

Sport

Sympathy for Stewart

LONDON, July 3 (Internet report): England manager David Graveney offered his sympathy to former captain Alec Stewart on Saturday after his double failure in the dramatic opening Test against New Zealand.

Stewart scored just one run, but was dismissed twice on a day when 21 wickets fell for 236 runs to leave England resuming on three for one, needing a further 205 runs for victory in conditions which have so far been perfect for accurate swing and seam bowling.

It was only the third time in Test cricket history that both sides have been dismissed on the same day and sets the match up for a tense and thrilling finale.

But Stewart, who has also dropped two crucial catches in his first Test since returning to the ranks, will play no further part other than offer encouragement from the sidelines, to leave his future in jeopardy now he is no longer captain.

But Graveney, one of Stewart's most loyal and long-standing supporters stressed: "When Stewie got out we all felt sorry for him. It became dark as we went out, but it wasn't unplayable as there were only two lights on at the time."

"It was a good swinging yorker from Geoff Allott and he'll be disappointed to get out at that time of the day, but it wasn't a bad shot - I put it down to good bowling."

"It was an extraordinary day of Test cricket, with high quality bowling in conditions that were not dissimilar, in terms of humidity, to when we bowled Australia out for a small score at Edgbaston in 1997. Quite simply the ball has dominated the bat and made interesting viewing."

"The team talk Nasser Hussain delivered was exactly spot-on after we were bowled out."

"He said the bowlers got us out of jail to a certain degree with the bat, now we've got to do it all again, and that's exactly what we did. We had to bowl them out in a very short space of time."

But Graveney conceded that the tourists had given them an object lesson in how to bowl in the conditions, adding: "They showed us the length to bowl on this wicket, that is to pitch it up."

"You've got to give credit where credit is due. It probably swung a bit more than it did on the first day. There were some good deliveries bowled by them."

Kasparov clinches Frankfurt title

FRANKFURT, July 3: Russia's world champion Garry Kasparov won the Frankfurt Chess Classics festival late Friday, beating his fellow-countryman Anatoly Karpov on the last day of the semi-rapid tournament, reports AFP.

Kasparov, playing against his old rival for the first time in three years, beat him by one win and three draws in the four-day Siemens Giants clash. He notched up the same score against two other opponents — Viswanathan Anand of India and Vladimir Kramnik of Russia.

The four were engaged in a semi-rapid competition which allows each player 25 minutes to make a move.

Over the last eight years, the two Russian masters have created one of the greatest rivalries in chess history.

They have played five World Championships against each other, and a total of 171 matches since 1981.

Kasparov, 36, has got the better of his 48-year-old rival, with 29 victories, 20 defeats and 122 draws against Karpov.

United to kick off retail chain in Middle East

DUBAI, July 3 (Reuters/ Internet): European soccer champion Manchester United plans to open a chain of retail shops in the Middle East as the world's wealthiest football team expands its international ventures.

The club's retail partner in the Middle East, retail and marketing group Gray Mackenzie, said on Saturday the team planned to open a chain of "Theatre of Dreams" stores, starting in the Gulf emirate of Dubai in March 2000.

In a statement, Gray Mackenzie said shops in Abu Dhabi, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Lebanon, Kuwait, Oman, Bahrain and Qatar would follow.

Peter McElwaine, chief executive of Gray Mackenzie, said the average size of each store will be 3,000 square feet (278.7 square metres) and will sell team uniforms and ranges of sports clothes and souvenirs for teenagers and children.

"Manchester United can justifiably lay claim to being the biggest club in the world," McElwaine said.

He said Manchester United coaches and players will also run soccer schools throughout the Middle East.

Peter Kenyon, United deputy chief executive, said the club was committed to delivering its retail concept to the Middle East.

