

### Nations Cup Zimbabwe off to good start

ASMAR, July 4: The Eritrean public burst when they lost 1-0 against Zimbabwe here on Sunday in the first of six mini-league matches to decide the final qualifier for the 2000 African Nations' Cup, reports AFP.

Veteran Swiss-based striker Adam Ndlovu scored the winner after 25 minutes before a capacity 10,000 crowd crammed into the National Stadium on a cool, cloudless afternoon in the East African capital.

Defeat was a bitter blow to Eritrean hopes of reaching the biennial finals at the first attempt just 12 months after being admitted to international controlling body FIFA.

The mini-league also includes Senegal and resulted from Zimbabwe losing the right to host the 2000 finals due to inadequate preparations. Ghana and Nigeria will co-host the showcase of African football instead.

Holders Egypt, Algeria, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Congo, Cote d'Ivoire, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Morocco, South Africa, Togo, Tunisia and Zambia have already qualified.

Zimbabwe are the only country among the top 20 African football nations never to play in the tournament and success in the Horn of Africa justified the optimism of Dutch coach Clemens Westerhof that they can win the group.

The winner will not be a contender for goal of the year as a scramble ended with an attempted clearance by Eritrean defender Efreim Tewelde rebounding off Ndlovu and tricking into the net.

Kingstone Rinemhota, Gilbert Mushangazhike and Agent Sawu wasted other good scoring chances for the visitors, who had an inspirational captain in defender Norman Mapeza.

Former Nigeria World Cup coach Westerhof was critical of the bumpy, uneven pitch, saying even a four-wheel drive vehicle would have found it difficult to manoeuvre on it.

Senegal host Eritrea on July 17 followed by two clashes between Zimbabwe and Senegal in early August that should determine who travels to West Africa next year.

### Moscow derby drawn

MOSCOW, July 4: Russian champions Spartak drew 2-2 with Moscow rivals Dynamo on Saturday in a derby played amid tight security at Luzhniki Stadium, reports Reuters.

Hundreds of mounted and riot police kept a close watch on several thousand Spartak supporters after they rampaged at Saturn Ramenskoye two weeks ago.

Dozens of arrests were made before the match but the crowd were kept under control during the game.

League top scorer Andrei Tikhonov put Spartak ahead with a solo effort in the 19th minute, dribbling past two Dynamo defenders and beating keeper Dmitry Kramarenko at the near post for his 11th goal of the season.

The league leaders had several good chances to go further ahead in the second half before Dynamo took advantage of a late sending off and seized two quick goals to snatch the lead.

Konstantin Golovskoi levelled for Dynamo in the 78th minute when he beat Russian international keeper Alexander Filimonov with a perfectly placed shot into the top corner from a 20-metre free kick.

Less than a minute later Rolan Gusev made it 2-1 to Dynamo.

Spartak were reduced to 10 men after defender Dmitry Khestov was sent off for a second yellow card in the 77th minute but they fought back, equalising through Vadim Yevseyev with six minutes left.

Spartak moved 11 points clear at the top of the league after second-placed Lokomotiv Moscow suffered their second straight defeat after a nine-game winning streak.

### Too many foreigners

LONDON, July 4: Professional Footballers' Association chief executive Gordon Taylor claimed here today that the influx of foreign players into English clubs was destroying the game, reports AFP.

And he said that while England may win their bid for the 2006 World Cup there might not be a host team good enough to distinguish itself.

Taylor said he was increasingly dismayed with the influx of foreign players into English football, forcing more out of work and affecting the chances of all the youngsters trying to break through.

The government's decision this week to relax work permit rules for players outside the European Union could now inflame the situation.

## Retirement mystery mounts

LONDON, July 4: Saqlain Mushtaq refused to confirm or deny on Saturday a report in a Pakistan newspaper that he was one of eight cricketers quitting the international side after allegations that Pakistan had 'thrown' the World Cup final against Australia, reports Reuters.

The eight, including skipper, Wasim Akram, pacesman Waqar Younis and veteran Salim Malik, were said to be retiring so that the public could believe their innocence.

