

Lord's Test begins today

England keep Rhodes out

LONDON, June 21: Historical precedent, current form and the bookmakers are all pointing to a virtual no chance of levelling the six-match series against West Indies in the second Test, starting at Lord's on Thursday, reports AFP.

The world's most famous cricket ground has not been a happy venue for England for sometime and since World War II, they have defeated the West Indies at Lord's on just one occasion—in 1957.



RICHELIE RICHARDSON while bookmakers are offering 4.5 on a West Indies win, with the draw 7.4.

In truth, there have not been many grounds on the circuit in recent years where England's oppositions has arrived in mortal dread of the home nation's reputation.

Headingley, where the cloud cover is meant to give England's seamers some kind of advantage, has always been seen as their best hope of success.

But in the first Test, the myth was exploded once again when the West Indies—apparently suffering from a confidence-crisis after the series defeat to Australia—annihilated England by nine wickets.

Since then, West Indies reiterated in their rain-affected draw against Durham, that reports of their decline have been grossly exaggerated.

Richie Richardson, Sherwin Campbell and reserve

keeper Courtney Browne all raced to centuries in their first and only innings. Brain Lara hit a lightning 91 and rejuvenated paceman Ian Bishop—the man-of-the-match in the first Test—was virtually unplayable for much of the Durham match.

But the tourists may only have four fit pace bowlers available on Thursday after hamstring and knee injuries prevented Winston Benjamin from taking the field on Monday.

With Kenny Benjamin already doubtful for the Test because of a side strain, Otis Gibson now has a good chance of making his Test debut.

Very little went right for England at Headingley and the composition of the 13-man squad for Thursday's match suggests that the selectors have accepted some of the blame.

England will again go into Thursday's second Test without a specialist wicket-keeper after chairman of selectors Ray Illingworth went back on his decision to recall Steve Rhodes on Wednesday.

Instead, Alec Stewart will keep wicket again and, in all probability, he will also be asked to open the batting despite his well-known reluctance to take on both responsibilities.

The move will allow England to go into the match with five bowlers rather than four.

Illingworth had said on Sunday that Rhodes would play because Stewart was not happy about both keeping wicket and opening.

But he admitted he did not like the idea of going into the Test with only four bowlers.

Illingworth's response since the weekend has been to successfully change Stewart's mind, and convince the other selectors—captain Mike Atherton, Fred Titmus and David Graveney—that his plan is best.

"Ray has talked to Alec at length over the last day or two. I am one of the selectors and this is the final decision we have made," said Atherton.

Stewart will now open if England bat first and may still do that job after a lengthy session behind the stumps, provided he is not too tired.

In the event of another opener being needed, Robin Smith—who made 16 and six and looked like a fish out of water during the first Test at Headingley—will again step up.

With a number of promising young batsmen pressing for his place, Lords is likely to be Smith's last chance of re-establishing his international credentials.

It amounts to major gamble by England and illingworth in particular, after the



MIKE ATHERTON nine-wicket hammering in the first Test at Headingley, where the decision to open with Smith and drop Stewart down the order were a palpable failure.

Captain Atherton is confident of making a full recovery despite a worrying recurrence of his chronic back complaint.

With Angus Fraser, Darren Gough and Richard Illingworth almost certain starters, Martin appears to be in a three-way fight with Phillip DeFreitas and the uncapped Dominic Cork.

Cork, whose batting ability takes him to the fringes of the all-rounder category, gave credit to West Indian paceman Malcolm Marshall for helping him win his Test call.

"He showed me how to bowl the inswinger and I've taken a few wickets with it this season," he admitted. "I've still got a bit of work to do on it but it's another weapon in my armoury."

Improve standard of sport: PM

Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia yesterday called upon the sportsmen to improve sports and games through proper utilisation of opportunities being provided by the government, reports UNB.

She said the present government attached importance to improving the standard of sports in the country.

Begum Zia was talking to a delegation of eminent sports personalities who were awarded state honour in this field when they paid a courtesy call on the Prime Minister at her office in the afternoon.

The Prime Minister said her government has taken steps so that the school students can involve themselves in different sports alongside their study. She laid importance on practice for better performance.

She sought suggestions from the sports personalities for the improvement of the standard of sports and also urged the affluent section of the society to come forward in developing sports in the country.

The delegation members requested Begum Zia to introduce a special identity card for the sports personalities who have received the state honour.

The Prime Minister told them that the government would consider their appeal and assured them of all possible cooperation.

