

Bits & pieces

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 But Twose, who married a New Zealander, is not completely lost to England.
 The national newspaper said Twose has given 'England at least one representative in the semifinals.'

RICH MAN RUSSELL

LONDON, June 15 (AP): Former Test wicketkeeper Jack Russell is the only English cricketer headed for a lucrative pay day on World Cup grand final day at Lord's.
 The Gloucestershire captain, who lists his career outside cricket as "professional artist", has been commissioned by a tournament sponsor to produce commemorative paintings of the June 20 finale.
 The commission is reportedly worth more than the English players were to have received for reaching the final.

WAUGH NUMBER ONE

LONDON, June 15 (AP): With the three leading runners out of the tournament, Australian skipper Steve Waugh assumes the No. 1 batting status going into the semifinals.
 Waugh, who scored an unbeaten 120 against South Africa on Sunday to ensure his team qualified for the finals, was ranked No. 4 in the standings behind Indian pair Rahul Dravid and Sourav Ganguly and Zimbabwe's Neil Johnson.
 But with India and Zimbabwe eliminated in the second round (Super Six), Waugh leads the tournament batting standings with 342 runs from seven innings.
 There's no such problem at the top of the bowling standings.

New Zealand's Geoff Allott will be looking to extend his record 20 wickets this tournament when the Black Caps take on Pakistan at Old Trafford on Wednesday.
 Pakistan have four bowlers among the tournament's top bowlers with Saqlain Mushtaq (16) in No. 3 spot, Azhar Mahmood and Shoaib Akhtar sharing No. 6 place with 13 wickets a piece and Wasim Akram close behind with 12 wickets.
NOTTS NOT KILLJOYS

NOTTINGHAM, June 15, England (AP): Cricket authorities at Trent Bridge who urged spectators not to stand or make "excessive noise" during New Zealand's Super Six win over India on Saturday have denied being "killjoys."
 "Accused of ruining the 'Carnival of Cricket' atmosphere with a series of ground announcements basically telling the crowd to sit down and shut up, Nottinghamshire Cricket officials say they were simply trying to get a fair balance for all fans."
 "I wouldn't want to be seen as killjoys because we wanted everyone to enjoy the 'Carnival of Cricket,'" said Notts chief executive Mark Arthur.

PROTEST OVER PROFIT

LONDON, June 15 (AP): At the completion of the last World Cup — jointly staged in India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka in 1996 — many competing nations had a common complaint.
 "What happened to the profits?
 With millions of dollars being shelled out for television rights, everyone expected a bumper slice of profit which never arrived."
 No great fuss was made but there were quiet protests to the International Cricket Council.
 The protests have obviously hit their mark because the ICC has confirmed that for the first time in seven World Cups, the tournament's finances will be independently audited.

ILLEGAL SIGNS

LONDON, June 15 (AP): The companies who sponsor cricket's World Cup are jealously guarding their rights. And they're not afraid of using the police to settle any infringements of those rights.
 Telecommunications company Vodafone has the branding rights for the "four" and "six" placards which are distributed to fans at World Cup stadiums to wave around when a batsman hits a boundary.
 But when The Times newspaper started distributing similar signs at a game in Taunton, Vodafone officials called in the police and the unsanctioned signs were quickly removed.

Saqi support

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 because the pitch has bounce, I haven't used much flight, I've just tried to keep batsman quiet and frustrate them. The ball which goes away from the batsman has got me a lot of wickets."
Jones would love

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In the batting, the players have to believe in themselves and go for it.
 "Like his team mates from the 1992 campaign, he still shudders at the loss to Pakistan.
 "It does frustrate me because we were so dominant throughout the tournament," he said. "We beat everyone. It was one of those tournaments where we should have won, yet we didn't even make the final."
 This year's New Zealand team are two wins away from a NZ\$1.0 million (US\$534,000) pay day, thanks to an insurance policy taken out by the sport's national body, New Zealand Cricket.
 The tournament's NZ\$550,000 first prize would be topped up by NZ\$450,000 bonus from the insurance policy.

