

Simply not good enough

EDGBASTON, England, May 30: England's exit from the World Cup here on Sunday was their worst performance in the tournament and underlined their decline as a cricketing power, reports AFP.

It was the first time they failed to reach the knock-out stage of the World Cup.

In 1996 they had managed to reach a quarter-final stage but their only victories had come against Holland and the United Arab Emirates.

England have hosted the tournament four times since the inaugural event in 1975 but have never won it.

Their last performance of note came in 1992, when they lost to Pakistan in the final.

They also reached the final in 1979 and 1987, losing to the West Indies and Pakistan.

Sunday's failure is likely to undermine attempts to try and win new converts to the game in England, a nation of around 60 million people where youngsters increasingly flock to football.

In India, the game continues to have unparalleled popularity among a population of almost a billion people.

Mohammad Azharuddin's side are hoping to emulate the Indian side of 1983, which took the title at Lord's.

The ground was once considered the home of the sport but India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka will argue the balance has shifted for good towards Asia.

A side from the Indian sub-continent has won three of the last four tournaments. Both India and Pakistan are among the last six sides in the tournament this time.

So far, sweetest

CHELMSFORD, England, May 30 (Reuters): Neil Johnson has stolen the World Cup spotlight from some of the tournament's more illustrious names after propelling Zimbabwe into the Super Six stage with a telling all-round performance against South Africa.

Johnson, who opened the batting and the bowling, made his highest Cup score of 76 and produced an incisive spell of three for 27 as South Africa's run of four wins out of four ended with a shock 48-run Group A defeat on Saturday.

Zimbabwe's prospects of qualifying for the Super Six appeared bleak after they followed wins over Kenya and India with defeats by England and Sri Lanka.

But Johnson's exploits have helped to revitalise a team who were playing below their best and seemed destined to return home after completing their group games against South Africa.

Victory over Hansie Cronje's side is particularly sweet for Johnson, who is Harare-born but grew up in South Africa where he played both for their A team and in provincial cricket before returning to his native country.

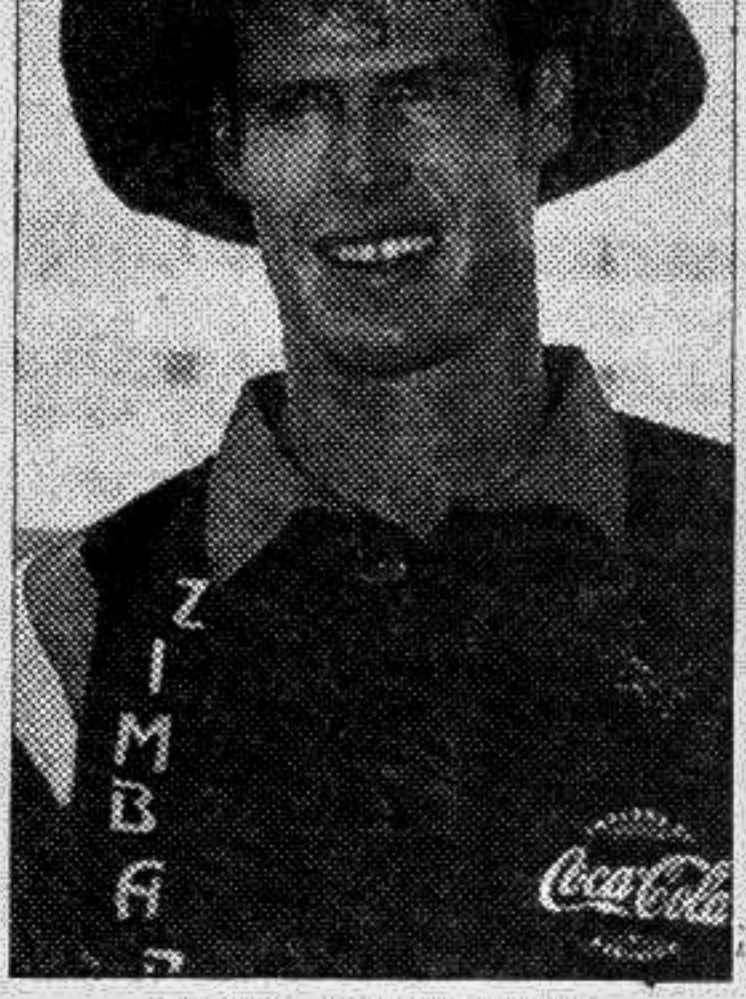
The quietly spoken Johnson said: "I left Zimbabwe when I was about nine and lived in Natal. I then went to university in Port Elizabeth, played at Eastern Province with (former South African captain) Kepler Wessels for four years and then went back to Natal for seven years. I left at the end of last year."