Saqlain, 22, was making his first appearance of the season for English county championship leaders Surrey at The Oval.

He showed no sign of the speculation affecting him, taking seven for 38 in Durham's second innings on his way to match figures of 12 for 110, Surrey winning by 226 runs.

After the game Saqlain refused to speak to journalists. But Keith Medlicott, the Surrey coach, said: "When I spoke to him about this story he just laughed. He's young and I think he will have a long international career."

A Lahore newspaper, Jang, said earlier that eight of Pakistan's players had decided to retire because of allegations that the team "threw" the World Cup final and misbehaved off the field.

Pakistan's official APP news agency reported last week that the accountability bureau had said some Pakistan players went overboard in merry-making during the tournament in England.

Jang quoted a bureau official as saying: "The intelligence agencies have presented evidence of indiscipline, lack of co-ordination and planning by the management and the members of the cricket team."

Jang said Saqlain, Wasim, Salim, Moin Khan, Ijaz Ahmad, Waqar Younis, Mushtaq Ahmad and Inzamam-ul-Haq had decided to retire in the wake of the allegations.

The players have decided to retire so that the public can believe their innocence. The decision was taken immediately after the final and is expected to be announced by the skipper shortly, the newspaper said.

Apart from Saqlain, none of the named players was immediately available to confirm or deny the report.

reducing. "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 Qayyum told Reuters from Lahore.

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 the July 8 hearing which I believe is going to be the last. After that, I will not need more than a week to submit my report."

Wasim, Salim and former coach Javed Miandad have been summoned to appear on July 8, as have the kidnappers of Wasim Akram's father. No reason for the 1996 abduction has ever been made public.

But Qayyum said the report would be delayed if the government asked him to investigate charges of match-fixing in the World Cup final.

"The World Cup charges are new. I have already sought clearance from the government if they want me to include the World Cup also."

"Investigating the charges in the World Cup means the repetition of the entire procedure. But if the government thinks that investigations were being delayed and the World Cup work has been done by the Accountability Bureau, I will compile just one report in light of both the investigations," he said.

Wasim, Salim and Ijaz were implicated when match-fixing investigations were carried out by a Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) committee last year.

the crease with Surrey - I've not batted 10 overs. "I've been getting low scores. I've been working hard with Graham Gooch on my batting and working with Mark Ramprakash. That's what he did in Australia and it worked well for me out there."

"I've been working hard in county cricket. But I've got a couple of good balls, and the odd time I've played a bad shot. "I don't see myself as a tailender. I see myself as a bowler who can bat a bit."

Even so, Tudor knows there will still be more work to do

thought I'd be sitting here talking about a match-winning innings? I'm just delighted."

Tudor, though, is no stranger to big scores. Although his previous first-class best was 56, he has scored a couple of second-team hundreds for Surrey as well as centuries for London Schools, batting at number four.

"After I came back from Australia, I had a few sessions at Chelmsford with Graham Gooch," Tudor added, as he chronicled the preparation which has made him one of the most successful tailenders in Test match history.

"Early season it wasn't going my way, but hopefully I can take confidence from this. Graham's a world class batsman and he gave me a few tips."

"He taught me to move my feet. I'm a tall fellow and sometimes I get stuck in my crease. He said 'be a bit nimble, step out to the bowlers. Just go for your shots.'"

Soccer style chants of 'Tudor, Tudor' greeted the big shots today, and he added, "I couldn't believe it. When I was in Australia I couldn't believe I was out there either. It's all about pinching myself - I still feel I'm in a dream."

"When I was young I was an all-rounder. Then I lost it and I was just concentrating on my bowling - but now it's important to have two strings to your bow."

Tudor's day job did not go exactly according to plan on a bowler's wicket, but he still felt he did himself justice with the ball.

"I wasn't disappointed with my bowling - one went down at second slip," he said.

"Andy Caddick and Alan Mullally bowled well. They've got good engines. I thought I bowled reasonably well. I'm learning all the time."

Tudor's father Darrell, meanwhile, felt like his son that a hundred might have been more icing on the cake but that the victory was what was important.