The delegation members were Lutfunnessa Huq, Doly Ghosh, Zaheda Ali, Mrs Zinat, Kazi Alam, Fazlur Rahman Arzu, Golam Sarwar Tipu, Abdur Rahim, Bashir Ahmed, Nabi Chowdhury, Kudrattullah, Mahmudur Rahman Moyeen, Shaheb Ali, Mukta, Zakaria Pintu, Mansur Ahsan, Major (ret'd) Hafiz and Abdul Hamid.

Jansher irate

PESHAWAR, June 21: World champion Jansher Khan said on Tuesday he would no longer play in the British Squash League again after he was accused of not trying in a club match, reports Reuter.

"I have informed by manager that I will not play in the UK league in future," he said following the Super Squash League (SSL) ban for the rest of the year. "I prefer professional tournaments."

The suspension followed Jansher's 10-8, 9-0, 9-0 defeat by Scottish champion Peter Nicol in the third and last match of a semifinal playoff in Bristol last April after his Welshback Wizards team and already lost 2-0 to Cannons Club.

"The British don't want us Pakistanis to win, they keep giving us mental torture to disturb us," Jansher said.

Jackson to miss Euro Cup

LONDON, June 21: World champion sprint hurdler Colin Jackson withdrew from Britain's team Wednesday for this weekend's European Cup in Lille, suffering from tonsillitis, reports AP.

Jackson, who won a 110m hurdles on Tuesday after losing his two previous races, has been suffering from what he thought was a cold for the past week.

The Welshman's doctor advised him to take a break and as well as the cup, he is likely to miss Grand Prix meetings in Helsinki on June 28 and Paris on July 3.

Britain's reserve hurdler Tony Jarret is also unavailable because of injury.



Recipients of national sports award met Prime Minister Begum Khaleda Zia at her office yesterday. State Minister for Youth and Sports Sadeque Hossain seen on her right.

Women's European Cup England, Holland in last four

AMSTELVEEN, Netherlands, June 21: England and the Netherlands made sure of their places in the semifinals of the women's European Cup by maintaining their 100 per cent records in their final group matches on Tuesday, reports Reuter.

England defeated Ireland 2-0 in Group A and the Netherlands beat Russia 3-0 in Group B to take their places in the last four.

Russia were eliminated after their loss and allowed Olympic champions Spain through even though they have not previously made the last four of the Europeans. The winner of Group B will not be decided until the Netherlands play Spain today. Neither team has yet conceded a goal.

England were the first country to qualify for Friday's semifinals by winning all five of their Pool A matches, scoring 19 goals and conceding none. They will meet the runners-up of Group B on Friday.

England again failed to find their early tournament form,

playing almost as poorly as they did in Monday's 3-0 win over Italy. They had just one genuine chance in the first half against an Irish side content to defend.

Another opening was wasted early in the second half but eventually Sandie Lister, the England captain, was fouled in the Irish circle and a penalty stroke was awarded which Karen Brown converted in the 46th minute.

Five minutes later, Jill Atkins converted England's sixth penalty corner to give her side a 2-0 lead. It was Atkins' seventh goal of the tournament, making her joint top scorer with Franziska Hentschel of Germany and

Ellen Kuipers of the Netherlands.

Like England, Netherlands had to wait a long time for their first goal.

The Russians defended six penalty corners in the first half but, just before half time, could not prevent Ellen Kuipers the new Dutch forward discovery, snatching her eighth goal of the tournament from close range. Dutch captain Wietske de Ruiter and Marlies Vossen, added second half goals.

Scotland and France made sure of qualifying for the 5-8th place play-offs. Scotland defeated Sweden 9-0 with their centre forward Susan Macdonald finding the net five times, including three from the penalty spot. It was Scotland's biggest win since they beat Denmark, 9-0 twenty years ago.

Acosta snubs Samaranch

LAUSANNE, Switzerland, June 21: Dr Ruben Acosta, Mexican-born president of the International Volleyball Federation, said here on Tuesday that he had declined IOC president Juan Antonio Samaranch's invitation to become an IOC member, reports AFP.

Christie, Jackson find form

MADRID, June 21: Linford Christie ended the worst week of his life with a narrow 100 metres victory at an international meeting in Spain on Tuesday, reports Reuter.

Britain's world and Olympic champion edged out Canadian Donovan Bailey at the line to win to a modest 10.35 seconds on a blustery night in an IAAF permit meeting at the Estadio de la Comunidad de Madrid.

In the last eight days Christie announced live on TV he was quitting the sport, threatened the media at Heathrow Airport, and suffered the death of his mother.

But on Tuesday he managed to put all of that behind him with his first international win of the season.

Christie, who said on television last Monday he would not defend his Olympic title in Atlanta next year because of media pressure, led after 50 metres before Bailey found his stride and pulled ahead.