Men in the middle

LONDON, June 15: David Shepherd, the "Dancing Umpire", and Steve Bucknor, the "Great Delayer", will take charge of their second cricket World Cup final in a tournament organisers announced here on Tuesday, reports AFP.
 The match takes place at Lord's on Sunday.



DAVID SHEPHERD

The semifinalists, who play on Wednesday and Thursday, are Pakistan and New Zealand and Australia and South Africa.

Englishman Shepherd and West Indian Bucknor, who stood together in the 1996 final between Sri Lanka and Australia in Lahore, are widely regarded as the best — and the most colourful — umpires in the game.

The portly, red-faced "Shep" is both respected and liked by the players for his firm judgment and his friendly manner.

The crowds love him for his eccentricities.
 The 58-year-old from the small town of Bideford, in the south west of England, begins

watching on one foot whenever the score hits the dreaded "Nelson" of 111. He also starts hopping on 222, 333 etc.
 "Cricketing folklore says that any multiple of the Nelson is unlucky and provokes the fall of wickets. The only way to combat it is to stand on one leg."
 Shepherd played as a batsman for Gloucestershire. He made his Test debut as an umpire in 1985.

When not travelling the globe, he helps out in the family post office business — hence his hobby of stamp collecting.

For the equally-respected Bucknor, this will be a hat-trick of World Cup finals. He also stood in the 1992 final between Pakistan and England in Melbourne.

The 53-year-old from Montego Bay has become best known for the long delay before he raises his finger to give batsmen out. His decisions, whichever way they go, are often accompanied by a wistful smile and a sad shake of the head.

Bucknor, a sports consultant, did not play the game but enjoys the unique distinction of having officiated in both cricket and football World Cups.

He was a football referee between 1985-92. He made his international cricket umpiring debut in 1988.

Shepherd — a bachelor who has lived with his partner for more than 20 years ("Friends say I should get married but I don't like to rush things") — and Bucknor, married with two sons, three daughters and one stepdaughter, were put through their paces during the World Cup second-round match between India and Pakistan.

The game was seen as potentially explosive due to the teams' traditional rivalry, which had been compounded in the run-up to the game by political and military tensions between the two nations.
 But the game passed off without incident, thanks to the players, the crowd and the umpires, who had fostered goodwill with a big smile and friendly handshake in front of the fans before starting the game.



STEVE BUCKNOR

Bucknor and Shepherd could have been blocked from standing in the final if England and the West Indies were still in the tournament, but both were knocked out in the first round.

Darell Hair of Australia and Peter Willey of England will stand in the first semifinal between Pakistan and New Zealand at Old Trafford on Wednesday.

Shepherd and Srivivas Venkatraghavan of India will stand in the second at Edgbaston the following day.

Bookies fancy S Africa

LONDON, June 15 (Reuters): South Africa have been reinstated as favourites to win the World Cup despite their defeat by Australia on Sunday and the fact they have to face them again in the semifinals. Bookmakers William Hill said they had cut South Africa's odds to 7-4 from 10-11 after receiving several hundred bets. "We took a string of three and four figure bets, including two of 5,000 and 6,000 pounds (8,000 dollars and 9,670 dollars), as well as an 11,000 pounds (17,730 dollars) bet for them to beat Australia in the semifinal," a spokesman said. Pakistan, the former 13-8 favourites, are now 2-1 second favourites with Australia at 9-4 and New Zealand 15-2.

LATEST ODDS

- 7-4 South Africa
- 2-1 Pakistan
- 9-4 Australia
- 15-2 New Zealand

Lehmann okay

BIRMINGHAM, June 15 (Reuters/Internet): Australian batsman Darren Lehmann declared himself fit and "raring to go" ahead of Thursday's World Cup semifinal against South Africa.
 The Australians practised at Edgbaston on Tuesday and Lehmann, who was replaced by Damien Martyn in last Sunday's classic match against the Springboks took a full part.
 Lehmann suffered a trapped finger when he was hit by Zimbabwean paceman Henry Olonga.

"It came at just the wrong time, I'd been hitting the ball well against India but I'm raring to go now," he said.

Lehmann, a talented and powerful hitter in the middle order, has had a disappointing tournament to date, scoring 122 runs at an average of 24. His only decent knock came in his group stage defeat by New Zealand when he topscored with 76.