Against that background

there could be little doubt that Johnson would take great pride in beating his adopted country.

"Our performance was number one, the best. It's unbelievable for us to play against our big brothers and to pull off a win like that," he said.

Johnson has already made his mark for Zimbabwe in Test cricket. He hit his first century, 107 against Pakistan at Pe-



NEIL JOHNSON

shawar, during the three-match series in which he made his debut towards the end of last year. But he ranks his all-round World Cup performance on Saturday above that.

"This is much better," he said. "When you play against Pakistan we don't really get much support out there whereas

here it's in front of all our boys. "We have a bigger crowd here than at home. This was fantastic."

When South Africa set out to make 234 to win Johnson knew his side's priorities.

"We had to get wickets. They're a great batting side with Lance (Kluseener) coming in at number nine but with the new ball on these tracks you do get a little bit of assistance and we had to run in hard. It worked out perfectly (dismissing Gary Kirsten) first ball and we just kept nicking them out."

Asked how close Johnson came to selection for the senior South Africa side during his long spell in that country, coach Bob Woolmer said: "Over the years his name was mentioned but he didn't quite mix it with the likes of Kluseener, Pollock and Kallis."

"But he played very well today and we didn't bowl very well at him until later on."

Woolmer's charges will finish top of Group A despite Saturday's upset. The first time Zimbabwe have beaten their African neighbours in their eight one-day meetings - but may go into the Super Six at a points disadvantage to the sides below them under the new format for the tournament.

However, former England all-rounder Woolmer said: "I think it's a wonderful format. I hope it stays that way. Yet in saying that, if we go through with only two points if means we've got to win two of the three (Super Six) games which is going to be tough because there are some very good sides to play against."

WC STANDINGS

LONDON, May 30 (AFP): World Cup Group A and B standings after Sunday's matches between England and India: (played, won, lost, tied, no result, points, run-rate):

Group A									
TEAM	P	W	L	T	NR	Pts	Net run-rate		
South Africa	5	4	1	0	0	8	+0.86		
India	5	3	2	0	0	6	+1.28		
Zimbabwe	5	3	2	0	0	6	+0.02		
England	5	3	2	0	0	6	-0.33		
Sri Lanka	4	1	3	0	0	2	-1.24		
Kenya	4	0	4	0	0	0	-1.27		
Group B									
TEAM	P	W	L	T	NR	Pts	Net run-rate		
1. Pakistan	4	4	0	0	0	8	+0.94		
2. West Indies	4	3	1	0	0	6	+0.88		
3. New Zealand	4	2	2	0	0	4	+0.00		
4. Australia	4	2	2	0	0	4	+0.77		
5. Bangladesh	4	1	3	0	0	2	-1.04		
6. Scotland	4	0	4	0	0	0	-1.58		

WINDIES-AUSSIE SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the West Indies innings against Australia at Old Trafford yesterday:

WEST INDIES	R	B	4	6
S Campbell c M Waugh b McGrath	2	14	0	0
R Jacobs not out	49	142	3	0
J Adams lbw b McGrath	0	1	0	0
*B Lara b McGrath	9	15	1	0
S Chandrapaul b Warne	16	39	0	0
S Williams c M Waugh b Moody	3	6	0	0
P Simmons b Fleming	1	8	0	0
C Ambrose lbw b Warne	1	7	0	0
M Dillon lbw b McGrath	0	9	0	0
R King lbw b Warne	1	30	0	0
C Walsh b McGrath	6	10	1	0
Extras: (lb-3, w-18, nb-1)	22			
Total: (All out in 46.4 overs)	110			

