

Lanka to host ODI tri-series in Aug

COLOMBO, June 4: Sri Lanka will host a three-nation series against Australia and India in August ahead of a three Test series against Australia, cricket officials said today, reports AFP.

The opening one-day international will be between Australia and Sri Lanka on August 22 at a new cricket stadium in Galle, 72 miles (112 kilometres) south of Colombo.

On the following day, India will play Australia and on August 25 the hosts will play a day-night match against India at the Premadasa Stadium in Colombo. The finals will be on August 31 under lights.

After, Australia will stay to play three Test matches against Sri Lanka.

ITINERARY

Aug. 22:	Australia v Sri Lanka at Galle.
Aug. 23:	Australia v India at Galle.
Aug. 25:	Sri Lanka v India at Colombo.
Aug. 26:	Sri Lanka v Australia at Colombo.
Aug. 28:	India v Australia at Colombo.
Aug. 29:	India v Sri Lanka at Colombo.
Aug. 31:	Final at Colombo.
Sept. 9-13:	First Test at Kandy.
Sept. 22-26:	Second Test at Galle.
Sept 29-Oct 3:	Third Test at Colombo.

Ronaldo buys a Ferrari

RIO DE JANEIRO, June 4 (AP): Soccer star Ronaldo is cheering himself up at the wheel of a 320,000 dollar Ferrari.

The Brazilian bought the red sports car after breaking up with girlfriend Suzana Werner and being ruled out of Saturday's exhibition match against the Netherlands because of a leg injury.

"I am going to treat this car with the same affection that I treat a soccer ball," Ronaldo told reporters after buying the car in Sao Paulo. He later drove it to his hometown of Rio.

"I already have one in Italy, but don't have time to go around in it and the weather is cold. In Rio, it's hot and you've got the beach. I'm going to take advantage."

The 355F-1 Berlinetta has a top speed of 295 kph (183 mph). "I love speed," added the 22-year-old Brazilian. "But I will have to drive carefully in Rio."

Donald v Shoaib: A fight by fire

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It has rained in Nottingham for the past two days.

Only when the skies cleared on Friday morning and the ground started to dry out were the South Africans able to leave the indoor facilities and finish their practice session in the nets on the outfield. Pakistan were due to train later in the day.

South Africa will be seeking an improved contribution from their top order after only two batsmen, Jacques Kallis and Herschelle Gibbs, scored half-centuries in the first round.

Cronje said: "On a couple of occasions the wicket did a little bit and you can't blame the batters for that. But there were certainly one or two occasions when we didn't score the runs we wanted to and that is something we have addressed."

After carrying only two points forward from the group games, South Africa have to win two of their three Super Six games to have a realistic chance of reaching the semifinals and Pakistan are set to pose the toughest test in their assignment.

"They're hitting some form now and they're very much a form side," Cronje said. "When they are on form it is almost impossible to stop them. You cannot allow them to play with any sort of flair or freedom."

"But we have a good record against them and hopefully we can maintain that."

Bits & pieces

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The number of security men was increased from 350 to 400 for the game. Ground officials said they estimated they could get protection to all players within eight seconds.

