

Sport

BFF signs Samir

Sports Reporter

Bangladesh Football Federation yesterday roped in former Iraqi international footballer Samir Shakir as its national coach.

An initial contract for three months was signed by the World Cup veteran at the National Sports Council (NSC) in presence of the State Minister for Youth and Sports Obaidul Quader.

Bangladesh Football Federation (BFF) general secretary Harunur Rashid MP and other senior BFF and NSC officials were present during the signing.

Samir played for Abahani Krira Chakra in the local Premier league in the mid-eighties and also coached Abahani and Mohammedan Sporting Club.

According to the deal, Samir will receive 1000 US dollar per month as his salary. In addition he will also get 500 USD for his boarding, food and transport.

Samir, who played for Iraq in the 1986 World Cup, will take over the charge of the national



Sprinter Matt Shirvington signing autographs for fans in Sydney during a welcome home parade for the Australian Commonwealth Games delegation yesterday. — AFP photo

Jamaica thrash USA



KINGSTON, Oct 8: Jamaica defeated the United States by eight wickets Wednesday in the Red Stripe Bowl cricket tournament at Chedwin Park.

Franklyn Rose, who started the rout, was the pick of the Jamaican bowlers, capturing up three wickets for 17 runs in 6.1 overs.

Of the American batsmen, only middle-order batsmen David Hollette and captain Richard Staple looked at home against the Jamaican attack.

Hollette, a former Jamaica player, topscored with 31 and was the last man out. Staple, also a one-time Jamaica player, played steadily for a patient 24 before he was run out in the 28th over.

Scoreboard for the Jamaica-USA match Wednesday in the Red Stripe Bowl cricket tournament at Chedwin park.

UNITED STATES: Wallace c Powell b Rose 0, Alexander run out 4, Headley b Rose 4, Staple run out 24, Richards lbw Adams 14, Wildman b Gayle 9, Hollette b Rose 29, Amin c Gayle b Ferguson 1.

Table with columns: Bowler, O, M, R, W. Lists stats for Louis b Ferguson, Nazir lbw Williams, etc.

JAMAICA: Samuels c Louis b Nazir 47, Ferguson c Staple b Nazir 27, Gayle not out 22, Hinds not out 5, Extras 7.

SCOREBOARD: Fall of wickets 1-60: 2-85: 108. Fall of wks: 1-4: 2-8: 3-14: 4-44: 5-56: 6-65: 7-73: 8-87: 9-101.

The Aii Museum

LOUISVILLE, Kentucky, Oct 8: Muhammad Ali brought the torch he used to light the Olympic flame at the Atlanta Games, and offered it Wednesday to be exhibited at a museum proposed to honor him, reports AP.

From school children to politicians, people flocked around the three-time heavyweight champion whose life journey would be on display at the Muhammad Ali Centre.

Alli's wife, Lonnie, said their goal for the centre is to inspire people, especially children, to reach their potential and to show tolerance and respect for others, no matter their skin color or beliefs.

This centre will not be about his fame, Muhammad does not want that. It is about values rather than fame," his wife said.

Alli, afflicted with Parkinson's syndrome, made no formal comments during the news conference near the downtown site for the proposed building.

The Ali Centre would include a museum, a research centre, an auditorium and a garden. It would be built downtown near the Ohio River, where Ali is reputed to have thrown his 1960 Olympic gold medal to protest racial injustice.

Organisers want to raise 80 million dollars for the long-anticipated project — 60 million dollars to design and build the centre, plus 20 million dollars for an endowment to pay for its operation.

The Ali's plan to move back to Louisville from Berrien Springs, Mich., to help oversee development and operation of the centre, Lonnie Ali said.

"It's not just Ali's victories in the ring that will be captured at this centre," mayor Jerry Abramson said.

"But it will be as much about the causes for which the champ fought outside the ring — equal rights, tolerance, peace in the world, respect for other human beings — that will be expounded upon and taught at this centre."

Gov. Paul Patton pledged support to raise money — both public and private — to build the museum. Patton said the centre should be built "on a scale that is commensurate with Muhammad Ali's impact on the world."

