



AN HISTORIC OCCASION: Jubilant New Zealand cricketers celebrate the match-winning boundary by Matthew Bell at Lord's on July 25 against England. This was the 'Black Caps' first victory at the home of cricket. — AFP photo

Atherton's timely knock

LONDON, July 26 (AFP/Reuters): Former England captain Mike Atherton's unbeaten 95 steered Lancashire Lightning to a four-wicket win against Hampshire Hawks on Sunday and gave a timely reminder to the England selectors.

With England captain Nasser Hussain doubtful for the third Test against New Zealand at Old Trafford in two weeks' time because of a broken finger, Atherton could be the man to step in and steady the ship following defeat in the second Test.

Atherton ensured Lancashire's fifth win of the National League season came at Southampton by driving Peter Hartley through the covers for the winning boundary with four balls remaining.

Atherton showed no sign of his injury problems as he watched six teammates come and go before Ian Austin helped him gather the 17 runs needed from the last two overs to condemn Hampshire to their sixth defeat.

Hampshire had only managed a moderate 210 for seven with Ian Austin taking two for 40.

Jacques Kallis' long-awaited Glamorgan Dragons debut produced plenty of fireworks as the records tumbled at Pontypridd. The South African Test all-rounder scored 155 not out as the Welsh side claimed a 71-run win over Surrey Lions in the Second Division.

Kallis' 155 was the highest individual score by any Glamorgan batsman in one-day league cricket-beating Matthew Maynard's 132 which was also against Surrey in 1997 — and Glamorgan's 294 for four was their highest total in league cricket.

Michael Cawdron came from nowhere to blow away Warwickshire Bears and set Gloucestershire Gladiators up for a thrilling First Division win at Cheltenham.

The 24-year-old right-arm took four for 17 in eight overs. Then the Gladiators scrambled past Warwickshire's 198 for eight with one ball to spare and three wickets in hand.

A century stand by Neil Smith and Dominic Ooster had rescued Warwickshire, who at one stage were 66 for four. But Gloucestershire pair Mark Ali Alleyne (49 n.o.) and Jack Russell upped the tempo and Alleyne hit the winning six off Ashley Giles.

Yorkshire Phoenix lost the leadership of the first division when they went down to Kent Spitfires by three wickets at Scarborough.

England's one-day all-rounder Alan Ballham played a key role in a low-scoring match by taking three for 29 with his medium pacers and hitting 34 not out.

Julian Thompson had earlier taken three for 16 in nine overs before Yorkshire were rescued by a stand of 94 from Anthony McGrath and Richard Harden.

Marcus Trescothick's Sunday-best 110 was not enough to preserve Somerset Sabres' 100 per cent record. Trescothick who lashed three sixes and 11 fours, made his runs out of a Somerset total of 218 which Middlesex passed with eight wickets and 5.5 overs in hand.

It was second-placed Somerset's first defeat in eight games in the second division, in which leaders Sussex Sharks also went down for the first time in nine games.

Northamptonshire Steelbacks beat Derbyshire Scorpions by seven runs at Derby but were worried by a twisted ankle suffered by captain Matthew Hayden.

Skipper Jason Gallian and all-rounder Chris Tolley put a firm brake on Sussex Sharks' charge towards promotion by setting up an emphatic victory for Nottinghamshire outlaws.

Former England batsman Gallian struck a fine unbeaten century as Notts posted a respectable 246 for four in perfect batting conditions.

And then Tolley claimed four for 38 as Sussex suffered their first defeat of the campaign.

History inspired Kiwis

LONDON, July 26: Captain Stephen Fleming used New Zealand's poor record against England as a motivating factor in pushing them towards their first-ever Test victory at Lord's yesterday, reports Reuters.

New Zealand's nine-wicket win in the second Test, with a day to spare, was the country's first success at Lord's in 13 Tests, and only their fifth victory against England at any venue in 80 matches.

"Our history is something that's important to us and we've used that as motivation," Fleming said. "In 70 years of Tests we've only (previously) achieved two Test wins in England and one series win. So for us to win at the home of cricket is quite emotional."

Fleming felt the difference between their performance in the first Test at Edgbaston, where they lost by seven wickets, and that at Lord's was that they did not surrender the initiative.

