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Kallis' stomach may upset SA

LONDON, June 16 (Internet report): South Africa's key all-rounder Jacques Kallis was still waging a fitness battle today just 24 hours before the World Cup semi-final against Australia at Edgbaston.

But South Africa's physiotherapist Craig Smith has advised captain Hansie Cronje and coach Bob Woolmer that it would be a risk to play Kallis, who has a stomach strain, as there is a chance of him breaking down.

With Smith's verdict down-beat, and Woolmer rating his chances as "50-50", a decision on Kallis is likely to be taken at the last possible moment.

The importance of the match is bound to come into the calculations, but if South Africa reach Sunday's final and Kallis aggravates the strain in the semi-final, he could miss the Lord's showpiece.

Cronje and Woolmer are thus left with a delicate decision to make - Kallis' injury forced him out of Sunday's epic against Australia at Headington, and South Africa missed his dual contribution as new ball bowler and middle-order strokemaker.

Kallis was in gentle mode when he began a bowling session at Edgbaston today, and gradually worked up his pace and follow through - but the workout lasted only 15 minutes.

Smith said: "Jacques is still in some degree of pain, he's been improving on a day-by-day basis. The real proof of the pudding is him bowling, and we bowled out there for ten minutes and it's still pretty painful.

"The decision for him to play is in the hands of the selectors.

"It happened in the match against New Zealand last week. He bowled six overs and from the fourth, he started noticing what he described as a crampy spasm in his stomach and it progressively got worse.

"Unfortunately the stomach musculature is so important for the strength of the whole body, it's crucial in the action of bowling and it's not completely healed yet.

"He's been having daily treatment, we went for a scan on Monday and the signs of the scan were pretty optimistic.

It all depends whether he feels he can bowl 20 overs in two matches, and that is the

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A costly lesson

EDGBASTON, England, June 16: Herschelle Gibbs, whose dropped-catch blunder against Australia wrecked South Africa's chance of an easy route to the cricket World Cup final, denied here on Tuesday that he had been show-boating, reports AFP.

Coach Bob Woolmer, however, wasn't so sure.

"I said to Herschelle afterwards: 'I love you, but if you do that again I'll batter you from here to kingdom come', " Woolmer revealed.

"He's learned a lesson - a lesson in life and a lesson in cricket. He won't do it again."

Gibbs, 25, turned from hero to instant villain on Sunday when, after scoring a century, he dropped Waugh on 56.

Waugh went on to make an unbeaten 120 as Australia won the last Super Six game with two balls to spare.

The victory not only kept Australia in the tournament, but it also robbed South Africa of an easy semi-final draw against Zimbabwe.

The result meant Australia and South Africa must stage a re-match in the last four here

on Thursday.

Gibbs took the catch at mid-wicket off Lance Klusener's bowling but then fumbled the ball as he appeared to be in the act of throwing it over his shoulder in his trademark celebration routine.

"I have got a tendency to do that," Gibbs admitted on Tuesday. "But I didn't have control of the ball then."

Gibbs blamed it on an injured right middle finger, suffered while batting.

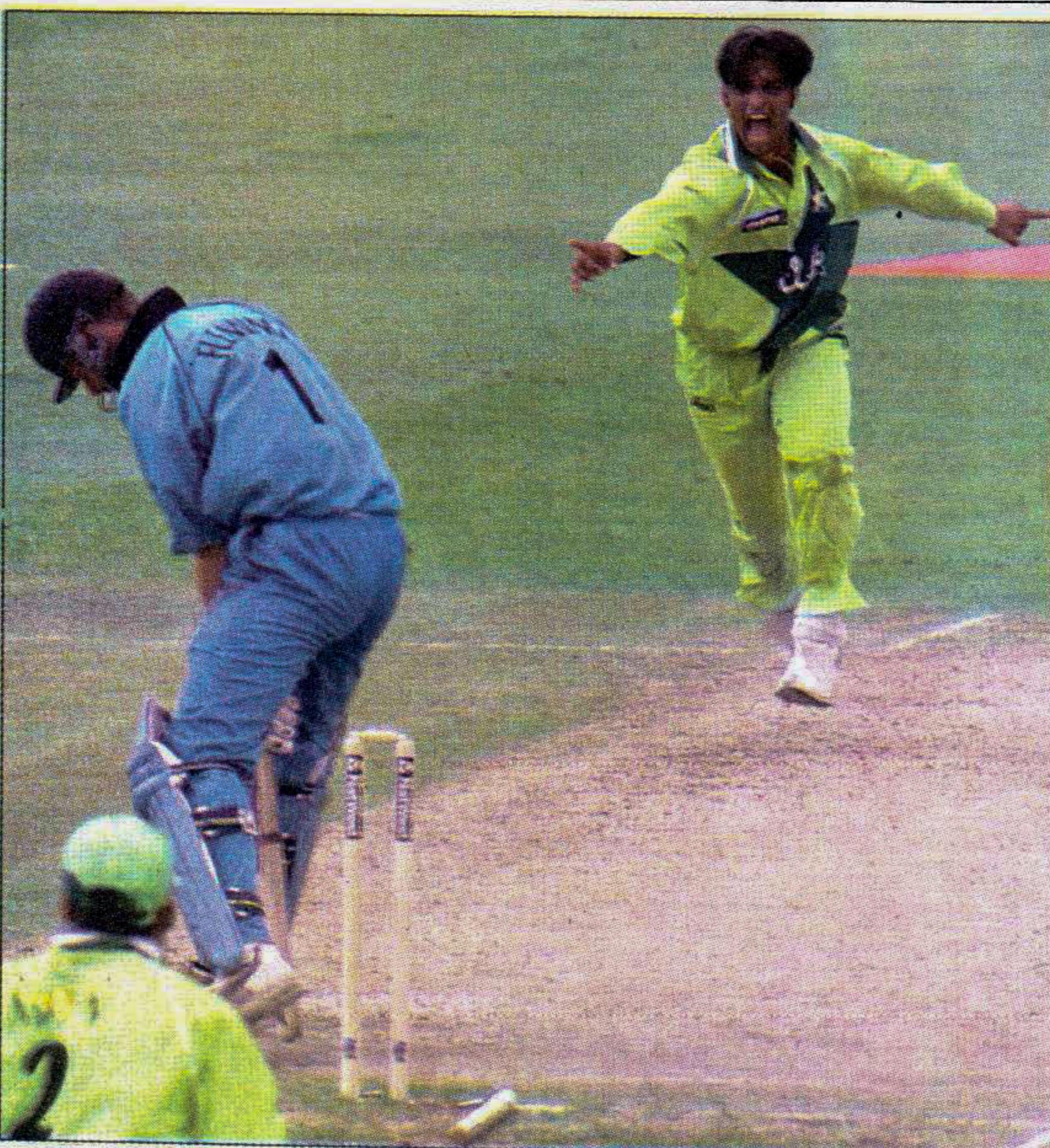
"After I got hit, the physio brought on the spray and that numbed the finger," he said.

