

Sport

A fantastic weekend of live cricket

Tune in to Star Sports for live coverage of an action-packed weekend of cricket! The excitement begins with the Final of the Pepsi Cup in Sharjah on Friday, April 19 at 10:30 BST. The Indians, rejuvenated with their victory over arch-rivals Pakistan, take on the thoroughly professional South Africans for the right to be called "Caliphs of the Desert," says a press release.

From the desert of the Middle East, the focus then shifts to the beautiful islands of the Caribbean as tourists New Zealand take on hosts West Indies in the first Test match in Barbados. Live telecast begins on Friday, April 19th at 20:00 BST. Live coverage of day two and three of the first Test will be aired on Saturday and Sunday night at the same time.

The five-match series of one-day internationals between the Kiwis and the Windies provided nail-biting excitement. West Indies won 3-2 and more drama can be expected in these Test matches. The West Indies' batting will be spearheaded by the immensely talented Brian Lara with skipper Courtney Walsh and Curtley Ambrose combining to form a potent pace attack. The New Zealanders, on the other hand, are a side short on superstars, but nonetheless comprise of competent individuals like Chris Cairns, Stephen Fleming and Gavind Larsen that combine well as a team.

So will the Indian tigers feast on the Springboks in camel territory and will the Kiwis dance to the Calypso beat? Tune in to Star Sports this weekend to find out!

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Wimbledon offers more money

LONDON, Apr 18: Wimbledon organisers announced on Thursday that prize money for this year's championships would be increased by 7.3 per cent to an overall total of 6,465,910 pounds (9.75 million dollars) sterling, reports Reuter.

The total compares with last year's figure of 6,025,550 pounds (9,08 million dollars).

The men's champion will receive 392,500 pounds (591,800 dollars), compared with the 365,000 pounds (550,000 dollars) Pete Sampras received last year, while the women's champion will receive 353,000 pounds (532,300 dollars) as against the 328,000 pounds (494,600 dollars) Steffi Graf won in 1995.

This year's championships run from June 24 to July 7.

Peter Graf's troubles mount

STUTTGART, Germany. Apr 18: German prosecutors have filed charges against the father of tennis star Steffi Graf and one of his financial advisers on suspicion of tax evasion. Mannheim prosecutor Peter Wehsung said on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

Wehsung said in a statement that Peter Graf and his associate Joachim Eckhardt were accused of evading taxes on 42 million marks (27.9 million dollars) in income of the world number one earned earlier in her glittering tennis career.

He said investigators had no evidence that Steffi Graf herself had made any false statements.

Peter Graf, who has handled his daughter's financial affairs since her childhood, has been in investigative custody since August.

The probe has also targeted Steffi Graf, but prosecutors have said they had no reason to detain her.

Aussies join anti-doping crusade

CANBERRA, Australia, Apr 18: Australia has joined an international anti-doping group designed to improve efforts to stamp out the use of banned substances in sport, reports AP.

Federal Sports Minister Warwick Smith said Thursday that Canada, Britain, Norway, France and New Zealand would take part in International Anti-Doping Arrangement (IADA), which involves reciprocal testing and exchange of information and expertise.

Smith said the arrangement still has to be signed by Canada, Britain and France. The Australian Sports Drug Agency (ASDA) will be the secretariat for the arrangement for two years from next January.

Smith also said progress had been made in continuing a bilateral anti-doping agreement with China despite suggestions the agreement was unravelling.

China's female swimmers have been under scrutiny for drug use and will be under pressure to be drug-free at the upcoming Atlanta Olympics.

Australia and China have exchanged information on drug testing since 1994.

Smith said ASDA and the Chinese Olympic Committee (CO-CADC) had agreed to conduct reciprocal testing prior to the Atlanta Games.

Barcelona to play friendly in China

BEIJING, Apr 18: Former European club champions Barcelona will play a friendly against Second Division Chinese side, Liaoning, during a tour in July, reports AFP.

In addition to the Spanish side, Liaoning, who were relegated last season, are also trying to bring over Belgium's Anderlecht and an Italian team, the official Xinhua news agency said.

187 strong Cuban delegation Atlanta bound

HAVANA, Apr 18: Cuba will send 187 competitors to the Summer Olympic Games in Atlanta, sports officials said on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

They will compete in athletics, women's basketball, baseball, boxing, cycling, diving, fencing, kayak, judo, weightlifting, wrestling, swimming, rowing, shooting, volleyball (men and women), beach volleyball and sailing.