Fall of wickets: 1-7 (Campbell, 4.2 ov); 2-7 (Adams, 4.3 ov); 3-20 (Lara, 8.2 ov); 4-64 (Chandrapaul, 22.3 ov); 5-67 (Williams, 23.4 ov); 6-69 (Simmons, 25.2 ov); 7-70 (Ambrose, 26.4 ov); 8-71 (Dillon, 29.5 ov); 9-88 (King, 40.5 ov); 10-110 (Walsh, 46.4 ov).

Bowler	O	M	R	W
McGrath	8.4	3	14	5
Fleming	7	1	12	1 (w-2)
Moody	7	0	16	1 (w-1)
Julian	7	1	36	0 (nb-1, w-4)
Warne	10	4	11	3 (w-1)
Bevan	7	0	18	0 (w-5)

Toss: Australia.
Umpires: RS Dunne (NZ) and KT Francis (SL).
TV Umpire: DJ Constant.
Match Referee: JR Reid (NZ).

SRI LANKA-KENYA SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the Sri Lankan innings against Kenya at Southampton yesterday:

SRI LANKA	R	B	4	6
S Jayasuriya lbw b Odoyo	39	50	2	1
R Mahanama b Odoyo	21	45	2	0
M Atapattu c Otieno b Angara	48	62	3	0
A de Silva c Chudasama b Odoyo	10	19	2	0
A Ranatunga run out (Angara)	55	66	4	0
U Chandana c Otieno b Kamande	0	1	0	0
M Jayawardene c Ravindur Shah b M Suji	45	33	7	0
Kaluwitharan c Chudasama b Angara	1	3	5	0
C Vaas not out	1	29	22	1
P Wickramasinghe not out	0	0	0	0
Extras: (lb-6, w-14, nb-5)	25			
Total: (For 8 wickets in 50 overs)	275			

Did not bat: M Muralitharan
Fall of wickets: 1-72 (Jayasuriya, 14.6 ov); 2-74 (Mahanama, 16.2 ov); 3-87 (de Silva, 20.3 ov); 4-191 (Ranatunga, 39.3 ov); 5-191 (Chandana, 39.4 ov); 6-199 (Atapattu, 40.5 ov); 7-209 (Kaluwitharan, 42.2 ov); 8-273 (Jayawardene, 49.5 ov).

Bowler	O	M	R	W
M Suji	9	1	58	1 (nb-2, w-2)
Angara	10	0	50	2 (nb-1, w-1)
Odoyo	10	2	56	3 (nb-1, w-1)
Asif Karim	10	0	35	0 (nb-1)
Kamande	9	0	51	1 (w-3)
Odumbe	2	0	18	0 (w-1)

Toss: Kenya.
Umpires: DL Orchard (SA) and P Willey.
TV Umpire: B Dulleston.
Match Referee: Talat Ali (Pak).

Words from Woolmer

CHELMSFORD, England, May 30 (AP): Neil Johnson, not considered good enough to play for South Africa, helped propel Zimbabwe into the World Cup Super Six by inspiring a 48-run win in the all-Africa derby.

And after the match, South Africa coach Bob Woolmer, whose team had already qualified for the Super Six stage, said Johnson played well. But he wasn't convinced that the South African selectors had been made to pay by not selecting Johnson for the national team.

"He came into consideration but he didn't quite mix it with the likes of the Kluseeners and the Pollocks and Kallis's," Woolmer said after Johnson's man-of-the-match performance.

Johnson took three top-order wickets as South Africa slumped to an astonishing 40 for six before allrounders Shaun Pollock and Lance Kluseener notched half centuries to bolster the total.

"(Johnson) played well didn't he," Woolmer conceded. "We didn't bowl very well at him until later on."

Johnson left his native Zimbabwe at age nine and lived in South Africa, where he played at the highest level with Eastern Province and Natal before returning to Zimbabwe in 1997 to kick-start his international career.

