

**TOSHIBA** The ULTIMATE TV For 120 million people RANGS GROUP

# Bad blood boys

LONDON, June 19 (AP): Seeking to avenge humiliations and accusations on and off the field at the hands of the Australians, Pakistan goes into Sunday's World Cup final at Lord's determined to right some wrongs.

Australia not only won a rare Test and limited-overs series in Pakistan last year — it's first since 1960 — but leading Australian players also gave evidence in bribery and match-fixing inquiries against Pakistani players.

Although the two teams met in the first round and Pakistan won by 10 runs, Australia had the better of the exchanges when they met in a full series in Pakistan last year, winning the Test series 1-0 and the one-dayers 3-0.

Playing their characteristic volatile brand of cricket, Pakistan thrashed New Zealand by nine wickets in Wednesday's semifinal.

On the otherhand, Australia just scraped into the tournament finale with a narrow win and a tie in successive games against South Africa.

In Thursday's semifinal at Edgbaston, Australia and South Africa played to the only tie in World Cup history when South Africa, chasing Australia's 213 all out, finished all out in last-over run out with two balls to spare.

Australia advanced to the final by virtue of their superior position in the Super Six standings — which they only secured with the five-wicket win over

South Africa at Headingley on Sunday.

Australia reached the 1996 final which they lost to Sri Lanka by seven wickets, in similar fashion when they defended a small total to edge the West Indies by five runs in a thrilling semifinal at Chandigarh.

Australian skipper Steve Waugh, mindful of the 1996 loss, said he wanted his players to peak one more after two heart-stopping games within five days.

"We've got a lot of experience in our side and we've got (team motivator) Sandy Gordon whose been helping in that regard," he said.

"I think we learnt a lesson in the last World Cup when we placed too much emphasis on the quarterfinal and the semifinal and we didn't pay enough attention to the final."

"From here on in, we're going to focus on the final. While it was a great escape (against South Africa), it doesn't count for anything if we don't walk away with the trophy," he said.

Having spent the past two years molding and perfecting Australia's one-day game plan with the aim of winning the quadrennial trophy, Waugh values the Cup as one of cricket's most prestigious prizes.

"You say to yourself 'what are we here for, we're here to win the World Cup' and it's a big event that only happens once every four years so you just have to give it your best shot,"

Waugh said.

The 34-year-old batsman was a young man when Australia won the Cup in 1987. It was made possible by Waugh's last over attack on Pakistan left-armed Saleem Jaffer in the semifinal to setup an epic win.

And there is more than cricket prestige at stake for Pakistan in winning the World Cup.

Skipper Wasim Akram, together with fellow Pakistan stars Salim Malik and Ijaz Ahmed, were accused of match fixing and bribery in an interim report which recommends that the three players should be banned from playing until further investigations are concluded.

It added that betting on matches was widespread and called for an intensive new inquiry.

The finding of a new inquiry is expected soon. But according to a source close to the Pakistan Cricket Board, the players will be exonerated and Justice Malik Qayyum's report will never be released.

Wasim was stripped of the national side's captaincy in January 1998 and turned down a series of offers to lead Pakistan again, before taking the job back and leading them to wins in the Asian Test Championship and one-day series in India and Sharjah before the World Cup.



HANDBALL FOR A CHANGE: Pakistani cricketers playing handball during a practice session outside Lord's yesterday. —AFP photo

# Brace yourselves for Shane and Shoaib

LONDON, June 19 (AFP): Two players — Shane Warne and Shoaib Akhtar — loom large over Sunday's cricket World Cup final.

More has been said, more written and more thought about them than any other player throughout the five-week tournament.

Pakistan's 23-year-old Akhtar, thin, angular, hungry and bowling at up to 95 miles per hour, has been hailed as the find of the World Cup. A brilliant career is forecast.

Australian leg spinner Warne, 29, tubby and round and tired, is at the end of a brilliant career.

Or so it was presumed, until his two performances against South Africa in the second round and the semi-finals, reminded the doubters of his magical powers.

The ball which bowled Herschelle Gibbs at Edgbaston on Thursday turned square out of the leg-side rough to clip the top of the off stump.

