

Sport

King Carlos to open Olympic Stadium

SEVILLE, Spain, May 4: A star studded line-up from the world of athletics and football will join together for the inauguration of the new Olympic Stadium here on Wednesday by King Carlos and International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) president Dr Primo Nebiolo, reports AFP.

Davor Suker, top scorer of the 1998 World Cup who plays for Spanish giants Real Madrid, will join the Croatian national squad for a friendly football match against Spain. Croatia were third in last year's World Cup.

The inauguration ceremony also includes two 1,500m races with top Spanish athletes Reyes Estevez, Isaac Vicioso and Andres Diaz competing against John Kosgei of Kenya and Briton John Maycock.

The women's event will feature Carla Sacramento of Portugal, Kutre Dulecha of Ethiopia and Kenya's Faith Mataricha.

An estimated 40,000 people will attend the ceremony in the stadium, which hosts the IAAF World Championships from August 20-29. The stadium is the first designed specifically for this major event.

Conservative English cocktail



LONDON, Apr 30 (Reuters/Internet): Even by the standards of a national sporting culture with an in-built distrust of flair, the England squad for next month's World Cup is deeply conservative.



MARK RAMPRAKASH

Being on the near certainty of a damp English spring and pitches conducive to seam bowling, England have opted for a team heavily weighted in favour of bits and pieces all-rounders.

The list of absentees says as much about the current thinking at the top of English cricket as the names of the cast picked to represent the host nation.

There is no room for Middlesex captain Mark Ramprakash, one of the few successes during another unsuccessful Ashes campaign in Australia.

Dean Headley, who bowled England to their only victory in Australia, is missing and Test vice-captain Nasser Hussain, the best fielder in the side, won a place by default when Mike Atherton withdrew through injury.

selectors can find no place either for Alex Tudor, who succeeded his Surrey team mate Ben Hooloake in Australia as the bright new hope of English cricket, while Hooloake has

been overlooked in favour of his less talented older brother Adam.

Instead, England have opted for a mix of proven one-day performers and a group of distinctly ordinary county professionals.

England have reached the semifinals twice and the final once on the three previous occasions the Cup has been staged in England.

But each time the England side was stronger than the current outfit and it is no simplification to say the team's success depends on Alec Stewart succeeding in his three roles.

At the age of 36, Stewart will captain his country, open the batting and keep wicket in the most demanding overall burden carried by any individual in the tournament.

Stewart, like his mentor Graham Gooch, leads from the front and England can only hope that the batting form which has deserted him in recent months returns.

At his best, Stewart is a splendid striker of the ball and a successful partnership with the equally aggressive Nick Knight is crucial to England's chances.

Graham Thorpe is as proficient at one-day cricket as he is in the five-day game, averaging 40 in internationals and at the age of 35 Neil Fairbrother remains a master of scoring runs in unexpected areas.

In the field, Darren Gough is now a magnificent operator with both old and new ball and the one player in the England line-up to exude genuine star quality.

His opening partnership with the left-handed Alan Mullally has proven effective and Angus Fraser, still the best and most consistent seam bowler in England, will exploit to the full any favourable spring conditions.

A huge question mark, though, hangs over the backup players, particularly after seven one-day defeats in a row for the national team this year.

The quintet picked for their all-round qualities - Ian Austin, Mark Ealham, Andrew Flintoff, Hooloake and Vince Wells - rarely performed with the bat and were inconsistent with the ball.

Their medium-pace is bound to be more effective in England than in either Australia or Sharjah but the lack of runs is a real worry for Stewart.

"We get five down and then the rest are out for 30," Stewart said this week during a series of interviews to publicise a diary summarising his first year as England captain.



DEAN HEADLEY

"We need the lower order to get 80 or 100 runs. We need more from the lower order."

Six members have already been expellid and four resigned with 10 censored in the wake of the Salt Lake City corruption scandal that sparked off the welter of allegations that have undermined the body.

Monday saw the inaugural meeting of the IOC's Ethics Commission, presided by Mbaye, to formally announce the drafting of an IOC Code of Ethics at a news conference.

The Ethics Commission consists of three IOC members and five outsiders.

The IOC trio are Mbaye, Australia's Kevin Gosper and Japan's Chiharu Igaya.