"We kept our foot on their throat," he said. "If we'd had to chase 150 or 200 to win it would have been pretty tasty, so there was a bit of anxiety at the start of the day, but we kept getting wickets at just the right time."

Fleming said his players were astonished when England's last man Phil Tufnell was given out to a catch at slip after the third umpire was given only one angle to study on the television replay.

He said: "They've got 23 cameras and only one shot was used. We probably looked a bit rude walking off but we were so adamant it was out. But there was nothing personal. Phil Tufnell was entitled to stand there. We have some emotional players, but there was no personal abuse of anyone."

The match referee, South African Peter van der Merwe, is expected to remind both teams of the need for restraint when he meets the two captains before the third Test at Old Trafford starting on August 5.

England still do not know

who their captain will be for that game. Nasser Hussain, who broke a finger while fielding on Saturday, assessed his chances of being fit as "50-50".

The England selectors will consider other options at their meeting next Saturday, which include recalling former captain Michael Atherton on his home ground.

Atherton has been suffering from back trouble this season which has restricted his appearances for Lancashire and kept him out of the England reckoning.

Hussain said: "Three things usually take two or three weeks and I don't want to miss any games if at all possible."

Hussain said England would need to improve their batting to win the four-match series, which is now level 1-1.

It was a poor performance, he added. "We were always paying for not putting a good score on the board in the first innings. All credit to New Zealand, but we'll pick ourselves up. Our heads are not going down."

Shocking England upsets Botham

LONDON, July 26 (AP): The much trumpeted re-emergence of English cricket lasted exactly one Test. And now the pundits who talked up the revival are the biggest critics.

After slumping to a nine-wicket loss Sunday, which gave New Zealand their first ever Test victory at Lord's, even Ian Botham — one of English cricket's icons — said he was

all about.

"They played with character and steady determination," Chris Cairns started England's demise by taking six wickets as the Kiwis' makeshift bowling attack skittled England for 186. Inspired by a century from opener Matt Horne, New Zealand replied with 358 for a first-innings lead of 172.

England was bowled out for 229 in their second innings and New Zealand eclipsed the victory target of 59 in 90 minutes.

Sunday for the loss of one wicket.

New Zealand's win at Lord's, following five losses and seven draws in their previous 12 Tests at the ground since 1931, levelled the current four-Test series 1-1.

England, with Nasser Hussain taking over from Alec Stewart as captain and with two rookies in the lineup, won the opening Test at Edgbaston, by seven wickets.

But now the selectors are under extreme pressure to come up with an unbeatable lineup for the third Test starting at Old Trafford on Aug. 5. Some old faces are certain to be recalled.

The major concern is over Hussain, who broke his finger in the field Saturday and couldn't bat in England's second innings. He is expected to miss the third Test, leaving the captaincy up for grabs.

Although Hussain plans to have his say in the next selection meeting.

"It was a poor performance at Lord's — it comes down to individuals and individuals' responsibility," he said.

"Our heads are not going down, we mustn't get too high or too low. When we beat New Zealand we mustn't get too high thinking we've solved all our problems and when we lose we mustn't think it's the end of the world and England are rubbish again."

- LORD'S TRAUMA**
Here's how England have performed in their last 10 Tests at the home of cricket (one win, three draws, six defeats):
- June '92: Two-wicket loss to Pakistan.
 - June '93: 62-run loss to Australia.
 - June '94: Draw vs New Zealand.
 - July '94: 356-run loss to South Africa.
 - June '95: 72-run win over West Indies.
 - July '96: Draw vs India.
 - July '96: 164-run loss to Pakistan.
 - June '97: Draw vs Australia.
 - June '98: 10-wicket loss to South Africa.
 - July '99: Nine-wicket loss to New Zealand.

Cuba, USA top Pan Am table

WINNIPEG, Manitoba, July 26: It's beginning to look like a regular Pan American Games — with the United States and Cuba alone on top of the medals table, reports AP.

Both countries won nine gold medals each and pulled away by themselves in their traditional quadrennial battle for Pan Am supremacy.

Bernard Williams and Johnny Gray led the American charge, with victories in the high-profile 100 and 800 metres in athletics.