Warne, who has struggled

back following a shoulder operation last year, believed it was not quite as good as his 1993 Ashes ball — the "Ball of the Century" — which removed Mike Gatting at Old Trafford.

"The 'Gatting ball' will always be special because of the situation — my first ball in a Test against England in England," he told The Times newspaper.

"It wasn't quite on the same shelf — maybe the next row down."

"But if people want to talk about a 'Gibbs ball' as well, then that's fine by me."

Australian captain Steve Waugh was under no illusions about the importance of Warne's first of four wickets in the semi-final.

"The ball that got Gibbs won us the game, mainly because of the psychological damage that it did to South Africa."

"I hope Pakistan were watching that game and that it damaged them," he said.

Akhtar has done a fair bit of psychological damage himself here.

His "Ball of the Tourna-

ment", ironically, did not earn him a wicket but made the world gasp in disbelief.

It was also his first ball at the top level in England.

No more than a loosener, it beat West Indian opener Sherwin Campbell for pace, caught the top edge of his bat and sailed over third man for six.

Campbell's face was a picture. He looked as bemused as Gatting and Gibbs. Six balls later, courtesy of Akhtar, his stumps exploded behind him.

Waugh said Akhtar was not all about pace, however.

"Pace isn't the worry. The reverse swing is where it gets difficult," he said.

Warne admits he is ever so slightly jealous.

It's all very well making batsmen look stupid, he says, but terrifying them out of their wits must be really fun.

Akhtar, asked if he would like to be able to spin the ball like Warne, smiled broadly.

"No," he said.

He's young and dashing and wild. And young men belong in the fast lane.



THE 'PIGEON' WANTS TO FLY AWAY WITH THE WORLD CUP: Glenn McGrath, the Australian pace ace, can wreck havoc in the Pakistani batting lineup. —Star file photo

## Ecstatic Aussie media

SYDNEY, June 19 (Reuters/Internet): Australia's media were still waxing lyrical on Saturday about their country's great escape in the World Cup semifinal against South Africa.

Columnist Mike Coward said "with a few flicks of his wrist" leg spinner Shane Warne had "filled Australia with hope and South Africa with self-doubt".

Australia's drama-filled tie on Thursday, taking them through to Sunday's final at Lord's, continued to dominate newspaper headlines and television and radio bulletins.

Footage of Allan Donald's farcical run out has been re-played ad nauseum while match reports have featured on the front and back pages of every major newspaper.

The country's only national paper, The Australian, attributed the success to the mental strength of the team's key players under the headline "Waugh of Nerves".

Cricket writer Andrew Ramsey made special mention of Steve Waugh's mental toughness both on and off the field.

"Few cricketers play the game as hard as Waugh. And no advantage over an opponent can be considered too small when the stakes are as high as the quadrennial world championship."

Coward. The Australian's chief cricket columnist, paid a glowing tribute to Waugh.

Coward said Waugh proved yet again what a great player he was by winning the man-of-the-match award.

# Caution for complacency

KARACHI, June 19: Former captain Hanif Mohammad on Friday warned Pakistan against complacency in the World Cup final against Australia but backed his nation to win, reports Reuters.

"Looking back at their (Pakistan) performance, I think only one team can beat Pakistan and that is Pakistan. Complacency will be the biggest enemy," Hanif was quoted as saying in the Dawn newspaper.

Pakistan beat New Zealand by nine wickets at Old Trafford on Wednesday to qualify for their second final in seven attempts.

At Lord's on Sunday, they meet Australia who earned a dramatic tie with favourites South Africa but forged ahead because of finishing in a higher position in the standings after the second round.

"The performance convinces me that Pakistan will win the World Cup. Everything seems to be falling at the right place at the right time," Hanif said.

The top order, which was struggling in the initial stages



HANIF MOHAMMAD of the event, got morale-boosting runs in the semifinal while the bowling is the best amongst all participants. It (the bowling) has variety, punch and kill," said Hanif, whose 337 against West Indies is still regarded as one of the best Test innings ever played.

Intikhab Alam, who was manager of the 1992 World Cup winning team, said he had high

hopes for Pakistan but emphasized that a lot of work still had to be done.

"Extras have to be curtailed. It was criminal to concede 47 extras against New Zealand. The fielding and running between the wickets has to be improved," said Intikhab.