In addition Cuba will also send 23 judges and federation officials, 12 doctors and 40 trainers.

Desert dressed for finale



SHARJAH, United Arab Emirates, Apr 18: Indian cricketer, manager Sandeep Patil lashed out at star batsman Sachin Tendulkar ahead of Friday's Pepsi Cup final against South Africa, saying his reckless batting was not helping the team's cause, reports AFP.

"Twice in this tournament Sachin has got out to silly shots. It shows he is not learning from his mistakes," Patil said on Thursday during the team's nets at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium.

The 22-year-old Tendulkar, India's batting pillar, smashed a century in the return match against arch-rivals Pakistan on Monday but made only 1, 2 and 17 in the three other league matches.

Stopping the brilliant South Africans, who eased through the double-leg preliminary league with an all-win record, may appear like a mirage in the desert for the Indians.

But Patil refuses to believe his team will be fighting a lost cause in Friday's final worth 30,000 dollars to the winners.

"No cricket team in the world is unbeatable in one-day cricket," he said. "It's a very unpredictable game. Every thing depends on how well you play on that day."

"We are not any less talented than the South Africans. But we have to play sensibly and to our full potential. If we do that, there is hope," Patil said.

India will field the same team which lost to the South Africans by five wickets in Wednesday's last league engagement.

"We have found the right combination. But they must all perform to their full ability if we are to win," Patil said.

The South Africans have so far appeared invincible in their maiden appearance at this popular desert venue, winning all their four league matches by huge margins.

But skipper Hansie Cronje, remembering his team's fate in the recent World Cup where they lost in the quarterfinal to the West Indies after romping through the league phase, is not taking victory for granted.

"Nothing's certain in one-day games. You have to play your best all the time," said Cronje, who has led his team to victory in 17 of its last 19 one-day internationals.

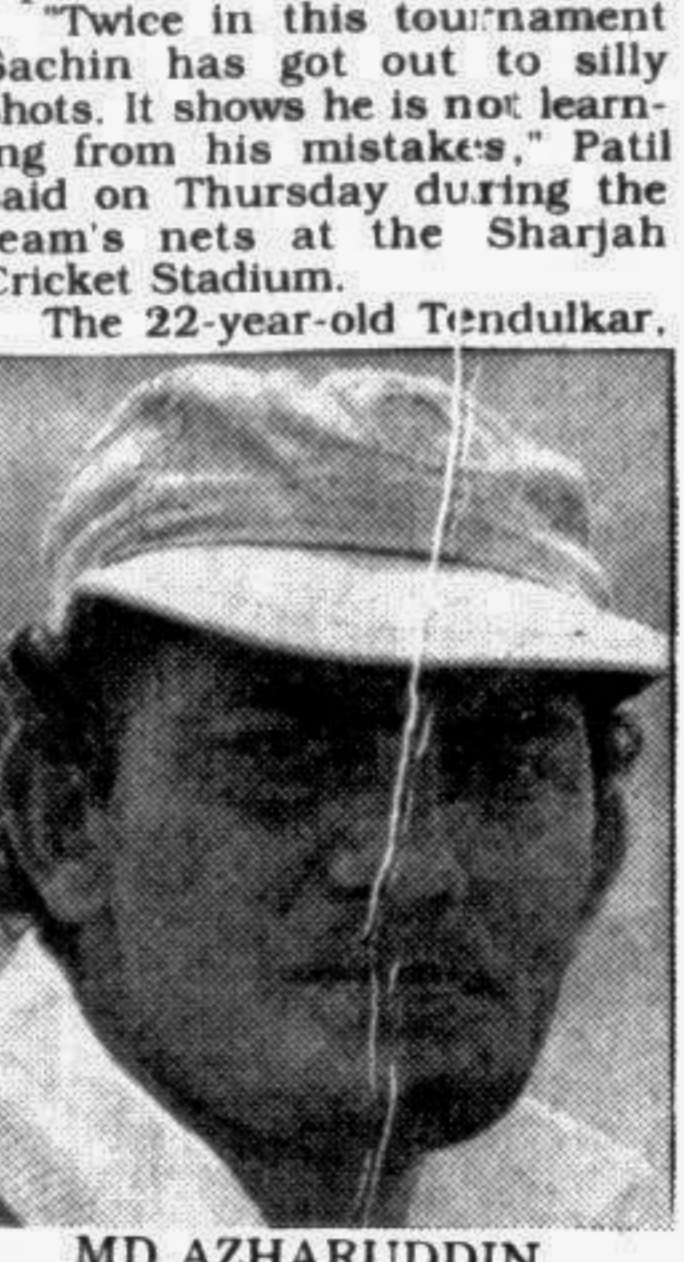
"We were happy with our form in the World Cup. Our performance gave us great confidence, but unintentionally I think we became a little too complacent."