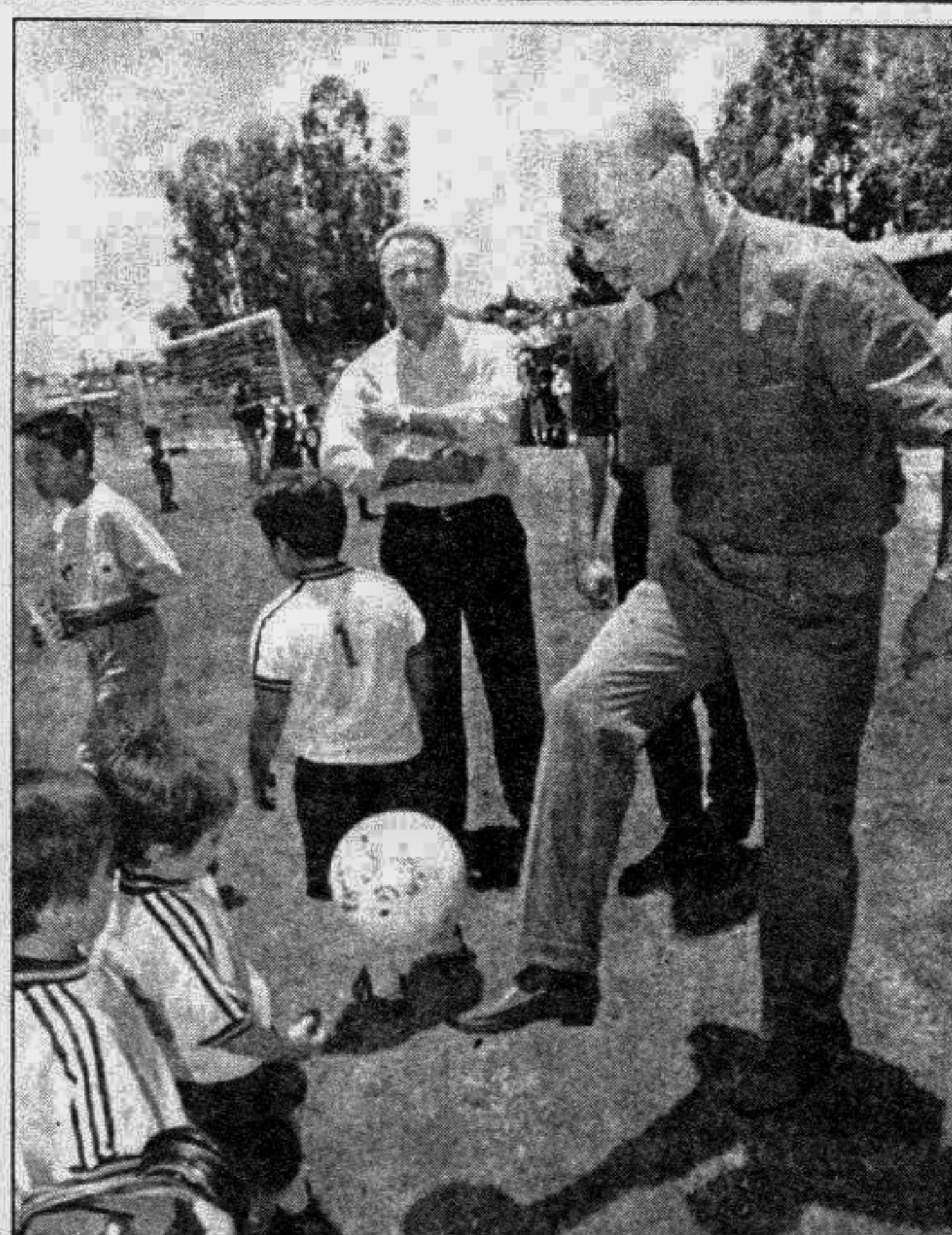
Ivan Pedrosa's victory in the long jump led the way for Cuba, which also took six titles in Greco-Roman wrestling.

Williams ended a 12-year drought for the United States in the Pan Am's premier sprint, winning in 10.08 seconds, only .02 seconds off the Games' record.

But the most exciting event of the evening was the 800, when the 39-year-old Gray outdueled and outlasted a 12-year-younger Norberto Tellez of Cuba to win the 800 by two hundredths of a second in a Games record 1 minute, 45.38 seconds.

"The public dwells in your head that you're too old and you're supposed to believe it," Gray said. "I don't. To have held up the way I did today shows that."

Mexico's women also claimed a pair of golds on the track. Anna Guevara won the 400 in 50.91 and Adriana Fernandez took the 5,000 in 15:56.57.