Intikhab said Wasim Akram had led the team from the front and by example. "He has been an inspiration and has emerged as the best captain of the series."

But the evening Star newspaper questioned Akram's attitude and said he was lacking in commitment against New Zealand.

Under the headline "Wasim almost no-balled the semis away: body language slovenly," the paper commented: "The most notable thing was lack of commitment of Wasim Akram. The body language spelled it out."

"... ironically, out of the 23 no-balls and wides, 11 were from skipper Wasim Akram," said the paper, which added that Pakistan were lucky not to be penalised for a slow over rate.

# Target tiredness

LONDON, June 18: Australia will go into the cricket World Cup final against Pakistan "tired mentally and physically," rival captain Wasim Akram said here on Friday.

Akram said Australia's tough run-up to the final at Lord's on Sunday would count against them.

"They must be tired mentally and physically. To have to win to get to the semi-finals and then win again to get to the final must be tough."

"It has been a lot of stress for them. If it affects anybody, it will be to our advantage."

Australia have just gone through two of the most mentally-draining one-day games ever seen during the World Cup's 24-year history.

Last Sunday, needing to win to remain in the tournament, they had beaten the South Africans with two balls to spare, thanks to an unbeaten 120 off 110 balls from skipper Steve Waugh.

In the semi-final re-match at Edgbaston on Thursday, the sides tied on 213 runs — the first tie in 199 World Cup games since the tournament began in 1975.

Australia scraped through because of their better record in the second round. They took the last South African wicket with two balls to spare.

Akram's side, meanwhile, cruised to easy wins over Zimbabwe and New Zealand before the final.

Pakistan also benefitted from an extra day to prepare for Sunday's showdown.

Akram said of Thursday's match: "It was one of the greatest games I have ever seen. I think Australia are a good side. It's impressive how they have won six games in a row here. But we are mentally tougher."

"If they are confident, then we are even more confident," Waugh and his entourage,

still emotionally exhausted after the extraordinary game at Edgbaston, face the massive task of goading their players into one last supreme effort.

Waugh was, however, positive, saying: "We really fought and scrapped and hung in there. Three or four times we were down and out."

"I guess it was whoever held their nerve right down to the wire — it was us."

He said his side could still toughen up. "We have had opportunities where we cracked under pressure as well — so there are ways to improve."

The record books confirm that Australia are a side that never accept defeat.

Their "tied victory" should be

ranked as the smallest margin of victory ever seen in the competition.

The next smallest victory margin, by one run, also saw Australia winning as they defeated India in Madras in 1987.

The next closest match was again won by the Australians, as they beat New Zealand by three runs in the same tournament.

The New Zealanders have also won a World Cup game against Zimbabwe by that margin.

And the closest final ever seen, inevitably, went to Australia. They beat England in the 1987 showpiece by seven runs.

See page 14

# Fear of catastrophe at carnival's end

From Nizamuddin Ahmed in London

June 19: Warnings about a possible tragedy if fireworks and pitch invasion were not tackled have gone unheeded. The rot was seen at Old Trafford's Pakistan-New Zealand semi-final. Many fear the worst was yet to come.

Aware of the security issue, Lord's organisers have warned that fireworks will not be tolerated in Sunday's final that features Australia and Pakistan. How they want to stop the mad race for souvenirs at the end of the final was not revealed. The growing menace of a crowd stampede has clearly put players' safety in danger.

The game was brought to disrepute by incidents at Old Trafford last Wednesday when Pakistani fans embarked on premature celebrations ahead of their one-sided win over New Zealand. Play was held up twice — once for a minute when firecrackers were burst in the gallery, and again for fifteen minutes when flag-waving fans invaded the pitch with six runs needed to complete their nine-wicket win. In fact, Robert Twose could not field the winning shot because of interference from the crowd.

Spokesman for the World Cup organisers, Michael Browning said about the final: "Fireworks are prohibited. If anyone lets off a fireworks, they will be evicted from the ground."

He did not elaborate on what procedure will be followed at Lord's to counter the threat of fireworks and pitch invasion. Baggage and body checks, and stewarding at play's end have clearly not helped.