Larry Townsend, who heads the Ali Centre board, said afterwards that construction wouldn't begin until all the money is raised.

Santos beat Rosario Central

SANTOS, Brazil, Oct 8: Brazil's Santos started off strong in this first game of the Conmebol Cup home and away final, beating Rosario Central 1-0 Wednesday night, reports AP.

The game was decided early when Claudomiro headed it past Rosario Central goalie Bujubasich for a goal in the 28th minute.

After that Santos were a hard team to stop, but Rosario Central closed the defence and held them off.

Santos who are currently leading in the Brazilian national championships wanted a win at home to give them an advantage when they meet Rosario Central, this time in Argentina, on Oct. 21 in the game that will decide the Conmebol Cup.

Lehmann hits hundred

RAWALPINDI, Oct 8: Left-hander Darren Lehmann hit a stylish century as Australia were 328-7 on the opening day of the four-day match against a Rawalpindi side here today, reports AFP.

The 28-year-old from South Australia, who missed a century by two runs in the first Test against Pakistan in Rawalpindi, made amends with a polished knock of 103.

Lehmann hit 10 fours and two sixes in his 155-ball innings that lasted 202 minutes. He shared a fifth wicket stand of 107 with Ricky Ponting who made 88.

Earlier Australian captain Mark Waugh won the toss and elected to bat. He continued his poor form with 13, dismissed by paceman Jaffer Nazir.

Michael Slater who hit 108 in the first Test against Pakistan could only make four.

Justin Langer shaped well during his 42 but fell pray to left-arm spinner Shakil Ahmed who took 3-97.

Aussies' key batsman Mark Waugh was caught off Test paceman Azhar Mahmood with just a single.

Ponting hit 14 boundaries in his 157-minute knock, making claims for a Test place. Langer was preferred over Ponting in the first Test.

The tourists rested vice-captain Steve Waugh. Leg-spinner Stuart MacGill and paceman Glenn McGrath. MacGill started in Australia's innings and 99-run win in the first Test at Rawalpindi this week.

Pakistan paceman Waqar Younis was in the line-up for the match but he failed to make it due to fitness problems.

At close Gavin Robertson was on 33 and Michael Kasprovic was on five. Pacers Azhar Mahmood and Jaffer Nazir took two wickets apiece.

Aussies welcome back heroes

SYDNEY, Oct 8: Thousands of Australians welcome back the country's triumphant Commonwealth Games team today in a large parade through the streets of Sydney, reports AFP.

Some of the stars of Australia's record haul of 198 medals in the Kuala Lumpur last month — swimmers Michael Klim, Grant Hackett and Ian Thorpe, field hockey striker of syson Annan and sprinter Nova Peris-Kneebone — sat in open-top cars to bask in the crowd's adulation.

Today was the last of a nationwide series of parades to congratulate the team, which dominated the Kuala Lumpur Games, bringing home 80 gold medals.

The parade, continuing a tradition of welcoming home successful sporting teams, wound its way through the streets of central Sydney from Hyde Park to Circular Quay.

Thousands of supporters cheered and waved flags as the athletes passed by.

Sydney, like the rest of Australia, is gearing up for its greatest sporting occasion when it hosts the Olympic Games in September, 2000.

UEFA plan gains ground

ROME, Oct 8 (Reuters/ Internet): Leading Italian clubs on Wednesday gave a thumbs up to UEFA's plans for a revised Champions League, as unveiled on Tuesday at a UEFA executive meeting in Lisbon.

Responding to UEFA's plans to enlarge the competition to 32 teams, leading Italian Serie A clubs Inter Milan, AC Milan, Lazio and Fiorentina all expressed their satisfaction, underlining the fact that the new regulations foresee four Italian entrants.

Former Italian international Giacinto Facchetti, now a consultant for Inter Milan, told Italian news agency, ANSA: "UEFA have shown that they have understood that the clubs want the cup competitions restructured and it seems that they have gone a long way towards realising the restructuring even before 2001."

