

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 Pakistan 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 here to interview you. Your cooperation will be appreciated. But only personal queries. The oracle is aired. Majid Jehangir 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 aristocrat 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 re-visitation of Dhaka was in the capacity of the tour manager of the Pakistan 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

of 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. Jehangir Khan,



MAJID 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 autodidact 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 unfluent. But initial attraction to the game can be attributed to the cricket books in his library."

Curiously Majid has developed a similar inheritance to his son Bayezid. "I do not entertain any hopes of seeing my son as a cricketer, Majid said. "It's upto 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 opening 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 hat-trick against Pakistan, and incidents like these went a long way in shaping my future course."

Having been drawn to the unattributed stories about batting 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, draws, "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? Illumined 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 admired 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."

Now that Javed is left out of the team quite unceremoniously at the twilight of his career, how Majid looks at the whole thing? "I know very little

about the dropping issue and the reasons behind it. But I guess it is Javed's dwindling form. Pakistan will certainly miss his experience and class but the caravan of cricket must go on. As far as Aaqib Javed is concerned he was not physically fit at the time of selection and Rameez was out of form."

Hinted at a possible collaboration between his cousins Imran and Burki (the latter is the head of the three-member adhoc committee now running the show instead of the BCCP dismissed recently by President Farooq Ahmed Leghari), suggested by recent reports attributed to Javed Miandad, Majid queried, "Do you think he went about intriguing to see Javed dropped. Why the hell he would do that? Javed played under Imran in many matches and Pakistan clicked as a team."

However, Majid sounded quite hepped to another dimension of the recent captaincy crisis in Pakistan cricket. "Yes I did see newspapers in Pakistan carrying reports of Imran's instructions to deposed captain Wasim Akram. But I did not check it with Imran so I do not think I am qualified enough to comment on that."

Fairly impressed with the performance of the Bangladesh team, particularly the batsmen, Majid attributed the recent streak of success of the Pakistan team to attitude. "We did have players as talented as many of today's team but they or should I say we could not think of winning. We were rather maginot-minded. A draw was the most we could ask for. With some of us getting exposure to positive, quality cricket, the inhibited coil gradually wore off. The present crop of cricketers have inherited that positive psyche. The worm's eye view of the world is gone. Also the infrastructure of the Pakistan domestic cricket has undergone a sea change. The number of tournaments have proliferated and the pitches are no longer the dripping roasts for batsmen and are more result-oriented."

Truly it is a conceptual revolution that has taken the Pakistan cricket by storm. But every storm has a way of sending the fallen and philomel leaves in a swirl. Does not Majid a bibliophile particularly that Robert Ludlum and McDonald Fraser, feel his exit from cricket was unsung, inglorious? Quiet came a query, yes, not a reply. "Tell me which Pakistani batsman has made a glorious exit?"

Pak-NZ XI match drawn

HAMILTON, New Zealand, Feb 2: Pakistan's three day tour match against a New Zealand XI ended in a draw but gave the tourists batsmen valuable time at the crease, reports Reuter.

Looking for practice before next week's First Test, Pakistan's batsmen were given a look at several of New Zealand's international bowlers and did not appear overly concerned, two players scoring centuries.

Set 265 to win in 110 minutes and 15 overs, Pakistan finally eased off when they needed 124 off 12 overs. The match finished with seven overs unbowed and the tourists at 155 for two.

The Hamilton pitch was ideal for batsmen throughout and just 14 wickets were taken by the bowlers during the match.

New Zealand XI captain Mark Greatbatch, well aware of the ease of batting, baited on the last day until wicketkeeper Lee Gernon reached his century before declaring their second innings at 290 for five.

Pakistan's openers Aamir Sohail and Shakeel Ahmed started at a vigorous pace, putting on 95 before putting the shutters up to play for a draw.

Pakistan travel south to Napier today to prepare for their four day match against another New Zealand XI starting on Friday.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard on the third and final day of Pakistan's three-day cricket match against a New Zealand XI.