The side came away from the World Cup with nothing to show for some very pleasing performances. I hope it's not the same again."

Cronje was confident that his team will be able to erase memories of their premature World Cup exit by winning on Friday.

"We want to see this one through, and after that happened to us in the World Cup, I honestly believe we are much better equipped to achieve that," he said.

A modest Cronje said both India and Pakistan may be suf-



fering from an exhausting schedule.

"After the World Cup they played in Singapore and now here."

"We, on the other hand, have had time to rest and refocus. I can't speak for them, but perhaps they are suffering from what must certainly have been a demanding few months."

The South Africans are almost certain to recall experienced opener Andrew Hudson and seamer Craig Matthews, who were rested for Wednesday's last league match against India.

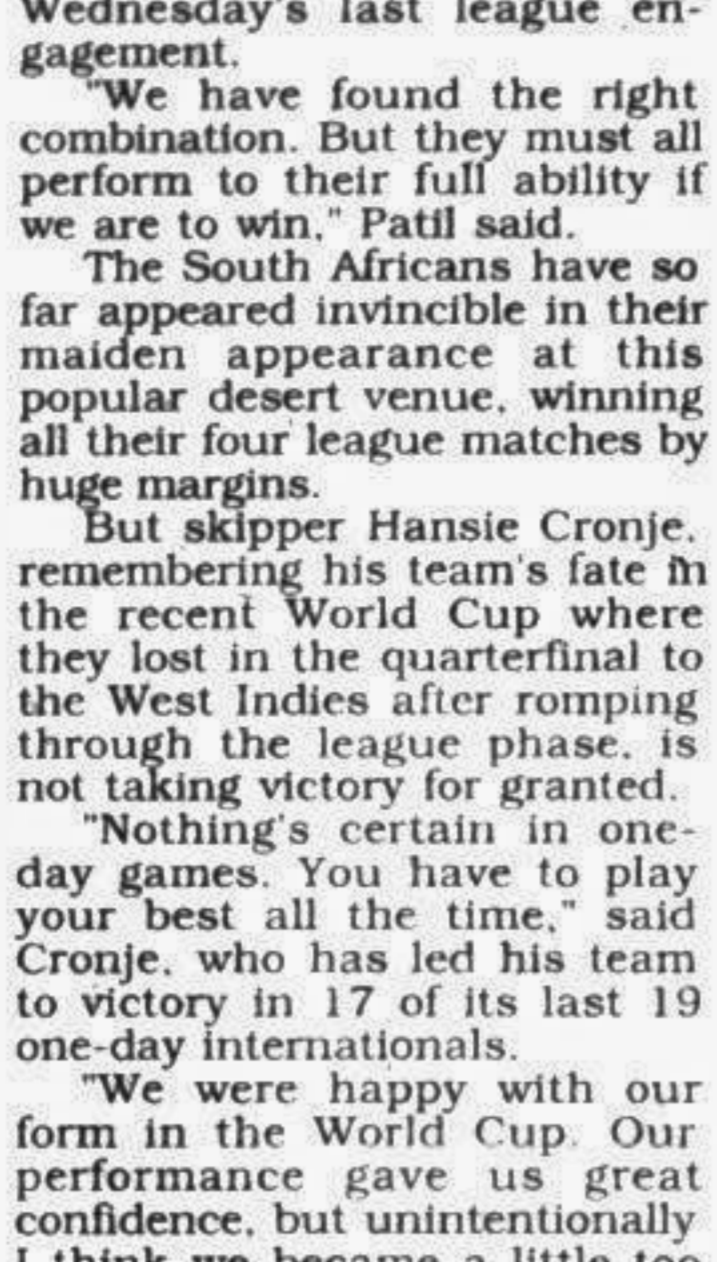
Graveney had earlier been nominated to stand against Illingworth for the chairman's job but withdrew when the association's County Cricketers' Trade Union, warned of a possible conflict of interests.

The result of the vote was announced on Thursday by Test and County Cricket Board chief executive Alan Smith.