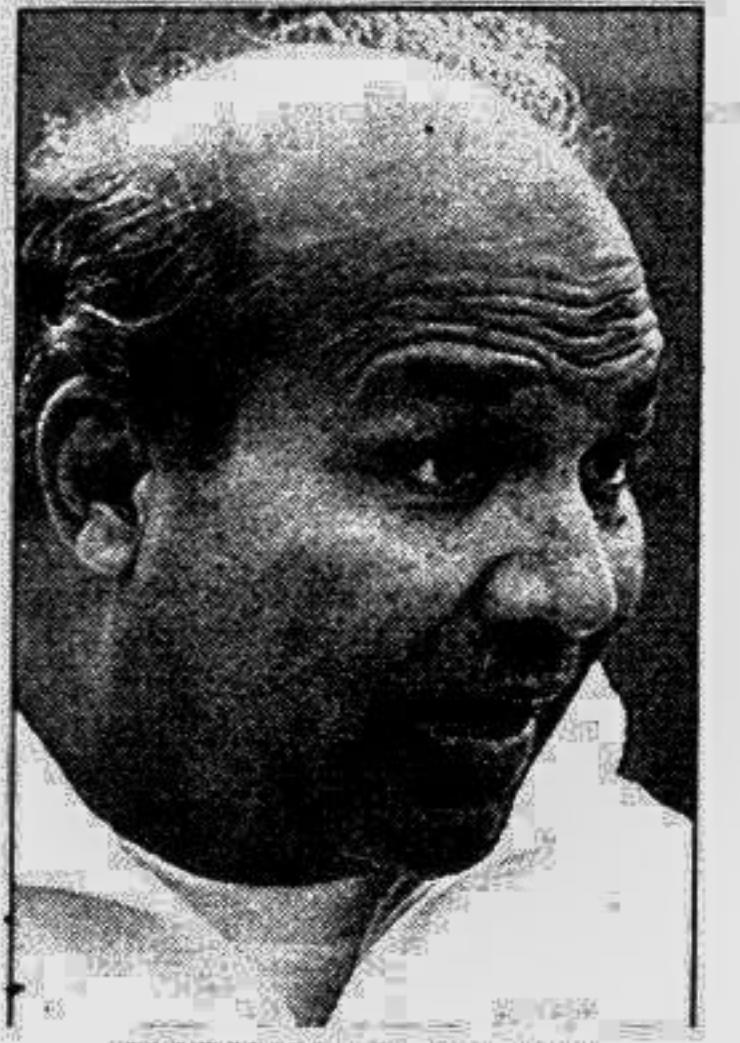
"We understand how passionate the people of the Middle East are about sport and football in particular," Kenyon said in a statement.

Last month, United announced it was opening stores across southeast Asia as part of a 10-year agreement with local retail group FJ Benjamin Holdings Ltd.

At the time, Kenyon said further retail partnerships would be announced in the next few months to cover China, Hong Kong, the Middle East, Scandinavia and Ireland.

Caught by Kargil virus

KARACHI, July 3 (Reuters): Former Pakistani Test cricketers agreed on Saturday with Indian players who have called for an end to cricketing relations between the two countries. The Pakistani players said



INTIKHAB ALAM

relations should be suspended until India changed its views on matters such as the Kashmir conflict, which led to the scrapping on Friday of the annual Sahara Cup tournament between the two in Toronto in September.

Pakistan should not compromise on nonsense. The door should be slammed on India until they realise that sports and politics are two different things," former captain In-

tikhab Alam said.

In the recent past we have played (them) in Canada and Sharjah. Now if we don't play there, what difference would it make? But Pakistan should not tolerate irresponsible statements," former test paceman Aaqib Javed said.

Indian cricket star Sachin Tendulkar said in Delhi on Friday that while the two countries were fighting, "it's very hard to go out there and play on a cricket field."

His remarks, referring to the Kashmir conflict, came after former Indian captain Kapil Dev demanded that India should not play Pakistan even on neutral territory.

Indian cricket board chief Raj Singh Dungarpur was reported as saying that India might never cricketing ties with Pakistan.

Isn't it ridiculous, sportsmen trying to repair a cocktail of sports and politics? Sportsmen are supposed to ease tension rather than create hatred amongst the people of two countries," Intikhab said.

He said Dungarpur's statement backed up the feeling of Pakistani politicians that India did not want to restore peace over the Kashmir conflict.

Javed, whose one-day best of seven for 37 was against India, said Tendulkar would lose the respect of the Pakistani people.

Tendulkar was not only a champion for India but Pakistan's budding players also looked up to him. Now he is set to lose the reputation of being a gentleman because you don't expect sensible people to talk

mindless things," he said.

Intikhab and Javed both said that India should have the courage to pull out of the tri-nation one-day series in Australia next year.

"But they can't dare do that. The Australian cricket board will hold them by the scruff of their necks," Javed said.



AAQUIB JAVED

Pakistan and India are due to participate in the one-day series besides playing three Tests each against Australia. Pakistan will tour Australia, with the first Test starting in the first week of November.

Meanwhile, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chief executive Majid Khan said the scrapping of the Sahara Cup might not be possible because of television contracts signed by the two countries.

Judge seeks govt help in Pak probe

Eight to call it quits?

KARACHI, July 3 (Reuters/ Internet): The judge investigating charges of betting and match-fixing in Pakistani cricket said on Saturday that he had sought help from the Prime Minister's anti-corruption bureau.

I have asked the Ehtesab (Accountability) Bureau to let me know what information they have collected during the World Cup, I am expecting a reply by Tuesday," Justice Malik Mohammad Qayum told the news agency from Lahore.

His statement coincided with a report in a Lahore newspaper, Jang, that eight of Pakistan's players had decided to retire because of allegations of match-fixing.

The judge said if the documents were made available, he would be in a position to submit his report to President Rafiq Tarar by July 16.

The report is in the final stages. All I need to include is what information they have collected during the World Cup, I am expecting a reply by Tuesday," Justice Malik Mohammad Qayum told the news agency from Lahore.

None of the named players was available to confirm or deny the report.

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