Martyn scored 11 on Sunday before falling to Steve Elworthy.

Australia have no other fitness worries. Steve Waugh, who suffered a hamstring injury in the second round, was fit to play after undergoing surgery.

"You get a bit stiff at my age and you have to stretch a bit," said the 34-year-old skipper.

Lance an Aussie by mistake!

BIRMINGHAM, England, June 15 (Reuters/Internet): Lance Klusener would probably be the first name on every World Cup captain's wish list and Australia's Steve Waugh must have been thinking "if only" when he saw the organisers' list.
 Sitting proudly atop the South African list was Klusener — and he was somewhat also included ahead of Waugh and his team-mates in the Australia list.
 The beefy all-rounder, who plundered 36 from 21 balls against the Aussies in the final Super Six match, averages 125 after being dismissed only twice in seven innings.

Cornered captain

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 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 captain."
 Disnayake later denied discussing Ranatunga with the BBC.

However, the Sinhalese-language Lankadeepa Monday carried Disnayake's denial and also a transcript from the BBC's Sinhalese-language programme, causing embarrassment to officials who had issued the denial on the minister's behalf.

Disnayake's move last week to appoint an interim body to run the crisis-ridden cricket board also appeared to be controversial.

The minister named bank executive Rennie Wijetilleke to head a 12-member interim panel to manage the Board of Control for Cricket after the elected office bearers were suspended by a court last week.

Disnayake is empowered by law to appoint a management committee to run the board until the court gives a final ruling on the election which made Thilanga Sumathipala president.

Official sources said Sumathipala's lawyers were planning to challenge the interim board.

Fleming's

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 is hoping a few flashes of brilliance from his players can upset Pakistan.
 "There are still a few guys in the debit column and they have plenty to offer. There has been probably too much done by too few with our side," the former Australian test player said.
 "If we happen to get it all together on the day there won't be a side who can beat us."
 "They (the Pakistanis) are a terrific side on their day but if you can't throw a ball of imbalance in there — something just to change their pattern — obviously they are going to panic like a lot of the sides in the sub-continent do."
 "When things aren't going well they tend to get a bit huffy and probably make irrational decisions."

Rixon said: "The theme I have been running the last few games is that we have nothing to lose and everything to gain."
 "If we keep things along those lines, we have to have our day in the sun soon because we haven't done it yet."

Grey, green and white

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 tenacity were both in evidence when he faced a world record 101 balls without scoring in a Test against South Africa this year.

The same determination combined with a natural ebullience have given the New Zealand World Cup team a cutting edge it would otherwise have lacked.

Now Allott is looking to turn the tables on Wasim Akram's side who won by 62 runs in a group encounter between the sides at Derby, and clinch the Kiwis first ever final appearance.

Allott said: "I've been delighted to do well but guys like Nash, Larsen, Harris and Cairns have also done well and it's just been one of those tournaments where I've got the wickets."

"Things can swing both ways. Sometimes you can bowl well and not get wickets. But I've got a job to do which is to try and get a couple of early wickets and then to come back at the death and try and keep it tight and contain."

"The conditions were helpful early on and the ball has been a big help to the seam bowlers in general. But now the wickets are drying out and we are also playing on unused wickets so there is not so much seam and swing."

"This one at Old Trafford looks pretty dry with not a lot of grass on it and if it has got pace it should be a good deck. It's a used pitch so it might get a

bit slower and lower in the second innings."
 Allott admitted: "After what happened to me, I'm literally taking things series by series. Every one is a bonus because this time last year I thought I might not be able to play again. I'm just glad to be here."
 "I had two stress fractures and a bulging disc and you get really down when you are faced with the prospect of never playing again."
 "It is hard watching from the stands at Lancaster Park, seeing the guys in action who have been playing alongside a few months earlier."

"But if I ever had any doubts about having the passion for the game, then that time out rekindled all that enthusiasm and gave me a hunger and desire to make it back and play again."

"I had to remodel my action completely because even if I had come back then the same problems would have happened again unless I changed particularly with the amount of cricket played now."

