrived in Sydney on Monday for their first cricket Test on Australian soil in 30 years, reports Reuter.

"If they have an Achilles heel, it's the lack of spinners that they face," Border said.

"That's what we're looking at as the way to beat them."

South African captain Kepler Wessels said his team still suffered from a lack of exposure but he was comfortable with its development before the three-Test series.

"We're a lot more comfortable at this level in every way," Wessels told reporters.

"But we haven't played that much Test cricket since we've been back, so that's the one area where we would like to get more exposure and for the guys to get more experience."

Wessels said the Springboks were not worried about Australian spin bowlers Shane Warne and Tim May, both in lethal form.

Wessels singled out 26-year-old batsman Daryl Cullinan as the Springbok to watch, comparing him with Australian batsman Mark Waugh. Cullinan hit an unbeaten 337 in October to establish a new record in South African first-class matches.

Wessels said the Springboks would rely on the improved fitness of left-arm fast bowler Brett Shultz, whom he rated as quick as Test spearhead Allan Donald.

"I haven't bowled but I've had intensive treatment since then, but I'll probably miss the first game in Canberra and should be ready to play against Victoria."

"I was just having a throw to see if I aggravated anything, but it's still very stiff and I can feel now that it's not 100 per cent yet."

Border earlier watched Warne and May destroy New Zealand in the second Test in Hobart on Monday.

"Warne and May are developing into a fantastic combination on all types of wickets," said Border after Australia's innings and 222-run victory over the Kiwis. "We will be planning our immediate future around Warne and May."

"This combination is our best chance to beat South Africa given the wickets we are playing them on."

The three Test wickets at Melbourne, Sydney and Adelaide are traditionally very rewarding for spinners.

Call to examine British flop



LONDON, Nov 29: Players' union chief Gordon Taylor called for a government inquiry into English football on Sunday following the four British nations' failure to qualify for the World Cup finals, reports AFP.

The chief executive of the Professional Footballers' Association promised to contact football-loving Prime Minister John Major to urge him to take immediate action after the British flop.

"We need an inquiry into the state of football now," he told the Mail on Sunday newspaper. "I have no doubt whatsoever the game is confronted by its biggest ever crisis."

"The government is now committed to a massive 20 million-pound (30 million dollars) injection into football over 10 years. That is tax-payers' money and the government has a responsibility to protect it."

"We're the laughing stock of world football and I'm convinced the Football Association, because of its structure and constitution, is incapable of changing itself from within."

"So many FA councillors are there as a reward for their years of service within the amateur game. They are in no way conversant with the professional side of the game."

"Football requires a governing body, but it has to earn the respect of those who are being governed. At the present time they don't deserve any respect. They simply haven't earned it."

"The FA talk blithely about the need for evolution, so they come up with a committee of six to investigate the structure of their own organisation. None of those chosen has any day-to-day involvement with a professional club."

"They seem to think that tinkering with the way in which the England manager is appointed is restructuring."

"The FA has got to understand what is happening outside their ivory tower. People stop me in the street, begging me to do something. I do not intend to ignore them."

Taylor believes that football should have two governing bodies — one for professionals and one for amateurs.

"Unless this happens, I'm convinced football will continue to go down the pan," he told the tabloid.

"If football is not to be more professionally-driven, then we're all going down like lemmings over the cliff into a sea of oblivion. We'll never recover."

Argentina Squad: Alberto Acosta, Claudio Baggio, Jorge Borelli, Diego Cagna, Hernan Diaz, Nestor Gorostio, Sergio Goycochea, Luis Islas, Carlos Macalister, Alejandro Mancuso, Diego Maradona, Ramon Medina Bellon, Roberto Montserrat, Ariel Ortega, Hugo Perez, Jorge Reynoso, Victor Sotomayor et Sergio Vazquez.

Real Madrid, one of the six joint leaders after last weekend's programme, ended a run of eight games without defeat with their first loss at Sporting since the 1980-81 season.

Croatian midfielder Robert Prosinecki, struggling to make Real's first team, scored his first goal of the season with a magnificently taken free kick after 56 minutes, curling the ball past Sporting keeper Emilio Isierti.

But Oscar Celada equalised six minutes later and Juanel Castano scored the winner with an 83rd minute penalty.

Celta went 1-0 up against Sevilla in the 24th minute through Croat Stjepan Rijasevic on his debut. Sebastian Losada made it 2-0 after 31 minutes and Croatian striker Davor Suker pulled one back for Sevilla with penalty eight minutes from time.