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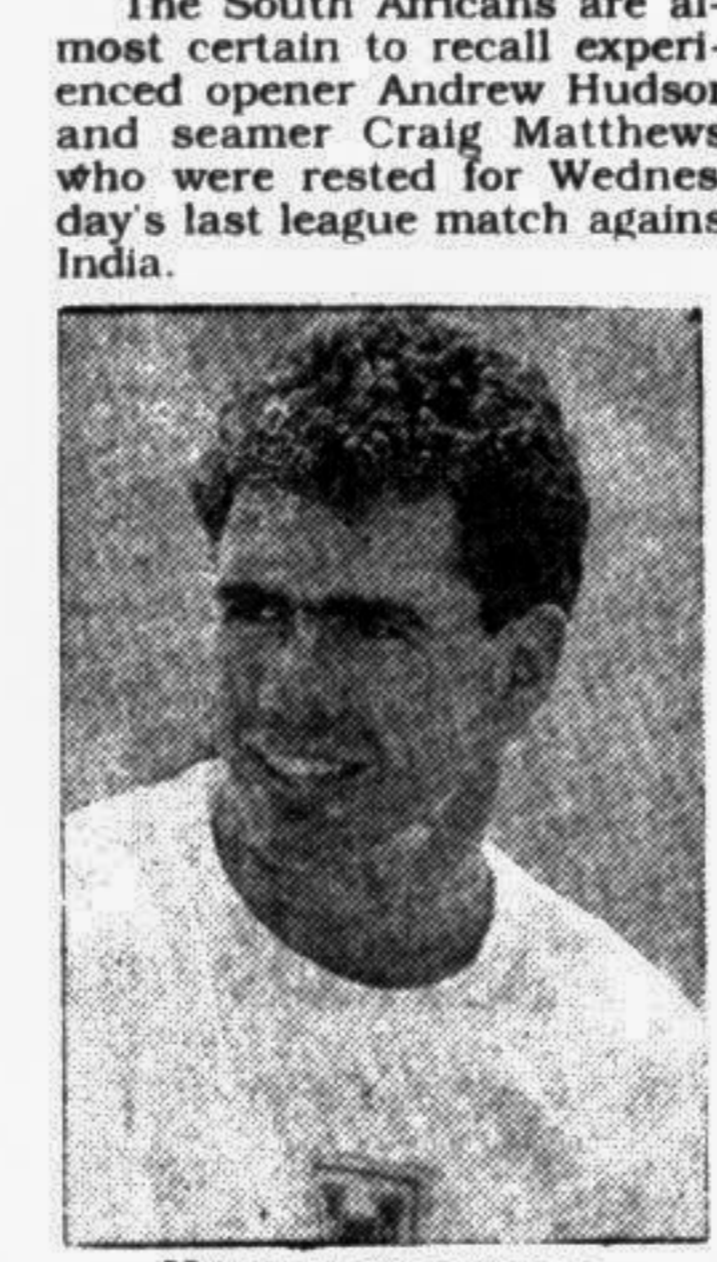
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HANSIE CRONJE
SQUADS
INDIA: Mohammad Azharuddin (capt), Sachin Tendulkar, Vikram Rathore, Navjot Sidhu, Sanjay Manjrekar, Ajay Jadhava, Nayan Mongia, Anil Kumble, Jagavallab Srinath, Venkatesh Prasad, Venkatesh Raju.
SOUTH AFRICA (from): Hansie Cronje (capt), Andrew Hudson, Gary Kirsten, Daryll Cullinan, Jonty Rhodes, Jacques Kallis, Derek Crookes, Brian McMillan, Dave Richardson, Shaun Pollock, Craig Matthews, Fanie de Villiers, Paul Adams, Pat Symcox.

Ajax, Juve reach final



LONDON, Apr 18: Holders Ajax Amsterdam turned a first-leg setback into a semifinal triumph on Wednesday to reach the European Cup final and a clash with Juventus, the team they beat in the final of 1973, reports agencies.

Ajax, beaten 1-0 by Panathinaikos in the first leg of the semifinal in Amsterdam, stormed back to win the second leg in Greece 3-0 and claim their richly deserved place in the final in Rome on May 22.

Juventus, European Cup champions in the tragic Heysel Stadium final of 1985, resisted a Nantes comeback in France, losing 3-2 on the night but prevailing 4-3 on aggregate.

