

Saurav signs for Omega

CALCUTTA, Jan 20: Omega, the world leader in watches has decided to appoint Saurav Ganguly its 'brand ambassador' to promote its range of products in India, reports PTI.

Omega has a tradition of awarding excellence. As part of this tradition we have decided to make Saurav Ganguly as one of our Indian brand ambassadors," Ravi Thakral, regional manager of SMH Group, makers of Omega, told a press conference here.

The appointment puts Saurav in line with international celebrities like super model Cindy Crawford, tennis star Martina Hingis, golfer Nick Faldo and racing car driver Michael Schumacher who are also Omega's ambassadors.

Actress Shabana Azmi, model Sushmita Sen and space traveller Rakesh Sharma were also Omega's Indian brand ambassadors, who had appeared in Omega's promotional events in India during 1996 and 1997, Thakral said.

Ctg soccer

CHITTAGONG, Jan 20: Chanda Ekashad will face Chalantika Krira Chakra in the final match of the Ispahani Mahanagar Pioneer football league '97 at Dampara Police Lines ground tomorrow, reports BSS.

Minister for Civil Aviation and Tourism Eng Mosharraf Hossain is expected to witness the match and distribute prizes as the chief guest.

Seventeen teams participated in the league, organised by the Chittagong Mahanagar Krira Sangstha.

Michel lays it out

RABAT, Jan 20: Morocco's French coach Henri Michel revealed his side's programme of warm-up friendlies for the World Cup finals on Monday, reports AFP.

Michel, who coached France to the 1986 World Cup semi-finals and was in charge of Cameroon at the 1994 finals, said that he would mainly rely on the forthcoming African Nations' Cup, which begins in Burkina Faso on February 7.

Morocco will also play host to France at Casablanca on May 16 and 17.

Michel added that apart from a friendly with Chile in Avignon, France, on June 4 he would base the rest of his team's preparations on how they fared in the nations' cup.

At the World Cup finals Morocco have been drawn in group One along with Brazil, Norway and Scotland.

Tyson ready to wrestle!

FRESNO, California, Jan 20: Mike Tyson was expected Monday to announce that he would guest referee at Wrestlemania XIV. Instead, he accepted a challenge to get into the ring himself, reports AP.

Just as Tyson was to make the announcement during the World Wrestling Federation's "Raw is War" programme, pro-wrestler Steve Austin jumped out and challenged the boxer to a fight.

The two briefly scuffled in the ring. Afterward, WWF owner Vince McMahon announced that Tyson accepted the challenge.

"Mike is refusing to guest referee. Austin embarrassed Mike Tyson and the WWF with his remarks. It was uncalled for and very unprofessional," McMahon said. "Mike is now saying he wants Stone Cold Steve Austin."

McMahon said he would ask Nevada boxing officials if they would let Tyson wrestle.

Tyson spokesman Sig Rogich said earlier that the former heavyweight champion would not wrestle.

Tyson stripped of his licence after biting off a piece of Evander Holyfield's ear in June, was banned from boxing in July by the Nevada State Athletic Commission. Rogich said Tyson would only referee to avoid jeopardizing his relationship with the commission.

Wrestlemania XIV will take place at the Fleet Centre in Boston on March 29.

Selectors set to pick Lara's team



Dean awaits baptism of fire

KINGSTON, Jamaica, Jan 20 (AP/FP): England fast bowler Dean Headley refutes the theory that he is at his best against left-handers.

There's no dispute that Headley's natural inswing — way from the left-handers — gave the likes of Australian pair Mark Taylor and Matthew Elliott their fair share of problems last summer.

He also grilled Jimmy Adams in England's innings victory over Jamaica in Montego Bay, twice in three balls causing him to pull away after being hit.

To counter West Indies' captain Brian Lara, rated as the world's top left-hander, Headley would appear to be the right man.

"Yes, I do reasonably well against left-handers," admitted the 27 year-old Kent bowler.

"I get it a lot that I get left-handers out. I seem to have bowled to quite a few for England."

"But before then I hadn't bowled to that many really. But people are always talking about it. It is like throwing five years of my career out of the window."

Lara is a key player, and against the key players you try to step up a gear to make sure they don't succeed.

"Jimmy Adams is a friend of mine, so I didn't want to give him an inch. But it was just a case of me hitting my rhythm when he came in." On a pitch like that your main concern is that you bowl wicket-to-wicket, so they always have to play you.

The fact that one ball hit him in the box and another on the gloves was governed by where I pitched the ball on that wicket. We're still friends."

He returned match figures of 46 for 46 to send England speeding to an innings and 65 runs victory with more than a day to spare at Jarrett Park.

Reports of his retirement, he said, were "just a vicious rumor."

It might have been the big

Headley show on a special, personal stage, but he is quick to emphasise that he is just one part of the England unit.

"I don't think this series is going to be won by the individual player, I think it will be a collective responsibility. Of course, you are going to get people bowling well through the team," he said.

The West Indies selectors,



CURTLY AMBROSE

meanwhile, meet on Tuesday to pick their first side under Lara's captaincy, buoyed by Courtney Walsh's decision to bowl on towards Malcolm Marshall's record of 376 wickets, and Curtly Ambrose's assurance that he has no plans of hanging up his bowling boots.