"I had to start literally again from scratch. I began by walking through a rayed action and run-up. Dave Hadlee and Ashley Ross at the New Zealand Academy supervised and were responsible for getting my action back on track."

"I feel good now although I still do a lot of exercise to strengthen my back and I wear a brace as well. I've also cut a hole in the front of my boot to help loosen the pressure on my

standing foot."
 Allott, by his own admission, is looking to improve on his performance in the first clash with Pakistan when his four wickets cost him 64 runs.
 He said: "That was a good learning experience for me. This is a completely different game. Pakistan are an excellent side, particularly in their top order batting and bowling. We will be underdogs."
 "But the good thing is that we have reached the semi-final without hitting our straps. We have not turned in a top level complete performance yet."

Allott indicated he would be open to offers from an English county and said he enjoyed playing on English pitches.

"They suit me without a doubt," he said.
 Richard Hadlee, who credits county cricket with transforming his own career, believes Allott will be playing in England next year.

"Two county executives have intimidated me that Allott could virtually name his price to play in the English championship next year," Hadlee said.

Allott was not aware he made history against Zimbabwe by equalling the World Cup record of 18 set by India's Roger Binny (1983). Australian Craig McDermott (1987) and the present Pakistan captain Wasim Akram (1992).

The New Zealanders have subsequently noted that in each case the record making bowler's team went on to win the World Cup.

Unpredictables v underachievers

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 that.
 But he stressed: "We will have to play better than we have so far in the tournament if we are to get to the final."
 "The top order have not fired yet and that applies to the middle order to some extent."
 "But that is a positive, to some extent, in that... we have got this far despite not firing."
 This far despite not firing? Pakistan winning the last five encounters.

NEW SQUADS

NEW ZEALAND (probable): Nathan Astle, Matthew Horne, Craig McMillan, Stephen Fleming (capt), Roger Twose, Adam Parore, Chris Cairns, Chris Harris, Dion Nash, Gavin Larsen, Geoff Allott.

PAKISTAN (probable): Saeed Anwar, Shahid Afridi, Abdul Razaq, Ijaz Ahmed, Inzamam-ul-Haq, Salim Malik, Moin Khan, Wasim Akram (capt), Azhar Mahmood, Saqlain Mushtaq, Shoaib Akhtar.

Waugh of wills

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 those little doubts and it seemed me on," Waugh said.
 "Surprisingly Sunday's all-or-nothing knock was only his second century in 266 one-day international innings."
 "Hundreds don't come along that often when you bat at five or six. It was the kind of innings I've always dreamed of. What you work for all your career," he said.
 "There are hundreds scored in one-day cricket but I don't think are that great, but there are some that are sort of special."

Waugh, a part-time medium-pacer in this competition, has known his lean times with the bat but the selectors have stood by him, knowing mental toughness like his is very hard to find.

"It's not just one facet, you sort of bring them all together — experience, knowledge of conditions, body language, what your opponents make-up is," the 34-year-old said.

Waugh now leads his side into Thursday's repeat clash with South Africa believing Australia have the psychological edge.

"They are a tough side to beat... I think the pressure is on (South African captain) Hansie Cronje," he said after the semifinal.
 "But it would be a shame to waste this performance."

WORLD CUP RESULTS TO DATE

New Zealand: First round — lost to Pakistan by 62 runs, beat Australia by 5 wks, lost to West Indies by 7 wks, beat Bangladesh by 6 wks, beat Scotland by 6 wks, Super Six: No result against Zimbabwe, lost to South Africa by 74 runs, beat India by 5 wks.

Pakistan: First round — beat New Zealand by 62 runs, beat Australia by 10 runs, beat the West Indies by 27 runs, beat Scotland by 94 runs, lost to Bangladesh by 62 runs, Super Six: Lost to South Africa by 3 wks, lost to India by 47 runs, beat Zimbabwe by 148 runs.

