

Hart returns to cricket

CHRISTCHURCH, Feb 17: All-round Matthew Hart was recalled from international cricket wilderness Wednesday when he was named in the New Zealand team for Saturday's third limited-over match against South Africa, reports AP.

The 26-year-old left-arm spinner replaces Wellington batsman Matthew Bell in the New Zealand side. Hart last played for New Zealand in Pakistán in late 1996.

Since then he has been overtaken as the country's premier spinner by provincial teammate Daniel Vettori.

As well as 14 Tests, Hart has played 11 one-day internationals, taking 13 wickets, with best figures of 5-22 against the West Indies at Gote in 1994.

New Zealand lost Wednesday's second match by seven wickets, enabling South Africa to level the six-match series 1-1.

TEAM

Dion Nash (capt), Nathan Astle, Matt Horne, Craig McMillan, Roger Twose, Adam Parore, Chris Harris, Matthew Hart, Daniel Vettori, Gavin Larsen, Simon Doull, Geoff Allott.

Heynckes rejects Borussia's offer

BERLIN, Feb 17: Jupp Heynckes has refused to become the saviour of his troubled former club, Borussia Moenchengladbach, who have fallen into the cellar of the Bundesliga, reports AP.

Heynckes, who coached Real Madrid to the Champions Cup triumph last season and is now between jobs, said in the latest issue of Sport Bild magazine published Tuesday that he had been offered every management position at the club.

"I was even offered the job of president, I refused. I'm a trainer and not a manager," Heynckes said.

Moenchengladbach was one of Europe's top clubs in the 1970s, sweeping to five Bundesliga titles and two UEFA Cup. But this season, the once-proud club is in disarray and fighting desperately to avoid relegation.

Heynckes is not the only former star of the team that has refused to help save the club they once made famous.

Guenther Netzer, now a television commentator, and former German national team coach Berti Vogts have also stayed away.

Another player on the famous 70s team, Rainer Bonhoff, took over as coach in mid-season as Moenchengladbach went through a shakeup.

But Bonhoff is not as respected in Germany as his three former teammates.

Heynckes has also been mentioned as a possible coach for another troubled team, the German national team. He had been offered the position when Vogts resigned after the World Cup, but refused because his wife was ill.

Heynckes's wife has since made a recovery, while Germany's new coach, Erich Ribbeck, is under fire after a humiliating 3-0 loss last week to the United States.

Papadaki advances

BOGOTA, Feb 17: Little-known Greek Christina Papadaki upset second-seeded Florencia Labat of Argentina 6-2, 6-2 on Monday and advanced to the second round of the VII Copa Colantos, reports AP.

Papadaki, the 25-year-old Athens native who was bounced in the first round of the Australian Open and failed to get through the qualifying rounds at the US Open, had little trouble with her 75th-ranked opponent.

The two other seeds in action Monday easily advanced.

No. 5 Fabiola Zuluaga of Colombia, eliminated Cristina Torriente Valero of Spain 6-2, 6-3 and third-seeded American Meghan Shaughnessy ousted compatriot Samantha Reeves 6-4, 6-2.

Top-seeded Li Fang of China was to make her debut in Tuesday's play, facing Luciana Masanté of Argentina.

Sino gymnast robbed

NEW YORK, Feb 17: Paralyzed Chinese gymnast Sang Lan and her aide have been robbed by a man who was helping them change a car tire, reports AP.

The Chinese gymnast, paralyzed last summer at the Goodwill Games, and her guardian, Gina Liu, had pulled their car over to the edge of a Manhattan service road so Ms. Liu could repair a flat tire at about 1:30 pm. Tuesday when a man walking by stopped to help them, said police.

The man and Ms. Liu, 45, changed the tire while the gymnast, 17, sat in the back seat of the car.

The man then stood up, stretched, dusted off his hands and snatched Ms. Liu's pocketbook, which had dials 400 in it, from the car's front seat before running away, said police, who had no suspects.

Sang, a member of the Chinese national gymnastics team, severely injured her neck doing warm-up exercises during the Goodwill Games at the Nassau Coliseum in Long Island on July 21.

She was paralyzed from the neck down but has regained some strength in her shoulders, elbows and wrists and can raise her arms.

Vice President Al Gore's wife, Tipper, earlier this month presented Sang with an award for courage from Women's Sport and Fitness magazine.

Kirsten pilots S Africa

CHRISTCHURCH, Feb 17: Two century partnerships involving Gary Kirsten took South Africa to a resounding seven-wicket victory over New Zealand in the second one-day international at Lancaster Park today, reports Reuters.

Chasing a modest 221 to win, South Africa were reduced to 122 for two before Kirsten added 103 with Jacques Kallis to rebuild the innings and then an unbeaten 109 with captain Hansie Cronje to win the match.

Apart from the win, which levelled the six-match series at one-all, Kirsten's innings signalled a return to form for the once prolific opener after enduring a wretched run that produced just 80 runs in his last 10 matches.

Kallis, who scored 100 in the first match in Dunedin, continued his brilliant form in reaching 50 from 60 balls before falling lbw to Gavin Larsen while Cronje was brutal in his treatment of spinner Daniel Vettori, helping him to 17 — including two sixes — of one over.

Cronje reached his 34th limited-over half-century from 45 balls with three sixes and six fours but the day belonged to Kirsten who also reached 50 from 60 balls before hitting the winning runs with his 10th boundary to finish unbeaten on 109 from 109 deliveries.

Cronje was 74 not out when the match was won with seven overs to spare.

Earlier Dion Nash's decision to bat first backfired when his side slipped to 29 for three inside 5.5 overs before the innings was held together by a stubborn innings of 78 from Roger Twose who batted for 42 overs and faced 123 balls.