Valencia failed to capitalise on last week's 1-0 win at Sevilla and were held 0-0 at home by Real Sociedad.

Barcelona back on top



MADRID, Nov 29: Barcelona returned to the top of the Spanish First Division with a 4-2 win at Rayo Vallecano, while arch-rivals Real Madrid crashed 2-1 away to Sporting Gijon on Sunday, reports Reuter.

The Catalans share the lead on 18 points with Deportivo Coruna, who won 1-0 at Atletico Madrid on Saturday. Sevilla, who began the day top of a leading pack of six teams on goal difference, slipped with a 2-1 loss at Celta, their second successive defeat in the league.

Barcelona, playing without Brazilian striker Romario, had a 20 minute purple patch midway through the second half although all their goals came from dead ball situations.

Dutch defender Ronald Koeman converted two penalties while midfielder Guillermo Amor netted the other two, both from free kicks. Mexican striker Hugo Sanchez scored both Rayo's goals from the penalty spot.

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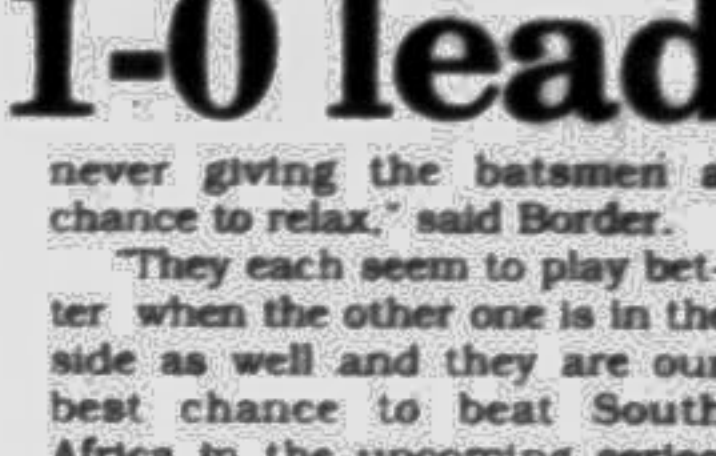
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West Indies arrive in Lanka



COLOMBO, Nov 29: The West Indies cricketers arrive in Sri Lanka today for their first official tour, reports Reuter.

Richie Richardson's men will play one Test, three one-day internationals and one three-day game, in the southern town of Galle, during their three-week visit.

The West Indies agreed to visit Sri Lanka after much lobbying at the International Cricket Council meeting at Lord's last year. They played here unofficially in 1984-9 and in 1978-9.

Canada in
TUNIS, Nov 29: Canada won a spot in the men's Volleyball World Championships by seeing off France 16-14, 13-15, 15-12, 15-5 in the qualifying tournament here on Sunday, reports AFP.

The finals take place in Greece between September 28-October 8 next year.

A three-Test series was being arranged but the Bengal Cricket Association then decided to stage its diamond jubilee tournament in India.

As a result, Sri Lanka had to settle for a scaled-down programme. However, from the way they have fared recently in Sharjah and India against West Indies, the curtailed itinerary may be the best thing that could have happened.

Sri Lanka have lost eight of their last nine one-day internationals played away from home, beating only newcomers Zimbabwe.

In four meetings with the West Indies in the Champions Trophy at Sharjah and the diamond jubilee tournament in India, Sri Lanka were convincingly beaten — underscoring their weakness against genuine pace and lack of penetrative bowlers.

On home wickets which are generally very slow, Sri Lanka have held their own against all countries, including South Africa with their strong pace attack.

But Sri Lanka's enviable home record of not having lost a one-day series against five countries — Australia, New Zealand, England, India and South Africa — is in danger of being broken against the West Indies.

The three-day game in Galle will begin on December 1 and the Test starts on December 8.

Derek Pringle confesses

LONDON, Nov 29: The row over ball-tampering in cricket was reopened by former England seamer Derek Pringle on Sunday when he admitted he used illegal methods to obtain swing during his career, reports Reuter.

Pringle, who retired from the first-class game on Saturday to become a journalist, confessed in his first column for the independent on Sunday that he had "occasionally" interfered with the ball while bowling for Essex and England.

Div III soccer

Sports Reporter
Gandaria Famous Sporting Club played out a goalless draw with Government Printing Press in the only Pragati Insurance Third Division football league match at the Outer Stadium yesterday.