In a dazzling display, Finnish international striker Jari Litmanen netted twice in the fourth and 77th minutes and substitute Nordin Wootter sealed the issue in the 86th.

The Dutch had at least four more chances to score while Panathinaikos were confined to desperate defence and never rose to the heights of their first leg semifinal.

Litmanen, Ajax's top scorer in the European Cup this season, was a constant threat to the Panathinaikos defence, missing two further chances at point blank range in the 28th and 45th minutes.

Ajax playing without injured striker Patrick Kluyvert who scored the winning goal in last year's final, entered the packed Olympic Stadium with clear intent despite the presence of 77,000 initially boisterous home fans.

Litmanen started the rout in the fourth minute, firing in from five metres after a weak block by Panathinaikos goalkeeper Jozef Wandzik from a 15 metre shot by Nwankwo Kanu.

Litmanen scored again with a rifling left-foot angled shot in the 77th minute after cushioning a right-wing cross by Kanu inside the penalty area. Nine minutes later, Wootter sealed Ajax's triumph from three metres.

"We fought hard but we lost to the best team in the world. It is a pity we did not reach the final but the future will be better for Panathinaikos," the club's Argentine coach Juan Ramon Rocha said.

Juventus, 2-0 up in their semifinal after the first leg in Italy, finished off the job in France but with little to spare.

Gianluca Vialli, who scored the first goal in the first leg, put Juventus further in front by opening his team's account in the 17th minute.

Though Nantes fought bravely and turned the affair into a highly entertaining game, it was a spectacle more than a real contest from the on.

The French team equalised just before halftime through Eric Decroix but Portuguese substitute Paulo Sousa put Juventus ahead again in five minutes after the break and goals for Nantes from Japhet N'Doram and Franck Renou in the latter half of the second period were not enough to change the outcome.

Juventus were unable to take pleasure from their only previous European Cup win in 1985 when a riot resulting in the deaths of 39 fans at the Heysel Stadium in Brussels marked the match as a tragedy rather than the celebration which had been anticipated.

In the May 22 final with Ajax Amsterdam in Rome, the Italians will clearly be looking for the long overdue chance to win in style and enjoy it too.

Vialli scored the first when Nantes failed to clear a free kick from Alessandro del Piero.

Ajax who defeated defending champions AC Milan 1-0 in last May's final, will be hoping for one more repeat against Italian opposition when they take on Juventus, whom they beat 1-0 in the 1973 final in Belgrade.



Juventus' Italian international Fabrizio Ravanelli is being confronted by Nantes' Eddy Capron during their European Champions' league semifinal second leg encounter in Nantes, France on Apr 17. Juventus reached the final (4-3 on aggregate) despite losing 3-2.

Botham's attempt go awry

LONDON, Apr 18: Former national captain Ian Botham has failed in his bid to become an England selector, reports Reuter.

Botham was one of eight candidates to fill two vacancies on the England committee, headed by chairman of selectors Ray Illingworth.

The 18 first class counties have instead voted for another former England captain in Essex opener Graham Gooch cricketers' association chief executive David Graveney to join the five-man panel.

Graveney had earlier been nominated to stand against Illingworth for the chairman's job but withdrew when the association's County Cricketers' Trade Union, warned of a possible conflict of interests.

The result of the vote was announced on Thursday by Test and County Cricket Board chief executive Alan Smith.

Graveney, who played county cricket for Gloucestershire, Somerset and Durham, was quick on Thursday to dismiss any suggestion of a possible conflict with Illingworth.

"I wouldn't have allowed by name to be put forward if I didn't think I could work with him," he said.

"Now I'm looking forward to trying to help put English cricket back on the road."

Nadia's gala wedding in Bucharest

BUCHAREST, Apr 18: Nadia Comaneci will marry former American Olympic gymnast Bart Conner here on April 26. A religious ceremony will be held the following day, reports AFP.

Comaneci, the first gymnast in Olympic history to be awarded a perfect score of 10 at the 1976 Games in Montreal when she was 15, defected from Romania in 1989 just before the fall of Nicolae Ceausescu's regime.

When she returned in 1994 she was greeted like a head of state.

In all she won nine Olympic medals — five gold, three silver and a bronze. Her last competition was a win at the World Student Games in 1981.

Conner was a member of the United States gold medal team at the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics where he also won the parallel bars individual title.

