

Northants get M Akram

LONDON, Sept 27: English county cricket club Northamptonshire confirmed the signing Thursday of Pakistan fast bowler Mohammad Akram as their overseas player for 1997, reports AFP.

The 24-year-old from Rawalpindi, who toured England this summer and appeared in the final Test at The Oval, replaces West Indian pace ace Curtly Ambrose.

The 33-year-old Antiguan bows out after spending six of the last eight seasons as a major force in their West Indies trophy success in 1992, but he missed nearly half their championship games this season.

"We've been talking to Curtly, but the feeling was that we needed to look to the future and find potentially longer-term prospect," said chief executive Steve Cowdare.

"We liked the look of Mohammad Akram when he played against Northants this year. We did our homework on him and there's no doubt that he's highly rated both inside and outside the Pakistan set-up."

"There is an element of gamble in it for us, but it's not easy now to sign players with a proven track record at international level."

Ambrose made 78 first-class appearances for Northants, taking 318 wickets at 20.60 each.

Indonesia reigns

ORANGE, California, Sept 27: The world's top-ranked players in men's singles and men's doubles, all three of them Indonesian, overcame tough Malaysian challenges in Thursday's quarter-finals of the US Open badminton championships, reports Reuter.

Indonesia's top-seeded pair of Denny Kartono and Antonius survived two tie-breaker sets in an 18-14, 16-18, 15-2 victory against Malaysia's Lee Wan Wah and Choong Tan Fook, ranked 17th internationally.

Another top-seeded Indonesian, Joko Suprianto, earned a 15-8, 15-13, 15-12 triumph over 12th ranked Ong Ewe Hock from Malaysia.

Suprianto, a quarter finalist at the 1996 Olympics, needed a rally in the third game to win. Ong had a 5-0 lead before Suprianto forced ties of 6-6 and 8-8, the Indonesian then scored the next seven points, including the final five in succession.

Kartono and Antonius had less difficulty in their decisive third set. The pair scored 10 consecutive points on Antonius' service to take a 13-1 lead. Antonius also scored five of the points off smashes and backhands.

"Most of the time, I used short serves," Antonius said, through a translator. "I wanted to make them lift the bird so we could attack them. Their offense was really strong, but sometimes they made easy mistakes."

Among the internationally ranked players advancing to the semifinals was Denmark's Poul-Erik Hoyer-Larsen, Olympic and All-England champion in men's singles. Hoyer-Larsen is ranked third in the world.

Shimizu win J-League Cup

TOKYO, Sept 27: Coach Ossie Ardiles, the former Argentine World Cup winner, was celebrating on Thursday after his side Shimizu S-Pulse won the J-League Nabisco Cup beating holders Verdy Kawasaki 5-4 in a penalty shootout after a 3-3 extra-time draw, reports Reuter.

Shimizu won after Kawasaki's Brazilian striker Magron missed the second penalty in the shootout before of 28.232 at Tokyo's Olympic Stadium. Even a hattrick from the Brazilian striker Bismarck was not enough to bring Kawasaki victory.

Ardiles, a member of the Argentine team which won the World Cup in 1978 and who played for the bulk of his career for Tottenham in England, took over as coach of Shimizu earlier this year.

Independiente left in cold

RIO DE JANEIRO, Sept 27: Holders Independiente were knocked out of the South American Super cup at the first hurdle when they were beaten 1-0 by Brazil's Flamengo on Wednesday, reports Reuter.

The result in the second leg of their first round tie gave Flamengo a 1-0 aggregate win over the team who beat them in the final of last year's competition.

It was Independiente's first defeat under veteran coach Cesario Luis Menotti.

The Argentine championship leaders were knocked out by a 39th minute goal by midfielder Fabio Baiano but could have lost by a bigger margin if Flamengo's international striker Bebeto had been targeted with any one of several chances.

Flamengo chose to play the match in Brasilia where they felt they could get a better crowd than in their home city of Rio de Janeiro. The club also say that the fees for using Rio's Maracana Stadium are too expensive.

Boca Juniors beat Argentina Juniors 3-0 in an all-Argentine clash despite fielding seven reserves.

Coach Carlos Bilardo chose to save most of his team for Sunday's Argentine championship clash with arch-rivals River Plate, who trail Independiente on goal difference.

The Super cup is played every year between past winners of the Libertadores Cup.

Hosts-world champs opener today Cricket carnival in Kenya

NAIROBI, Sept 27: World Cup holders Sri Lanka, former world champions Pakistan and powerful South Africa jetted into Nairobi on Thursday for the four-nation cricket tournament, which opens Saturday with Sri Lanka playing Kenya, reports AFP.

The 10-day tournament,

surya, Roshan Mahanama, Hashan Tillekeratne, Asanka Gurusingha, Kumara Dharmasena, Upal Chandana, Chaminda Vaas, Pramodiy Wickremasinghe and Ravinda Pushpakumara.

South Africa, captained by Hansie Cronje, are confident of a good showing with uncapped Bob Woolmer, 22, the only new name.

All-rounder Jacques Kallis, medium-pace bowler Shaun

FIXTURES

Sept 28:	Kenya v Sri Lanka
Sept 29:	South Africa v Pakistan
Oct 1:	Sri Lanka v South Africa
Oct 2:	Kenya v Pakistan
Oct 3:	Kenya v South Africa
Oct 4:	Pakistan v Sri Lanka
Oct 6:	The Final
Oct 7:	Reserve Day

Pollock and left-arm spinner Paul Adams have been left behind.

The Pakistanis, still celebrating their 3-2 victory over India in the Sahara Cup in Canada last weekend, are captained by all-rounder Wasim Akram.

Kenya have played all their build-up matches at home, performing indifferently against the Northern Transvaal in a match that ended in a draw.

The Kenyans have plenty at stake.

The International Cricket Conference may review Kenya's application for full one-day status depending on how the east African nation performs.

Despite some media interest, the man in the street is largely unaware of the tournament. Most Kenyans are soccer-mad and consider boxing or athletics as the alternative national pastime.

But the Kenyan squad, led by Maurice Odumbe, have promised to upset the big three.

Odumbe did a splendid job with a spell of 3/15 in 10 overs that Africans upset the West Indies in the World Cup, while two young bowlers, Thomas

Odooy and Tony Suj, are expected to underline their potential.

An insurance company has promised 20,000 dollars to Kenyan team members should they win the tournament.

While this amount might sound small considering the commercial value of individual

All-rounder Jacques Kallis, medium-pace bowler Shaun



ARJUNA RANATUNGA

players from Sri Lanka, Pakistan and South Africa, it could boost the financial standing of the Kenyans — who are mostly unemployed or unskilled workers.

Commission sources said

the complaints had been filed by television channels which

broadcast UEFA matches but do

not have exclusivity rights.

They particularly contested

UEFA's sub-licensing conditions which, they said, colluded with their own interests.

Earlier this year UEFA and

the EU clashed over a landmark

ruling from the EU which

forced UEFA to scrap its player

system and transfer rules in the

wake of a European Court of

Justice case field by Belgian

footballer Jean-Marc Bosman.

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Steve Tikolo, Kennedy Otiemo,

Rajab Ali, Martin Owiti, Hitesh

Modi, Tony Suj, Lameck

Onyango, Joseph Angara,

Thomas Odooy, Channarakant

Pandit, Tom Tikolo, Sandip

Gupta, Edward Tito, Deepak

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