TO AVOID STUMP THEFT

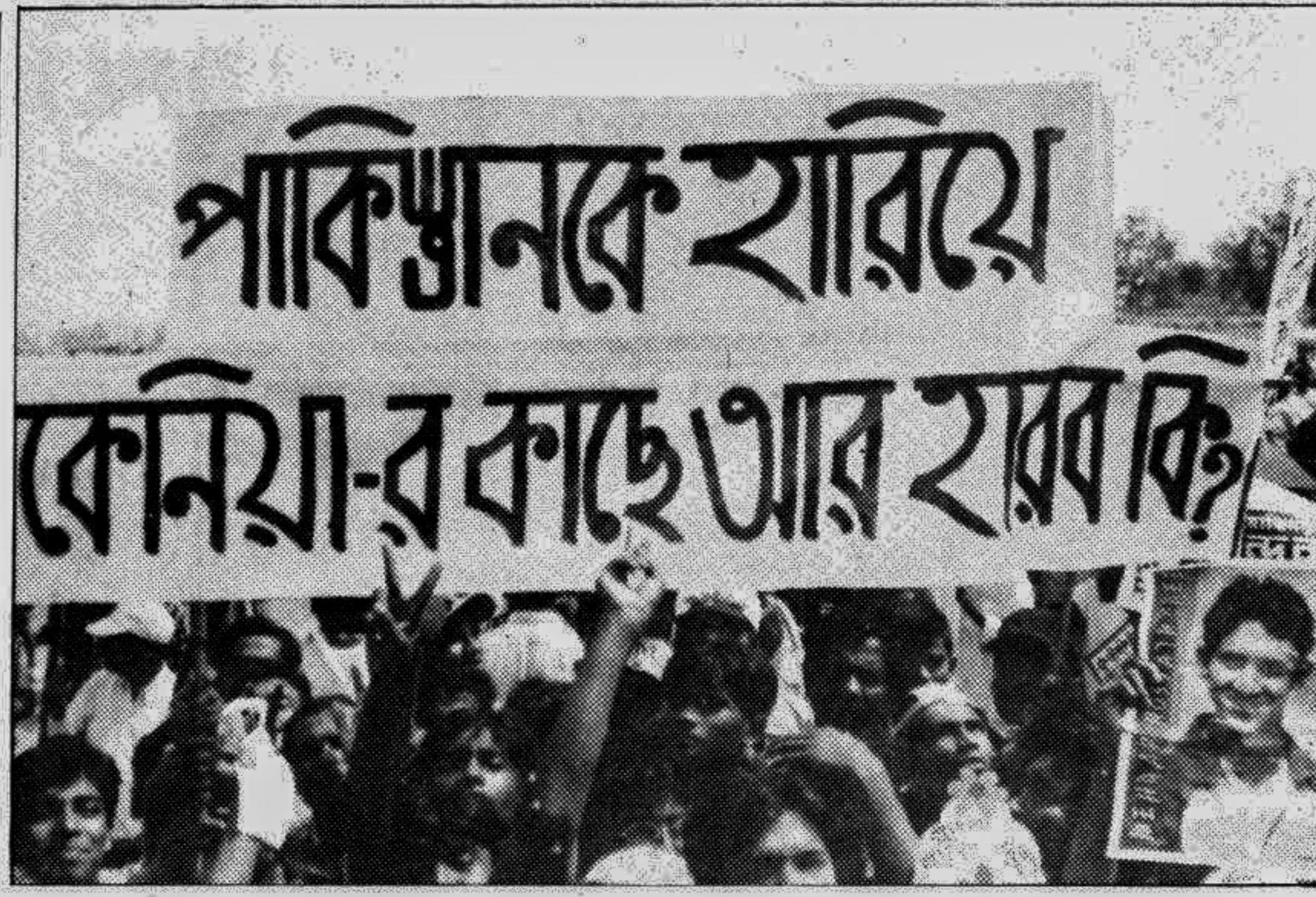
LONDON, June 4 (AFP): Ground officials, fearing that fans could steal stumps containing expensive mini television cameras, have got around the problem by replacing them with normal stumps towards the end of matches.

The cameras, introduced more than eight years ago in Australia, cost more than 5,000 pounds (\$8,000 dollars) apiece.

TOP SECRET

MANCHESTER, England, June 4 (AFP): World Cup organisers are refusing to divulge details of special security measures being prepared for India's high-tension Super Six encounter with Pakistan at Old Trafford on Tuesday.

Talks have been going on with police to make sure players are given protection from pitch invasions. The two sides have traditionally been rivals, with military clashes on their disputed Kashmir border raising tensions further before the game.



HOPEFULLY NOT: A banner at the National Parade Square asks the question whether we'll ever lose to Kenya again specially after the heroics against Pakistan.

Star photo by AKM Mohsin

Target English shirt

LONDON, June 4: Gavin Hamilton trooped off from the luxurious surroundings of the Grange in Edinburgh in the knowledge that his World Cup exploits with Scotland could now win him an England call-up.

Many now believe the Yorkshire all-rounder is ready for international recognition for England, both at one-day and Test level against New Zealand later this summer.

Hamilton's aggregate World Cup total of 217 was higher than any English batsman achieved and the man who was ignored by the selectors is making a strong case for inclusion.

He is still eligible to represent England and was in their original squad for the World Cup before it was whittled down to 15 and after being left out he opted to join up with the minors from north of the border.

"To play in a Test match is what I am in cricket to do," said the 24-year-old, who averaged more than 50 with the bat during Scotland's five-game losing streak.

"We all want to play at the highest possible level and I have made one step up by playing in the World Cup, a Test call would be another."

"But I am not getting worried about receiving a call and it won't dominate my thoughts."

"I just want one big month with Yorkshire get a lot of runs and a few wickets and see what happens after that."

