

## Bits &amp; pieces

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been dismissed five times for a duck.

## KIWILAND INCENTIVES

OLD TRAFFORD, June 14: Stephen Fleming's New Zealand have more than just prestige at stake as they prepare for the World Cup semi-final showdown against Pakistan here on Wednesday, reports AFP.

The team could win a million New Zealand dollars if they beat Pakistan and go on to win the tournament.

If New Zealand win their first World Cup they will receive a bonus of 450,000 New Zealand dollars (243,000 US) from their cricket board, in addition to the 550,000 dollars (300,000 US) prize money offered by the organisers.

The 15 players stand to gain 70,000 New Zealand dollars (37,800 US) each.

But coach Steve Rixon and four members of the team management have been excluded from the incentives.

New Zealand have reached three previous semifinals without making it to the final.

During the 1992 World Cup at home, New Zealand lost a thrilling semi-final to Pakistan.

## Pakistan fairly pleased

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"I think it's given them a little bit of momentum."

"But I tell you what, it's made us that much more determined - hopefully we can lift our game by 10 per cent on Thursday."

"We've got three days now to rest and get our thoughts together."

The South Africans will at least be boosted by all-rounder Kallis' likely return from a stomach muscle injury. Cronje said: "When you lose Jacques, you lose two cricketers - a batsman and a bowler."

Australian skipper Steve Waugh, Sunday's hero after scoring 120 not out off 110 balls, said he thought Australia were now the side to watch.

"I think the other teams will be more concerned about us," he said.

Waugh's side looked down and out after just one win - against Scotland - in their first three World Cup games.

Waugh had set his team the target of winning their next seven games in a row to take the title.

Sunday's win made it five out of five.

New Zealand, meanwhile, continued to enjoy their role as World Cup underdogs while plotting to upset Pakistan.

"Nobody really rated us in the early stages and that suited us fine," coach Steve Rixon said, but added: "I'd be very surprised if quite a few sides wouldn't trade a few of our guys."

Pakistan are a team of tremendously talented individuals while New Zealand, Rixon said, excelled through teamwork.

"Everyone understands the team needs must come first and then the individual needs come after that," he said.

"It's something which has moulded this side together ... we began planning for this tournament 18 months ago and now we are in a situation where the final goal is to lift the World Cup."

## Sequel may surpass original for drama

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no pressure."

Their Australian coach Steve Rixon was more outspoken.

"Nobody really rated us in the early stages," Rixon said. "All the comments that were made about us were fairly bland and were obviously from people who haven't been watching New Zealand recently."

Pakistan will target the vulnerable New Zealand top-order batting with the extreme pace of Shoaib Akhtar, the late swing of captain Wasim Akram and the wiles of Saqlain Mushtaq, rated by Akram as the finest off-spin bowler he has seen.

They are 13-8 favourites to win the Cup, with Australia and South Africa both quoted at 11-5 and New Zealand the 15-2 outsiders.

## World Waugh

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South Africa's opener Herschelle Gibbs' 101.

Gibbs' knock was also pushed into the background by his dropped catch of Waugh, which will rank among the most bizarre incidents in World Cup history.

Waugh, then on 56, miscued a shot off Lance Klusener towards Gibbs, who seemed to have his hands under the ball.

But it slipped out as the fielder tried to throw the ball in the air. And Waugh made South Africa pay heavily for this lapse.

The course of the match was altered by a 126-run fourth-wicket stand between Waugh and Ricky Ponting (69), which sparked Australia's recovery.

Waugh said his team could chase any target but it was the team's wayward bowling which needed to be redressed.

"It was ordinary. We bowled on both sides of the wicket and definitely have some work to do there," Waugh said.

## Super yet

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69 matches. Between now and the next World Cup in South Africa in 2003 the organisers may have to settle for a refinement of the current tournament's improved, if not flawless, format.

## Inside four camps

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Shane Warne was certain that the South Africans would think of something by 2003.

The Australian leg-spinner was again in the news with regard to newsmen back home who were after him. After revelations from the Aussie skipper Steve Waugh that the media pressure might force talented Warne out of international competition, fast bowler Allan McGrath has urged the star spinner not to take any rash decision.

Zimbabwe, the newest Test nation, who were edged out of the semis at the eleventh hour, as skipper Steve Waugh played the innings of his life to overwhelm South Africa's substantial total of 271 at Headingley yesterday, were going home a proud team. Both coach David Houghton and captain Alastair Campbell were proud of their team's performance. The contentment of the African country was underlined by the coach, who said, "We are not going home to fire our captain or manager or anyone else."