The five external members are former President of the French Constitutional Court Robert Badinter, former US senator Howard Baker, former Canadian Olympian Charagne Crooks, former Swiss President Kurt Furgler and Peruvian former United Nations secretary general Javier Perez de Cuellar.

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Kim, Coles' fate on Tuesday

LAUSANNE, Switzerland, May 4: The chairman of the International Olympic Committee's new Ethics Committee said Monday a decision would be taken Tuesday on the future of two senior IOC officials accused of impropriety, reports AFP.

Senegalese Judge Keba Mbaye said the two - South Korean Kim Un-Yong and Australian Phil Coles - would be given a definitive decision.

Prior to the corruption scandals that have rocked the Olympic movement Kim had been seen as one of the leading contenders to replace IOC president Juan Antonio Samaranch when his term expires in 2001.

Coles played a leading role in Sydney's successful campaign to stage the 2000 summer games.

Mbaye also said allegations implicating around 30 members, of which 15 are newly accused, would be placed on the IOC website (olympic.org) although their names would not be revealed.

The allegations have been made by various host cities.

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Botham bouncer to bosses



IAN BOTHAM

LONDON, May 4 (Reuters/Internet): Ian Botham on Thursday ripped England's decision to risk its World Cup squad in county matches ahead of next month's tournament.

Former England captain Botham, touring the country as an ambassador for the World Cup, believes the selectors could have made a major mistake in allowing their 15-strong squad to play for their counties following the return from their disappointing displays in Sharjah.

Lancashire all-rounder Ian Austin has already been forced to pull out of his county's current championship match with Leicestershire to receive treatment on a thigh strain. Botham fears other players could suffer even more serious injuries by being exposed to the county game.

"Form is difficult to judge at this time of year and I think it's a mistake to see players playing county cricket before the World Cup," stressed Botham.

"It's stupid to risk someone picking up a hamstring strain or something like that and being struggling."

The Australians get it right and don't have naughty-boy

net - if they get beaten they learn from it and get on with it.

"I get the impression the boys are all playing county cricket now because they didn't play very well in Sharjah, which I don't agree with."

Botham believes England should have followed Australia's example and despatched the squad to another location rather than allow them to play for their counties.

The Australians do everything together and it reflects in the way they play. They are now getting their feet up in the Bahamas after the West Indies tour. They will fly their wives in and then, when they get here, they will be refreshed and hungry again because they have had 10 days with their families.

Botham also said England's recent involvement in the Sharjah tournament was a major mistake because the conditions were so different to those it was likely to experience during the World Cup.

"I don't think there was any point in going to Sharjah. The conditions were completely alien and the players had just had a very hard tour of Australia."

"When you look at guys like Darren Gough, who bowled his guts out in Australia, he would have been better off on a desert island with his family putting his feet up."

Australia, which just finished a gruelling tour of the West Indies, has allowed its players a break in the Bahamas before travelling to England for the start of the World Cup campaign.

Botham said: "I'd have sent them away en bloc out of the way for five or six days to get to know each other and do a bit of bonding."

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Ralf appointed Stuttgart coach

STUTTGART, May 4: Ralf Rangnick has been appointed coach of Bundesliga outfit VfB Stuttgart to replace Rainer Adrion, who was sacked following a disastrous season, club president Gerhard Mayer-Vorfelder announced here on Monday, reports AFP.

Rangnick is VfB Stuttgart's fourth coach this season, after Adrion, Winfried Schafer and Wolfgang Rolff.

Adrion, appointed coach in January, was sacked after VfB Stuttgart failed to win any of their last eight encounters. The team is presently 11th in the German league.

The appointment of 40-year-old Rangnick, former coach of Bundesliga side HSV, comes into effect immediately.

VfB Stuttgart will meet German champions Bayern Munich on Tuesday.

Peter Starzmann remains as deputy coach.

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Kafelnikov new number one

PARIS, May 4: Yevgeny Kafelnikov was Monday confirmed as the first Russian to be ranked number one in the world - despite the fact he hasn't won a match in six weeks, reports AFP.

Kafelnikov, who became the 16th number one since the ATP Tour introduced its rankings system, overhauled American Pete Sampras - who was inactive last week - despite losing his first match in the Czech Open in Prague.