"It was fantastic, absolutely wonderful," he said.

"I have been telling people for years Alex is a good batsman."

"He always played straight and if the bowlers strayed he was always capable of punishing the loose ball. He played some wonderful shots through the covers."

"You have got to think of the win first. You put your country first, don't you?"

"You can't think of (Thorpe) letting Alex get a hundred. I'm sure he'll get one eventually - maybe even at Lord's."

As for New Zealand captain Stephen Fleming, he was left to reflect on a poor session last night that cost his team dear in the final analysis.

"It's fair to say we dominated the match with 100-run lead, which was pretty good spot to be in on a low-scoring wicket," he said.

"But if you have a session where you lose eight for 52 you can't expect to win too many Tests."

Alex Tudor played very well. The bowlers strayed in their length and didn't find the consistency of the first innings. Tudor didn't go after us too much - it's just that we bowled in the areas that suited him.

"Some of the shots we played were reckless, and there is no excuse for them. In Test cricket it's not good enough and it cost us the match."

"We bowled pretty well, and that got us into the game after a streaky 226. But to win Tests you have to give the bowlers runs to bowl at."

"We knew we had to start well, we felt we had a 50-50 chance. We had to settle into a pattern of taking wickets and not giving too much away."

The Kiwis may be one down, but all is not lost as far as Fleming is concerned.

## Tudor toast of England

LONDON, July 4 (Internet report): Superwatchman Alex Tudor thought of England first and a famous century second as he fell one run short of etching his own special place in history but made sure of guiding his team to victory in the first Test at Edgbaston today.

Graham Thorpe offered England's unlikely batting hero the chance to go for the big one by giving him the strike, but Tudor's priority was to bring an extraordinary match to its conclusion.

He did just that, and a 21st four took him to 99 not out from 119 balls as New Zealand were beaten by seven wickets by mid-afternoon on the third day.

Tudor, the son of a Barbados-born former bus driver who now works as a gateman at The Oval, became England highest-scoring nightwatchman, nudging past the 98 scored by Harold Larwood against Australia in Sydney on the infamous 1932/33 tour.

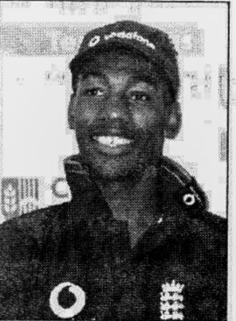
Tudor, 21, said, "Graham came and said he'd try to push a one to get me to the striker's end. But all I wanted to do was win the game. That's the most important thing, and that's what we did."

"He said I'd never get a better chance of a Test hundred. I said maybe that's true. But you never know, cricket is a funny game and hopefully my chance will come again."

For a long period, it looked as if Tudor would join Tony Mann (Australia) and Nasim-ul-Ghani (Pakistan) as the only two nightwatchmen who have scored Test centuries.

Tudor's batting has been improved in one-to-one sessions with England coach Graham Gooch, while extra tuition has come from Mark Ramprakash in Australia last winter and during the practice for this match.

Tudor added, "This season I haven't spent enough time at



ALEX TUDOR

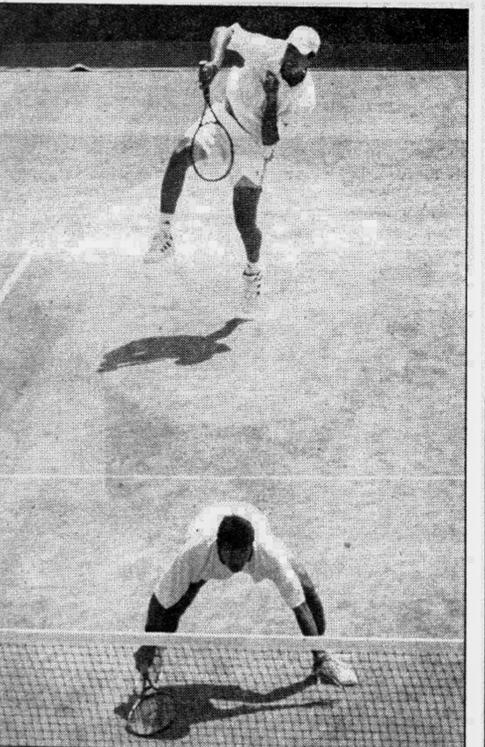
back at The Oval if he is to move up the Surrey batting order.

