

Headingley's fall from the grace!

LONDON, Oct 8: Headingley, one of England's best known cricket grounds, looked certain to disappear from the Test circuit after Yorkshire announced plans on Monday to move to a new 90 million pounds (78 million dollars) stadium near Wakefield, reports Reuters.

The surprise announcement signalled the end of more than 100 years' association between the county club and the Leeds ground.

Yorkshire are only tenants at Headingley and they have become increasingly frustrated over their inability to capitalise fully on Test match proceeds or to expand the limited facilities.

Yorkshire president Sir Lawrence Byford said, "At long last, our distinguished club with its outstanding cricketing heritage is on the threshold of owning its own cricket stadium together with the community facilities that will enable it to progress cricket even further throughout Yorkshire."

The new 25,000-capacity all-seater stadium is to be built on a site near Wakefield in the south of the county and Yorkshire hope to start playing there in four years.

No change in SA squad

JOHANNESBURG, Oct 8: South African selectors on Monday kept faith with the team which won the Kenyan Centenary four-nation tournament in Nairobi at the weekend when they announced their squad to tour India later this month, reports Reuters.

The entire 14-man squad who returned to Johannesburg from Kenya on Monday were named by convener of selectors Peter Pollock for the first part of the two-month tour of India which starts on October 13.

Pollock said the 14 players had been selected for the initial limited-over triangular series with hosts India and Australia between October 17 and November 7 but that possible changes could then be made for the three Test series against India which follow.

Pollock said Shaun Pollock (ankle injury), Jacques Kallis (back strain), Craig Mathews (tendon strain) and Paul Adams (groin strain) were in the frame for possible selection for the latter part of the tour once they recovered from injury.

SQUAD

Hansie Cronje (captain), Gary Kirsten (vice-captain), Andrew Hudson, Daryll Cullinan, Jonty Rhodes, Brian McMillan, Derek Coetzee, Dave Richardson, Lance Klusener, Pat Symcox, Franck de Villiers, Allan Donald, Herschelle Gibbs, Niccy Boje.

Win leaves PSG thinking

PARIS, Oct 8: A fine 2-0 victory over Le Havre, which gave Paris St Germain a six-point lead at the top of the French soccer league on Saturday, left the Parisians wondering whether they actually need an extra player, reports Reuters.

Rumours of an ace coming to the French capital have been circulating since almost the start of the season but Brazilian coach Ricardo saw no reason to coach or reinforce his winning team.

"There's no rush to look for an extra player. We have plenty of time to think and ponder," said Ricardo.

With a near-perfect record of 11 matches without defeat and only three goals conceded, PSG have few reasons to be worried. And their win against Le Havre was earned without six key players, who were injured or called up by their national sides.

Young second choice players such as goalkeeper Vincent Fernandez, who replaced international Bernard Lama, or Jerome Leroy, who stepped in for Brazil's Rai, showed they were fine replacements.

There were bad news though for Ricardo on Monday as libero Alian Roche was complaining about a painful ankle. If the injury turns out to be serious, it would leave PSG without three of their six French internationals.

It may also prompt club officials into looking for a new recruit faster than they expected.

Tendulkar's test in Test

NEW DELHI, Oct 8: Sachin Tendulkar leads India for the first time in a Test match on Thursday hoping to match the astonishing home run enjoyed by his predecessor Mohammad Azharuddin, reports AFP.

Under Azharuddin, India won 10 of their last 14 Tests at home, helped by wickets doctored to assist the nation's traditional strength in spin bowling.

But Azharuddin, his country's most successful Test captain, failed to match that success abroad and he was sacked in August after losing a Test and one-day series in England.

Tendulkar goes into the one-off Test against Australia here at the Ferozeshah Kotla ground under pressure to produce results after two successive failures in limited-overs series in Sri Lanka and Canada.

It's a burden the champion 23-year-old batsman is willing to tackle head-on—with the aid of a spin bowling attack.