AC Milan acting president Adriano Galliani was equally enthusiastic. "We've taken a big step forward. UEFA has finally taken on board market considerations," he said.

Referring to the threat from the Milan-based company Media Partners to set up a rival breakaway European Super League, Galliani said: "Now we have to work out the finances. At the moment UEFA pays out only 50 percent of its takings to the clubs while Media Partners had promised us 80-85 percent."

Rome club Lazio also gave a positive response to the new plan. "The reforms respect a fundamental sporting principle, namely that clubs have to earn admission on merit," Lazio technical director Julio Velasco said.

"For us at Lazio, the fact that there are four places available to Italian teams...is very important."

Florentina director Giancarlo Antognoni, a former Italian international, also welcomed the new plans but added: "By increasing the number of teams, you consequently increase revenue, publicity and prestige."

"I only hope that the quality of the game does not diminish. Increasing the number of competitors in a tournament does not always mean that you get

Injury Hoddle's worry

LONDON, Oct 8: Inspirational defender Tony Adams is one of six England players at risk of being ruled out of Saturday's European Championship qualifier with Bulgaria at Wembley, reports AFP.

The Arsenal veteran was forced to sit out Wednesday's training session along with forwards Teddy Sheringham, Ian Wright and Darren Anderson, defender Martin Keown and midfielder Ray Parlour.

Adams is suffering from back and ankle problems and England coach Hoddle admitted: "As things stand at this moment in time I wouldn't put my hat on any of them being fit for Saturday."

"The good thing is that they are all improving and things will unfold in the next couple of days."

"This sport of things has happened to Tony in the past. The two injuries seem to be connected a bit. He controls it well for Arsenal and we need give him time now."

Hoddle, who is already without suspended midfielders Paul Ince and David Beckham, added: "Martin Keown has got a back problem as well, he landed awkwardly on Sunday, he has been suffering spasms and it needs time to settle down."

Eng FA reports against B SkyB

LONDON, Oct 8: English soccer's governing body, the Football Association, has opposed the takeover of Manchester United by B SkyB in its submission to the Office of Fair Trading, reports AP.

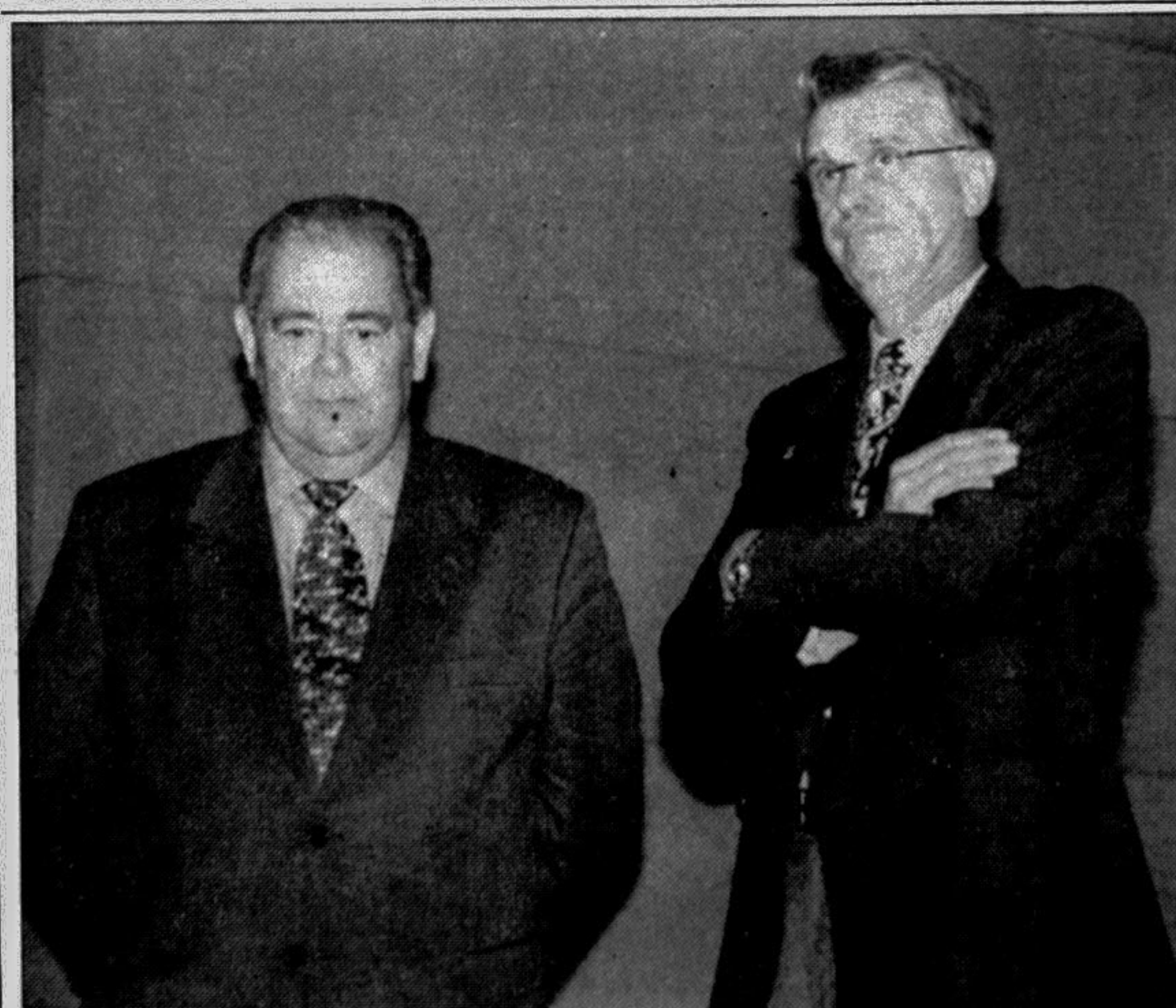
The FA submission reportedly said the proposed 623-million-pound (1 billion dollar) takeover by Rupert Murdoch's satellite broadcaster is "not welcomed" because it is not in the overall interests of the game.

