

Sport

Tranquil recollection of majesty

By Chandra Shekhar Das

"He is my insurance against any possible flare up and discord among players during the New Zealand tour," was the confident pronouncement of Salim Malik, the newly-appointed captain of the Pakistani cricket team, who, as a part of a placating ploy of the authorities, got a job he could have got earlier.

At one corner of the lighted ball-room of Sheraton Hotel some of the better known cricketers of the visiting Pakistan cricket team, while waiting for the dinner, were obliging the autograph-hunters as well as those who sought photographs with the celebrities of sports world to attribute some significance to their nebulous existence. One of the players in green Pakistan blazer was Waqar Younis, a dazzling stallion of a man, whom most batsmen do not like when he starts running with the ball in his hand. You can't blame the batsmen for not being different in their attitude because many of them particularly those who play in the country circuit have the wretched lot of cursing the world's fastest while nursing their sometimes bruised, sometimes broken toes by reportedly the highest paid player.

That Waqar Younis stood up like a truant school boy waiting to be panned by a stern class teacher— "Yes sir?"

"He is from the press and wants to interview you. Your cooperation will be appreciated. But only personal queries."

"The oracle is ailed. Majid Jahan Khan the tour manager has given the little boy permission to prance about but only within the compound, not out of the gate in any case."

The reverence, the awe with which a publicised, adored cricketer like Waqar listened to Majid was enough to convince me that Malik did not exaggerate one bit.

Gravel voiced, shapely, handsome and inordinately aristocratic Majid Khan is a stranger neither to the city nor to its cricket buffs. He played here at the prime of his youth in the 60s. He came back here at the out set of the eighties as a senior member of the Pakistan team. His recent visitation of Dhaka was in the capacity of the tour manager of the Pakistani cricket team that played two friendly one-day matches in Dhaka before starting off for New Zealand.

Often called Mr. Majestic for his daring, disdainful treatment of even the very best

bowlers, Majid, the father of three children, is now one of the directors of PTV. Originally from Lahore, the Cambridge University graduate in history is now based in Islamabad.

Cricket was in Majid's gene. His father Dr. Jahan Khan, who obtained a doctorate degree for his thesis on 'Mughal Policy in the North-West Frontier,' was an integral member of the Indian cricket team before partition. Once during a tour of England, one of Dr. Khan's stroke killed a bird.

Two of Majid's cousins — Javed Burki and Imran Khan — have represented Pakistan with the latter, in fact, getting into cricket's hall of fame as probably the most talked-about, publicised cricketer for his cricketing excellence, galvanising captaincy and above all good looks.

Strangely, Majid considers himself some kind of an auto-didact regarding cricket. "My father had nothing to do with my coming to cricket. I cannot recall my father of having ever reacted to my decision of choosing professional cricketer's career. On cricket he was unimposing and very unimpressive. But initial attraction to the game can be attributed to the cricket books in his library."

Curiously, Majid has devolved a similar inheritance to his son Bayezid. "I do not entertain any hopes of seeing my son as a cricketer. Majid said, "It's up to him to decide."

Majid, who started his career as a medium pace bowler before being transformed into a middle-order batsman with the evolution culminating in his final identity as a dashing batsman, did not have any model.

In his words, "I did not

worship anyone but I saw some great cricketers in action, for example, I saw West Indian paceman Wes Hall achieving a hatrick against Pakistan, and incidents like these went a long way in shaping my future course."

Having been drawn to the unattributed stories about batman with his feet put in stock as a part of challenge thrown by his sceptic colleagues, Majid, who is capable of giving listeners the auditory impression of hearing an echo, drawls, "They are myths," (smiles). "Well some of them are true. But then, every great player manages these things in his own way."

Majid's ego-nursing encounter with legendary Aussie fast bowler Dennis Lillee is a part of modern day cricket lore. What went between Majid and Lillee during Pakistan's tour of the Down Under in 1976 illuminated the man of the moment himself. "Well, he said he would hit me on the temple. I said, 'Go ahead, see if you can do it. He hit my jaw and I gave him my sombrero as a mark of acknowledgement of his feat (laughs)."

An admirer of an admired when one takes into account Imran Khan's uncritical, eulogistic account of his cousin, Majid was dramatically quiet on his relationship with Pakistan's most successful and influential captain Imran. "He was a great player but it is difficult to compare him with his predecessors as a captain. Because I believe luck plays a very important role in cricket, in life, in anywhere. He, perhaps, had his share of luck more than anyone else I can think of. Besides he had the determination to lead from the front. It is not really possible for me to evaluate the man Imran. Because I never had to wake up to it. Moreover, you tend take someone who is either close or whom you see often for granted."

The Khans of Pakistan cricket had the reclame during their playing days of not having a rapport with another very famous name Javed Miandad, recently dropped from the squad. Majid was one of the rebels who refused to play under Miandad in 1981. "Yes I felt Javed did not have the qualities to be the leader of a team that contained quite a few cricketers who were senior to him."

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Olympic team, and was not to be used for any criminal proceedings. It would likely be used to hire a new lawyer in addition to those she already has.

Harding doesn't have a contract with Nike and she is not likely to get one, Peters said. The money was offered in the spirit of defending athletes' rights, as Nike has done many times in the past.

Peters said Knight began thinking about taking some action to help Harding three weeks ago after reading an article in the Washington Post suggesting the skater should quit the team.

"That really lit the spark in him," Peters said.

Harding has not been charged in connection with the attack on Kerrigan. Her ex-husband, former bodyguard and two other men have all been charged with conspiracy in the attack. Ex-husband Jeff Gilroy was scheduled to appear in court on Tuesday to enter a guilty plea.

The US Figure Skating Association has named a five-person committee to recommend whether Harding has violated the organization's code of conduct. The panel's decision could ultimately lead to her dismissal from the Olympic team.

The committee meets Tuesday for the first time in Colorado.

Nike spokesman Keith Peters said the money was intended solely to help Harding defend her place on the

"I am excited about working with some of the most talented players from around the world," Beckenbauer said in a statement released by organizers of the July 23-Aug 7 Games. "The format of an All-Star team is intriguing, and I think it will be a great game."

"I can't think of a more suitable person to manage the international collection of top players," said Vyacheslav Koleskov, president of the Football Union of Russia.

Beckenbauer's reputation and identity within the football community is incomparable."

Beckenbauer was captain of the German team which won the World Cup in 1974. As manager, he guided Germany to the World Cup title in 1990. He is currently manager of Bayern Munich.

The matches of the 12th Nirman schools cricket tournament have been suspended until Friday due to persistent inclement weather, said a Bangladesh Cricket Control Board (BCCB) press release issued yesterday.

The tourney will resume on Saturday.

BJMC sports prize-giving ceremony today

Sports Reporter

The prize giving ceremony of the 16th annual sports competition of the Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation, BJMC, which began yesterday, will be held at 3:30 pm today at the Karim Jute Mills premises, Demra.

Jute Minister Brigadier (retd) A S M Hannan Shah will distribute prizes among the winners.

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