Woolmer said he was glad to get a surprise loss out of the way before the semifinal.

"We played badly. We bowled badly, we fielded pretty well but we batted very badly," said Woolmer. "But I am pleased it has happened now. It would have been terrible if it had happened in the semifinal."

"That's not taking any credit away from a fantastic Zimbabwe effort."

"They had nothing to lose. If they win they have a good chance of going through to the Super Six and now they've got a good chance of taking four points in."

Woolmer said his top order batsman had failed to produce so far in the tournament but the situation was not drastic.

"Hopefully our top six are saving it up for the Super Six."

Akram not at all

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"I'm glad Saeed isn't getting runs because it will mean he will get runs in the Super Six's," he said.

Wasim suggested that rather than finding their form early, his side are building towards reaching the final and accepted that his country's hoards of supporters will be hugely disappointed if Pakistan fail to get there.

"I think we have played four games, and all the batsmen know what the wickets are like. There should not be an excuse in future games. In fact, there won't be any time for excuses anyway."

The wicket at Derby proved perfect for being despite the overcast conditions, and Wasim is keen to see one-day matches contested on flat tracks.

"This was a good one-day wicket. I believe what we need is to have a good batting track, and that's what the crowd needs," he added. "If somebody is a good enough bowler, they will get something out of it."

Pakistan were their own worst enemy against the Kiwis with two run-outs hindering their charge. Neither, surprisingly, involved Inzamam, notoriously ribbed for his running between the wickets.

When questioned about his side's Achilles heel and whether he had spoken to Inzamam about his running, Wasim joked, "I don't say anything to him, he's very touchy."

"Even in practice, we have run-outs but we are getting better."

Bits & pieces

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Sunday, has not been seen since.

"This is not what I needed when the game had been postponed to the reserve day and I still have to bat," says Flintoff. "I have another bats that I can use, but I am used to this one."

MANCUNIANS LOVE CRICKET ALSO

MANCHESTER, May 30: With all of Manchester's soccer fraternity still sleeping off a historic treble hangover and the other concentrating on the Division Two playoffs, cricket squeezed its way into the city's sporting psyche on Sunday, reports AP.

About 20,000 fans braved cold, blustery weather and the threat of a rain-broken day to watch Australia take on the West Indies in a crucial World Cup Group B match at Old Trafford.

As Caribbean and Australian fans headed into the northwestern city, thousands of Mancunians were heading south to Wembley - where Manchester City was taking on Gillingham for the right to play in English soccer's First Division next season and to steal some of the glory from Manchester United's Champions Cup, Premier League and FA Cup triumphs.

Australian fans immediately had something to cheer about as paceman Glenn McGrath took two wickets in his third over to reduce the Windies to 7-2.

McGrath missed out on his own historic treble - a rare World Cup hat-trick - when Brian Lara nudged him for a single after the tall Australian had had Sherwin Campbell caught by Mark Waugh at second slip and then trapped Jimmy Adams lbw with his next ball.

Fallen stars ready

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Mahmud, Minhazul Abedin, Enamul Hoque, Hasibul Hossain, Manjural Islam.
PAKISTAN (probable): Saeed Anwar, Shahid Afridi, Abdul Razzaq, Ijaz Ahmed, Inzamam-ul Haq, Salim Malik, Moin Khan, Wasim Akram (capt), Azhar Mahmood, Mushtaq Ahmed, Waqar Younis.

HEAD TO HEAD

Bangladesh are not yet recognised at Test level and are also making their World Cup debut here. Their last one-day encounter came in Dhaka in March '99, when Pakistan won a one-off match by 152 runs. Bangladesh, chasing 293-7, were dismissed for 141 despite Pakistan using part-time bowlers.

WORLD CUP RESULTS TO DATE

Bangladesh: Lost to New Zealand by six wickets, lost to West Indies by seven wickets, beat Scotland by 22 runs, lost to Australia by seven wickets.

Pakistan: Beat West Indies by 27 runs, beat Scotland by 94 runs, beat Australia by 10 runs, beat New Zealand by 62 runs.