At Old Trafford's India-Pakistan match, spectators were searched for alcohol and weapons. Although alcohol is not allowed to be brought in at some venues, there is enough flowing in the bars under the gallery. One would assume it

was good business sense, rather than a security proceeding.

Incidentally, all World Cup grounds, a prohibition order (issued with each ticket) is in force on knives, offensive weapons, dangerous articles, fireworks, flares, sticks and flagpoles, klaxons, megaphones, compressed air or gas-operated horns, face masks, banners, fancy dress, oversize headwear, and bands. How well that written ban is working any television viewer can decide.

New Zealand captain Stephen Fleming said they were very much concerned about Twose's safety until they saw him being ushered into the pavilion by a minding steward. Having decided earlier that they were hopelessly outnumbered to stop the crowd, stewards at Old Trafford went for the players, who had to run for their life.

Crowd invasion has been a trademark of this tournament. It's madness.

Somebody is bound to get hurt sooner or later.

There have been suggestions about fencing off the ground but that would rob cricket of its traditional charm, rushing on to the pitch being very much a part of it. The feeling against fencing is also high because of the tragedy at Sheffield Wednesday's football ground where many died.

"But it's a measure that will have to be taken into consideration for players' safety," said Fleming.

Pakistan captain Wasim Akram attributed the invasion to over-excitement but added, "Something has to be done to stop this. Fans are coming up to the players and hitting them. It is too much. Saqlain Mushtaq was quite shaken in one incident."

He was referring to the behaviour of a jubilant crowd at

See page 14

# Warne sees Aussies win

LONDON, June 19: Australia are destined to beat Pakistan in the cricket World Cup final, Shane Warne said in remarks published on Saturday, reports AFP.

The leg spinner told The Times newspaper on the eve of the game: "I have always believed in destiny and I reckon now that we are destined to win the World Cup."

"I thought it before that incredible semi-final and, after coming through that, I'm absolutely convinced."

Australia reached the Lord's showpiece after tying in the semi-final with South Africa. Both sides made 213 but the Australians scraped through

because of a better record in the second round of the tournament.

South Africa had needed just one run off the last four balls but then lost their final wicket in a desperate run-out.

Warne, who took four for 29 in the game, said: "That was the best I've bowled during the tournament."

"Losing in the final to Sri Lanka three years ago was one of the worst moments of my life."

"I am determined that it will not happen again."

Australia won the World Cup in 1987. Pakistan followed suit in 1992.

# Who's the boss?

LONDON, June 19: (AFP/Internet): Faster than a speeding bullet, more deadly than a viper's bite, Glenn McGrath and Shoaib Akhtar will be involved in their own private battle during the World Cup final.

And the grand finale at Lord's on Sunday provides a perfect stage for two of the world's best fast bowlers to display their talents.

The Akhtar-versus McGrath sideshow promises to be as appetising as the main course before a sell-out crowd of 30,000.

The duo, who will be vying for the unofficial title of the best quickie in the world, amazingly, go into the final with almost identical statistics.

Both have taken the same number of wickets (16) for the same number of runs (354), at

an average of 22.12, and both have bowled six maidens.

Akhtar is the fastest bowler in the world, having been timed at 95-miles-an-hour during the tournament.

McGrath, whose fastest delivery was timed at 90, is universally acclaimed as one of the finest pacemen of the 90s because of his impeccable control.

Shoaib's wickets at the World Cup have come in 10.1 fewer overs than McGrath's. The Australian, however, has the best bowling figures of the tournament so far — five for 14 against the West Indies at Old Trafford on May 30.

It promises to be the most dramatic shoot-out since John Wayne decided to hang up his gun.

	Overs	Mds	Runs	Wkts	Avg	S/R	Econ5	wkts	Best
Glenn McGrath	86.4	6	354	16	22.12	32.50	4.08	1	5-14
Shoaib Akhtar	76.5	6	354	16	22.12	28.81	4.61	0	3-11



Kodak GOLD 200 ASA. M.R.P Tk. 125  
Kodak GOLD 100 ASA. M.R.P Tk. 120

**NEW** When it comes to colour, there is nothing like **GOLD**. Introducing the world's best film for colour...now in Bangladesh for best results insist on Kodak paper