

Lloyd concerned with openers

GEORGETOWN, Guyana. Apr 5: Clive Lloyd admitted that West Indies have still not come to grips with losing openers Gordon Greenidge and Desmond Haynes from the international stage; reports Reuter.

The pair were a formidable force in both Test and one-day matches during the 1980s and early 1990s.

Lloyd, West Indies coach for the home series against New Zealand, said: "We don't have a settled opening pair - that is a major concern."

"We have still not come to grips with the fact that Greenidge and Haynes have finished playing for a long while."

After sharing a century opening stand in the opening one-day match of the five-game series against New Zealand, Stuart Williams and Shivnarine Chanderpaul mustered just 48 runs between them in the next three.

Lloyd did not single out the pair for criticism after West Indies' four-run defeat in the fourth match in Georgetown on Wednesday but he was at pains to point out that his side played some "bad cricket, batting-wise" while chasing a modest 159-run target.

"We should have won the match," said Lloyd, "but we are trying to build a team and we are going back hiccups on the way."

TCCB sets matters straight

LONDON, Apr 5: English cricket officials denied today they were trying to block the election of Ian Botham as a national selector, reports Reuter.

Test and County Cricket Board (TCCB) chief executive Alan Smith has written to all 18 first-class counties pointing out the media commitments of "at least one candidate."

But Smith insisted: "It is long-standing policy and was applied to both Ray Illingworth and Ted Dexter."

Smith's letter, revealed in today's Daily Mirror newspaper, is being seen as a direct threat to former England captain and allrounder Botham, who is one of nine contenders for two vacant places on the selection committee.

TCCB spokesman Richard Little also stressed the letter was not designed to comment unfavourably on Botham's potential clash of interests with his media work, saying: "Alan was certainly not trying to put the block on anyone."

Smith reminded counties of a similar situation last year when Bob Willis nomination was withdrawn by Surrey because of his work in the media.

The letter said: "At least one of the nominations to date is, we believe, very heavily involved with a media responsibility."

"In the circumstances we believe you should be advised of the position taken up by the executive committee at roughly the same time last year."

The letter adds details of an executive meeting which stated: "After a brief discussion it was agreed, as a matter of principle, that someone who was employed full-time in the media could not be a selector."

The first-class counties, MCC and the minor counties will vote to decide the two selectors, and the outcome is due to be announced on April 18.

New payment system in German soccer

BONN, Apr 5: Germany's soccer bosses have proposed that payments to a central pool which would benefit all professional clubs should replace transfer fees for out-of-contract players, reports Reuter.

The league committee of the German Soccer Federation (DFB) agreed the plan on Wednesday night and will recommend it to a meeting of the country's 36 professional clubs next Tuesday.

The committee proposed a transitional transfer system should operate next season and the new pool system would be in place for the 1997-98 season.

The committee also proposed that clubs be allowed to play an unlimited number of players from any UEFA-affiliated country from next season, scrapping the limits on players from other European countries playing in the Bundesliga.

Precise details of the new pool system are still under wraps but the general idea is that a club buying an out-of-contract player would pay a fee into a central fund or pool instead of the players former club.

The pool money, augmented by cash from television rights, would then be distributed among all the clubs according to a formula which has yet to be finalised.

Tendulkar's ton goes in vain Pakistan pulverise India



SINGAPORE, Apr 5: A rollicking 144-run opening partnership between skipper Aamir Sohail and Saad Anwar powered Pakistan into the Singer Cup final with an eight-wicket revenge win over India today, reports AFP.

Little master Sachin Tendulkar's seventh one-day century for India went in vain as Pakistan easily reached their 187-run target in a rain-shortened match at the Padang on Sunday.

India made 226 for eight in 47.1 overs but the Pakistani target was revised to 187 off the next three.

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Aamir Sohail

AAMIR SOHAIL... m-o-m 33 overs after heavy rain robbed more than two hours of play.

