

World Cup seedings

MARSEILLE, France, Dec 2: The eight seeds for the 1998 World Cup are Brazil, France, Germany, Italy, Argentina, Spain, Romania and Holland. It was announced by the organisers here on Tuesday, reports AFP.

The draw for the 32 teams in the finals will be made on Thursday.

Windies to play

5 Tests in SA

JOHANNESBURG, Dec 2: The West Indies cricket team will play five Test matches in their 1998-99 tour of South Africa, United Cricket Board managing director Ali Bacher announced Monday, reports AFP.

Bacher said that while the itinerary is still being finalised, it had been agreed that the first Test will take place at The Wanderers in Johannesburg from November 26 to 30.

The next four will be at St George's Park in Port Elizabeth (December 10 to 14), Kingsmead, Durban (December 26-30), Newlands, Cape Town (January 2-6) and Centurion Park, near Pretoria (January 15-19).

Bacher also announced that the United Cricket Board had provisionally accepted an invitation from the Kenyan Cricket Board to play a triangular series also involving Australia there in September 1999.

"Our agreement to play is subject firstly to the support of the players in Australia and secondly our not being asked to send a team to play in Disney-World in December, 1999," said Bacher.

'Super Eagles' eye Venables

LONDON, Dec 2: Former England manager Terry Venables may still get to coach at next year's World Cup finals, reports AFP.

Venables' Australian team failed to qualify after being held to a draw by Iran at the weekend. But he is now a target for finalists Nigeria.

The Olympic gold medalists are currently without a manager after Frenchman Philippe Troussier quit.

Nigerian Football Association chairman Colonel Abdulmumin Aminu will attend Thursday's World Cup draw in Marseille before travelling to London on Friday where he hopes to meet Venables.

Aminu told the London daily Telegraph: "We will meet Terry as soon as possible if Terry says yes the job is his providing the salary he would want is reasonable."

Aslam lifts N'ganji Club tennis title

Sports Reporter

Mohammad Aslam emerged men's singles champion in the Naranayangon Club tennis tournament yesterday.

He defeated Shafiqul Islam 6-4, 7-5, in the final.

The league-basis tournament began on November 22 with all 13 players featuring.

Some solace for Irish fans

MARSEILLE, Dec 2: World football body FIFA on Monday handed its Fair Play Award for 1997 to Ireland's fans for exemplary behaviour during their team's ultimately unsuccessful World Cup qualifying campaign, reports AFP.

FIFA singled out the Irish contingent in particular for their good conduct in the two playoff games against Belgium last month.

Jordan richest of 'em all

NEW YORK, Dec 2 (AFP): For the fifth time in six years, Michael Jordan is the richest athlete in sport, taking home a record 78.3 million dollars in 1997.

Jordan unseated Mike Tyson, who last year snapped a four-year streak by Jordan in the Forbes magazine list of wealthiest sports competitors. The former heavyweight champion fell to fifth in the rankings.

Jordan, a star guard for the National Basketball Association's Chicago Bulls, takes home 31.3 million dollars in salary and 47 million dollars in endorsements.

Runner-up Evander Holyfield, the World Boxing Association and International Boxing Federation heavyweight champion, had 54.3 million dollars, all but 1.3 million of that coming from his two 1997 title fights.

Welterweight champion Oscar de la Hoya was third at 38 million dollars with Formula One driver Michael Schumacher fourth at 35 million dollars and Tyson fifth at 27 million dollars.

Tyson's total plunged by 48 million dollars after his career was put on hold following his biting of Holyfield's ears in their title fight. Tyson was banished from the sport for at least a year.

Masters champion Tiger Woods, the first black golfer to capture a major crown, was sixth at 26.1 million dollars, only two million of which came from prize money.

NBA star centre Shaquille O'Neal of the Los Angeles Lakers was seventh at 25.4 million.

For the second year in a row, no woman made the list. Steffi Graf had been there in 1995.

Pakistan poised for victory



RAWALPINDI, Pakistan, Dec 2 (AFP/AP): Pakistan scored their highest total against West Indies in a home Test here today and then grabbed quick wickets to get close to an emphatic series win.

Pakistan captain Wasim Akram took three wickets including the prized one of Brian Lara as the visitors struggled to 99 for six in their second innings at the close of the fourth day of the second Test.

West Indies needed another 69 runs to avoid a second successive innings defeat. Their hopes now rest with Carl Hooper who was 44 not out. Ian Bishop was the other not out batsman on one.

Pakistan, 1-0 up in the three match series, scored 471 runs in their first innings with Inzamamul Haq taking his score to 177.

It was the hosts' highest score at home against West Indies, beating the 406 for eight made in Karachi in 1974-75.

Victory would lead to only Pakistan's second series win over the Caribbeans in ten attempts — their first for 39 years. They last beat West Indies 2-1 in 1958-59.

Inzamam was the first to go after Pakistan resumed on 403 for three. He lasted 36 minutes when he offered a catch to Sherwin Campbell at point off Courtney Walsh. Inzamam hit 19 fours and two sixes in his 177 lasting 454 minutes and faced 320 balls.

Pakistan added 68 runs for the final seven wickets.

Mohammad Wasim made a slow 26 before becoming one of five victims for Walsh, his 15th five wicket-haul taking his tally of wickets to 349 in 95 Tests. Franklin Rose took three for 92.

Akram with three wickets for 17, brought his tally of wickets to 326 in 76 Tests when he had Shivarine Chanderpaul leg before and is now eighth spot in the all-time wicket takers' list, beating England's Bob Willis' 325 wickets in 90 Tests.

"It's a great feeling but the thing that I more rejoice is that we are going to beat West Indies only for the second time," Akram said. "We promised a clean sweep and we will do it."

West Indies lost debutant opener Philo Wallace in the fourth over, adjudged lbw off Waqar Younis for eight. One run later Azhar Mahmood held a superb catch in the gully off Akram to send Stuart Williams back for one. But TV replays showed it was a no-ball with Akram clearly overstepping the line.

Brian Lara faced tremendous pressure in the wicket after a run of poor runs and his team again needing a match-winning innings.

He survived 16 balls before Akram deceived him with a slow one and held an upish back drive.

Lara scored one. The holder

of world records for the highest Test and first-class innings, has made just 56 runs off 86 balls in four Test innings here. Lara also dropped Inzamam in the Peshawar Test and Aamir Sohail in this Test.

At tea West Indies were struggling on 53 for three.

Sherwin Campbell (34) and Chanderpaul (7) went soon after the break.

Campbell's 118-minute stay ended when he was bowled off his legs by leg-spinner Mushtaq Ahmed. Chanderpaul missed a straight ball from Akram and was trapped lbw.

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