"Martin Bicknell and Ian Salisbury have been batting well for Surrey recently, so when I go back I'll probably be back at number 10," he said.

"I was just going out there to enjoy it, block the straight balls and throw the kitchen sink at the batsmen."

"They hit the middle of my bat and went for four. Another day I might have got an edge and not been there at all."

"I'm pleased that I was not out and that England won, and Graham Gooch said it was very important for somebody to carry their bat. Who'd have



DURABLE DUO: India's World No 1 doubles pair of Mahesh Bhupathi (serving) and Leander Paes in action during their Wimbledon semi-final against Frenchmen Oliver Delaite and Fabrice Santoro on July 3.

## Steffi uncertain of US Open

BERLIN, July 4: German star Steffi Graf has yet to decide whether she will compete at the US Open, it emerged Sunday, reports AFP.

Graf, who turned 30 earlier this month, has had a superb few weeks, lifting a sixth French Open title and reaching yet another Wimbledon final, in an interview with Die Welt am Sonntag she said she was not sure if she would go to the United States, where she has previously won five titles.

"I don't know if I will be in New York at the end of August into early September. It would be good to go but everything is possible," said Graf, betraying an element of doubt.

Graf's Roland Garros triumph a month ago came after two injury-ravaged years which at one stage threatened to spell a premature end to her sparkling career of 22 Grand Slam titles.

Graf was later Sunday to face American Lindsay Davenport in the Wimbledon final as she bids to add yet another trophy to her huge collection.

The German, who has registered for the Canadian Open in mid-August - the US Open starts a fortnight later - did say she was not thinking of retiring just yet.

"I've asked myself that question less and less given that playing tennis is a source of great pleasure right now. I've really worked my way out of the doldrums," said the former world number one, who will go on a camping holiday in the United States after Wimbledon.

## Graf withdraws from mixed doubles

WIMBLEDON, July 4: Steffi Graf, saving herself for Sunday's Wimbledon final against Lindsay Davenport, pulled out of her mixed doubles semifinal on Saturday with John McEnroe, reports AP.

Wimbledon officials said Graf had a strained muscle in her left thigh.

After her Saturday semifinal win over Mirjana Lucic 6-7, 6-4, 6-3, Graf said she had the thigh wrapped during the match as a "precaution." She said it hadn't hindered her play.

Graf and McEnroe were to have faced Anna Kournikova and Jonas Bjorkman, who now advance to the final.

## WIMBLEDON AT A GLANCE

WIMBLEDON, July 4: A brief look at what happened Saturday on the 12th day of the Wimbledon tennis championships:

**Weather:** Warm and dry, with a mix of sun and clouds. High temperature was 23 Celsius (73 Fahrenheit).

**Attendance:** 29,566, a record for the second Saturday. Last year on the 12th day it was 26,338. The record for the second Saturday was 26,338 in 1998. The total attendance so far is 426,0267, an increase of 29,334 over last year.

**Winners:** Pete Sampras and Andre Agassi advanced to the men's final; Steffi Graf and Lindsay Davenport reached the women's final.

**Stat of the Day:** Lindsay Davenport needed only 47 minutes to beat Alexandra Stevenson 6-1, 6-1.

**Quote of the Day:** "We should see some fireworks out there" - Andre Agassi on his Fourth of July final against Sampras.

## Olympic qualifiers Malaysia finish third

TOKYO, July 4: Malaysia gained sweet revenge for a riot-interrupted match two weeks ago by beating Nepal 3-2 to finish third on the final day of the Asian Group Six qualifying tournament here on Sunday, reports AFP.

In the first leg of the qualifying tournament for the Sydney Olympics held in Hong Kong, two Malaysian players were hospitalised when they were attacked by at least 100 Nepalese fans who invaded the pitch in the dying seconds.