"We will go for a win," Tendulkar said, after convincing the selectors to include four spinners in the 14-man squad.

The last time a Test was played here, in 1993, India inflicted an innings defeat on lowly Zimbabwe in four days, with the spinners taking 17 wickets.

Current vice-captain Anil Kumble, who claimed eight wickets in that match, will be joined by left-armers Sunil Joshi and either leg-spinner

Narendra Hirwani or off-spinner Ashish Kapoor in a three-pronged spin attack.

With the Karnataka pace duo of Javagal Srinath and Venkatesh Prasad completing the bowling line-up, Tendulkar is confident he has the armoury to break the Australians.

"We had a bad time in England, but things will change soon," Tendulkar said, hoping his team can pile one on the other.

"Moreover, a sixth day would have left the home side just one day's rest before taking on South Africa in the opening match of a three-nation limited-overs series which also includes the tourists.

The visitors, meanwhile, showed why they are such feared opponents when Mark Waugh returned career-best figures of six for 68 against the Board President's team in the match which ended in a draw on Monday.

Waugh's off-spin, along with Warner's leg-spin replacement Peter McIntyre, who returned two for 62 in 21 overs, could be crucial for Australia if the Kotla wicket behaves as the hosts hope.

Australia's new coach Geoff Marsh, who played in his team's last Test series in India in 1986, was disappointed they were playing just one Test on this tour.

"Just one match leaves you with no chance of coming back if you have a bad game," Marsh said, "But we will be positive as usual and hope to win."

The Australians return for a three-test tour in 1998.

TENDULKAR

runs against an Australian attack depleted by the absence of star bowler Shane Warne.

Tendulkar knows the tourists will not be easy, despite Warne's absence and the fact only Steve Waugh has previously played a Test here.

"I'm not taking anything for granted," said the pragmatic skipper, a veteran of 41 Tests.

"The Australians are never easy to beat. They are one of the best sides in the game, and very tough rivals."

The Indians turned down an offer by rival skipper Mark Taylor to schedule an additional sixth day in the Test if bad weather washed out an entire day's play.

Board secretary Jagmohan Dalmiya said there was no provision or a reserve day in the playing conditions laid out by the two boards.

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NZ commits to Indian tourney

WELLINGTON, Oct 8: New Zealand are "certain" to compete in a one-day cricket tournament in India next May, New Zealand Cricket (NZC) chief executive Chris Doig said today, reports AFP.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) are hosting the tournament to mark the 50th anniversary of the country's independence.

However, Doig admitted details are sketchy with NZC awaiting further information from the BCCI.

There are nine Test-playing nations. If all accept invitations, depending on the tournament format the New Zealand players could have an extra 8-10 matches tacked on to their programme for 1996-97.

Last week, the BCCI announced they planned to have their leading players involved in cricket all year round, starting in 1997.

Cricket in India is usually played from around September until the end of April and it is expected to be very hot by the end of May.

The tournament is expected to feature a large number of day-night games.

"We have seven top-class cricket venues with lighting facilities," leading Indian official Indrajit Singh Bindra said.

Doig confirmed the tournament was part of the New Zealand players' contracts.

The international season will now consist of their tour of Sharjah and Pakistan in November-December, the visits of England and Sri Lanka from January until the end of March and the one-day tournament in India.

Proceeding at a snail's pace!

PARIS, Oct 8: A soccer players' union launched last year by Diego Maradona and Eric Cantona said on Monday it would hold a charity match for Belgium's Jean-marc Bosman next April, reports Reuters.

At a meeting in Paris, which Maradona and Cantona did not attend, the International Association of Professional Footballers (AIFP) also said it would open a bank account for donations to Bosman, the player who earned the right for his European colleagues to work freely inside the European Union.

"We had to show our solidarity towards a man who launched a revolution within soccer," said French international goalkeeper Bernard Lama, who chaired the meeting.

"Thanks to him things have changed at last in our circles."

The match will be played on April 1. Lama was unable to say who would play and where it would be held.