PLAYERS TO WATCH

Bangladesh: Minhazul Abedin. An all-rounder, he has succeeded with the bat in particular after being left out of the first game against New Zealand. He made 68 not out against Scotland and 53 against Australia and has taken a wicket in each of his three matches - including the scalp of Brian Lara. Not included in the original World Cup squad but reinstated by public demand.

Pakistan: Waqar Younis. The 27-year-old right-arm fast bowler has something to prove. He once terrorised the world's batsmen with his vicious late inswinger, now he sits on the bench as Shoaib Akhtar takes all the glory. Will want to show he is still a force following recent injuries. Missed six months with an elbow problem last year.

VENUE

Northampton. This is one of several grounds, like The Oval and Trent Bridge, with a football connection. Northampton Town once played first division football here in the 1960s. Capacity: 7,000. (AFP)

BATTING, BOWLING SO FAR

LONDON, May 30 (Reuters): Top batting and bowling performances at the cricket World Cup after Saturday's completed matches (*denotes not out):

BATTING	BOWLING
183 - Saurav Ganguly (India) v Sri Lanka, May 26, Taunton.	145 - Rahul Dravid (India) v Sri Lanka, May 26, Taunton.
140* - Sachin Tendulkar (India) v Kenya, May 23, Bristol.	104* - Rahul Dravid (India) v Kenya, May 23, Bristol.
97 - Saurav Ganguly (India) v South Africa, May 15, Hove.	96 - Jacques Kallis (South Africa) v India, May 15, Hove.
88* - Nasser Hussain (England) v Kenya, May 18, Canterbury.	88 - Alec Stewart (England) v Sri Lanka, May 14, Lord's.
81* - Yousuf Youhana (Pakistan) v Scotland, May 20, Durham.	81 - Inzamam-ul Haq (Pakistan) v Australia, May 23, Leeds.
80* - Roger Twose (New Zealand) v Australia, May 20, Cardiff.	80* - Ridley Jacobs (West Indies) v New Zealand, May 24, Southampton.
77 - Shivnarine Chanderpaul (West Indies) v Pakistan, May 16, Bristol.	76 - Darren Lehmann (Australia) v New Zealand, May 20, Cardiff.
76 - Gavin Hamilton (Scotland) v Pakistan, May 20, Durham.	76 - Neil Johnson (Zimbabwe) v South Africa, May 29, Birmingham.
73* - Graeme Hick (England) v Sri Lanka, May 14, Lord's.	73* - Inzamam-ul Haq (Pakistan) v New Zealand, May 28, Derby.
71 - Steve Tikolo (Kenya) v England, May 18, Canterbury.	5 for 21 - Lance Kluseener (South Africa) v Kenya, May 26, Amstelveen.
5 for 31 - Robin Singh (India) v Sri Lanka, May 26, Worcester.	4 for 17 - Allan Donald (South Africa) v England, May 22, The Oval.
4 for 25 - Courtney Walsh (West Indies) v Bangladesh, May 21, Dublin.	4 for 34 - Darren Gough (England) v Kenya, May 18, Canterbury.
4 for 37 - Alan Mullally (England) v Sri Lanka, May 14, Lord's.	4 for 37 - Geoff Allott (New Zealand) v Australia, May 20, Cardiff.
4 for 37 - John Blair (Scotland) v Bangladesh, May 24, Edinburgh.	4 for 40 - Wasim Akram (Pakistan) v Australia, May 23, Leeds.
4 for 42 - Neil Johnson (Zimbabwe) v Kenya, May 15, Taunton.	4 for 56 - Debashish Mohanty (India) v Kenya, May 23, Bristol.
4 for 64 - Geoff Allott (New Zealand) v Pakistan, May 28, Derby.	3 for 7 - Courtney Walsh (West Indies) v Scotland, May 27, Leicester.
3 for 11 - Shoaib Akhtar (Pakistan) v Scotland, May 20, Durham.	