The Russian is not playing this week after withdrawing from the tournament in Hamburg because of a viral infection.

Kafelnikov, from Sochi on the Black Sea, advanced to number one after Sampras dropped points when he didn't defend his title in Atlanta last week.

Kafelnikov has not won a tournament since winning his 19th title in Rotterdam, Holland, in February.

He will be aiming for the third Grand Slam title of his career at the French Open later this month. He won at Roland Garros in 1996.

Slovakia's Dominik Hrbaty, winner on Sunday of the Czech Open, is the biggest riser in the new list, moving from 31 to 26th. American Andre Agassi drops three places to 14th.

Symonds steals the show



ANDREW SYMONDS

LONDON, May 4: Former England man Chris Lewis continued his good start to the season with Leicestershire, cracking a rapid century Monday but was upstaged by Kent's Australian Andrew Symonds in the National League clash at Canterbury, reports AFP.

Lewis, who has inspired Leicestershire in their defence of the County Championship, hit 116 including 10 fours and a six, yet his team eventually went down to a three-wicket defeat against the Spitfires in Division One.

Symonds (95) was the architect of the Kent success, dominating a 100-run fourth-wicket stand with Alan Wells to help his team to victory with almost eight overs to spare.

The other tons came in Division Two, young opener Alan Evans (108) underpinning Glamorgan Dragons' winning total of 220 for seven against the Derbyshire Scorpions at Cardiff.

Evans combined with Keith Newell (41), and the home batsmen set too testing a target for the Scorpions, who managed only 195 for eight. Robin Weston top-scoring with 33 not out.

Elsewhere in the top flight, Warwickshire, Gloucestershire and Yorkshire joined Leicestershire as victors.

A Kim Barnett-inspired collapse undermined what looked a winning position for Lancashire Lightning against the Gladiators at Bristol.

An opening stand of 73 between Paddy McKewen (48) and Mark Chilton (39) seemed to have put the Lancastrians on the way to victory, chasing a modest 199 for nine.

But former England and Derbyshire batsman Barnett took four for 29 as Lancashire descended from 110 for one to 177 all out.

Earlier, the Lancashire pace attack seemed to have done enough in restricting Gloucestershire, despite half-centuries down the order from Jeremy Snape (56) and Tim Hancock (57).

An unbeaten 72 from David Hemp saw the Warwickshire Bears to a seven-wicket victory with more than 15 overs to spare against the Hampshire Hawks at Southampton.

Hemp's 128-run third-wicket stand with Trevor Penney (55) all but sealed the match for the Bears, who passed Hampshire's inadequate 168 all out.

The nagging slow left-arm of Ashley Giles (four for 29) had prevented Hampshire setting a testing target.

At Worcester, the Royals' Bradford-born David Leatherdale (70) did his native county no favours by figur-

ing in a fourth-wicket stand of 133 - leading the home fight-back after a three-wicket burst from Yorkshire paceman Chris Silverwood.

But Yorkshire's batting had enough firepower to surpass the hosts' 212 for five, captain David Byas (87) leading from the front as his team got home by three wickets with four balls to spare.

Back down in Division Two, former Durham batsman Mike Roseberry marked his first return to Riverside back in Middlesex colours by leading the Crusaders to an eight-wicket win over the Dynamos.

Wearsider Roseberry (77) was the lynchpin of the Londoners' 192 for two, achieved with 10 overs to spare in reply to the hosts' 189 for nine.

Earlier, Jimmy Daley (90) found staunch support from Jon Lewis (45) in a fifth-wicket partnership of 115.

But the Durham effort was to fall short of what was required

and was notable mostly for the performance of the visitors' wicketkeeper David Nash, whose six victims included three stumpings.

Four wickets each for Mark Robinson and Umar Rashid helped Sussex Sharks to a 68-run win over the Steelbacks at Northampton, after a battling 62 from Tony Cottee had seen the visitors through to 198 all out in their full 45 overs.

England A wicketkeeper Chris Read (44) top-scored in a team effort with the bat for the Nottinghamshire Outlaws that proved just too much for the Surrey Lions at Trent Bridge.