A committee was also created to try to find ways to finance the union, which until now has been funded by its members.

One year after its creation, the AIFP has remained very low-profile but Lama said it aimed to become "a new partner in discussions with international bodies."

Italy's Gianluca Vialli said the union had learnt from mistakes in the past year and would be more active this year.

Kiwis seek Silva therapy

WELLINGTON, Oct 8: Sri Lankan cricket star Aravinda de Silva will play for the Auckland provincial team in the 1996-97 Shell Cup limited-overs competition, officials announced Tuesday, reports agencies.

De Silva, the man-of-the-match in Sri Lanka's World Cup final victory over Australia earlier this year, will join the Auckland team in time for the start of the competition, which begins on Dec 6.

"He's one of the top three or four players in the world right now, a real class act especially in one-day cricket," said Auckland Cricket Association chief executive Lindsay Crocker.

"We're satisfied that he'll do the business on the park."

The move was designed to reinvigorate the sport, Crocker said.

"I believe the domestic game here has lost a bit of its gloss since the arrival of the new game to its rightful place," he said.

Crocker said Auckland signed 30-year-old De Silva as part of a new marketing initiative.

"We are looking to modernise our image in terms of how we dress, the name of our team and attractions on the playing front. Aravinda is

marketing attraction."

The ACA plans to unveil a new Shell Cup one-day playing strip and a new team name within a month.

De Silva has scored more than 3,000 Test runs for Sri Lanka, with a personal best of 267 scored against New Zealand in Wellington in 1991.

Crocker said the ACA had tried to secure De Silva's services for both the Shell Cup and Shell Trophy four-day competitions, but he was available only for Shell Cup matches.

The ACA had unsuccessfully sought to contract former Australian batsman Dean Jones for the 1996-97 season, and Crocker said they had lost little in securing De Silva.

"We wanted someone who fitted into the great category, and Aravinda is unquestionably one of the finest players on the circuit today."

"But we just didn't want anyone. We wanted someone with the right attitude to the game and to people in general. We've got what we wanted with Aravinda."

De Silva will debut for Auckland on December 6.

Ferreira bites dust

VIENNA, Oct 8: Weary Wayne Ferreira was the first seed to crash out of the 800,000-dollar CA Trophy on Monday, report agencies.

The number four from South Africa lost 6-2, 7-6 to Switzerland's Marc Rosset.

Rosset impressed with some thundering aces which allowed him to clinch the first set in only 24 minutes.

Although world number six Ferreira stepped up a gear in the second set, he was unable to gain command on the indoor hardcourt at the Stadthalle sports arena.

Unlike Ferreira, seventh-seeded Todd Martin was fully motivated and had little problems in overcoming Spain's Alberto Costa 6-3, 6-2 in only 59 minutes.

In other matches, Australian Jason Stoltenberg defeated, by serving compatriot Mark Philippoussis 6-4, 7-6 and Czech Bohdan Uhlirach dropped only two games in the first set in eliminating Gilbert Schaller.

Second-seeded Goran Ivanisevic of Croatia meets Belgian Filip Dewulf on Tuesday in the event's first attractive pairing.

Top seed and local hero Thomas Muster enters the tournament Wednesday. He faces Italian Gianluca Pozzi, a finalist in 1992.

The world number three will be looking for his first vic-

tory at home after reaching the final in 1988, 1993 and 1995.

Maldini extends Milan days

FLORENCE, Italy, Oct 8: Italy captain Paolo Maldini extended his contract with league champions AC Milan by one year to 2001 on Monday, reports Reuters.

"As you can see, I intend to go a long way," the defender said. "When the contract expires I'll be 33 and then we will see what happens."

Maldini joined Milan in 1984 and, like Baresi, has remained there.

Sandrine sails

SURABAYA, Indonesia, Oct 8: Top seed Sandrine Testud of France dropped only one game as she swept to a convincing victory over Tina Krizan on Monday in the opening round of the 107,500 dollar Indonesian Open, reports AFP.