But Christie, returning to a city of fond memories where he won the first major medal of his career—the European Indoor Championships gold in 1986—fought back over the last 20 metres to win by 0.02 of a second.

Briton Colin Jackson, Christie's close friend and business partner who was profoundly upset by the death of Christie's mother last week, returned to winning ways in the 110 metres hurdles, edging home ahead of Cuban Emilio Valle and Eric Batle in 14.07.

Samuel Matete of Zambia won the race in 48.69 seconds.

Javier Stomayor, who won the World Indoor Championships in Barcelona in March, won the men's high jump, but on a blustery evening in the Spanish capital the Cuban ended well short of his own world record of 2.45 metres with a final clearance of 2.34.

Khans London party held

LONDON, June 21: Pakistani cricket idol Imran Khan and British heiress Jemima Goldsmith were married Tuesday in a glittering high-society wedding blessed by sun, money and the very best of guest lists, reports Reuter.

From royals to aristocrats, diplomats to bankers, the world's well-to-do flocked to the leafy London suburb of Richmond to witness the brief civic ceremony and then toast the union at a lavish mid-summer ball hosted by the bride's father, Anglo-French financier Sir James Goldsmith.

Hatted, suited and with a coy smile, the bride was greeted by crowds of well-wishers when she arrived for

the civic wedding, which followed a Muslim ceremony in Paris last month.

True to tradition, she kept the groom waiting 25 minutes.

Wearing a cream outfit by designer Bruce Oldfield, the bride was looking modest in an Islamic dress—long skirt, tapered jacket and wide brimmed hat.

Khan, twice her age at 42, wore an Islamic tunic. He too once the very model of a single man about town—was mobbed by fans brandishing roses after emerging from the most talked—about wedding of the year.

Not all the publicity has been positive. Some Pakistani purists are dismayed that one of their national heroes chose a blonde of Jewish descent as

his bride. British xenophobes fear a life of drudgery for Goldsmith, a recent convert to Islam, once she vanishes "behind the veil".

Speaking just hours before the wedding, the former cricket captain and his student bride acknowledged the challenges ahead, be it the age gap, cultural rift or religious differences.

But Khan showed the style that so often lifted Pakistan to victory on the pitch and made him a heartthrob from London to Lahore. "It's like entering a match and thinking about losing you cannot win," he told Sky television. "So how awful to enter a marriage and think about divorce?"

With a nod to his playful past, the handsome Khan said only: "I wish I was born an angel and I would never have committed a sin in my life. But I wasn't."

Goldsmith too said she was ready for her new life in Pakistan, where Khan has refashioned himself as a devout Muslim patriot, fuelling talk of high political ambitions.

"I know it's a big challenge to try and adapt to that kind of culture but I don't really have any huge, huge fears," she told Sky. "I know to some extent what I'm going into."

It was one of the most converted invitations of the summer season. The guest list was said to include Princess Diana—who anyway had a prior engagement—and an assortment of other royals. Landed aristocrats and the world's rich and powerful.