Kiwis plan

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for the Black Caps. "They can not afford to write us off despite the fact that we have lost our first four matches," said Hamilton. Scotland have only pride to play for and Hamilton is desperate to ensure they do not end the tournament with five defeats.

To end the competition without a win would be a real injustice," said Hamilton. "With the exception of the game against West Indies we have played really well and have surprised a lot of people."

"A victory would give us the breakthrough we've been looking for. Although we are one of the so-called minnows we haven't disgraced ourselves at all."

SQUADS

NEW ZEALAND (Probable): Matthew Horne, Nathan Asle, Craig McMillan, Stefan Fleming, Roger Twose, Chris Cairns, Adam Parore, Chris Harris, Dion Nash, Gavin Larsen, Geoff Allott.

SCOTLAND (Probable): Ian Philip, Bruce Patterson, Mike Smith, Mike Aillingham, George Salmond, Gavin Hamilton, Ian Stanger, Alec Davis, James Brinkley, John Blain, Asim Butt.

Complex cricket

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- that the top three out of six teams in each first-round group go through to the second phase, taking with them the points they scored against fellow qualifiers.

- that, should two teams finish on equal points, the team which won their first-round game qualify.

- that, if three teams are equal on points, the two teams with the most points from the matches between them go through. If each has one win, however, the two teams with the best net run rate - the difference between runs scored and runs conceded per over - survive.

And if Steve Waugh still wants to try and understand how scores are re-calculated in rain-affected matches, an explanatory sheet on the Lewis/Duckworth method shows that it is all about T = (S x R2/R1) + 1. However, if...

Scots for a cheer

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think about how we bring young players through in the future.

"We spoke about what happened on Thursday and everyone was fairly positive but we need to move onto the next stage now and that transition won't be easy."

The Kiwis stand on the threshold of making it through the first stage and have the added advantage of knowing exactly what margin of victory they will require against the Scots to qualify for the Super Sixes.

Zimbabwe make it big

CHELMSFORD, England, May 30: Zimbabwe's giant-killing World Cup cricketers were basking in glory here on Sunday after the greatest win - and the greatest achievement - in their short history, reports AFP.

Written off even by their own coach, they defeated tournament favourites South Africa on Saturday by 48 runs to reach the second phase of a World Cup for the first time.

Skipper Alistair Campbell said: "It is magnificent, not only in the context of being in the World Cup but for Zimbabwean cricket and Zimbabwe as a nation."

"Now that we are in the Super Sixes, there will be a truck-load of people coming over. They said if we reached the Super Six, they would all be here."

Coach David Houghton, meanwhile, was left delighted by the success of his reverse psychology.

He had accused his side of playing "schoolboy cricket" and of "choking" earlier in the tournament in an attempt to fire their pride, then had fed the South Africans' confidence by saying they could not lose Saturday's group A encounter.

The play worked wonders as Zimbabwe, who often complain that South Africa have looked down on them as a team since they became a Test-playing nation in 1992, beat their neighbours for the first time.

Chasing 233 for six, Hansie Cronje's much-vaunted side were routed for 185.

The man-of-the-match award, ironically, went to Neil Johnson, who once represented South Africa 'A' but returned to Zimbabwe after failing to break into the senior side.

Harare-born Johnson, who scored 76 before taking three wickets for 27, said: "It was number one - the best. To come up with a win like that is fantastic."

The 29-year-old left-hand open batsman and right-arm swing bowler, who has played for Natal and Leicestershire, added: "We worked hard - and it worked out for us."

To beat South Africa is just wonderful. They are probably the best side here along with Pakistan."

Johnson made an immediate impact at the start of both in-

nings, hitting two fours off the first over from Shaun Pollock - one admittedly an inside edge - then removing Gary Kirsten first ball.

Before Saturday's game, Zimbabwe had won only five of 29 World Cup games since their debut in 1983.

Their one previous encounter with South Africa saw them beaten by seven wickets in Canberra in 1992.

They had never got close to reaching the second stage of the competition before.

Campbell added: "We knew we had nothing to lose. Everyone had written us off, but we knew... we still had a good chance."

"The main thing we said before was that we were