It was a powerful and confident performance which left Krizan thoroughly demoralised, and it was fitting that the frustrated Slovak should concede the 55-minute contest with a double-fault.

Testud mixed up her game to keep her opponent off balance, but it was her big forehand that caused most of the damage, and it was not until she was serving for the match at 5-0 that Testud allowed Krizan a game.

Until that point, Testud had ruthlessly snuffed out any chance Krizan had of extending the tide of winners, particularly at the start of the second set when Krizan failed to convert four game points. That resulted in Krizan throwing her racket at her chair and receiving a warning from the umpire.

Sarah Pitkowski, seeded five, won an all-French clash by beating Alexia Dechaume-Balleret 6-2, 6-2 but third seeded Alexandra Fusai, also of France, was beaten 6-2, 6-4 by Rika Hiraki of Japan.

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Expensive legs

MADRID, Oct 8: Teenage striker Raul Gonzalez, who looks set to win his first cap for Spain in Wednesday's World Cup qualifier against the Czech Republic, has insured his legs for two billion pesetas (15.5 million dollars), reports Reuters.

Raul, 19, shot to prominence for Real Madrid two years ago and is the club's leading goalscorer this season despite being moved back to midfield by new coach Fabio Capello.

Those were the findings of the Davis Cup Committee Monday, which took no action against Brazil and let stand small fines imposed at the time against Muster and his Austrian team, reports AP.

The Austrians defaulted the tie, advancing the Latin American into the top group of Davis Cup — the World Group.

"The committee is not planning to take any action against Brazil," said Brian Tobin, the president of the International Tennis Federation who chairs the four-member committee.

"We feel that the organization of the tie and — as far as we can tell — the security arrangements... were very good," Tobin added.

"It's very difficult to make that decision where you go over the line, but we felt in balance that the situation there didn't justify the end result, which was a default by the Austrian team."

Basically, the committee decided world No. 3 Muster overreacted. Tobin also said the Austrians didn't have enough proof of their accusations that fans were spitting, cursing and throwing things at Muster and shouting taunts threatening his life.

The incident occurred Sept 21 in Sao Paulo when Muster walked off court while trailing in a doubles match 0-2, 15-30, in the fifth and deciding set.

Austria forfeited that match. With Muster suspended for the reverse singles, Austria decided to forfeit the remaining two matches and lost the Davis Cup tie 4-1.

Most of the things they (Brazil) were accused of were not substantiated," Tobin said.

"We're not saying they didn't occur, but a referee and umpire can't pick up everything that happens. It wasn't justification for walking off."



French international and Paris St. Germain goalkeeper Bernard Lama (R) speaks during the first AIFP meeting in Paris on Oct 7.

Vogts' boys ready to roll

LONDON, Oct 8: European champions Germany begin what will be a long, though far from difficult, journey to the 1998 World Cup finals in France, with a tricky first qualifier away to Armenia on Wednesday, report agencies.

The Germans, playing their first competitive match since the final of Euro '96 on June 30, will be without several key players from their successful summer campaign, including Borussia Dortmund libero Matthias Sammer and Bayern Munich defender Thomas Helmer.

And coach Berti Vogts was forced to re-arrange his defence for the Group Nine match again on Monday when Bayern's wing-back Christian Zege and defensive midfielder Thomas Strunz also pulled out of the trip because of knee and back injuries.

Dortmund veteran Juergen Kohler, who missed most of the Euro '96 because of injury, is expected to take over as sweeper.

Vogts has four uncapped players in his squad and may give Borussia Moenchengladbach's defensive midfielder Stephan Passlack his international debut.

Ukraine, who surprisingly beat Portugal 3-2 on Saturday, led the group with a maximum haul of six points, while Armenia have drawn their opening two matches against Portugal and Northern Ireland.

The Czech Republic, who lost to Germany in the European Championship final, play Spain in their second match in Group Six following their 6-0 opening victory over Malta.

