

Here comes super balls!

TOKYO, Dec 4: The balls to be used in next year's World Cup finals are going to be a nightmare for goalkeepers, many of the star strikers who will be taking part have warned. reports AFP.

The Adidas makers say they have developed a "revolutionary" new process which makes the ball travel straighter and faster than any other used.

England star David Beckam is among those who have already tested it and he said: "The Tricolore is different to any other ball I have used, it's faster and it's sharper. I think in World Cup '98 it is going to be harder for 'keepers to save this ball."

Italy's Alessandro del Piero added in a special video release to accompany the launch of the official World Cup ball that he also foresees more goals, the Asian launch is to be carried out in Tokyo on Thursday.

He said: "I think the Tricolore moves much faster, with more speed and control, you are able to do what you want with your feet, to be more creative, the ball follows your directions better and so you're more likely to score."

Adidas say the synthetic foam used on the World Cup ball "creates the most playable ball ever."

Company research manager Otto Dobroung said the foam on the football panels was a tight regular polyurethane matrix composed of gas filled individually closed micro-balloons which return energy equally to ball's 32 panels."

The foam has a very tight density and makes the ball more responsive than ever and the flight more accurate."

Like all FIFA approved balls, the latest one has been through testing at a Swiss government laboratory. It was fired at a steel plate at 50 kilometers (30 miles) an hour 4,800 times.

Duplicate bridge

The two-day pair duplicate bridge competition of Dhaka Club begins at the club premises today, reports BSS.

The meet being organised as part of the club's Victory Day celebrations, will start at 4 pm.

Besides, a team event will also be held on December 10.

Saurav, Sachin rule the day

BOMBAY, Dec 4: Saurav Ganguly and skipper Sachin Tendulkar plundered sparkling centuries today as India piled up a huge first innings total of 512 in the final Test against Sri Lanka here, reports AFP.

Sanath Jayasuriya then smashed 50 off 44 balls as Sri Lanka replied with 66 for one from 15 overs by close of the second day's play on the easy-paced Wankhede Stadium wicket.

The Indian captain, who failed in the first two Tests, smashed 20 boundaries and three sixes in his 14th Test century before a delighted home crowd.

The lunch put on 81 runs before smashing 143 in a rousing afternoon session against the limited Sri Lankan attack.

The Indian captain crossed the 4,000-run mark from 51 Tests by lofting right-arm spinner Kumar Dharmasena for a six over long-on.

Ganguly, playing his 17th Test match, took 208 balls and 297 minutes to reach his century. He now has scores of 147, 45, 109, 99 and 173 in his last five innings against Sri Lanka.

Pushpakumara, who had a five-wicket haul during the drawn second Test at Nagpur, came in for special treatment by the Indians.

Tendulkar, who had a shaky start, cover drove Pushpakumara for a four and then took two of the next ball. Later, he hit the same bowler for two successive fours through long-on and the covers.

Ganguly made his highest Test score of 173 and Tendulkar finally struck form with 148 during a record-breaking stand of 256 for the fourth wicket.

The partnership was India's best for the fourth wicket in Test cricket, surpassing the 212 by Vijay Manjrekar and Vijay Hazare against England at Leeds way back in 1952.

Ganguly and Tendulkar, who resumed at the overnight score of 247 for three, batted through the first two sessions to take India to a prosperous 471 for three by tea.

But just when India appeared set for a 600-plus score, the Sri Lankans fought back by grabbing the remaining seven wickets for the addition of just 41 runs.

Ganguly, who hit 25 boundaries and two sixes in his fifth Test century, fell in the first

over after tea when an intended sweep against off-spinner Dharmasena was taken by the wicketkeeper.

Tendulkar was bowled in the next over by Ravindra Pushpakumara, who also trapped Mohammad Azharuddin leg-behind for naught and uprooted Anil Kumble's middle stump to finish with three for 108.

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JU cricket

Sports Reporter

Department of Physics stormed into the semifinals of the Jhansigirnagar University inter-department cricket championship with a 120-run thrashing of Mathematics at the JU ground yesterday.

His song, "La cour des grands" (which FIFA football's world governing body, has been selected as the football competition's official anthem and he will sing it together with Belgian pop Star Axelle Red.

"La cour des grands" will be premiered at the December 4 World Cup finals draw in Mar-selle, France.

Brought up in the slums of Medina, a district of Dakar, N'Dour, a singer since the age of 13 now finds himself where the grown-ups play: the world stage of pop.

It took great willpower and parental disobedience to make the journey.

Behind his stark metallic voice that is beginning to captivate audiences outside Senegal is a simple, spontaneous and generous personality, like those of his compatriot fellow singers, Baba Maal Lo and Omar Pene.