"At the moment Yorkshire are playing so well that I will have a fight on my hands just to get into their side, let alone England."

Hamilton has carried a nation on his back during a torrid campaign during which he was the only consistent run scorer.

It is not difficult to imagine the problems Scotland would have encountered if he had not

been available to coach Jim Love but the amiable all-rounder shrugs them off with ease.

He even believes that being chosen for the World Cup's whipping boys could have bene-

fit. "There were a couple of close lbw calls that didn't go my way as well, so I could easily have been taking 10 wickets instead of three."

"It has also been an education bowling against better players and I don't feel there are any problems on that score."

So now it is back south to Yorkshire and a side who have begun to challenge for the PPP County Championship and are unbeaten at the top of the new CGU National League.

The men he leaves behind must pick up the pieces for their NatWest Cup tie against Surrey later this month.

With Hamilton and Northamptonshire seamer John Blain, who finished the tournament with 10 wickets back at their counties, the Scottish cupboard is looking rather bare.

But Hamilton feels the experiences of the last three weeks are something that can only benefit the country of his birth.

"If it was a big step up from county standard for me, imagine the difference for the rest of the guys who have only been playing club cricket," he said.

"People talk about there being a problem with technique but I don't see it like that."

"My technique hasn't altered all that much since I have been in England but there is slightly more maturity when you are looking a shot selected."

"It might look pretty grim at the moment but the I'm certain the squad will go back to their clubs better players than when they left."

GAVIN HAMILTON fitted him more than if he had been part of England's unhappy campaign.

"I have probably had more opportunities than if I had been picked by England," he said.

"To average over 50 in the World Cup is ridiculous really because it has been such a nuge step up in class."

"Against the West Indies I only made 20 but it was probably the best batting performance I have ever produced."

"In county cricket you might face one good bowler and then get a rest but here there was one on at either end and another two lined-up for when the openers got tired."

"I was expecting it to be hard and it lived up to expectations."

And, although he only muscled three wickets with the

ball, Hamilton is confident that his prowess with the bat has not overshadowed what has always been the strongest part of his game.

In the first game against Australia, I had two dropped catches and I thought I bowled OK throughout," he said.

"There were a couple of close lbw calls that didn't go my way as well, so I could easily have been taking 10 wickets instead of three."

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With the first day washed out, Leicestershire put the visitors in to bat but dropped three catches. Steve James (38 not out) was dropped twice, before scoring and on six, and Alun Evans (46) was put down when he had made 18 as the home side struggled to make the breakthrough they needed.

Alan Mullally missed out on the action for the champions because he is still suffering from the after-effects of England's exit from the World Cup.

Paul Grayson's unbeaten century helped Essex get over the disappointment of losing the opening day against Hampshire to rain. He made 144, and Stuart Law added 56, as the home side reached 327 for seven at Ilford.

Somerset clocked up 300 for nine from the 75.1 overs possible from the first two rain-sodden days at the Riverside against Durham -- a fine recovery after they were 126 for seven at one stage.

A seventh-wicket stand of 125 between Rob Turner (95) and Matthew Bulbeck (76 not out) steered the visitors into a strong position before they declared.

A third-wicket stand of 94 between Tim Robinson (61) and Paul Johnson (61) helped Nottinghamshire out of a tight spot after they had lost Matthew Downman and captain Jason Gallian to be 40 for two.

But four wickets for Devon Malcolm kept the total down, and Notts finished on 220 before Northants made 20 for no loss by the close.

It is a confrontation between the two teams with the best records in the group stage, an occasion that would grace the final, but with the South Africans having to negotiate an awkward assignment.

The pre-tournament favourites have carried forward only two points from the first round for their victory over fellow qualifiers India, making two wins out of three in the Super Sixes a priority.

Woolmer, man of vision, innovative methods and dedicated to the team ethic, has acknowledged it will be tough, but beating Pakistan at Trent Bridge would provide a useful psychological boost apart from two priceless points.

South Africa's four wins out of five in Group A owed much to the all-rounders providing batting strength in depth. Only two players in the top order have hit a half-century. Jacques Kallis with 96 against India and Herschelle Gibbs with 60 against England.

Woolmer said after his team's upset defeat by Zimbabwe at the weekend: "We have just got to be very positive about it. Hopefully our top six are storing it up for the Super Sixes and the rest of the tournament."

Lance Klusener has epitomised the resilience of South Africa's lower order, notably in answering a crisis with an un-

expected win.

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