LEARN FROM THE LEGEND: Soccer idol Franz Beckenbauer showing ball controlling to tiny tots at the "Oasis del Nino" orphanage in Queretaro, Mexico on July 25. Beckenbauer is accompanying the German Confederations' Cup squad. — AFP photo

Players warned over sledging

LONDON, July 26 (Internet report): Match referee Peter Van Der Merwe will speak with captains, coaches and umpires before the third Test against New Zealand at Old Trafford over the use of verbal abuse.

England's batsmen were given plenty of advice by New Zealand's bowlers during the second Test at Lord's Sunday, with close-up camera shots making it especially obvious.

Some players see verbal baiting as part and parcel of the game but Van Der Merwe is not expected to take any further action.

England captain Nasser Hussain said, "TV cameras are picking it up. I have no problem with it. It doesn't affect my batting, it probably spurs me on a little bit, and most of it is said in jest."

"But I think it sets a bad example. It seems to be part of the game and if someone tells the players to stop it then they have got to stop it."

New Zealand skipper Stephen Fleming added, "There was nothing personal."

"We have some emotional players like Dion Nash and Chris Cairns who enter into a gamesmanship type of scenario, but certainly there's no personal abuse at anyone involved."

"I don't kill the emotion and I don't want to be heavy-handed on anyone showing emotion."

Donald, Kirsten allowed a break

JOHANNESBURG, July 26 (AFP): Top South African cricketers Allan Donald and Gary Kirsten have been excused from the quadrangular limited-overs cricket tournament in Nairobi at the end of September, the United Cricket Board (UCB) said Monday.

Donald has been granted leave of absence to wrap up his benefit season at Warwickshire and Kirsten to enjoy his honeymoon, the SAPA news agency reported here.

Their absence and the following triangular series against England and Zimbabwe in South Africa will allow selectors "ample opportunity to look at a few of our fringe players," UCB managing director Ali Bacher said.

South African sporting codes, especially cricket and rugby, have been criticised for not including more black players in national squads and have pledged to promote strive for racial balance in their selection.

The UCB on Monday introduced its new six-man selection panel which includes South Africa's first black cricket selector, Gerald Majola, from the Eastern Province.

Majola joins cricketers stalwart Kepler Wessels, Rushdie Magiet, Clive Rice, Morris Gardia and Mike Procter. The convenor has still to be appointed.

Brunskina brilliant

ISTANBUL, July 26: Olga Brunskina completed a synchronised swimming treble yesterday and a second pair of long-distance and diving victories enabled Russia to sweep all three titles for the second consecutive day at the European swimming Championships, reports Reuters.

Brunskina made it three golds in three days when she led the Russian team to victory in the synchro team event after winning the solo on Friday and retaining the duet title with Maria Kisseleva on Saturday.

This came as no great surprise — the former Soviet Union and Russia have won every European synchro title in the 1990s.

The Russians ended the day with seven of the eight golds contested in the first four days of the Championships, with Vera Ilyina taking the women's three-metre springboard and Olga Guseva the women's 25-kms open-water race on Sunday, 24 hours after Dmitry Sautin had won the men's platform diving.

Blanco blow for Saudis



MEXICO CITY, July 26: Cuauhtemoc Blanco scored four goals as host nations Mexico whipped Saudi Arabia 5-1 to take a firm grip of group A. Earlier Egypt had held Bolivia 2-2 in the opening match of the group in the Confederations Cup here Sunday, reports AFP.

MEXICO-SAUDI ARABIA

Blanco was the star in a game in which he had promised at least one goal to his son, Cuauhtemoc Jr, who celebrated his birthday on Sunday.

It only took Blanco, hugely impressive in the recent Copa America, 10 minutes to make the breakthrough, beating Saudi keeper Mohammad Al Deayea with ease with not a defender in sight.

Just eight minutes later Jose Manuel Abundis took a corner and an unmarked Blanco rose to bury a header in the Saudi net.

The host nation killed the match as a competitive event after 21 minutes with Abundis again taking advantage of a reticent Saudi defence running forward before picking his spot and scoring with a long-range effort.

After 62 minutes Hamzah Falata finally gave the Saudis reason to be cheerful winning a penalty which was duly converted by Nawaf Al Temyat.