Five Malaysian players were injured, with goalkeeper Megat Ibrahim and goalscorer Mohd Rashid needing hospital treatment after they were punched and kicked when Nepal equalised in the last minute.

Football's world governing body said it considered the game a 1-1 draw shortly before the second leg started in Tokyo.

"Regarding today's game, I thought personally that contrary to what many people had expected, because of what happened in Hong Kong,"

Nepal's German head coach Torsten Spittler also praised the spectators at the National Stadium.

It was a repeat performance when Akmal Rizal Rakhili opened the scoring for Malaysia with a right foot shot in the 23rd minute.

Six minutes later, Bashant Gauchan sent the ball into the Malaysian area, where Nareesh Joshi and Dilli Ram Shrestha combined to lay on a pass for Rajan Raymajhi's equaliser.

Malaysia ended with three wins, two draws and three defeats for 11 points and third place, beating Nepal into fourth place on eight points.

Japan had already secured top place to reach the last Asian qualifying round and join South Korea, China, Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain and Kazakhstan.

draw for the final Asian round. From October 1 to November 15 will be held in Los Angeles on July 8.

## Last Wimbledon waltz

LONDON, July 4: Seven-time champion Steffi Graf announced she would not play at Wimbledon again following her women's singles final defeat by American Lindsay Davenport on Sunday, reports AFP.

The 30-year-old broke the news after losing 6-4, 7-5 to Davenport on Centre Court but refused to reveal whether she was retiring from the game.

"I will not be coming back to Wimbledon as a player," Graf said. "I'm not talking about whether I will play on at the moment."

"I decided before the match, the result would not have made

Open final a month ago. She is two short of Martina Navratilova's record of nine Wimbledon singles crowns, her

last success coming in 1996 when she defeated Spain's Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario in straight sets.

### FACTFILE

LONDON, July 4 (AFP): A brief career history of Steffi Graf, who announced she would not return as a player to Wimbledon after losing in the singles final on Sunday:

**1969:** Born June 14 in Brühl, Germany.  
**1973:** Aged four, starts playing tennis.  
**1982:** October 18 -- turns professional after winning European Championships 12s and 18s. Second youngest player to receive ranking on pro tour at number 124.

**1983:** Loses in opening round of first Grand Slam appearance at Australian Open. Reaches second round of French Open.  
**1984:** Wins first Wimbledon match against American Susan Mascarin 6-4, 5-7, 10-8 before advancing to fourth round where she loses to Britain's Jo Durie 3-6, 6-3, 9-7.

**1985:** Loses in fourth round at Wimbledon, but then reaches semifinal at US Open.  
**1986:** Wins eight singles tournaments, including event at Brighton.  
**1987:** Reaches first Grand Slam final at Roland Garros and beats Martina Navratilova 6-4, 4-6, 8-6. Loses in straight sets in Wimbledon final to Navratilova, who also beats her in US Open final. Becomes world number one for the first time in August.

**1988:** Completes Grand Slam of all four major titles, including her first Wimbledon victory at expense of Navratilova. Wins gold medal at Summer Olympics in Seoul.  
**1989:** Wins Australian and US Opens as well as Wimbledon, but loses to Arantxa Sanchez-Vicario in French Open final.  
**1990:** Wins Australian Open -- her ninth Grand Slam title.

**1991:** Wimbledon is her only major success, as she clinches a marathon tussle with Gabriela Sabatini 8-6 in final set. German tax authorities start to probe her financial affairs.  
**1992:** Loses to Seles in French Open final, but beats same opponent to win Wimbledon.  
**1993:** Only Australian Open slips by as she wins all three other majors.

**1994:** Wins Australian Open, but suffers shock first round exit at Wimbledon at hands of American Lori McNeil -- the first top seed to lose at the first hurdle in the women's event at SW19 (Martina Hingis became the second in 1999).  
**1995:** Captures all three Grand Slams in which she competes -- at French, Wimbledon and US Open. From start of the French, Graf reels off 45 consecutive Grand Slam victories. Father, Peter, is arrested in the wake of lengthy tax investigation.