The hosts' 237 for eight provided enough of a buffer, notwithstanding 80 in the middle of the Surrey reply from Ian Ward - and Read capped a fine day individually with four catches behind the stumps as the visitors fell 11 runs short, all out in the last over after Mark Bowen had picked up four wickets.

TRACK RECORD

LONDON, Apr 29 (AFP) - England's World Cup track record: 1975-1996: Played 40, won 25, lost 14, no result 1

Finalists: 1979, 1987, 1992

Semi-finalists: 1975, 1983

Eliminated before semi-finals: 1996

1975 Played 4, won 3, lost 1

Group matches

Lord's, London, June 7 - England bt India by 202 runs. England 334-4 (Amis 137, Fletcher 68, Old 132-3)

Nottingham, June 11 - England bt New Zealand by 80 runs. England 266-6 (Fletcher 131), New Zealand 186 (Morrison 55, Greig 4-45)

Birmingham, June 14 - England bt East Africa by 196 runs. England 290-5 (Wood 77, Amis 88, Hayes 52), East Africa 94 (Snow 4-11)

Semifinal

Leeds, June 18 - Australia bt England by 4 wks. England 93 (Gilmour 6-14, Walker 3-22), Australia 94-6 (Old 3-29)

1979 Played 5, won 4, lost 1

Lord's, London, June 9 - England bt Australia by 6 wks. Australia 159-9, England 160-4 (Gooch 53)

Manchester, June 13, 14 - England bt Canada by 8 wks. Canada 45 (Willis 10.3-3-11-4, Old 10-5-8-4), England 46-2

Leeds, June 16 - England bt Pakistan by 14 runs. England 165-9 (Sikander Bakht 3-32, Majid Khan 3-27), Palostam 151 (Asif Iqbal 51, Hendrick 12-6-15-4)

Semifinal

Manchester, June 20 - England bt New Zealand by 9 runs. England 221-8 (Brearley 53, Gooch 71), New Zealand 212-9 (Wright 69, Hendrick 3-55)

Final

Lord's, London, June 23 - West Indies bt England by 92 runs. West Indies 286-9 (Richards 138 not, King 86), England 194 (Brearley 64, Boycott 57, Croft 3-42, Garner 5-38)

1983 Played 7, won 5, lost 2

Oval, London, June 9 - England bt New Zealand by 106 runs. England 322-6 (Lamb 102), New Zealand 216 (Crowe 97)

Taunton, June 11 - England bt Sri Lanka by 47 runs. England 333-9 (Gower 130, Lanib 53), Sri Lanka 286 (Mendis 56, de Alwis 58, Dilley 4-45)

Lord's, London, June 13 - England bt Pakistan by 8 wks. Pakistan 193-8 (Zaheer Abbas 83 not, England 199-2 (Fowler 78 not)

Birmingham, June 15 - New Zealand bt England by 2 wks. England 234 (Fowler 89, Gower 92 not, Hadlee 3-22, Cairns 3-44), New Zealand 238-8 (Howarth 60, Coney 66 not, Willis 4-42)

Manchester, June 18 - England bt Pakistan by 7 wks. Pakistan 232 (Javed Miandad 67), England 233-3 (Fowler 69, Tavare 58)

Leeds, June 20 - England bt Sri Lanka by 9 wks. Sri Lanka 136 (Willis 9-4 9-1, Allott 3-41), England 137-1 (Fowler 81 not)

Semifinals

Manchester, June 22 - India bt England by 6 wks. England 213 (Kapil Dev 3-35), India 217-4 (Yashpal Sharma 61, S. Patil 51)

1987 Played 8, won 5, lost 3

Group matches

Gujranwala, Pakistan, October 9 - England bt West Indies by 2 wks. West Indies 243-7 (Richardson 53, Foster 3-53), England 246-8 (Lamb 67 not, Hooper 3-42)

Rawalpindi, Pakistan, October 12, 13 - Pakistan bt England by 18 runs. Pakistan 239-7 (Salim Malik 65, Ijaz Ahmed 59, DeFreitas 3-42), England 221 (Abdul Qadir 4-31)

Peshawar, Pakistan, October 17 - England bt Sri Lanka faster run rate. England 296-4 (Gooch 84, Gattling 58, Lamb 76), Sri Lanka 158-8 (target reduced to 267 in 45 overs after rain)