NEW ZEALAND XI
First innings: 318.5 declared

Second innings:
B Hartland c sub (AHL) b Shoaib 50
G Burnett c Shakeel b Nazir 2
I Howell c Shoaib b Mujtaba 59
L Gernon not out 100
M Greatbatch retired 50
D Patel c Shakeel b Sohail 4
M Hart not out 18
Extras: (nb-5, lb-2) 7
Total: (for five wickets, declared) 290

Fall of wickets: 4-9, 2-79, 3-155, 4-249, 5-261.

Did not bat: Blair Pocock, Simon Doull, Richard de Groen, Michael Owens.

Bowling: O M R W
Ataur Rehman 7 2 24 0
Amir Nazir 12 0 48 1
Asif Mujtaba 10.1 3 38 1
Ashfaq Ahmed 7 1 29 0
Shoaib Mohammed 16 2 67 1
Basit Ali 13 0 54 0
Aamir Sohail 4 0 28 1

PAKISTAN
First innings: 344.4 declared

Second innings:
Aamir Sohail c Burnett b De Groen 55
Shakeel Ahmed c Howell b Patel 68
Shoaib Mohammed not out 23
Asif Mujtaba not out 7
Extras: (nb-1, lb-1) 2
Total: (for two wickets) 155

Fall of wickets: 1-93, 2-147.
Did not bat: Salim Malik, Inzamamul Haq, Saeed Anwar, Basit Ali, Ataur Rehman, Ashfaq Ahmed, Amir Nazir.

Bowling: O M R W
Owens 4 0 29 0
Doull 5 0 19 0
De Groen 9 0 38 1
Hart 12 0 52 0
Patel 4 2 16 1

Result: Match drawn.

Akram doubtful

HAMILTON, New Zealand, Feb 2: Star Pakistan fast bowler Wasim Akram is in doubt for his team's final lead up match before next week's first cricket Test against New Zealand, reports AFP.

Left arm speedster Akram was confined to bed with a fever and high temperature Wednesday as the tourists drew their three-day match against the New Zealand XI here.

He joined the tour on Saturday and did not play either of the first two games.



Latome of Tenerife (R) shields the ball from a Real Madrid player during a quarter-final match in the Kings Cup in Madrid, Spain on Feb 1. Tenerife won 3-0. — AFP photo

Maradona parts with Newell's

BUENOS AIRES, Feb 2: Argentina captain Diego Maradona, depressed, parted ways with Newell's Old Boys after barely four months on Tuesday and his agent said the time is nearing when the star will retire for good, reports Reuter.

"Retirement will come one day and one has to face up to that," agent Diego Franchi said. "I don't know whether that day is today, tomorrow or when."

Although club officials said Maradona's departure was a joint decision, local media reported that he had in fact been fired after repeatedly failing to show up for practice and going missing over the past week.

"It's now clear Maradona will not be in the World Cup," said one radio commentator.

Maradona, 33, has had a succession of injuries since returning to Argentine club soccer last October.

"It has been agreed to terminate the relationship between Newell's Old Boys and Diego Maradona," club president Walter Cattaneo told a news conference relayed live by Buenos Aires radio from the coastal city of Mar Del Plata.

"The link ends on a note of affection... because of Diego's plain inability to continue playing with Newell's."

"There are things you can

measure," Cattaneo added, referring to Maradona's hamstring injuries. "But when there are problems of psychological, emotional depression, that's where the serious trouble starts."

After his return to local soccer in October following an eight-month layoff, Maradona said he wanted to play for Argentina until 1995.

"I feel great at the moment but I realise I do not have all that much time left to play at the highest level," he said in Sydney on October 28, three days before his 33rd birthday.

Argentina coach Alfio Basile last year described Maradona's return as an inspiration for a team which had suffered one of its most humiliating defeats with a 5-0 loss to Colombia in a World Cup qualifier.