That was perhaps Zimbabwe's way of making an oblique reference to the sacking of Sri Lanka's Arjuna Ranatunga, rumours that England's Alec Stewart was under the grind

and calls for the head of India's Mohammad Azharuddin.

All successful captains over the years in this form or that, but World Cup pathos demand a heavy price for failure.

Incidentally, Alec Stewart's ouster and the coronation of Nasir Hossain as England's captain are on hold. Selection Committee Chairman Tom Graveney said:

that a further discussion will be required with Stewart and the matter was far from resolved. The statement was to some extent embarrassing for the British Press, some of which carried full-blown pictures of the new captain.

The South African captain considered Kallis indispensable and irreplaceable, as he was two cricketers...a batsman and a bowler.

The Australian camp was exuding confidence after their dramatic entry into the last four. They were an example of how a defeat can inspire a great side. After falling short of Pakistan's 275 in a group match by only 10 runs at Headingley, many pundits and those not-so-such as Yours Truly gave them little chance against South Africa's 271 on Sunday.

Following defeat against Pakistan, the Australians were told that they had to win only seven more matches to take the Cup home. They have already won five. With only two games to win to reach their target, Sunday's man-of-the-match skipper Steve Waugh said, "The pressure is on Hansie Cronje."

With that because they have their own land, but I am always filled with admiration for their ability," said the Bangalore-born Mascarenhas.

Akhtar is the first non-Indian to be contracted by Mascarenhas, who says that he decided to manage players because of his love of cricket rather than for any financial motivation.

The 23-year-old bowler, who aims to shepherd Pakistan into Sunday's World Cup final by defeating New Zealand on Wednesday, caused a sensation in February when he uprooted Tendulkar's middle stump in front of 80,000 shocked fans in Calcutta.

It was the first time that the Indian idol had ever been dismissed first ball in a test match.

Mascarenhas, the president of WorldTel, a Connecticut-based television broadcasting company, was quick to recognize Akhtar's talent and a business opportunity.

Akhtar is currently the world's fastest bowler with a delivery recorded at 96 miles per hour (155.5 kilometers per hour) and could be the first bowler to break the 100 mph (162 kmph) barrier.

Meanwhile, a debate deepened on Ranatunga's future following Sri Lanka's humiliating ouster from the current World Cup tournament being played in England.

In a letter to a newspaper Monday, Dissanayake denied saying he did not expect Ranatunga to lead the team in the future.

Dissanayake had been quoted in an interview with the BBC on Friday night as saying Ranatunga "got many things wrong in the tournament... He made several bad decisions... in future I believe he will play in the team but not as a captain."

The Sinhalese-language Lankadeepa Monday carried Dissanayake's denial and also a transcript from the BBC's Sinhalese-language program Sandeshaya causing embarrassment to officials who had issued the denial on the minister's behalf.

A local television station on Sunday held a phone-in program with several prominent cricket personalities to discuss what went wrong with the team.

Many panelists and callers demanded Ranatunga's head while some defended the players saying they had given their best and that the skipper should not be held responsible for the debacle.

Maybe they would disagree

## BATTING, BOWLING SO FAR

LONDON, June 14 (AFP): Top batting and bowling performances at the World Cup after Sunday's final Super Six match (\* denotes not out):

## BATTING

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  
132\* - Neil Johnson (Zimbabwe) v Australia, June 9, Lord's  
120 - Steve Waugh (Australia) v South Africa, June 13, Headingley  
104\* - Rahul Dravid (India) v Kenya, May 23, Bristol  
104 - Mark Waugh (Australia) v Zimbabwe, June 9, Lord's  
103 - Saeed Anwar (Pakistan) v Zimbabwe, June 11, The Oval  
101 - Herschelle Gibbs (South Africa) v Australia, June 13, Headingley  
100\* - Ajay Jadeja (India) v Australia, June 4, The Oval  
97 - Saurav Ganguly (India) v South Africa, May 15, Hove  
96 - Jacques Kallis (South Africa) v India, May 15, Hove  
91\* - Herschelle Gibbs (South Africa) v New Zealand, June 10, Birmingham  
88\* - Nasser Hussain (England) v Kenya, May 18, Canterbury  
88 - Alec Stewart (England) v Sri Lanka, May 14, Lord's  
83 - Mark Waugh (Australia) v India, June 4, The Oval  
82 - Maurice Odumbe (Kenya) v Sri Lanka, May 30, Southampton  
80\* - Gary Kirsten (South Africa) v New Zealand, June 10, Birmingham  
71\* - Younus Youhana (Pakistan) v Scotland, May 20, Durham  
81 - Inzamamul 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  
75 - Robin Singh (India) v Australia, June 4, The Oval