Karachi, October 20 - Pakistan bt England by 7 wks. England 244-9 (Athey 86, Gattling 80), Imran Khan 4-37, Abdul Qadir 3-31), Pakistan 247-3 (Ramiz Raja 113, Salim Malik 88)

Jaipur, India, October 26 - England bt West Indies by 34 runs. England 269-5 (Gooch 92, Patterson 3-56), West Indies 233 (Richardson 93, Richards 51, DeFreitas 3-28)

Pune, India, October 30 - England bt Sri Lanka by 8 wks. Sri Lanka 218-7 (Dias 80, Hemmings 3-57), England 219-2 (Gooch 61, Robinson 55)

Semifinals

Bombay, November 5 - England bt India by 35 runs. England 254-6 (Gattling 56, Maninder Singh 3-54), India 219 (Azharuddin 64, Foster 3-47, Hemmings 4-52)

Final

Calcutta, November 8 - Australia bt England by 7 runs. Australia 253-5 (Boon 75), England 246-8 (Athey 58)

1992 Played 10, won 6, lost 3, no result 1

Preliminary round

Perth, Australia, February 22 - England bt India by 9 runs. England 236-9 (Gooch 51, Smith 91), India 227 (Shastri 57, Reeve 3-38)

Melbourne, February 27 - England bt West Indies by 6 wks. West Indies 157 (Arthurton 54, Lewis 3-30, DeFreitas 3-34), England 160-4 (Gooch 65, Hick 54)

Adelaide, March 1 - Pakistan v England no result, match abandoned. Pakistan 74 (Pringle 3-8, Botham 2-12), England 24-1 (after target revised to 63 off 16 overs)

Sydney, March 5 - England bt Australia by 8 wks. Australia 171 (Moody 51, Botham 4-31), England 173-2 (Gooch 58, Botham 53)

Ballaarat, Australia, March 9 - England bt Sri Lanka by 106 runs. England 280-6 (Fairbrother 63, Stewart 59), Sri Lanka 174 (Lewis 4-30)

TRACK RECORD

Melbourne, March 12 - England bt South Africa by 3 wks. South Africa 236-4 (Wessels 85, Hudson 79), England 226-7 (after set 225 in 41 overs, Stewart 77, Fairbrother 75 not, Snell 3-42)

Wellington, March 15 - New Zealand bt England by 7 wks. England 200-8 (Hick 56), New Zealand 201-3 (Jones 78, Crowe 73 not)

Albury, Australia, March 18 - Zimbabwe bt England by 9 runs. Zimbabwe 134 (Botham 3-23, Illingworth 3-33), England 125 (Brandes 4-21)

Semifinal

Sydney, March 22 - England bt South Africa by 20 runs. England 252-6 (45 overs, Hick 83), South Africa 232-6 (after set 252 in 43 overs)

Final

Melbourne, March 25 - Pakistan bt England by 22 runs. Pakistan 249-6 (Imran Khan 70, Javed Miandad 58, Pringle 3-22), England 227 (Fairbrother 62, Wasim Akram 3-49, Mushtaq Ahmed 3-41)

1996 Played 6, won 2, lost 4

Group matches

Ahmedabad, India, February 14 - New Zealand bt England by 11 runs. New Zealand 239-6 (Astle 101), England 228-9 (Hick 85, Nash 3-27)

Peshawar, Pakistan, February 18 - England bt United Arab Emirates by 8 wks. United Arab Emirates 136 (N. Smith 3-29), England 140-2

Peshawar, Pakistan, February 22 - England bt Holland by 49 runs. England 279-4 (Hick 104 not, Thorpe 89), Holland 230 (van Noortwijk 64, Zuidereent 54, DeFreitas 3-31)

Rawalpindi, Pakistan, February 25 - South Africa bt England by 78 runs. South Africa 230 (Martin 3-33), England 152

Karachi, March 3 - Pakistan bt England by 7 wks. England 249-9 (R. Smith 75, Atherton 66, Thorpe 52 not, Mushtaq Ahmed 3-53), Pakistan 250-3 (Saeed Anwar 71, Ijaz Ahmed 70, Inzamam-ul-Haq 53 not)