Known to his friends as You, N'Dour, 38 is endlessly curious. He is a great football fan and avid mixer of cultures.

"I can see Germany, France, Spain, Italy and perhaps England contending the semifinal places along with Brazil," said the Brazilian who won the first of his three World Cups as a 17-year-old in 1958 when Brazil became the only country to win the tournament outside their own continent.

Seven of the eight quarter finalists in the United States in 1994 were European sides.

"Neither Germany nor Italy are playing well now but you have always got to respect them. They always seem to get it right on the day," he said.

"Spain have been right to stick to the same basic lineup, bringing in players like Raul, who could be the player of 1998, and England have made enormous progress under Glenn Hoddle. They have at last learnt to be patient," said the player who rates the late Bobby Moore as the best defender he played against.

He thought Brazil's biggest problem was the fact they have only played friendly matches — apart from the 1996 Copa America — since their triumph in USA '94.

"And Zagallo still hasn't decided on his defence and midfield," he said of the Brazil

Div I cricket

Sports Reporter

BRIEF SCORES

GOPIBAGH FA: 227 for nine in 45 overs (Rizvi 57, Setu 30, Riton 25; Masud 4/46).

DHANMONDI CLUB: 228 for five in 44.2 overs (Aslam 69, Masud 56, Mohammad 23 no, Dul 12/12).

Result: Dhankandi Club won by five wickets.

A brilliant all-round performance by Masud Raihan enabled Dhanmondi Club to post a five-wicket victory over Gopibagh Friends Association in a First Division cricket league engagement at the City Club ground yesterday.

Masud grabbed four wickets for 44 and then scored a dazzling 56 off 70 deliveries as Dhanmondi Club overcame the Gopibagh total of 227.

Masud, who came to bat at number three with Dhanmondi fairly placed on 57 for one in 15.2 overs, added 87 runs for the second wicket along with opener Mohammad Aslam who topscored with 69 off 100 balls.

Besides, Mohammad (23 n.o.) and Lipu (19) were the other notable run-getters for the winners.

Earlier, Gopibagh, after electing to bat, amassed the total losing nine wickets in 45 overs with one-down Asim Rizvi of Pakistan hammering highest 57.

Football to jive with N'Dour beat

N'Dour beat

DAKAR, Dec 4: Youssou N'Dour, Senegalese poor boy crowned king of the traditional Mbalakh rhythm at home, has the World Cup to thank for thrusting him into the international spotlight, reports AFP.

His song, "La cour des grands" (which FIFA football's world governing body, has been selected as the football competition's official anthem and he will sing it together with Belgian pop Star Axelle Red.

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Symcox antics vex Aussies

All-rounder Harvey impressed with the ball on debut, claiming a wicket with his second delivery in international cricket.

Rhodes made 12 before he became the fifth down when Harvey's full-pitch medium pace ball slipped under the bat.

Bichel claimed Brian McMillan for 19, Cronje for 21 and Dave Richardson for 17.

Warne, the team's new vice-captain with the ascendancy of

South African captain Hansie Cronje told the umpires he would have to lead his side off the ground if fans continued to throw hard objects such as golf balls and bottles.

"In Pakistan and India we walked off three times because of stones and rocks being thrown on the field," Cronje said. "I told the umpires we had to be consistent. We can't just walk off in Pakistan and not walk off here."

Cronje said two golf balls were thrown on the field while Jacques Kallis was hit by a tennis ball "filled with water."

Symcox, who led South Africa to 200 all out off the final ball of their innings with an unbeaten 27, grabbed a career best 4-28 as Australia crumbled to 133 off 38 overs.

"I wasn't too happy about it down there," Symcox said of the crowd trouble.

Australia's revamped lineup, with five players dropped from their successful Test team, was cruising at 61 for one in the 17th over before the crash came. It was the first match of the triangular World Series Cup also featuring New Zealand.

Mark Waugh and Greg Blewett added 55 runs for the second wicket before Blewett fell to paceman Allan Donald, attempting a pull from the crease which looped out to Jonty Rhodes at mid-wicket.

Symcox, 37, then ripped out the experienced twins Mark and Steve Waugh with his off spinners.

The wicket was the start of a slide of 4-28. Kirsten went two runs later with the total on 98 when he swept a Mark Waugh delivery to Glenn McGrath at deep mid-wicket.

McGrath, back in the side after missing two Test matches against New Zealand with a groin strain, claimed 3-40 in an undisciplined South African batting performance.

Steve Waugh to the top job, was reluctant to leave and had words with umpire Steve Randell as he departed.

Earlier Symcox and Donald carried South Africa to the 200 mark after it was allowing at 160 for nine.

The visitors appeared to squander a bright 59-run stand for the third wicket between Cullinan (33) and Gary Kirsten (44).

Kirsten and