Spain beat the Faroe Islands 6-2 in their opening game and both teams will be looking to maintain their unbeaten starts.

For the Czechs, like the Germans, it will be the first big test for the team since Euro '96 and coach Dusan Uhrin is looking for the same cohesive play that made his team the surprise package of the tournament in England.

Manchester United midfielder Karel Poborsky summed up the Czechs' attitude towards Spain after Sunday's final training match, a 1-0 win against Second Division Blasny.

"They're explosive and technically very sound. And it's made all the more important because a loss will make it a difficult trip for either side," Poborsky said.

Teenger Raul Gonzalez looks set to make his full international debut for Spain in Prague, the city where he played his best game for the country at junior level.

Coach Javier Clemente is playing his cards close to his chest, but the Spanish press has taken it for granted that Raul will at least come on as substitute.

Raul, 19, led his side to victory against the Czechs with two goals in the quarter-final of last season's European under-21 competition, guaranteeing Spain a place in the Olympics.

Despite a poor showing in Atlanta, Raul has gone from strength to strength at club level, where he leads the Real Madrid goalscoring tables even after being moved back to midfield by new coach Fabio Capello.

England, bidding to reach the World Cup finals for the first time since 1990, face their old rivals Poland at Wembley in a Group Two match which is the latest in an astonishing sequence between the two countries.

They have met in the qualifying rounds of the 1974, 1990 and 1994 World Cups, the qualifying rounds of the 1992 European Championship and the finals of the 1986 World Cup in Mexico, but Poland have not beaten England since a 2-0 win in Chorzow eight matches and 23 years ago.

A sell-out crowd of 76,000 is expected at Wembley for coach Glenn Hoddle's first home match.

On Monday, Alan Shearer called on Hoddle to play him alongside club mate Les Ferdinand to form a 30-million dol-

lar front pairing for England's World Cup campaign.

But Hoddle's new captain said there was hot competition for the front pairing with Teddy Sheringham, Nick Barmby, Mattie Tisser and Paul Merson as possibilities.

Arrigo Sacchi is likely to return to his favoured 4-4-2 line-up for Italy's World Cup Group Two qualifier against Georgia in Perugia after their unconvincing 3-1 win over Moldova on Saturday.

Although the Italians won the team's overall performance satisfied neither critics nor Sacchi.

Under pressure to produce a more convincing performance in his first home game since this summer's European Championship failure, Sacchi intends to abandon the three-man attack of Fabrizio Ravanelli, Pierluigi Casiraghi and Enrico Chiesa used initially against Moldova.

The Italian coach may also ring the changes in defence, dropping the out of form AC Milan defender Alessandro Costacurta to make way for new cap — Juventus defender Gianluca Pesotto.

Russian coach Boris Ignatiev says Israeli football has learned a lot from former Soviet exiles and poses a real threat to the Group Five favourites in the World Cup qualifier in Tel Aviv.

Russia, keen to forget a dismal time at the European Championships, will field a side heavy with Spanish league experience against an Israeli team in buoyant mood after last month's 2-1 home win over Bulgaria.

This game will likely be the key to our year," Ignatiev said. "If we win, we'll not only open up a lead but have a psychological advantage over our main rivals, Israel and Bulgaria."

In all, seventeen qualifiers are being played on Wednesday and today including the intriguing match between the former warring nations of Bosnia and Croatia, in neutral Bologna.

Easy escape for Muster

LONDON, Oct 8: Brazil made "very good" security arrangements for last month's Davis Cup tie in Brazil where Austrian Thomas Muster charged off the court, refused to keep playing and claimed his life was threatened by zealous Brazilian fans.

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Wednesday 9th October

(All programmes are in local time. There may be changes in the programmes.)

BTV

3:00 Opening Announcement Al-Quran Programme Summary 3:10 Recitation from the Geeta 3:15 Rerelease of Selected Programme 4:00 News in Bangla 4:15 Sports Programme 4: