

Essex-Law deal to be extended

CHELMSFORD, England, Sept 22: Essex confirmed Sunday that 28-year-old Australian Stuart Law, a resounding success for the English county over the past two seasons...

He has accepted an extension to his contract to cover next season and everything will be signed and sealed before he returns home later in the week...

In his two seasons with the county, Law has scored 5,132 runs in all competitions and hit 19 centuries.

David to quit coaching

LONDON, Sept 22: David Gilbert, the Australian coach who steered Surrey to the Sunday League and Benson and Hedges Cup, is to quit the English county at the end of next month...

The 36-year-old former Australian pacer wants to pursue a career in cricket administration, almost certainly in England.

Gilbert said, "See my future in an administrative position in cricket, whether it be with Surrey for somewhere else. I feel the timing is perfect to move on."

Gilbert revealed that he had recently applied for the chief executive job with Tasmania, but was unsuccessful.

"It's looking very much as if I'll be staying here in England," admitted Gilbert, whose wife Hilary comes from Kent. "The future is here."

Swedish striker Martin Dahlin led the way with two goals and fellow Swede Andersson, Englishman Chris Sutton, Scot Kevin Gallacher and Norwegian Lars Bohinen scored one each.

Nottingham Forest went down to a surprise 1-0 home defeat at the hands of Walsall, who have managed just one win in seven division two games this season...

In the night's other games, Southampton beat Bradford 3-1, Leeds beat Bristol City by the same score and Birmingham thumped Stockport 4-1 in an all-first Division clash.

Kiwis 338 runs behind

HARARE, Sept 22: New Zealand suffered a double blow in their bid to stave off defeat against Zimbabwe in the first cricket Test at the Harare Sports Club here on Sunday...

Leg-spinners Paul Strang and Adam Huckle took a wicket apiece as New Zealand lost two wickets in the space of five balls in the 22nd over when bad light stopped play...

After openers Blair Pocock and Craig Spearman had seen off the threat of Heath Streak, Bryan Strang and Guy Whittall the spinners were brought on with almost immediate success.

First Spearman was caught behind by wicketkeeper Andy Flower after offering a fine edge to Paul Strang for 33 with the score on 63.

In the next over more run Matt Horne tried to leave a ball which reared into him and got a glove on its way to the wicket-keeper.

But shortly after captain Stephen Fleming joined Pocock at the wicket the batsmen accepted the umpires offer for bad light and trooped off much to the disgust of the home team.

Pocock was unbeaten on 30 in 85 minutes with five fours. Zimbabwe had just after tea declared their first innings closed on 311-9 for a lead of 402 and leaving the Kiwis 403 to win in 126 overs.

Opener Grant Flower became the first Zimbabwean to score a century in each innings, following up his 104 in the first innings with a resolute 151 in the second as Zimbabwe moved from their overnight 115-0 to 311-9 declared.

Resuming on 60, the 26-year-old batsman went on to dominate proceedings for the best part of two sessions before falling to a brilliant catch at mid-wicket by Stephen Fleming off Shayne O'Connor in the 79th over.

However, Flower, who batted 334 minutes, faced 239 balls and hit 12 fours and a six for his third Test century, was given two lives — at 132 when a hard return catch to O'Connor deflected onto the stumps to run out Guy Whittall who was backing up too far and at 142 when he skied the same bowler to be put down by Pocock at the

square leg boundary. He also became the highest run scorer for his country, overtaking Dave Houghton who had led before the Test began with 1396 runs.

After completing 255 runs in two innings Flower had reached 1430 runs from 23 Tests, 10 more than Houghton.

In the morning session he and Gavin Rennie also completed a wicket partnership of 156, beating the previous 120 by Flower and Stuart Carlisle against New Zealand in Auckland last year.



G FLOWER...151

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Bobby to become Benfica boss?

LISBON, Sept 22: Former England and Barcelona manager Bobby Robson is set to become coach of Benfica, Portuguese media reported Monday, reports AP.

Robson would replace Manuel Jose who was fired Sunday after a string of poor performances by the club in the national championship and in the UEFA Cup.

All Portuguese newspapers, including the three sports dailies, said Robson will be the replacement.

Benfica officials have not yet confirmed hiring Robson but announced that Mario Wilson, the head coach of the Portuguese Second Division club Alverca will be the temporary replacement.

Benfica president Manuel Damasio told a news conference Sunday night that in addition to the firing of Jose and his assistants, the whole board of directors, including Damasio, might be replaced.

The decision on their dismissal, as well as on the new coach, will be reached at Benfica's general assembly scheduled for Friday, Damasio said.

The 64-year-old Robson was replaced by Luis Van Gaal as FC Barcelona's manager this season after a second-place finish in the Spanish league last year. He is now Barcelona's general manager.

Robson, who managed England a 1990 World Cup team, came to Barcelona from FC Oporto, where he guided the Portuguese club to two league titles in 1995 and 1996.

Benfica, currently 11th in the Portuguese championship, have a 1-1-2 record after four rounds and were defeated by the French club Bastia 1-0 in the first round of the UEFA Cup.

Fluminense fans' unique protest

RIO DE JANEIRO, Sept 22: Disgruntled Fluminense fans protested at their team's dreadful performance during a 3-0 home defeat by turning their backs and refusing to watch the game on Sunday, reports Reuters.

An entire section of the crowd at the Laranjeiras Stadium in Rio spent the last part of the match with their backs to the pitch after Jackson pounced on a defensive blunder to score Sport Recife's third goal.

But the protests became more sinister at the end when some fans threw assorted objects at the players as they left the field.

Outside the stadium three people were reported arrested as protesting fans clashed with police, who had been preparing for trouble since sport's third goal.

Fluminense face the unique prospect of being relegated from Serie A of the Brazilian championship for the second year running. The team were relegated last season but then granted a reprieve by the Brazilian Football Confederation (CBF) in June.

The CBF was accused of turning the competition into a farce but Fluminense's dismal display this year has left their fans wondering if they would not have been better off in Serie B the first time around.

Fluminense, who have played more games than their rivals are one from bottom in the championship in which the last four teams face the chop.

They have already fired one coach during their ill-fated campaign and it was expected the Carbone, the present incumbent, could also lose his job.

He was due to appear on a television round-table programme Sunday night but a presenter said Carbone had rung to say that he did not know if he was still coach or not and would therefore not take part.

Botafogo players had to be protected from their own supporters by security guards as they left the ground following a 3-1 home defeat by Bahia which kept them in the relegation zone.

Fans gathered outside the stadium entrance to insult the players as they left.

Sources said club directors had called the police to ask for reinforcements as soon as Bahia scored their second goal before halftime.

Saurav's redolent in Sahara Cup series

Some solace for Pakistan

TORONTO, Sept 22: Pakistan won the final one-day match in the five-match Sahara Cup series against India here on Sunday with Inzamam-ul-Haq returning after a

particularly happy with the performance of Ganguly. Ganguly, who was out for short of a hundred, alongwith Tendulkar added 98 for the opening stand. After that he and Mohammad Azharuddin put on 104 runs for

the earlier matches, scored 41 before he was caught behind by Saba Karim off Mohanty.

Inzamam played in the last match after serving his two game suspension for interrupting the second match on September 14 when he confronted a heckler in the stands.

Despite the comeback win in the last match Pakistani skipper Rameez Raja is not sure if he will lead his side in the upcoming Jinnah Cup in Pakistan.

Raja believes the Pakistani Cricket Board will announce a 'new squad' to him in the Jinnah series is a serious matter. "I have no idea of my captaincy ship. I know the crowds were disappointed here. The same response will be felt in Pakistan when we go home," he told a press conference.

"I thought Raza played very well," said his captain. "He demonstrated lot of guts and determination. He wanted to prove a point. Along with Inzamam, he did a wonderful job."

Former all-rounders, regular captain Wasim Akram, who was sidelined due to injury, will replace. "I evaluate my performance after each series. I have always played my cricket like that," he said.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the fifth match of the Sahara Cup series between Pakistan and India in Toronto Sunday:

INDIA

Tendulkar lbw Mahmood 51 Ganguly c Mahmood b Saqlain 96 Kambl b Saqlain b Mahmood 1

Azharuddin run out 50 Javeda not out 23 Singh c and b Aaqub 9

Dravid not out 7 Extras (lb-5, w-8, nb-4) 17 Total (for 50 wickets in 50 overs) 250

Bowling: O M R W Aaqub 10 3 40 1 Nazir 10 0 66 0 Mahmood 10 1 27 2 Saqlain 10 1 51 1 Malik 1 0 13 0 Afridi 9 0 48 0

PAKISTAN

Afridi c Tendulkar b Ganguly 39 Ijaz c Tendulkar b Harvinder 60 Malik c Karim b Harvinder 8 Rameez b Ganguly 0 Inzamam not out 71

Hassan c Karim b Mohanty 41 Moin not out 3 Extras (lb-2, lb-9, w-14, nb-4) 29 Total (for 5 wickets in 41.5 overs) 251

Bowling: O M R W Kurviya 9.5 0 80 0 Mohanty 9 1 66 1 Harvinder 8 0 33 2 Ganguly 9 1 33 2 Robin 4 0 15 0 Javeda 2 0 13 0

Result: Pakistan own the match by 5 wickets; India won the series 4-1.

Man-of-the-match: Saurav Ganguly.

Man-of-the-series: Saurav Ganguly.

Ali Cup

Williamson wins heavyweight gold

LOUISVILLE, Kentucky, Sept 22: Davarrell Williamson got up from his first knock down as an amateur to stop fellow American Calvin Brock in the fourth round Friday to win the heavyweight gold medal at the inaugural Ali Cup, reports AP.

Williamson, a two-time US national champion and the top-rated US amateur heavyweight, was floored in the first round by a left hook and overhand right from the hard-charging Brock.

Williamson was back on his feet quickly, but Brock unleashed several more combinations that brought a standing eight-count against Williamson later in the opening round.

Williamson became the aggressor in the second round, and a right uppercut followed by a flurry led to a standing eight-count against Brock, also of the United States.

In the fourth round, Williamson dazed Brock with a strong right, followed by a combination as the referee stopped the fight 1:13 into the round. Williamson said a left to the body hurt Brock and set up the final flurry.

Williamson's victory capped a disappointing afternoon session for the Americans, who lost three championship bouts to international opponents.

Belgians upset French applecart

PARIS, Sept 22: Davis Cup champions France discovered what a difference a good captain can make when they were relegated from the elite World Group after losing to Belgium, reports AFP.

In the qualifying play-offs, France, who lost their number-one Cedric Pioline with a back injury during his opening singles on Friday, fought hard to keep their position among the elite — but they were finally beaten 3-2 in Ghent.

Bespoke replacement Guillaume Raux, who temporarily revived French hopes by winning the doubles alongside Fabrice Santoro on Saturday, set the stage for a thrilling finish by leveling the score at 2-2 when he beat Belgian number one Filip Dewulf 6-3, 6-4, 7-5 in the first of the reverse singles.

Injuries forced both team captains to call up their reserve players for the final singles — Christophe van Garsee omming in for Johan van Herck and Lionel Roux taking the place of Santoro — and, in a dramatic three-hour encounter, the 23-year-old Belgian played the match of his life and scored an emotional 7-5, 6-4, 1-6, 6-2, win.

France were not the only big name casualties in the World Group play-offs.

Austria, despite the presence of Thomas Muster in their lineup, were also relegated when they lost 3-2 to Zimbabwe in Harare.

With the African side leading 2-1 after Saturday's doubles, Muster kept Austrian hopes alive by winning a gruelling five-setter against Zimbabwean number-one Byron Black. But his 3-6, 6-3, 2-6, 6-3, 6-1 win was not enough.

Byron's brother, Wayne Black, clinched his side's win by defeating Gerald Mandl in the final match. Mandl, who came in for Gilbert Schaller who was suffering from stomach aches, went down 5-7, 6-3, 6-3, 6-0.

Slovakia, like Zimbabwe reached the World Group for the first time when they defeated

both of Sunday's dead singles.

The Swiss, who had taken an unbeatable 3-0 lead after Saturday's doubles, did not play their 1998 Olympic champion Marco Pantani on the final day since he was complaining of shoulder pain. His place was taken by Lorenzo Mantu, who crashed 6-2, 6-3 to Yung-Il-Yoon and Lee Hyung-Talk then defeated Ivo Heuberger 7-5, 6-2.

Germany did not let up against Mexico.

Three-time Wimbledon champion Boris Becker, 29 and playing his last before his retirement at the end of the season, defeated Alejandro Hernandez 6-4, 7-5 and Jens Knippschild beat Luis Herrera 6-2, 3-6, 6-4 for an overall 5-0 win.

Russia and India, however, had tougher matches.

Russia finally sealed a 3-2 win over Romania in Moscow when Alexandru Volkov overcame Ion Moldovan 6-4, 6-3, 7-5 in the final singles.

The Russians, who had led 2-0 after Friday's singles but who lost Saturday's doubles, were in serious trouble when their 1996 French Open champion Yevgeny Kafelnikov suffered a shock 6-4, 3-6, 6-4, 6-1 loss to Andrei Pavel, but Volkov came to the rescue with this straight sets win.

In New Delhi, Mahesh Bhupathy fought back from the brink in the decisive fifth rubber Sunday to lead hosts India to a 3-2 victory over Chile in their Davis Cup World Group qualification tie.

Bhupathy, ranked 225 in the world, withstood the loss of the first two sets to overcome 184th-ranked Gabriel Silberstein 6-7 (4/7), 4-6, 6-4, 6-3 in a titanic three-hour struggle.

The win came after Chile, trailing 1-2 after Saturday's rubbers, had drawn level when world number-seven Marcelo

beat Venezuela 4-1 in the American Group One play-off in Buenos Aires.

Uzbekistan whitewashed the Philippines 5-0 in Tashkent in their Asia/Oceania Group One play-off, and the Lebanon scored a 4-1 home win over Iran in the Asia/Oceania Group Two 3rd round.

In the Euro/African Group Two third-round, Norway defeated Portugal 3-2 in Porto and Finland defeated Poland by the same scoreline in Helsinki.

Colombia, meanwhile, saw off Uruguay 4-1 in Bogota in the American Group Two third-round clash.

Rios defeated India's top player Leander Paes 6-7 (5/7), 6-4, 6-0, 7-6 (7/3).

In other matches, the Ukraine completed a 3-2 victory over Hungary in the Euro/African Group One play-off in Budapest — Andrei Medvedev winning all three of his matches — and Argentina

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