## BOWLING

5-14 - Glenn McGrath (Australia) v West Indies, May 30, Manchester  
5-21 - Lance Klusener (South Africa) v Kenya, May 26, Amstelveen  
5-27 - Venkatesh Prasad (India) v Pakistan, June 8, Old Trafford  
5-31 - Robin Singh (India) v Sri Lanka, May 26, Worcester  
5-35 - Saqlain Mushtaq (Pakistan) v Bangladesh, May 31, Northampton  
4-7 - Chris Harris (New Zealand) v Scotland, May 31, Edinburgh  
4-17 - Allan Donald (South Africa) v England, May 22, The Oval  
4-25 - Courtney Walsh (West Indies) v Bangladesh, May 21, Dublin  
4-34 - Darren Gough (England) v Kenya, May 18, Canterbury  
4-37 - Alan Mullally (England) v Sri Lanka, May 14, Lord's  
Geoff Allott (New Zealand) v Australia, May 20, Cardiff  
John Blain (Scotland) v Bangladesh, May 24, Edinburgh  
4-40 - Wasim Akram (Pakistan) v Australia, May 23, Leeds  
4-42 - Neil Johnson (Zimbabwe) v Kenya, May 15, Taunton  
4-46 - Mervyn Dillon (West Indies) v New Zealand, May 24, Southampton  
4-56 - Debasish Mohanty (India) v Kenya, May 23, Bristol  
4-64 - Geoff Allott (New Zealand) v Pakistan, May 28, Derby  
HATTRICK GROUP A, North Harbour Stadium, Albany, New Zealand, United States, Uruguay, Poland.  
GROUP B, McLean Park, Napier, New Zealand, Mexico, Thailand.  
GROUP C, QEII Stadium, Christchurch, New Zealand, or Bahrain, Mali, Germany.  
GROUP D, Carisbrook, Dunedin, Jamaica, Burkina Faso, Paraguay, Qatar.  
SAQLAIN MUSHTAQ Saqlain Mushtaq (Pakistan) v Zimbabwe, June 11, The Oval.

## Sport

## Praises from the land of Proteas

JOHANNESBURG, June 14 (Reuters/ Internet): The South African media were full of praise for Steve Waugh and his Australian team in the wake of their World Cup win against the national side on Sunday.

Australia won by five wickets at Headingley to stay in the tournament and set up a return clash against Hansie Cronje's team in the semifinals on Thursday.

Victory looked certain for South Africa when they reduced Australia to 48 for three and needed 272 to win, but then Waugh produced one of his greatest innings in scoring an unbeaten 120 to turn the match around.

"All credit to Australia and Waugh in particular," said the Durban newspaper The Mercury under the headline "Prepare for World Waugh".

But the paper also chided opening batsman Herschelle Gibbs, despite his 101 which set up South Africa's total of 271 for seven.

Gibbs was criticised for botching a simple catch offered by Waugh when he had made 56.

"Gibbs hero and villain as Aussies stage stirring recovery," it said in a sub-headline.

Gibbs seemed to have taken the catch at midwicket, but the ball slipped from his fingers as he went to throw it up in celebration.

"It was an unnecessary, flambouyant lapse which could yet determine the destiny of the Cup," the Mercury said.

"Instead of holding onto the ball, Gibbs, in trying to throw it up in triumph, lost control and Waugh batted on... and on."

In Cape Town, the Cape Times headlined its report: "SA in dire need of Kallis double act" with reference to the absence of key allrounder Jacques Kallis from Sunday's match.

Kallis was unable to play because of a stomach muscle injury, and South Africa suffered as Hansie Cronje and left-arm spinner Nicky Boje conceded 79 runs in 10 overs between them.

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## Away from the pitch

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days while the card hung on the side of a department store in Hyderabad.

India's film industry says it expects a plunge of around 40 percent in box-office takings over the next month, as people switch to the World Cup. Analysts estimate the loss of income at around 35 million US dollars.

May 14: Australian Shane Warne tells Sri Lankan captain Arjuna Ranatunga in remarks published on the opening day of the Cup that the sport would be better off without him. He says he does not like Ranatunga and no longer respects him as a player.

- Sri Lankan cricket captain Arjuna Ranatunga says the remarks show "more about Shane Warne and Australian culture rather than about me and our culture. We have a culture that is 2,500 years old - I think we all know where they (Australians) come from."

May 15: Wives of some of the Indian cricketers return home to allow their husbands to focus better on the World Cup.

- Australian selector Allan Border questions whether Shane Warne will make himself available to tour Sri Lanka later this year following his acrimonious public spat with Ranatunga.