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Kiwi honour at state

LONDON, June 15: New Zealand's future as a first division cricketing power is on the line at the sport's international headquarters this week, reports Reuter.

The New Zealanders, bedevilled throughout their tour by injuries, inexperience and bad weather, lost the first Test to England by an innings.

Now, in a further cruel blow, they will again be without their one genuine international bowler Danny Morrison for the second Test starting at Lord's on Thursday.

Morrison, who missed the first Test, has been ruled out of the remainder of the tour after a hamstring injury failed to heal and his absence has dealt incalculable damage to a young side short of confidence and consistent form.

Although New Zealand have an attractive and potentially prolific batting line-up, they succumbed famously twice in the face of a competent but hardly threatening England attack during the first Test.

A repeat performance at Lord's would leave the Kiwis in grave danger of a 3-0 white-wash and leave Shri Lanka, who have defeated both England and New Zealand in their last meetings, wondering what they need to do to gain guaranteed tours to England.

The present twin-tour concept was inaugurated in 1965 by New Zealand and South Africa, who share the season again this year for the first time since that long-vanished summer.

But with Shri Lanka and Zimbabwe now admitted to the ranks of the Test playing countries, New Zealand may no longer have an automatic right to their four-yearly three-Test tours.

With summer making a belated appearance this week, the stage is at least set for Martin Crowe to demonstrate on the international stage that he is still one of the world's premier batsmen.

Crowe, a man of immense natural talent and intense ambition, plans to play at least three further seasons and add five Test centuries to his current New Zealand record of 15.

He warmed up for Thursday's clash with 73 from only 53 balls in the last tour match against Gloucestershire and the New Zealand first innings of 295 for five declare brought some overdue satisfaction to tour manager Geoff Howarth.

"That's the sort of thing we are looking for, though you can never have enough runs," said Howarth. "It gives the guys confidence and hopefully that confidence will run through the whole side."

England have kept faith with their first Test squad with both spinners Peter Such and Richard Stemp tipped to play on a Lord's pitch which has soaked up more than its fair share of rain during a damp May.

Devon Malcolm, who appeared to be favouring his injured knee during the first Test and bowled indifferently throughout, is a likely omission while Stemp's inclusion may depend on whether skipper Mike Atherton believes he can trust all-rounder Craig White to fulfill the role of third seamer.

Far from the madding crowd

NEW YORK, June 15: Italian players went on a shopping spree down Fifth Avenue as the World Cup team enjoyed its only "vacation day" prior to Saturday's game against Ireland, reports AP.

The stars also enjoyed a "Puerto Rican" festival through new York's downtown streets which resembled the Rio de Janeiro carnival Sunday.

Retail stores, toys and electronic shops were the most visited places by the Italians.

AC Milan's defenders Alessandro Costacurta and Mauro Tassotti were among the "happy few" who got tickets for the third game at Madison Square Garden Sunday night.

"There was a great atmosphere," Costacurta said Monday.

Milla — a tired old lion

OXNARD, Calif., June 15: Roger Milla was conspicuous by his absence when French coach Henri Michel put his Cameroon squad through tough training on Tuesday, five days before their opening World Cup match against Sweden, reports Reuter.

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Veteran Cameroon striker Roger Milla enjoys a massage after a practice session in Oxnard, California on Tuesday.

The 42-year-old super-sub, hero of Cameroon's 1990 World Cup campaign, sat beside one of the goals at the Oxnard College training camp for most of the 2-1/2 hour session.

He briefly removed his tracksuit trousers, rubbed his

gnarled right hamstring, and then put them back on. A long stretch and a tired yawn would not have seemed out of place from the oldest "Indomitable Lion," of them all.

Milla, whose goals helped propel Cameroon to the quarter-finals four years ago even though he was — and remains — in semi-retirement, is said to have been included in this

year's squad at the instance of Cameroon's President Paul Biya.

Milla refused to answer reporters questions.

Michel has hinted strongly that Milla will again be used in the substitutes role he filled to such devastating effect in Italy

— but on Tuesday's lack of evidence it is hard to see how effective the old campaigner will be.

There is also considerable doubt he will recover from the hamstring problem in time for Sunday's opening match of Group B, which also includes Brazil and Russia, at the Rose Bowl in Pasadena, 100 km (60 miles) to the southeast.

"I still have some decisions to make regarding the final selection," said Michel. "I still have to decide on a number of places — including the goalkeeper's spot."

Either Thomas N'Kono, who played in both the 1982 and 1990 World Cups, or Joseph-Antoine Bell, who did not play in 1990 after falling out with then-coach Valerri Nepomniachi, are contesting the goalkeeper's No. 1 jersey.

The team has been buffeted by controversy in the run-up to the finals, including rows over money and disputes with FECAFOOT, the national federation, and problems with FIFA.

FIFA last month threatened to expel Cameroon from the cup unless the government accepted the outcome of FECAFOOT elections and stopped interfering in the federation's affairs.

A boldly designed new shirt preferred by the players was vetoed by FECAFOOT, so they will wear their traditional strip of green shirts, red shorts and yellow socks. They are still awaiting their official World Cup tracksuits and boots.

Against this background, Bell said chances of repeating their quarter-final appearance of 1990 were not great.

"We are more experienced than we were four years ago, but I am not sure if our potential is as great — but we have been hampered in so many ways," he said.

"We have been preparing for this World Cup against a background of huge problems, problems that from a European perspective would seem incredible."

Rumi's treble powers Mukhtis

Sports Reporter A superb hat-trick by national striker Rumi Rizvi Karim powered Mukhtijoddha Sangsad to a massive 6-1 Group D semifinal victory over Feni Soccer Club of Chittagong Division at the Dhaka Stadium yesterday.

Mukhtijoddha, however, had to overcome the shock of conceding the first goal of the match in the ninth minute when Feni striker Prince guided the ball home past Mukti custodian.

The winners took some time to settle down but once Rumi levelled the score in the 26th minute, there was no turning back for the side, which hit headlines earlier this year after roping in a host of national stars.

Mizanur Rahman got two goals while Arif netted the other for the victors.

Mukhtijoddha will meet Public Works Department (PWD) SC in the group final on Saturday. PWD edged out East End Club 3-2 in tie-breaker after the regulation period ended goalless.

Soccer world, hostile to women?

BERLIN, June 15: Soccer's establishment is hostile to women and old-fashioned, the wife of the Germany World Cup team's goalkeeper says, reports AP.

In the latest tiff over whether sex can harm player performance on the field, Bianca Ilgner was reacting to the ban on wives and girlfriends at the German team hotel in Chicago.

"I find it antiquated how women are handled," she told Stern newsmagazine. "The way the soccer world is, I find it very hostile to women."

Ilgner broke the rule barring women when she visited her husband Bodo at the team training camp in Germany two weeks ago, drawing criticism from other players and officials.

Secrecy-shrouded session for Swiss DEARBORN, Mich., June 15: Swiss players homed in Tuesday on their first World Cup opponent — the United States. They also scored 11 goals in a secrecy-shrouded practice game, reports AP.

Their warmups against other national teams over, the Swiss got a briefing from coach Roy Hodgson on the host US team as final preparations began for both teams' opener Saturday at the indoor Silverdome in Pontiac, Mich.

"I spoke to the team for the first time about the US squad," said Hodgson, an Englishman who led Switzerland to their first cup final in 1966.

Switzerland won't face a disadvantage in the famously hot and sticky Silverdome, Hodgson said.

"I'm not afraid of the special conditions. The Americans have the same problem," he said.

"Only the FIFA rule of not drinking water on the field disturbs me because it's not correct from the medical point of view. But we'll find a solution."

After failing to score in tuncups against Italy and Bolivia, the Swiss limbered up with an 11-0 Tuesday against the Milwaukee Kickers college team at Country Day School in Detroit.

Hodgson banned observers for the first 30 minutes, when Switzerland's top lineup scored five goals.

Adrian Knup, the team's top scorer, talked twice, Stephane Chapuisat, Alain Sutter and Thomas Bickel scored the others.

Midfield playmaker Ciriaco Sforza, who plays for Kaiserslautern in Germany's Bundesliga, skipped the practice game because of muscle problems in his right leg.

"It's not serious," he said. "I'll be fit for Saturday."

Hodgson said staying loose is the key if the goals aren't flowing, and there's no point to special practice.

The worst thing you can do then is to try to force scoring," he said.

A goalkeepers' World Cup

NEW YORK, June 15: There will be a game within a game at this World Cup for the 24 players whose job is to look after number one, reports Reuter.

For the first time in years the mantle of "world's best goalkeeper" is lying unclaimed



GIANLUCA PAGLIUCA awaiting a safe new pair of hands.

The bad news for the world's strikers is that a long queue has formed amongst the modern-day successors to Shilton, Zoff, Banks and Yashin.

At least 10 of the first-choice goalkeepers in the tournament have good credentials, a high proportion given that about half the teams on view are likely to field a keeper in his first World Cup.

For everyone from 39-year-old Cameroon goalie Joseph-Antoine Bell to 21-year-old Mohammed al Deaya of Saudi Arabia, it represents a perfect chance to build an instant reputation and in several cases attract a lucrative overseas offer.

As Italy's highly-rated Gianluca Pagliuca put it this week: "There are a lot of unknown goalkeepers at this World Cup but there will be some well-known ones by the end of it."

One of the potential beneficiaries could be Erik Thorstvedt, Norway's last line of defence, who is determined to make the most of his country's first appearance in the finals since 1938.

"I feel privileged to be here. It's once in a lifetime experience," said Thorstvedt. "It's not just the games. Everything that surrounds it is brilliant."

"Obviously everyone is looking and comparing you but I'm not really hung up on that sort of thing. I'm here to participate in winning games for Norway."

"If I do nothing more than watch and Norway win I'll be well happy. I'm not here to be the world's best."

Thorstvedt's opposite number in his country's opening match this weekend is not quite so modest. Mexico's Jorge Campos favours his own design of fluorescent jerseys and is a regular visitor to the opposition penalty box.

He has twice been used as an outfield player by Mexico and scored 14 goals in a season for his club side in 1989 acting as a striker.

"We are fully aware that he takes risks," said his coach Miguel Barron. "But football is a game of risks and he has the team's and coach's backing."

Amongst the more conventional candidates, Thorstvedt rates Russian Dmitri Kharine, who also plays his club soccer in England, as "brilliant" and also nominated Sampdoria keeper Pagliuca as one to watch.

The same applies to Brazilian Claudio Taffarel who has a good World Cup in 1990, while Bodo Ilgner, Andoni Zubizarreta and Michel Predud' Homme head an experienced cast from Europe.

For sheer shot-stopping ability, the acrobatic American captain Tony Meola is a class and Argentina's Sergio Goycochea is renowned as a penalty expert after his sudden-death performances against Yugoslavia and Italy four years ago.

But as specialist in a sport where mistakes will be seen by an estimated 32 billion people worldwide, what all the contenders need most are strong nerves to go with the reflexes — one reason why Thorstvedt is highly rated by his captain Rune Bratseth.

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Kaiser, Vogts foes no more

OAK BROOK, Ill., June 15: German coach Bert Vogts and Franz Beckenbauer made peace Tuesday, drinking coffee, eating cake and having a lot of laughs, reports AP.

Beckenbauer, captain of Germany's 1974 World Cup-winning team and coach of the 1990 champions, paid a visit to the German team's headquarters outside Chicago.

"There was never any conflict, there was only a divergence of interests," Vogts said of his 1974 teammate and predecessor as coach.

A dispute erupted between Vogts and Beckenbauer in April, when the German team was in Abu Dhabi for a game against the United Arab Emirates.

Beckenbauer was then coaching Bayern Munich and the German Soccer Federation

had ordered his team to replay a key league game that could have been decisive for Bayern's chase of the title.

Before the national team's trip, Beckenbauer had asked Vogts to promise to release his players if the game was ordered replayed, and Vogts had obliged.

Once in Abu Dhabi, however, Vogts' team was hit by injuries and Vogts refused to let captain Lothar Matthaus and defender Thomas Helmer return home before the UAE game.

Beckenbauer reacted angrily, and accused Vogts of breaking his word. Vogts defended himself by saying he had to protect the interests of the national team.

Relations between the two remained cool until Tuesday, when they made up. Beckenbauer spent two hours at the team's hotel, wishing the players a successful defence of the World Cup title. He then sat

down with Vogts. "We had a good chat, we had coffee, we had cake and we laughed a lot," Vogts said.

Vogts became coach after Beckenbauer retired following Germany's World Cup victory in Italy.

Beckenbauer is at the World Cup as a commentator for German television. He is enjoying his relative anonymity in Oak Brook, something unimaginable at home.

He was spotted eating breakfast at a diner with his wife Tuesday. Surprised by a few reporters, he chatted for several minutes, with no one of the diner apparently aware a soccer great was among them.

When a waiter was asked if he recognized his guest, he said he had no idea. Even the name Beckenbauer meant nothing to him.

"I hope I'll get to know some players before the end of the World Cup," the waiter said.

World champs rock'n roll

CHICAGO, June 15: The Germans got off to a rocky start...

The 22 soccer players and coach Bert Vogts join-ed with the German rock band The Scorpions for a live "world premiere" of "No Pain, No Gain."

It was the climax of a party the German Soccer Federation threw Monday night to celebrate their arrival in the land of the World Cup, reports AP.

A video recording of "No Pain, No Gain" features scenes for Germany's soccer matches, and players join in the hard-rock beat chorus.

The scorpions, whose five members say they are great soccer fans, took time off their US tour to make and appearance at the party, playing some to their hits like "Time of Change."

The German team traditionally records a World Cup

song before each tournament, but the gig with the Scorpions was in addition to the already recorded official tune with the Village People.

Captain Lothar Matthaus and defender Thomas Berthold lend their voices to the joint effort in "No Pain, No Gain." Midfielder, Andreas Moeller picked up a spare guitar (it was hard to see whether it was plugged in).

The rest of the team swayed rhythmically in the background.

Coach Bert Vogts clapped his hands and sang in unison, grinning widely.

Everyone then had a good time, helped by the Bittburger beer brought from Germany.

The party for about 250 people included reporters traveling with the team and local leaders including Westmont, Mayor James A. Addington.

Addington received an orig-

inal German team shirt signed by all the players from the president of the German Soccer Federation, Egidius Braun.

The mayor promised the shirt would hang in his office "forever," and wished the team "Viel Glueck" (all the best) in its attempt to retain the World Cup title.

Westmont, Ill., near Chicago, will be the German's home through the first round.

The party was supposed to be an outdoor grill affair, but a couple of thunderstorms forced the Germans to move it into a ballroom of their hotel in Westmont.

The village issued a special World Cup souvenir booklet to mark the German's stay and the tournament.

Its souvenir value could rise by the fact that it lists Germany's Group C rivals as Bolivia, Spain — and Greece instead of south Korea.

For Moore, it's a dream

MISSION VIEJO, Calif., June 15: Last year, he was the Americans' top scorer with eight goals. This year, he barely made the cut for the US World Cup team.

Joe-Max Moore is one of the US players who got a lot of playing time before European-based Americans returned over the past several months for the World Cup, reports AP.

Although relegated to a reserve role, he isn't complaining.

"It's a dream," Moore said of simply being a member of the US World Cup team.

Other American hopefuls weren't so lucky when coach Bora Milutinovic had to make cuts to reach the 22-player roster limit.

Moore saw a friend from his college playing days at UCLA released in the final cut.

"I knew I was one of the last players to be picked," the midfielder-forward said. "Chris Henderson was my roommate at UCLA; of course I hate to see him be left off the team. Coach didn't really talk about his picks."

"He doesn't ever say no, and we all worked very hard because we really were not sure until the very end. He kept everyone so off-balance."

After leading Mission Viejo High School to the state championship in 1989, Moore went to UCLA, where he was a nominee for the 1991 Hermann Trophy as the top player in the country.

Moore said he grew up in a country where soccer is a relatively minor sport. Moore dreamed of becoming a soccer star.

"I played every sport and I was the best at soccer. I enjoyed it most," said Moore, who was born in Tulsa, Okla.

In Oklahoma? "Oh yeah, on Oklahoma. It's very popular," he said. "The Green Country Soccer Association is as big as the American Youth Soccer Organization is out here. It's the largest sport out there, participation-wise."

Asked why he stayed with soccer even when the adulation and money was in other sports, Moore had a quick reply.

"The love for the game," he said. "I stuck with it and made it my life. I enjoy it so much. I still do and it's my job, how many people can say that about their job?"

The Americans begin World Cup play Saturday against Switzerland in the Silverdome at Pontiac, Mich.

"I think we'll surprise people and make the second round," Moore said.

Milutinovic has a history of making surprising moves. Just weeks before the 1990 World Cup in Italy, he took over the Costa Rican team and made six changes in the lineup, ousting the team captain. The team then made the second round of the World Cup.

Moore, a history major, hopes history will repeat itself. But whatever happens, he said, "I'm just thrilled to be here."