US First Lady Hillary Clinton, Prince Albert of Monaco, film star Arnold Schwarzenegger and his wife Maria Schriver and International Olympic Committee President Juan Antonio Samaranch have been invited to the wedding.

Romanian President Ion Iliescu will throw a reception for the newly weds.

Pippig remains in medi-care

BOSTON, Apr 18: Uta Pippig remained hospitalised on Wednesday two days after her record third consecutive Boston Marathon victory, her coach and boyfriend said, reports Reuter.

Dietre Hogan said Pippig was resting but declined to say from what she was suffering. He told reporters doctors wanted to do further tests on the German distance runner before releasing her.

"Stress makes her what she has maybe even more worse and that's what we don't want to have and that's why she has to rest more," Hogan said, adding that Pippig, the world's top-ranked woman marathoner, planned to spend several days resting in the Boston area after leaving the hospital.

Despite suffering from diarrhoea and menstrual cramps that nearly caused her to give up the race, Pippig scored a remarkable come-from-behind victory in the 100th Boston Marathon on Monday, overtaking Kenya's Tegla Loroupe in the final mile (1.6 km).

Ethiopia wants Games' timetable adjustments in

ADDIS ABABA, Apr 18: Ethiopia will call for changes to the Olympic athletics timetable after a leading official said it denied Haile Gebreselassie and Derartu Tulu the opportunity of running both the 5,000 and 10,000 metres, reports Reuter.

Triple world record holder Gebreselassie and 1992 Olympic women's 10,000 metres gold medalist Tulu have each been entered for both events.

But Ethiopian national athletics coach Wolde Meskel Kostire said on Wednesday the present schedule made it almost impossible for either athlete to attempt the double.

"The programme... makes it virtually impossible for a single athlete to compete in the two events unless the programme is relaxed," Wolde Meskel said.

"Unless the IAAF International Amateur Athletic Federation rules in our favour and changes the elimination programme for the two events, we may be forced to make some changes."

The organisers of the Atlanta Olympics should have considered the fact that those athletes who would compete in Atlanta are human beings and not robots."

WI-Kiwi first Test begins today

Caribbeans count on Courtney



BRIDGETOWN, Barbados, Apr 18: Courtney Walsh leads a West Indies' side in transition on Friday in the opening match of a two-Test series against New Zealand which has assumed special significance in the Caribbean, reports Reuter.

One year ago West Indies lost their crown as unofficial world champions to Mark Taylor's vibrant young Australian side and went on to draw a six-Test series in England.



COURTNEY WALSH
They then failed to qualify for the World Series finals in Australia, lost to Kenya in the group stages of the World Cup and were knocked out of the tournament in the semifinals by an Australian side who had been seemingly out for the count.

The repercussions were chillingly swift and predictably harsh.

West Hall and Andy Roberts were sacked as manager and coach respectively and captain Richie Richardson, anticipating the inevitable, announced his retirement from international cricket.

West Indies are now managed by Tony Marshall, formerly an able club cricketer and now a successful banker, and coached by former skipper Clive Lloyd.

Chairman of selectors David Holford concedes there has been an overall decline in the standard of cricket in the West Indian islands.

"In the past, it has always been pretty obvious who our next generation of stars would be," Holford said this week.

"I think now that we don't have that same quality of players, at least it is not immediately evident who that generation of players will be. So we have got to expose as many players as we can to see how they adapt themselves to the next level of cricket."

West Indies' major weakness over the past few years has been the middle-order batting, which has become almost wholly reliant on Trinidad's Brian Lara.

With Richardson unavailable and Cal Hooper ineligible after missing the domestic Red Stripe Cup competition, West Indies have recalled Phil Simmons once again and selected Roland Holder for the first time.

Jamaican opener Robert Samuels, who scored 364 runs at an average of 40.44 in the Red Stripe, has also been named in a squad of 13 along with a third new cap, Barbadian fast bowler Patterson Thompson.

"I think we have quite a good combination, a fairly balanced team in terms of batting and bowling and it's a good mixture of youth and experience and I am quite satisfied with the team," Holford said.

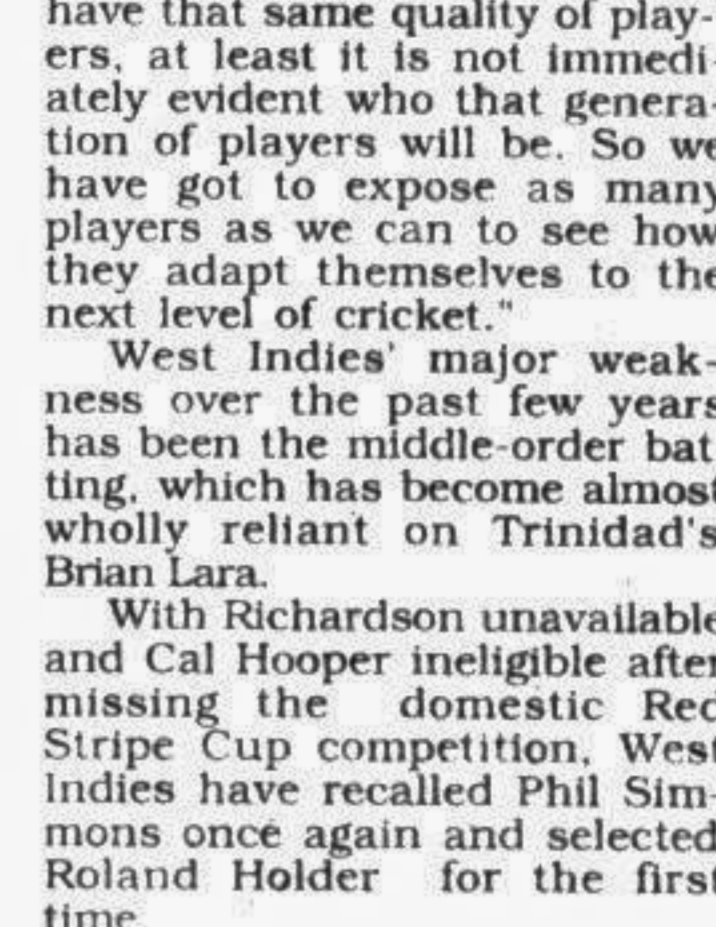
New Zealand, who lost by an innings and 49 runs to a West Indies President's XI at

the weekend, played some spirited cricket in the one-day series, eventually won 3-2 by the West Indies.

But although their new captain Lee Germon has restored some traditional grit and fighting spirit to the national team, they remain a side of modest ability with only left-hander Stephen Fleming and all-rounder Chris Cairns looking like players of true international pedigree.

TEAMS (from): WEST INDIES: Courtney Walsh (captain), Sherwin Campbell, Robert Samuels, Brian Lara, Phil Simmons, Shivnarine Chanderpaul, Roland Holder, James Adams, Courtney Browne, Ian Bishop, Curtly Ambrose, Rajindra Dhanraj, Patterson Thompson.

NEW ZEALAND: Lee Germon (captain), Nathan Astle, Craig Spearman, Stephen Fleming, Roger Twose, Chris Harris, Adam Parore, Chris Cairns, Shane Thomson, Dipak Patel, Dion Nash, Robert Kennedy, Gavin Larsen, Danny Morrison.



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Lara on a sticky wicket



BRIDGETOWN, Barbados, Apr 18: Star batsman Brian Lara faces another disciplinary hearing soon and has been passed over as deputy to West Indies captain Courtney Walsh for an upcoming cricket Test against New Zealand, reports AP.

Stephen Camacho, chief executive officer of the West Indies Cricket Board of Control, said Wednesday that Lara's case had gone to the disciplinary committee and would be heard within a few days.

The hearing will be about Lara's public altercation with trainer and physical therapist Dennis Waight as the team travelled home last month from the World Cup in India.

News reports said the Trinidadian-born Lara, who is black, used profanities and racial slurs against Australian-born Waight, who is white.

The trade followed the West Indies five-run loss to Australia in the World Cup.

Lara has acknowledged blame for his part in the incident and publicly apologised to Waight, then-team manager Wes Hall and then-captain Richie Richardson.

Waight, therapist for the West Indies team since the

Kerry Packer series in the late 1970s, reportedly wrote the cricket board about Lara's insults. His letter was leaked to the media in Barbados.

Also Wednesday, West Indies selection panel chairman David Holford announced that Lara, participating in team training in Barbados for the Test, which starts Friday, didn't immediately comment on the announcements.

New coach Clive Lloyd and Walsh had chosen the controversial left-hander as the captain's deputy for a recent series of one-day internationals against the New Zealanders. Lloyd and Walsh acted without instructions from the team's selectors.

"We're starting afresh," Lloyd said at the time. "This is a new era and I'm not too bothered with what went before. I'm looking ahead."