**1996:** She repeats her 1995 feat, to set a winning streak of reaching 21 consecutive finals. The Wimbledon title was her 100th career singles title.  
**1997:** Competes in only the Australian Open, where she loses in fourth round, and French Open, where she loses in quarterfinal -- both defeats at the hands of South Africa's Amanda Coetzer. Surgery keeps her out of Wimbledon for first time in 11 years.

**1998:** Wins first two tournaments as an unseeded player and quickly regains top 10 ranking. Returns to Grand Slam action at Wimbledon but is beaten in third round by Natasha Zvereva. Has minor surgery on right wrist following fourth round exit at US Open.  
**1999:** Returns to Roland Garros to clinch a memorable victory against Hingis -- her 22nd Grand Slam victory -- before announcing that she would not compete at French Open again.

**July 4:** Beaten in Wimbledon final by Lindsay Davenport in straight sets. After walking off court announces it is her last appearance at the tournament.



Players and officials of Dhaka DSA who clinch the national hockey title. — Star photo

## Swiss Open starts today

GSTAAD, Switzerland, July 4: Briton Greg Rusedski takes his big-serving game to the high altitude of the Swiss Alps as he competes in the 550,000 dollars Swiss Open which gets underway on Monday, reports AFP.

The fourth seed can recover from his fourth-round loss at Wimbledon to Australian Mark Philippoussis by perhaps breaking his serving speed record of 146 kph, set in March, 1998 in the Californian desert.

The clay-court event is set at 1,000 metres, which make the surface feel almost like a hard-court. The thin air contributes to quick ball speed.

Germany's Boris Becker, who did not win a single clay title out of 49 during his career, reached the final in 1998, losing to Alex Corretja.

The 25-year-old Rusedski travelled to the Swiss resort with his girlfriend Lucy, fitness trainer Ken Masuda and can expect to enjoy a relaxed, if contrasting, lifestyle to that of the just-concluded Wimbledon fortnight.

Players are put up in four-star mountain luxury hotel and are offered everything from golf

to hot-air balloon rides by way of entertainment.

Corretja is back as second seed after not playing since the French Open.

The Spaniard opted to rest after suffering with a virus this spring which sapped his strength. He starts against Nicolas Lapentti while Rusedski will face off against another big hitter, Swiss Marc Rosset.

Brazil's Gustavo Kuerten, beaten in the Wimbledon quarter-finals by Andre Agassi, is top seed and opens the first round against Argentine Mariano Panatta.

Former world No. 1 Marcelo Rios of Chile skipped Wimbledon through injury, but will be third seed in the Alps, beginning with a test against Czech Bohdan Ulihrach.

The majority of the field is composed of Latin clay-courtiers, who can play on their preferred surface for much of the ATP Tour year.

The event begins what is known as the "Alpine Circuit," with another event in high-altitude Kitzbuehel, Austria, later in July.

### SEEDS

- 1: Gustavo Kuerten (Bra)
- 2: Alex Corretja (Spa)
- 3: Marcelo Rios (Chi)
- 4: Greg Rusedski (Gbr)
- 5: Felix Mantilla (Spa)
- 6: Francisco Clavet (Spa)
- 7: Mariano Zabaleta (Arg)
- 8: Albert Costa (Spa)

### 2010 World Cup Joint ANZ soccer bid

AUCKLAND, July 4: New Zealand and Australia will make a joint bid for soccer's 2010 World Cup, the Sunday News reported here, says AFP.

It quoted Soccer New Zealand chief executive Bob Patterson who said he had been in talks with his Australian counterparts.

"We're both capable of hosting the World Cup," he said.

New Zealand had the venues capable of holding matches, he said.

"I don't know how many games we would get," Patterson said.

"But there's no doubt we have the venues available in New Zealand."



Akmal Rizal Rakhil (No 9) is the toast of his Malaysian teammates after scoring the winner against Nepal in the Olympic football qualifying match at Tokyo yesterday. — AFP photo