Pakistan won with five overs to spare and qualified for the final with a better run-rate.

Anwar slammed 74 off just 49 balls with three powerful sixes, one of which sailed out of the ground and into the street, and seven fours as the two left-handed openers put the Indian bowling to the sword.

He eventually fell to left-arm spinner Venkatapathy Raju going for another six and holding out to Rahul Dravid at the mid-wicket boundary. But by then Pakistan were virtually home and dry.

Leg-spinner Anil Kumble claimed Rameez Raja, lbw for five with a quick top-spinner, but Sohail steered Pakistan to their target with no hiccups after being dropped by the same bowler off his own bowling.

Sohail, who led from the front, remained not out with 76 off 89 balls as his side avenged their World Cup quarter-final defeat to their

arch-rivals.

"The skipper, who took a wicket and astutely marshalled his attack during the Indian innings, was named the man-of-the-match.

"Aamir and Saad really batted well. They took away the game from us," said disappointed Indian skipper Mohammad Azharuddin.

Pakistan needed a handsome win to qualify for the final on a better run-rate after losing Tuesday's high-scoring opener to World Cup champions Sri Lanka, who were beaten by India the following day.

Everything went right for the Pakistanis after Sohail won the toss and put India in to bat, but Tendulkar was not to be denied his maiden century against Pakistan.

The 23-year-old batting sensation hit a six and nine four off 111 balls to delight a sell-out 5,000-strong good Friday holiday crowd before he was out for exactly 100.

Tendulkar's century easily eclipsed his previous best 73 against the same opponents in Sharjah in 1994.

Wicket-keeper Rashid Latif removed the balls in a flash as Tendulkar stepped out of the crease to off-spinner Saqlain Mushtaq, his concentration disturbed by a crowd invasion of the grounds after he had reached three figures.

He added 59 runs in a fourth-wicket partnership with Sanjay Manjrekar before his dismissal in the 39th over just when he looked ready to launch a major assault on the bowling.

India's innings -- including three suicidal run-outs -- began in sedate fashion with Tendulkar and Navjot Sidhu putting on 44 runs for the first wicket after Pakistan skipper Aamir Sohail won the toss and put them in.

Sidhu, who had scored an invaluable 94 against Sri Lanka on Wednesday, was caught by Latif, off medium-pace Aaqib Javed for 14.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard in the rain-hit Singer Cup Limited overs cricket match between India and Pakistan on Friday.

INDIA: Sidhu c Latif b Aaqib 14; Tendulkar st Latif b Saqlain 100; Asharuddin c Latif b Sohail 29; Dravid run out 4; Manjrekar c Aaqib b Saqlain 41; Jadeja run out 5; Mongia run out 3; Kumble not out 14; Srinath st Latif b Saqlain 1; Prasad not out 15.

Extras: (lb-3, w-9, nb-3) 15. Total: (eight wickets-47.1 overs) 226. Fall of wickets: 1-44; 2-110; 3-127; 4-186; 5-195; 6-205; 7-223; 8-224. Did not bat: V Raju.

SAEED ANWAR... 74

Bowling table for Saad Anwar

PAKISTAN: Aamir Sohail not out 76; Saad Anwar c Dravid b Raju 74; Rameez Raja lbw Kumble 5; Salim Malik not out 25; Extras: (lb-3, w-4, nb-3) 10; Total: (for 2 wickets in 28 overs) 190; Fall of wickets: 1-144; 2-162.

Bowling table for Pakistan

Result: Pakistan won by eight wickets. Man-of-the-match: Aamir Sohail.

Note: Pakistan's target was reduced to 187 in 33 overs after rain shortened the match.

Rahul Dravid was run out in his second one-day international, and five wickets were lost for the addition of just 38 runs as Tendulkar's dismissal set the stage for a middle-order collapse.