WORLD CUP

Pakistan have won five of their six World Cup matches. New Zealand won the first encounter in 1983, but lost the return in the same tournament. In 1992, New Zealand were beaten at home twice, once in the preliminary league and then in the semifinal, which launched Inzamam-ul-Haq on the international stage with a match-winning knock of 60. In 1996, Pakistan won easily by 46 runs at home in Lahore. In the first round match on May 28 at Derby in this tournament, Pakistan won by 62 runs. Ijaz Ahmed and Inzamam-ul-Haq both made half-centuries, as did Stephen Fleming, while Geoff Allott took four wickets, his performance balanced by Azhar Mahmood's three.

VENUE

Old Trafford, Manchester. It is England's second largest cricket venue after Lord's and has been used for Test matches since 1884. It entered the record books in 1956 when Jim Laker took all 10 wickets against Australia. A feat emulated by India's Anil Kumble against Pakistan earlier this year. Hosted two other World Cup matches between Australia and the West Indies and the high-profile India v Pakistan game.

QUOTABLE QUOTES

LONDON, June 15 (AFP): Who said what during the Super Six second round of the 1999 cricket World Cup?
 "I don't know about morals, I've here to win the World Cup. They make the rules, we have to do as we see fit." Australian captain Steve Waugh after his decision to bat slowly against the West Indies to try and eliminate New Zealand.

"I'm absolutely certain it has to be an Englishman. I just think that if it isn't, then it's just somebody who is drawing a salary." Outgoing England coach David Lloyd on the search for his successor.

"Brian Lara has done extremely well, but he can't bat for the whole team. There's nothing wrong with his captaincy. We are not far off from being a decent side." West Indies team manager Clive Lloyd after the team's first-round exit.

"It almost feels like playing at home but that has been the case here in England for a long time. Asians love their cricket. The English, I think, are a bit more inclined towards football." Mohammed Azharuddin after India's victory over England at Edgbaston.

"It was like Calcutta out there and England couldn't handle the pressure." South Africa's Allan Donald.
 "The damage that it has done to the players and, more importantly, the cricketing public in this country, has been immense." England chairman of selectors David Graveney.

Rixon

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 could come down to who handles the pressure better."
 Fleming said New Zealand's progress through the tournament had nothing to do with luck.
 "From the outside obviously the fluctuating form over a long period has given us the underdog status... but at important times we've done things well and we take heart from that," he said.
 Fleming said they were mentally tougher than they were in their 62-run loss to Pakistan in a group game at Derby.

He said he'd prefer to bat first if the "pitch permits" because Pakistan can be vulnerable chasing a target.

HEAD-TO-HEAD

The two teams have not played each other in Test matches or a one-day series in the past year.
 They have, however, contested one unofficial one-dayer, at the Commonwealth Games in Kuala Lumpur in September. Kiwi skipper Stephen Fleming scored 66 in an 81-run win that saw Pakistan skittled in damp conditions for 134.

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CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS
 1 Oil-rich sultanate
 5 Periodical in brief
 8 "Cr" Freedom subject
 12 — Park, N.Y.
 13 Ivy League
 14 Portent
 15 Eve's grandson
 16 Take apart
 18 Landau's Oscar-winning role
 20 Taps preceider
 21 Cry of woe
 23 "... on key's uncl'nd'
 24 Haste
 28 Make an impression
 31 Wall climber
 32 Two-time 1990s candidate
 34 Overseas agree-ment
 35 Lapidary's

DOWN
 11 Aware of
 17 Poke
 19 Hit
 22 Backdrop fabric
 24 Groove on
 25 "Got a Secret"
 26 Discussion conferences
 27 Long and tubular
 29 Prompt
 30 Waste no time
 33 Farewell
 36 "Parting is such sweet..."
 38 — counter
 40 Royal insomnia cause
 42 Hubbubs
 43 Floss structure
 44 Leak slowly
 46 Show chutzpah
 47 Fair-tale word
 48 Nuisance
 50 Writer Buscaglia

Solution time: 26 min.

CRYPTOQUIP
 Z W M T L U Y D P Y
 V W T A Z A W V I L R Q W P P F
 I Q W T L L N R R F Y D
 I Q N I D V A Y Q N I M ?
 Saturday's Cryptoquip: KING ARTHUR HAD ONE RATHER STOUT KNIGHT CALLED SIR LUNCHALOT.
 Today's Cryptoquip clue: Q equals B. The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.