The stocky start shed 12 kgs (26 pounds) to return to the pitch... a crash course local commentators said may have affected him.

"We just have to face it — his state of mind prevents him from playing soccer," Cattaneo said.

Maradona's agent confirmed that boredom was taking over. "He cannot stand the hassle, the routine of training sessions," DYN news agency quoted Franchi as saying.

Maradona could not be reached for comment.

"Just... leave your message... after the beep," his six-year-old daughter Yanina intoned hesitantly from a recording on his answering machine.

Height of frustration

BUENOS AIRES, Feb 2: Argentina captain Diego Maradona, sacked by his club after just four months, fired an air gun at journalists besieging his country home on Wednesday, according to witnesses, reports Reuter.

"We're going to the police," one of the reporters and photographers hit by pellets told a local radio station.

"If you don't get out of here, we're going to start shooting real bullets," DYN news agency quoted Maradona as shouting.

The agency reported that at least five people inside the house appeared to be shooting air guns.

Newell's Old Boys terminated Maradona's four-month-old contract on Tuesday for repeatedly failing to show up for training.

Club president Walter Cattaneo said Maradona's physical injuries were surmountable, but added: "When there are problems of psychological, emotional depression, that's where the serious trouble starts."

PCA announces its draw

NEW YORK, Feb 2: The breakaway Professional Chess Association Tuesday announced the quarter final draw in its search for a challenger to world champion Garry Kasparov, reports Reuter.

It also said it would organise, for the first time, a separate commercial tournament within the walls of the Kremlin.

The announcement came two days after the International Chess Federation (FIDE) made its own draw to decide who will play titleholder Anatoly Karpov of Russia for the world championship.

The PCA was formed by world champion Garry Kasparov and last year's challenger Nigel Short of England after they split from FIDE.

The PCA said leading computer chip company Intel would invest up to 1.2 million dollars to be the sole sponsor of its events in 1994.

The result of the draw, made with Kasparov present

on a rare US visit, pits Short against Boris Gulko of the United States, Vladimir Kramnik of Russia against Gata Kamsky of the US, Indian Viswanathan Anand against Ukrainian Oleg Romanishin and Michael Adams of England against Sergei Tiviakov of Russia. All matches will be played in New York in June.

Semifinals will be held in Barcelona in September and the final to determine Kasparov's challenger in London in February 1995, the PCA announced at a news conference in New York.

"Chess until recently had in many ways been controlled by the old Soviet Union and this really symbolises the way we've taken it and made it into a western-style sport," PCA commissioner Bob Rice said about the Grandmaster tournament in the Kremlin in April.

FIDE stripped Kasparov of his world title and dropped him and short from its world ranking list. It also held a title match in which Kasparov's arch rival Anatoly Karpov easily defeated Jan Timman of the Netherlands.

"They (FIDE) are losing the war against time," Kasparov told reporters after the news conference. Because time is on our side, Chess can only survive by being professional.

"FIDE just has some money, FIDE just has some ambitions and in my opinion it will take maybe a year for FIDE to realise that the only way to cooperate with us is to adopt the system of professional tennis or golf," Kasparov said.

But Armenian-born Kasparov stressed there was no chance of a reunification world championship match between him and the winner of the FIDE qualifying contest, a subject of some speculation in the chess world.

"As long as I am alive there will be no so-called unification," he said. Three players, Anand, Kramnik and Kamsky are also competing in the FIDE qualifiers, with the next round scheduled for July.

Office league now from Feb 10

Sports Reporter

The office league cricket originally scheduled for February 3, now starts from February 10, according to a BCCB press release.

The reason for re-fixation has been attributed to bad weather.

B'ball results

Dhaka Winners Club tasted their first defeat in the Partex First Division basketball league, when they lost 53-105 against Angels Club at the Outer Stadium wooden floor gymnasium yesterday, reports UNB.

Winners Club, who still lead the table with 11 points from six matches, were trailing 26-53 points in the first session.