Ajay Jadeja and Nayan Mongia were both run out cheaply. Manjrekar top-edged Saqlain to Javed's safe hands in the deep after making 41 and Javagal Srinath was stumped off the same bowler.

Saqlain was the pick of the Pakistani attack with three for 38.

The skies opened up over the Padang ground after the first ball of the 48th over was

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PSG take advantage

LA CORUNA, Spain, Apr 5: A superb 89th minute strike by substitute Youri Djorkaeff gave Paris St Germain a 1-0 victory over Deportivo Coruna in the first leg of their European Cup Winners' Cup semifinal on Thursday, reports Reuter.

Djorkaeff picked up the ball in midfield, found space and blasted home the winner from 25 metres.

The goal was the high point of a poor game in which both sides wasted the few chances they had managed to create.

Deportivo's best chance fell to another substitute, Aitor Begiristain, who hit the bar in the 74th minute after pouncing on a ball that PSG goalkeeper Bernard Lama had been unable to hold.

Deportivo's other chances fell to Brazilian World Cup striker Bebeto and Fran Gonzalez.

Bebeto decided to pass rather than running with a fine through ball from Donato after only two minutes while Gonzalez was foiled by Lama just after the break.

PSG's Pascal Louma and Patrice Lokoeach forced saves out of Deportivo goalkeeper Patco Liano in successive minutes of the second half of a game that had appeared doomed to end in a goalless draw.

The result means Deportivo who knocked out holders Zaragoza in the quarter-finals -- will have to score at least once in the return leg in Paris to have any chance of keeping the trophy in Spain.

PSG have a knack of beating Spanish sides, having defeated Real Madrid twice and Barcelona once in European competitions over the past five years.

Athens Games revisited

ATHENS, Apr 5: One hundred years ago, Francis Lane of the United States sped down a 100-meter cinder track before 40,000 cheering spectators to win the first foot race of the modern Olympic Games, reports AP.

The Princeton University student was the winner of his heat in 12.5 seconds, but it was another American, James Brendan Connoly, who won the first gold medal in the hop, skip and jump, an event later known as the triple jump.

Those Athens Games, which opened on April 6, 1896, will be re-enacted Saturday in special 100th anniversary ceremonies.

This is not the event Greece had wanted to stage. The Greeks expected to host the Centennial Games -- an honour that went instead to Atlanta, a city founded just 59 years before the revival of the Olympics.

Many Greeks remain bitter about losing out to Atlanta, although the wounds have healed somewhat.

"I must confess that at the beginning we were a little bitter and a little sad... but Greeks with the magnitude of their hearts have forgotten all of this," said Adonis Tsikas, president of the Greek Olympic Committee.

In an effort to mend fences, the International Olympic Committee allowed Greek officials to organise a series of events marking the centennial, including Saturday's re-enactment.

Athletes from the United States, Greece and the eight other countries that took part in the 1896 games (Germany, France, Britain, Hungary, Austria, Australia, Denmark and Switzerland) will again gather in this city's 1,666-year-old all-marble Panathenaic Stadium.

There will be four track races and six field events, all conducted using 1896 rules that include a ban on starting blocks. The only exceptions are the high jump and pole vault in which athletes will use modern equipment for reasons of safety. At the first games, athletes jumped into sand pits.

The celebrations will be topped off by the entrance of the Olympic Flame after a week-long 1,562-mile relay around Greece. The flame will be carried around the stadium by athletes from the 22 cities that have hosted the Summer Games.

The athletes include two-time Olympic hurdles champion Roger Kingdom of the United States, representing the 1984 Los Angeles Games. The flame will be handed over to American officials for the 10,000-mile relay that starts in Los Angeles on April 27 and ends in Atlanta on July 19.

Atlanta Mayor Bill Campbell and IOC president Juan Antonio Samaranch will be on hand for the celebration, as will as mayors from 17 cities which have hosted past Games.