Quarterfinals

Faisalabad, Pakistan, March 9 - Sri Lanka bt England by 5 wks. England 235-8 (DeFreitas 67), Sri Lanka 236-5 (Jayasuriya 82)

AGAINST OTHERS

v Australia: Played 4, won 2 (1979, 1992), lost 2 (1975, 1987)

v India: Played 4, won 3 (1975, 1987, 1992), lost 1 (1983)

v New Zealand: Played 6, won 3 (1975, 1979, 1983), lost 3 (1983, 1992, 1996)

v Pakistan: Played 8, won 3 (1979, 1983 x2), lost 4 (1987 x2, 1992, 1996), 1 abandoned (1992)

v South Africa: Played 2, won 2 (1992 x2), lost 1 (1996)

v Sri Lanka: Played 6, won 5 (1983 x2, 1987 x2, 1992), lost 1 (1996)

v West Indies: Played 4, won 3 (1987 x2, 1992), lost 1 (1979)

Zimbabwe: Played 1, lost 1 (1992)

Others: East Africa: Played 1, won 1 (1975). Canada: Played 1, won 1 (1979). UAE: Played 1, won 1 (1996). Holland: Played 1, won 1 (1996)

Champs' League German matches on Murdoch TV

MUNICH, May 4: Private TV company Tm3, controlled by American-Australian media mogul Rupert Murdoch, has acquired the rights to transmit the matches involving German clubs in the European Champions' League for the next four seasons, UEFA announced Monday, reports AFP.

It's the first time a foreign consortium has won the rights to broadcast matches involving German clubs.

The deal coincides with the launch in September of the new enlarged Champions' League.

Until now the rights to televise Champions' League matches were held by another private channel, RTL.



Wayne Ferreira of South Africa plays backhand during his German Open match against local Michael Kohlmann in Hamburg on May 3. Ferreira won 7-5, 7-5. AFP photo

Kournikova through



ANNA KOURNIKOVA

ROME, May 4: Russian teenager Anna Kournikova booked her place in the Italian Open second round on Monday after her Italian opponent Rita Grande retired with cramp in the third set here, reports AFP.

The ninth seeded Kournikova was just recovering her true form when Grande, brought a punting match to an end with the score at 6-7, 6-3, 2-0 in favour of the Russian.

Kournikova, the first seed in action on the opening day, was in a different class in terms of stroke-play. But her frequent lapses of concentration and a poor length turned what should have been a formality into a two-hour marathon.

The Russian blamed a slow clay court and a light racket for her moments of difficulty, while a bitterly disappointed Grande blamed the turning point in the match, midway through the second set, on cramp.

"She played well in front of her home crowd, but it was difficult for me because the court was slow and I was trying out a new racket and the ball had to change back to my old one," said Kournikova.

"The racket was light and everything was going long. But

then, after I changed it, I made only a couple of enforced errors."

And she summed up: "I was pretty much in control of the whole match. I'm playing well at the moment and have been for the last two tournaments."

"And I'm in great shape. Rita was cramping out there but I feel like I could go out now and practice."

Her analysis did not go down well with her opponent, though. "I don't agree," Grande said. "It was me who put her into a position to make those mistakes in the first place. I was playing hard and mixing my game with short and long shots."

"She can say what she likes because she won, but I could say

that if it wasn't for those cramps at 2-2 (in the second set), I could have won it in two sets. I've never had cramps like that before."

Kournikova's error-riddled display finally caught up with her in the 10th game when serving for 5-4 and the set, the Russian conceding break point before sweeping a cross court forehand out.

She broke back for 6-5, but was broken again for 6-6 and quickly found herself 4-6 down in the tiebreak before striking an easy return into the net to concede the set.

The second set went with serve until the fifth when Grande, who lifted her game, raced into a 40-0 lead before breaking for 3-2.

It looked like the beginning of the end for the ninth seed, but instead Kournikova broke back immediately with an imperious forehand which Grande didn't even bother moving for and then served out for 4-2.

The Russian, now unleashed and unstoppable, broke to love for 5-3, served out to take the set, broke immediately for 1-0 in the third set and raced into a 2-0 lead before the match was brought to an early end.

Kournikova took the opening point of the third set, at which point, Grande called it a day.