Raju scored the day's highest 30 while Dulal and Siddique caged 26 and 23 respectively for the Winners while Shahana scored 14 and Asif Hossain 10 for the losers.

Earlier, in the day's first match, lowly Hornets Club registered their first victory in the league beating Backstroke Boys Club 76-54 after leading the first session 38-22.

Dulal made 18 and Tarun 17 for the Winners while Mitu contributed 24 and Sajik 18 points for the losers.

Partex league will remain suspended for the next two days. It will resume on February 5.

Suspended

The match between Old Ideals and Victoria Sporting Club of Phoenix Insurance Handball competition was suspended yesterday due to inclement weather, reports UNB.

The match will be held today at 2-15 pm at the same venue, a press release issued by Bangladesh Handball Federation said.

The other matches of the competition will be held accordingly, the release added.

Privalova sets new world mark

MOSCOW, Feb 2: Russian athlete Irina Privalova set a world record for indoor competitions Tuesday, running 50 metres in 6.03 seconds in a track tournament in Moscow, reports AP.

The previous record — 6.05 seconds — was set by Privalova last spring.

Youth hockey off to inauspicious start

Sports Reporter

The 13th national youth hockey championship got off to a formal inauguration but the opening match between hosts Bangladesh Krira Shiksha Protishthan (BKSP) and Chittagong District Sports Association fell through only after ten minutes due to heavy downpour at the BKSP ground at Jirani, Savar yesterday.

Weather permitting, the match will be played today while the encounter billed for today in the original fixture will be shifted bodily and held tomorrow.

State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadeque Hossain inaugurated the meet.

Fifteen teams are taking part in this nine-day meet.

Madrasha meet on

From Our Correspondent

BARISAL, Feb 2: The 23rd national winter sports meet organised by the National School and Madrasha Krira Samity began here at the Barisal Stadium today.

The meet was inaugurated by M A Rashid, Divisional Commissioner, Barisal as chief guest and was attended by Prof Hasan Waiz, Chairman, Jessore Education Board, Lutfunnessa Haq, deputy director, Physical Education, Prof Md Yunus Mia, director general, Secondary and Higher Secondary Education.

Four hundred and sixty-eight competitors from four regions of the country are participating in 33 events.

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 (ret'd) A S M Hannan Shah will distribute prizes among the winners.

Nike bails Harding out

ORTLAND, Feb 1: Nike Inc. contributed \$25,000 on Monday to help national figure skating champion Tonya Harding defend her place on the US Olympic team, reports AP.

Chief executive officer Philip Knight said he feared Harding, who does not have a contract with Nike, would be forced off the team before the criminal justice system has rendered judgment on whether she had a role in the attack on rival skater Nancy Kerrigan.

Beckenbauer's assignment

LONDON, Feb 2: German soccer hero Franz Beckenbauer will manage a World All-Star Team at this summer's Goodwill Games in St Petersburg, Russia, reports AP.

Beckenbauer's team, featuring players from leading clubs around the world, will face a Russian All-Star team in a one-game challenge match on Aug 7 at Kirov Stadium.

"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 Italy in 1990. He is currently manager of Bayern Munich.

Nirman cricket postponed

Sports Reporter

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.

There's a real drive to declare her guilty before she's had a trial," Knight told a cable television network. What's happening is that the US (Olympic Committee) feels some pressure to rush to judgment quickly because the Olympic Games are coming up.

"If she wins and is guilty, you can take her medals away, but if, in fact she is innocent and doesn't get to skate, you can never repair that damage ever."

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 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 Gillooly was scheduled to appear in court on Tuesday to enter a guilty plea.



A rather ghostly paradigm of a swimming pool. For eight long years this natatorium of Dhaka University has remained incomplete for reasons best known to the authorities. Heaven knows how many more years will it take before the university students can dive and dip into a watered pool. One wonders if it has to remain sans water why the project was undertaken in the first place?

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