The Office of Fair Trading, a government body investigating the takeover, has extended its review deadline by 15 days after receiving 350 complaints.

The OFT Thursday said the deadline for submissions had been extended until November 2 after an "unusually high" number of complaints had been received about the proposed deal.

The OFT will then make its recommendation to the government's trade and industry department on whether or not to refer the deal to a Monopolies and Mergers Commission.

France's World Cup winning coach Aime Jacquet (R), who is at present the technical director of the country's soccer federation, and federation president Claude Simonet waiting before the start of the anti-drug meeting at University of Paris yesterday. — AFP photo



France's World Cup winning coach Aime Jacquet (R), who is at present the technical director of the country's soccer federation, and federation president Claude Simonet waiting before the start of the anti-drug meeting at University of Paris yesterday. — AFP photo

Don't take heed of sledging

Sports Reporter

LONDON, Oct 8: Controversial England coach David Lloyd said Wednesday that he and his team must rise above any verbal provocation from the Australians during the forthcoming Ashes series down under, reports AFP.

Lloyd, whose outspoken views have often landed him in trouble with the authorities, said he was reluctant to accuse the Australians of sledging but he was warned his players about the danger of rising to 'terrific banter'.

Lloyd was effectively placed on probation after his comments about Sri Lankan spinner Muttiah Muralitharan in the summer and he acknowledged the Australians will be tempting him to step out of line once again.

He has been warned by his England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) employers to take a diplomatic line on controversial issues and will give a wide berth to the expected baiting from the Australian team and media.

"We cannot stop them talking about the England team, so I guess we'll just rise above it," said Lloyd. "I hate to use the word 'sledging', so I rather term the exchanges the two sides have as terrific banter."

"Believe it or not, I've made some terrific friendship with Australians over the years and I hope that continues this winter."

"We're there to win the Ashes not to cause controversy and we know the enormity of the challenge we face."

Speaking at the launch of a new cricket coaching initiative, Lloyd admitted his side faced a mighty task against the unofficial world champions on their own soil.