Despite the April 6 gala and conciliatory words coming from the lips of Greek sports officials, a great deal of resentment still abounds over what many Greeks have dubbed the "Coca-Cola Olympics" in Atlanta.

Even Tsikas' voice cracked with emotion when he said that Greek "have forgotten all of this" at the lighting of the Atlanta torch during a special ceremony last weekend at Ancient Olympia.



Deportivo La Coruna's Brazilian superstar Bebeto outfoxes two Paris St Germain players during their European Cup Winners' Cup semifinal first leg encounter in La Coruna, Spain on April 4. The Paris outfit won 1-0.

Rapid keep hopes alive

ROTTERDAM, Apr 5: Carsten Jancker gave Rapid, Vienna, a great chance of reaching the European Cup Winners' Cup final when he scored the equaliser in a 1-1 draw against Feyenoord Rotterdam in a semifinal first leg on Thursday, reports Reuter.

Jancker, who scored twice against Dynamo Moscow in the quarterfinals, taught Feyenoord's international goalkeeper Ed de Goeij on the wrong foot as he headed home from close range in the 67th minute.

Feyenoord, by far the stronger side, had gone in front 14 minutes earlier when Ronald Koeman scored from the penalty spot after striker Henk Vos was fouled in the box.

Rapid, who lost to England's Everton in the 1985 Cup Winners' Cup final here, looked in danger of being overwhelmed in the first 25

minutes as Feyenoord attacked at speed against the Austrian side.

But despite a dozen chances, with winger Giovanni van Bronckhorst slightly off target three times, and forcing eight corners to none, the home side failed to score.

The Rotterdam defence made errors as the first half wore on and De Goeij did well to parry a shot from Jancker in the 28th minute.

The best chance in the first half fell to Koeman three minutes into injury time but the former international failed to get hold of his shot firmly after Swedish teammate Henrik Larsson ran across his path.

Feyenoord earned a penalty in the 53rd minute when veteran Bulgarian defender Trifon Inonov fouled Vos. Koeman fired the spot-kick to the left of goalkeeper Michael Konsel.

The Dutch team stepped up the pace in search of a second goal but Rapid deflated them with a goal on a rare counter-

attack.

A cross by Christian Stumpf, which seemed to elude everybody, was headed in by Jancker at the far post, leaving De Goeij in despair at seeing the ball drop behind him into the net.

Feyenoord lost confidence after that unexpected blow. Rapid, their spirits raised, successfully closed down in defence and return to Vienna with every chance in the second leg.

Disappointed Feyenoord coach Arie Haan saw his team's chances of reaching next month's final in Brussels recede but still praised his side.

"We played well but the equaliser was an anticlimax. After it was 1-1 the players wanted to press on but did not have faith anymore," he said.

Rapid coach Ernst Doppen said: "At the beginning we were overwhelmed but in the last part we got more grip on the match."

Atlanta's final countdown

ATLANTA, Apr 5: Atlanta's Olympic marathon turned toward a 100-day sprint, organisers could be forgiven for wondering when the hurdles would come down.

They have had to contend with a host of problems while readying their city for the centennial Olympic Games, reports AP.

Two 10,000-pound beams crashed to the ground minutes after they were installed at the 21 million dollar Olympic swimming arena at Georgia Tech.

Construction of several other projects, including the showpiece Centennial Olympic Park, was accelerated to make up time lost in an unusually cold and wet winter and early spring.

Despite an almost obsessive concentration on raising money, organisers of the privately funded games reported they still needed about \$1.7 billion dollars it will cost to stage the Games.

And nearly everyone was griping about the traffic snarls caused by Olympic preparations.

So why was Olympic organising committee head Billy Payne smiling?

"All of us...are about to encounter that which I believe will become one of the most intense, nerve-racking but wonderful times of our lives," said Payne, president of the Atlanta Committee for the Olympic Games.

For all the tumult the city has encountered in six years of getting ready for the Summer Games, there has been one constant: the lack of worry expressed by Payne, the city's Olympic boss.