The champion fast bowler denied reports that he had prepared a letter of retirement, insisting he was available for the five-Test series.

"I'm not done yet and only

Curtly knows when to call it quits," Ambrose said in a radio interview. "I still have something to offer to West Indies cricket."

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Ambrose said he had been "getting calls from all over the world" in response to the rumours.

The 34-year-old Antiguan has taken 307 wickets in 74 Tests, 117 of them against England, and has been the spearhead of the attack since he came into the team in 1988.

He was forced to come home early from the recent West Indies tour of Pakistan because of a back injury and has been below his best form in two President's Cup matches for the Lee-ward Islands in the current West Indies season.

But he maintained he was fit and ready to play.

"I'm still standing strong," he said in the radio interview, dismissing conjecture that he was on the decline.

"When you set yourself certain standards and you don't live up to that standard in a game or two, people start to talk," he said. "But I know myself and I know my capabilities so I'm not worried. I know I'm OK."

Walsh and Ambrose have taken 660 Test wickets between them, and Trinidad's Ian Bishop — beyond the 150 mark in Tests — must be in the frame for the series opener after claiming five for 32 against the Windward Islands to receive the man-of-the-match award.

They are formidable statistics confronting England, and all three are in form.

Ambrose, who did not play in the Champions' Trophy in Sharjah because of shoulder trouble, bowled 28 overs in the recent match against Guyana to prove his fitness.

Pace newcomers Franklin Rose and the highly rated Marvin Dillon should also be in the squad to support the big men.

Jamaica's dependable Sherwin Campbell could partner Stuart Williams at the top of the batting order, and it may be down to a choice of Adams or Trinidad all-rounder Phil Simmons for the No 6 berth.

Ranga took four wickets for 25 runs.

In the second match of the day at the same venue, Dishaari Sangha defeated Wanderers' Cricket Club by seven wickets.

Winning the toss Wanderers Club batted first and made 124 runs for nine wickets in the stipulated 22 overs.

Manjo scored glorious 53 runs for Wanderers.

In reply, Dishaari Sangha made 125 runs for three wickets in 20.2 overs.

Rupan and Selim bagged 43 and 20 runs respectively for the winners.

Biju collected 59 runs.

Rahmatganj beat Farashganj

Rahmatganj Muslim Friends Society completed the second phase engagements of the Premier Division football league with a 1-0 victory over Farashganj Sporting Club at the Mirpur Stadium yesterday, reports UNB.

Milan netted the match-winner for Rahmatganj in the 55th minute.

With this third win from 18 league matches, Rahmatganj have collected 17 points while Farashganj, who earlier booked a spot for the super league, remained at previous 19 points from 18 outings.

The five-team super league involving Mohammedan Sporting Club, Mukti Joddha Sangsads, Abahani Krira Chakra, Brothers Union and Farashganj SC will begin on February 10.

TEAMS

RAHMATGANJ MFS:

Panu, Pons, Kamal, Shafiq, Adil (Awlad), Nayan, Asif, Badal, Saiful (Tipul), Towhid (Jahangir) and Milan.

FARASHGANJ SC:

Newshad, Kajal, Montu, Din Mohammad (Pintu), Dulal, Selim, Chanchal (Mithu), Sakhawat, Akhtar, Babu Das and Uttam (Rabi).

Referee: Golam Mustafa.

Zia Smriti cricket

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Jan 20: S M Khan Smriti Sangha defeated Rajarhat Tarun Sangha by one wicket in the 10th Shaheed Zia Smriti cricket tournament

played today at the Rajshahi Government College playground.

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taken 660 Test wickets between them, and Trinidad's Ian Bishop — beyond the 150 mark in Tests — must be in the frame for the series opener after claiming five for 32 against the Windward Islands to receive the man-of-the-match award.

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AUSSIE OPEN AT A GLANCE

MELBOURNE, Jan 20 (AP): Highlights of Tuesday's second day of the 6.7 million dollars Australian Open tennis championships:

Weather: Overcast. Afternoon temperature was 77 degrees (25 C).

Results: Men's singles, first round — No 3 Michael Chang beat Kenneth Charlton 6-3, 7-6 (7-2), 5-7, 6-3; No 5 Greg Rusedski beat David Witt 7-6 (7-4), 6-3, 6-4; Jan Apell beat No 8 Thomas Muster 6-4, 7-6 (7-5), 7-5; No 9 Marcelo Rios beat Grant Stafford 6-1, 6-0, 6-3; No 12 Gustavo Kuerten beat Jacobo Diaz 6-3, 6-2, 6-3, 6-2; No 13 Goran Ivanisevic 6-2, 7-6 (7-3), 3-6, 6-4.

Women's Singles, First Round: No 1 Martina Hingis beat Wiltrud Probst 6-1, 6-2; No 7 Arantxa Sanchez Vicario beat Janet Lee 6-0, 6-4; No 9 Sandrine Testud beat Leon Garcia 6-3, 6-2; No 10 Anke Huber beat Sarah Pitkowski 5-7, 6-0, 6-0; No 14 Dominique Van Roost beat Renee Simpson 6-3, 6-2; No 16 Al Sugiyama beat Maria Sanchez Lorenz 4-6, 6-1, 6-3; No 11 Brenda Schultz McCarthy beat Marion Maruska 7-6 (8-6), 7-5.

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