Lloyd also revealed England will employ an Australian spin expert on the upcoming Ashes tour in a bid to reduce the threat of spin twins Shane Warne and Stuart MacGill.

Warne has been England's principal tormentor in recent years and the England management have decided to take steps to reduce his threat by hiring coach Peter Philpott.

Philpott, now in his 50s, was a leg-spinner who played Test cricket for Australia in the 1960s.

He has worked with Lloyd before at English county, Lancashire and will become a familiar face in the nets during the series, as the England batsmen attempt to come to terms with the intricacies of top-class leg-spin.

Lloyd is sure that Philpott's presence on the tour will be an advantage. "If having Peter there helps just one per cent we'll be delighted," he said. "His only brief will be to teach the players how to combat leg-spin."

"With tormentors-in-chief from the last Ashes series — bowlers Glenn McGrath and Shane Warne — both on the road back to fitness, he acknowledges England deserve to start as underdogs."

"It's going to be a very tough challenge against a side I regard the undisputed number one team in the world," said Lloyd. "They're incredibly well equipped in every department. But for the players it's a lifetime's ambition just to be selected, so they'll be giving it their all."

Lloyd reported that Michael Atherton is fully fit and recovered from his injury and is raring to re-acquaint himself with Australian rivals.

Fast bowler McGrath gave the Lancashire opener a torrid time during the last series, and Lloyd is banking on Atherton taking his revenge this winter.

"He was in a slump then but showed true spirit and survived when the cares of captaincy were relieved. He showed us all what he could do," said Lloyd.

"Against South Africa he was absolutely brilliant, and his battles with Allan Donald were pure Test match cricket. I'm hoping we'll see more of the same this winter."

Call for ICC to act over bribery

Sports Reporter

MELBOURNE, Oct 8 (Reuters/ Internet): Australia's top cricket official has called on the sport's world ruling body to take a more significant role in the current investigation into alleged match-fixing by Pakistan players.

Australian Cricket Board (ACB) chief executive Malcolm Speed said he wanted to see the International Cricket Council (ICC) deal with the matter itself or appoint an independent panel to look into it.

"The ICC needs to be empowered and then provided with the resources, whether they be internal resources or external resources, to carry out inquiries if they need to be carried out," Speed said.

"What I'd like to see ultimately is that there is provision there for an independent inquiry into incidents that occur in the future so that players are put on notice that if there is any bribery or match-fixing there is a mechanism to deal with it."

Speed was speaking on his return to Australia on Thursday after visiting Pakistan to accompany Australia captain Mark Taylor and batsman

Mark Waugh when they testified before the inquiry. The Australians repeated their allegations of bribery to the sport's world ruling body to take a more significant role in the current investigation into alleged match-fixing by Pakistan players.

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Hagi adamant

Sports Reporter

BUCHAREST, Oct 8: Veteran midfielder Gheorghe Hagi on Wednesday rejected an appeal from the Romanian football federation to make himself available for qualifying matches for the 2000 European Championships, reports AFP.

Hagi, 34, said he would not reverse his decision to retire from international football, which he made after the World Cup finals earlier this year.

"I made a serious decision to quit — and I'm not going back on that decision," Hagi said.

Former Arsenal player Hartson has been in trouble on and off the pitch before for his hot temper, finishing last season with 13 bookings, one red card and three bans.

In October, the F.A. charged him with misconduct for a verbal attack on a referee in which he accused him of being a "homer" (biased towards the home side) and branded the official a "disgrace".

On Monday, he was fined by a Welsh court for using a hanging basket of flowers as a football.

Israel radio quoted him as saying he would not be taking court action against his Welsh team mate.

The midfielder wrote in the Israeli tabloid Ma'ariv that he

lay on the ground for 10 minutes after the kick with blood gushing from his head.

He said Hartson had phoned him to apologise. "I think it's a bit late for that now," Berkovic said with his reply.

Hartson is attending a

French clinic for treatment for an ankle injury but his agent criticised Berkovic in the Sun newspaper.

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CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer. Includes crossword puzzle grid and solutions for various words like 'Dust', 'Towel', 'Fair share', etc.