The latest raft of problems that have confronted the organising effort are, in Payne's view, inevitable bumps on the road to the big payoff.

The work ahead, he said, is great but not insurmountable. The clock will tick more loudly, however, on Wednesday, when the 100-day countdown starts.

"While what we have to do is a lot, it was never supposed to be done except in the last 100 days," Payne said in an interview, sounding relaxed for someone who's having a party with a guest list of 2 million people.

"I don't want to underestimate the enormity of that, but I do want to put it in perspective that there are no time pressures whatsoever, because in every case there are schedules

to do all that and we're right on schedule."

The biggest job remaining for the Atlanta organisers is finishing the 12 arenas that are being built for the Summer Games. In the next few weeks, ACOG also will take over about 20 existing facilities; it must adapt for Olympic use.

Needing a volunteer force of 40,000, ACOG still is wading through the 45,000 applications. The volunteers then must be trained and motivated to work long, grueling hours in exchange for a uniform, box lunches and the chance to say they were part of the Olympics.

A 15,000-mile Los Angeles to Atlanta torch relay, critical to stirring up national enthusiasm for the Games, is set to begin April 27.

And rehearsals are soon to begin for the opening ceremony, a top-secret extravaganza produced by Hollywood whiz Don Mischke.

So far, Atlanta's preparations have earned high marks from the International Olympic Committee, which has been closely monitoring the work. An IOC review panel will make its final pre-Olympic inspection next month.

"This time, the thing to do will be to make sure that everything is right for the athletes," said Dick Pound, the IOC member who heads the review panel.

"By that time, they should be into virtually every venue, or have their access plans and lighting and wiring plans for all the internal stuff ready to go."

Over the past six years, the mood of Atlanta residents has swung from yearning to fear to excitement. Now it finally seems to be settling into eager anticipation.

"We're going to come out fine. I like the way the city's dressing up," said Lloyd A. Givens Jr., a downtown office worker.

"I've got some concern about how they're going to handle the sheer numbers of people," said Pat Bendert, another downtown worker. "But I think the city's going to look spectacular."

USOC's radical tests put off

NEW YORK, Apr 5: A programme of no-notice, out-of-competition drug testing for US Olympic athletes probably won't be in place until after the Atlanta Games, reports AP.

A task force report on the programme, generally considered to be the toughest anti-doping package in the world, is expected to be adopted by the US Olympic Committee's board of directors next week.

But the report will include amendments delaying the effective date of some of the strongest provisions until after this summer's Games because there is too little time to implement such a broad and drastic program before July, officials said.

"We're going to drug test our Olympic athletes, as we have always done," said Baron Pittenger, co-chairman of the USOC's anti-doping task force. "But it is unlikely that no-advance-notice testing will be

implemented by Atlanta.

The task force said that delaying full implementation of the new programme would save 300,000 dollars that would have to be used to re-test some 800 athletes prior to the Games. The full programme is expected to cost about 2.6 million dollars annually, with the USOC picking up the entire tab.

But Pittenger said the delay was not an attempt to cut costs.

"It's a matter of time and putting in place a whole new set of procedures," he said. The package would make athletes in all 41 Olympic and Pan American Games sports liable to random, out-of-competition urinalysis without advance notice, more stringent than any other anti-doping programme in the world.

It would complement a hodge-podge of drug tests already run by the individual sports and the USOC, most of them during scheduled events. Such testing is considered

ineffective because athletes know when to expect screening and can stop or mask drug use in time to beat the testers.

The no-notice tests will not search for all drugs on the banned lists of each sport, which generally follow the pattern set by the International Olympic Committee and stretch to hundreds of substances from steroids to stimulants.

Pittenger said the unannounced tests would be aimed at "preventing anything that provides long-term training or competition advantage." The tests will look for strength-building steroids but not for amphetamines, which produce a short-term burst of energy, he said.

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