"When the catch went up it was almost as though my hand didn't want to close. I couldn't really feel the ball in my hand and before I knew it the ball was on the ground."

Next time he holds a catch, Gibbs said, he would try to hold on to the ball longer.

Gibbs' father Herman, meanwhile, advised his son on the phone from Cape Town: "Put the ball in your pocket next time you take a catch and don't take it out until the batsman has gone."

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JUST TOO GOOD: Shoaib Akhtar is over the moon after knocking over New Zealand skipper Stephen Fleming's leg stump with a deadly yorker.

— AFP photo



Wasim Akram (C) being congratulated by Wajahatullah Wasti (L) and Ijaz Ahmed after getting rid of Craig McMillan yesterday.

— AFP photo

BITS & PIECES

Step aside Lance, Tom is here

EDGBASTON, England, June 16: If Australia win the World Cup, it will be all-rounder Tom Moody's second "world title" on British soil.

Moody, who is preparing with his team for the semifinal here against South Africa, revealed that during Australia's 1989 tour of England he captured sport's least prestigious world title - champion haggis thrower.

The Scottish sport, which is a bit of an oddity even in Scotland, is something like hammarthrow, except that the athlete perches on a barrel hurls a bag filled with sheep intestine.

"I remember the haggis being about the shape of an oversize light bulb, but pretty heavy," said Moody, who stands 210 centimetres (6 feet 7 inches).

"I threw it like an American football quarterback and it sailed into the car park for a world record," he said.

Moody said he and his teammates were taking part in a mini-Highland games and the main event was the haggis thrower.

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LANCE KLUSENER

time. His dismissal by New Zealand's Gavin Larsen also gave Klusener a world record of

400 one-day runs since the last time he trudged back to the pavilion.

Australia's veteran all-rounder Tom Moody, however, has been quietly building an unbeaten run of his own.

Ignored by the selectors for the first three World Cup games, he has since had four innings without losing his wicket, scoring 117 runs.

Klusener's current average is 125. Moody's is infinity, having not been dismissed.

The Australian already owns one world record.

One cricket tour to Britain 10 years ago, he visited the Highland Games in Scotland, where bizarre sports like tossing the caber - a tree trunk - and hurling the haggis - a Scottish delicacy made of minced sheep's meat - are practised.

The 6ft 7ins Moody threw the haggis into the car park to break the existing record.

Klusener's powerful hitting at number seven, which saved his side from imminent disaster against Sri Lanka, England and Pakistan, have earned him four man-of-the-match awards.

Yet Moody's runs have been scored at an even faster rate.

Also coming in at number seven, the Western Australia and Worcestershire skipper has made less headlines because he has scored 20s and 30s to

Klusener's 40s and 50s.

But Moody has the higher score here, 56 not out, to the South African's 52 not out.

Moody hit those runs off a World Cup record 29 balls

against Bangladesh.

The Australian almost

missed the World Cup after being left out of the provisional 19-man squad, only to be recalled at the last minute.

Moody and Steve Waugh are

the only survivors of Australia's victorious 1987 World Cup squad. Moody, however, did not play in the final.

— AFP photo

TOM MOODY

Warne wary of 'Zulu'

EDGBASTON, England, June 16: Australian leg spinner Shane Warne goes into Thursday's World Cup semi-final against South Africa knowing the key lies in containing the Lance Klusener, the star of the tournament, reports AFP.

But, Warne admitted, the problem lay in finding the right key.

"Klusener has been player of the tournament by a country mile," Warne wrote in the Times on Wednesday.

"Our plan on Sunday was to go around the wicket and aim to bowl yorkers outside the off-stump to stop him hitting in his favourite area through the leg-side."

The plan, Warne said, "half-worked" because the left-handed Klusener blasted 36 off 21 balls in the second-round clash at Headington.

Australia won the match with two balls to spare following a magnificent 120 not out by skipper Steve Waugh.

Waugh, who had finished his spell by the time Klusener came to the crease, said Australia will have to come up with another plan for the semi-final.

"But plans have to go out of the window when you are bowling to someone like him at the death," he said.

Klusener has only been dis-

missed twice in the tournament while hitting 250 runs. He also has 17 wickets, the second highest behind Geoff Allott of New Zealand (20).

His efforts have earned Klusener four man-of-the-match awards, and he remains

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