But the selectors and West Indies Cricket Board of Control later named all-rounder Roger Harper as Walsh's deputy for the last two matches of the series. Harper is not on the Test team and Bishop has been picked to take his place.

Late last year, Lara stunned the cricket world by withdrawing from the West Indies' tour of Australia that included the World Series Cup after he was fined for disciplinary reasons during the team's summer tour of England.



BRIAN LARA
that fast bowler Ian Bishop would take over any time the captain had to leave the field during the Test. But Bishop had not been appointed official vice captain, Holford said.

"It has not been practice to

Six-nation pre-Olympic tourney

Pakistan stymie Indians



ATLANTA, Apr 18: Pakistan resisted tremendous pressure from India to manage a draw in the final match of the six-nation pre-Olympic men's hockey tournament 2-2 and win the trophy on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

It was Pakistan's second tournament title since they won the World Cup in December 1994.

Pakistan dominated the first half, with Tahir Zaman giving the winners the lead from their first penalty corner after only three minutes. His flick shot went into the goal after bouncing off the underside of the crossbar.

Pakistan scored their second goal in the second half on a cross-shot by Mohammed Sarwar on the right wing, beating Subbiah in the Indian goal in the 39th minute.

But India quickly bounced back two minutes later.

Dhanraj Pillay, their centre forward, took the ball to the by-line and Baljit Singh scored after a back pass from 10 yards out.

Subbiah had to make difficult saves in succession from Pakistan's wingers.

Pargat Singh, India's captain, forced a penalty stroke when his low drive hit Mohammed Riaz on a foot in the goalmouth. Ramandeep Singh, India's left half, sent Mansoor Ahmed in the Pakistan goal the wrong way from the penalty spot and the match was levelled at 2-2.

India, needing to win, to snatch the trophy from Pakistan, kept the Pakistanis under intense pressure but they could not force another goal.

Early in the game the umpires warned the captains from both sides about the particularly rough tackling.

Two Pakistan players, Mohammed Khalid and Danish

Kaleem received temporary suspensions.

By holding Pakistan to a draw, India denied Pakistan five straight victories in the tournament. India finished second, with three wins and two draws, two points ahead of

Clinton's sumo experience

TOKYO, Apr 18: President Clinton hobbled by the emperor and struck deals with the prime minister, but the real heavyweight encounter came on the final day of his three day visit to Japan, reports AP.

American-born sumo stars Akebono and Musashimaru — their Japanese ring names were among the guests at a VIP luncheon for the President on Thursday, and he chatted briefly with them.

Even in a crowd, the wrestlers would have been tough to miss. Akebono, born Chad Rowan, tips the scales at 450-plus pounds (200-plus kilograms). Musashimaru, whose real name is Flamalu Penitani is a comparatively svelte 350 pounds (160 kilograms).

Most of the 300 invited dignitaries were in Western dress, but Akebono and Musashimaru wore kimono, as sumo stars usually do in public, with their hair done in top knots.

Breaking into sumo, Japan's most tradition-bound sport, is difficult for American wrestlers. But Akebono rose to the rank of "Yokozuna," or Grand Champion, the first foreigner to do so. Musashimaru holds the sports second-highest title of "Ozeki," or Champion.

This may be the last chance for the two wrestlers to attend an event like this as distinguished Americans. Both have applied for Japanese citizenship.

Korea, although dominated for much of the first half, had gone into the interval a goal ahead when left midfielder Seung-Jin Yoo popped in a rebound two minutes before the interval.

That there were no more goals in an exciting second half was due to outstanding performances by the two goalkeepers Simon Mason of Britain and Jin-Soo Koo of Korea.

In the day's other match, Argentina, the Pan-American champions, lifted itself off the bottom of the table, collecting its first points with its 12th win in 13 matches against the United States.

Santiago Capurro (10th minute) and Gustavo Rosso (52nd) scored their goals in open play.

STANDINGS

Standings at end of fifth and final day of the men's pre-Olympic hockey tournament, played on a round robin basis, at Clark University on Wednesday. (Tabulate under: Played, won, drawn, lost, goals for, against, points):

Team	P	W	D	L	GF	GA	Pts
Pakistan	5	4	1	0	13	4	9
India	5	3	2	0	11	3	8
Iran	5	2	2	1	9	6	6
South Korea	5	1	2	2	8	4	4
Argentina	5	1	0	4	5	13	2
United States	5	0	1	4	4	12	1