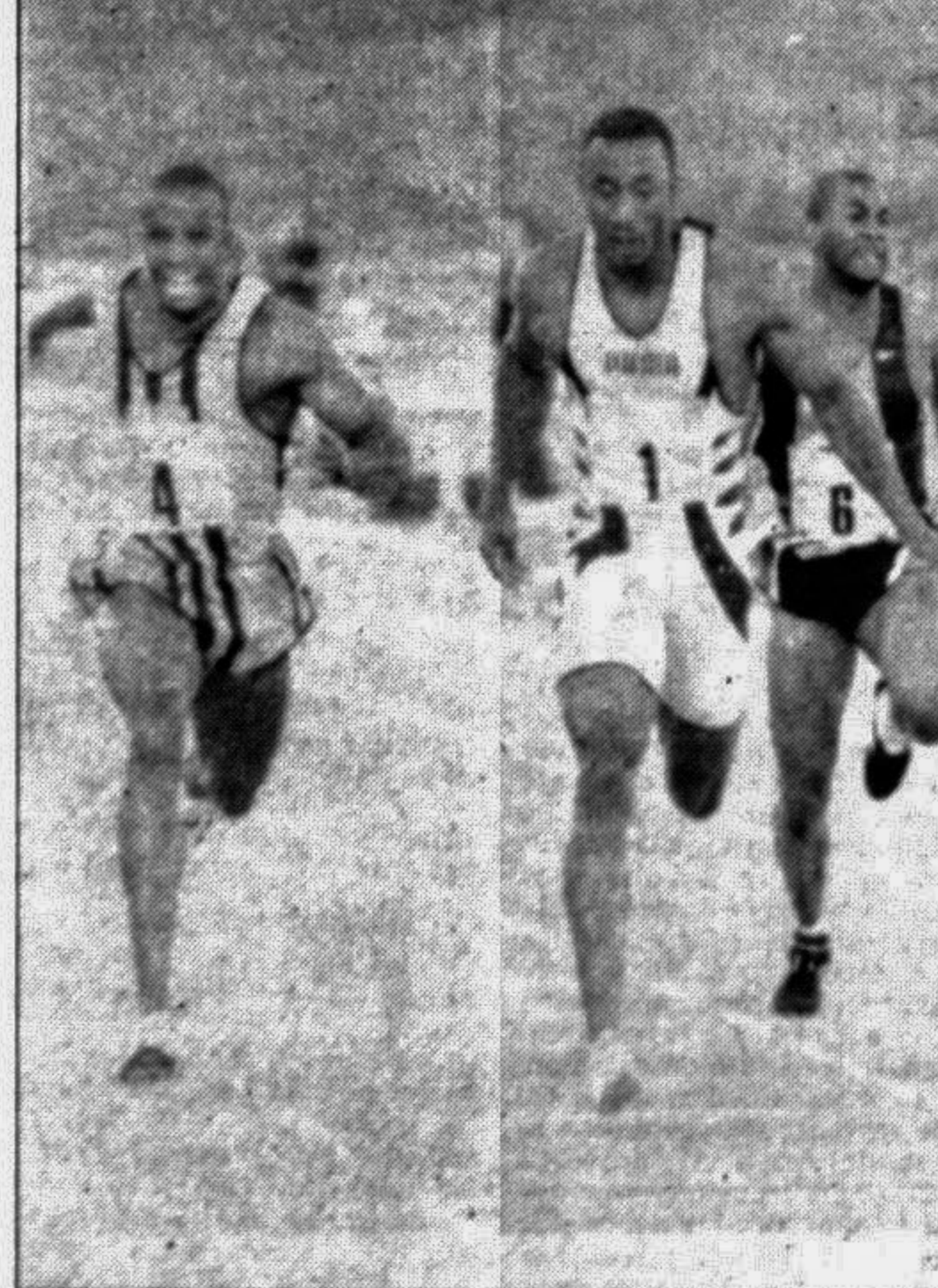
Among them, former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, bankers Sir Evelyn de Rothschild and Lord Hambro, Australia's richest man Kerry Packer and multimillionaire Lord White.

Broadcaster David Frost and Prince Rupert Loewenstein, business manager to the Rolling Stones, also received the call.

Muster prevails

ST. POELTEN, Austria, June 21: French Open winner Thomas Muster struggled against unseeded Filip Dewulf of Belgium but finally beat him 4-6, 7-6 (9-7), 6-3 in first-round play Tuesday at a 375,000 dollars men's clay court tournament, reports AP.

Fellow-Austrians in the stands yelled out Paris after Muster committed a double fault at 3-3 in the second set. He responded with an ace. He hunched along for the rest of the set, fending off three match points to win.



Britain's Olympic champion Linford Christie crosses the finish line to win the 100 metres event at an international meeting in Madrid on June 20. Christie clocked 10.35 seconds.

18th Asian men's b'ball live on Star TV

Prime Sports presents Asian viewers with live and exclusive satellite coverage of the Asian men's basketball championships presently taking place in Seoul, Korea. Prime Sports' coverage will commence with the quarter-finals live on June 22 at 9:30 am, says a press release.

This tournament is certain to spark some riveting hoop action as the nineteen Asian countries competing are ultimately vying for one of the top two positions; the top two finalists will advance to represent Asia in the 1996 Olympic Summer Games in Atlanta, USA.

The preliminary rounds, currently in play, are formatted with the nineteen teams divided into four groups of five (with the exception of group B which has four) competing in round-robin play with the top two teams from each group proceeding to the quarter-final rounds.

Courier crashes

BONN, June 21: A fighting display from fellow-American Richey Reneberg and an awkward bounce on match-point conspired to dup fifth seed Jim Courier out of the 750,000 dollars Halle grass court tournament on Tuesday, reports Reuter.

The bounce left Courier with no chance of a return and gave Reneberg the match 6-7, 6-3, 7-6.

Veteran Jimmy Connors' his first tour appearance for more than a year, ignored the inconsistency of the surface to earn his substantial appearance money by beating young Canadian hopeful Sebastien Lareau 6-4, 7-6.

Connors showed little sign of his 42 years as he came back from 2-4 down to take the first set and again recovered from a break down late in the second before dominating the subsequent tiebreak.

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