Jacques Kallis had Nathan

Astle (1) caught by Shaun Pollock in the gully before Pollock produced two immaculate off cutters to have both Matt Horne (5) and Craig McMillan (6) caught by Daryl Cullinan at slip.

Twose and Adam Parore then repaired much of the early damage with a stand of 102 from 147 balls for the fourth.

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Maurice misses narrowly

MADRID, Feb 17: Jet-lagged American sprinter Maurice Greene made an abortive attempt on his world indoor 60 metres record on Tuesday, reports Reuters.

Greene won comfortably in 6.49 seconds but the performance failed to match his record 6.39 effort on the same track just over 12 months ago.

"I was tired after a long trip from California. There were delays and I only arrived in Madrid on Monday night," Greene explained.

"My body really wasn't here and I didn't feel too good."

Despite his fatigue, Greene produced a time that only he has beaten at seal-level this season, her overwhelming favourite to take the world indoor title over the same distance in Japan next month.

Greene admitted that he could probably have shaved a little more from his time on

Tuesday had he not eased up over the final five metres.

But he decided not to push himself too hard after a good start put him well clear of his rivals.

Nigeria's Deji Aliu finished second in 6.59.

Electronic timing equipment was set up at 50 metres to see whether Greene could threaten the world mark of 5.56

On Saturday in Los Angeles, Greene had equalled the time first recorded by Canada's Olympic 100 metres champion Donovan Bailey in 1996. Greene came close to making it his own, stopping the clock at 5.59.

The women's 60 metres heralded a new sprint prospect in Spain-based teenager Joan Eka of Nigeria.

She won in 7.10, matching the third best time of the year.

Russia's Maksim Tarasov, 1998 European Champion, again dominated the pole vault, clearing 5.90 metres on his sec-

Whitaker feels like then

JERSEY CITY, New Jersey, Feb 17 (Reuters): Ask Pernell Whitaker and he says nothing, absolutely nothing, has changed since he won the first of his six world titles 10 years ago. Ask his trainer and he says that's nonsense.

Of course, Tommy Brooks, who also trains Mike Tyson, won't admit that being 35 hurts Whitaker's chances Saturday in Madison Square Garden against International Boxing Federation (IBF) champion Feleini Trinidad of Puerto Rico.

But he says the years have made a smarter fighter of Whitaker, finally making him learn to plant his feet and try to take his opponent out rather than strictly rely on his extretemal defensive abilities.

Brooks says that along with chipping off all that rust Whitaker accumulated in his 16-month layoff — due mostly to a suspension for drug abuse — Whitaker (41-2-1) finally has realised that had he thrown more power punches against Oscar De La Hoya. He might have stopped him or at least impressed the judges enough to win the decision in their April.

motive in his ring antics is aimed at keeping "the judges focused on me" to recognise his great defensive skills.

"I don't know if it upsets the opponent or gets him out of position," but "I don't show off. I try to hit and not be hit. That's the object of the game. I'm gonna do a lot of tricks in there."

Whitaker also disagrees at Evander Holyfield's assessment that Whitaker is susceptible these days to getting hit more with combinations, and that the 33-0 Trinidad, nine years younger, may present a very tough obstacle for Whitaker getting his career back on track after the loss to De La Hoya and the drug suspension.

"Nobody hits me with a four-punch combination. I'm not gonna let anybody put their hands on me four times in a row," says Whitaker, his gold tooth catching the light.

"My fights are only as easy as I make them," Whitaker said. For Trinidad, Whitaker said, "I've covered every angle I need to cover. I know what I have to do. There will be no excuses."

In addition to the loss to De La Hoya, Whitaker also lost a decision to Jose Ramirez in 1988, and he drew with Julio Cesar Chavez in 1993.

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Malmo, Sweden, Feb 17: Kelly Stepanchyn won the 50 and 200 metres backstroke at a World Cup short course meeting on Tuesday in a Canadian haul of four of the eight women's golds decided on the first day, reports Reuters.

She clocked 28.94 seconds over the shorter distance, edging out Denmark's Louise Orsted by 0.04 of a second.

Stepanchyn completed the double by touching first in the 200 in minutes 9.37 with Cathleen Rund of Germany second in 9.09.

Joanne Malar headed a Canadian sweep in the women's 200 individual medley. She clocked 2:12.94 and was followed home by Marianne Limpert (2:13.07) and Carrie Brugoyne (2:14.49).

Their compatriot Laura Nichols took the 200 freestyle, storming home in 1:58.10 ahead of Sweden's Josefsson (1:58.62) and Miriam Oremans (1:58.66).

Stepanchyn's 50 and 200 backstrokes were the first to be decided on the first day.

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Stephanie Graf and Jennifer Capriati celebrate after winning their doubles fixture against Sabine Apelmanns and Miriam Oremans in the WTA tournament at Hanover on February 16.

England A go one-up

BULAWAYO, Feb 17: England earned victory by one wicket in the first of three one-day internationals against Zimbabwe A here Tuesday with just three balls to spare, reports AFP.

The home side reached 262 all out in 49.4 overs and England a scrambled to the required target at 263 to win in 49.3 overs with the last pair at the wicket.

Zimbabwe A were strengthened by the inclusion of Test fast bowler Everton Matambanadzo and the one-day specialist all-rounder Craig Evans.

But it was the regular Zimbabwe A captain Drik Viljoen and middle order batsmen Stuart Carlisle, who continued their successful run of good scores against the tourists.

They put on a breezy 112 for the fourth wicket, Carlisle making 80 runs in only 67 balls and Viljoen 73 in 99 balls.

Andrew Flintoff from Lancashire with 57 and Worcester's Vikram Solanki, who made 71 runs in just 70 balls, were the best of the English batsmen.

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