But it did not take long for the Mexicans to reestablish that three-goal margin and a Rafael Garcia freekick after 67 minutes again found the head of Blanco, who once more made no mistake.

That brought cries of "cinco" (five) from the partisan 80,000 Mexican crowd and 10 minutes later their wish would be granted.

Once again it was courtesy of Blanco's head although on this occasion it was substitute Jesus Arellano who was the provider with a cross from the right byline.

There were no more goals with Mexico easing up in the later stages but the team was greeted with a standing ovation — and of course the famous Mexican wave — at the end of proceedings.

It was a hugely impressive performance from Mexico who finished third in the recent Copa America and puts them top of what is the easier of the two groups.

Qualification already looks a formality with only matches with Bolivia and Egypt to come.

"Our crowd deserved satisfaction. We did not play a good game but but we played to win," said Mexican coach Manuel La-puente. "It was a well fought game but we knew how to handle it."

BOLIVIA - EGYPT

It was Egypt who took the lead after only seven minutes.

Abdelsatar Sabry worked a fine one-two before rounding goalkeeper Jose Carlo Fernandez and giving the Africans an early lead.

But after 20 minutes the Bolivians squared the match when Limberg Gutierrez equalised with a brilliantly worked freekick fooling Essam El-Hadary in the Egyptian goal.

The south Americans, eliminated in the group stages of the Copa America earlier this month, then took control, eventually seizing the lead five minutes before the interval.

It was Reny Ribera who made the breakthrough with a shot from the right edge of the penalty area.

But Egypt levelled the score after 62 minutes with what proved to be the last goal of the match when Yasser Radwan struck a left-footed shot from 30 metres.

Bolivia boss Hector Veira introduced Marco Etcheverry for Gutierrez with 20 minutes remaining but the talented midfielder was unable to conjure up a winner for the Latin Americans.

STANDINGS

Group points tables in Confederations Cup after games played on Sunday

Group A									
Team	P	W	D	L	G	A	P	G	A
Mexico	1	1	0	0	5	1	3		
Bolivia	1	0	1	0	2	2	1		
Egypt	1	0	1	0	2	2	1		
Saudi Arabia	1	0	0	1	1	5	0		
Group B									
Brazil	1	1	0	0	4	0	3		
United States	1	1	0	0	2	1	3		
New Zealand	1	0	0	1	1	2	0		
Germany	1	0	0	1	0	4	0		



BEAUTIFUL BLANCO: Ace Mexican striker Cuauhtemoc Blanco (R) is ecstatic after scoring his fourth goal against Saudi Arabia in the Confederations' Cup at Mexico City on July 25. — AFP photo

Hussain wants his say

LONDON, July 26 (Internet report): Nasser Hussain today flexed his muscles as England's captain to insist he has a major say in the selection for the next Test squad, even if he is not involved as a player.

Hussain's fractured right middle finger, sustained during fielding on the third day of England's nine wicket second Test defeat at Lord's, is likely to sideline him for the next meeting with New Zealand at Old Trafford on August 5.

But he intends the line-up to be very much his choice when he sits down with fellow selectors David Graveney, Mike Gatting and Graham Gooch next weekend for what is expected to be a longer than usual meeting following the disappointment of Lord's.

"I will have as much say as I can with this next Test side," stressed Hussain, who plans to be with the team in Manchester even if he fails to recover in time to take his place.

"It was a poor performance at Lord's and it's one thing me going in and saying things, but all it is words. It comes down to individuals and individuals' responsibility for batting for long periods of time."

"I know they are good players who have done it in the past. They can do it again, it's just making sure they're in the right mental state and have the right preparation and that's got to come down to the individual all the way down."

Hussain's frustration as he watched from the pavilion balcony was obvious as England, resuming on the fourth day still 65 behind on 107 for four, finally discovered determina-

tion, application and resolve to frustrate the New Zealanders and stave off the possibility of an innings' defeat.

Andy Caddick hit a Test best 45 while Chris Read weighed in with a composed 37 in a 78-run seventh wicket partnership which propelled England to a second innings total of 229 and a slender lead of 57.

It was not enough to give the tourists the jitters, who com-

plained.

"Our heads are not going down, we mustn't get too high or too low. When we beat New Zealand we mustn't get too high thinking we've solved all our problems and when we lose we mustn't think it's the end of the world and England are rubbish again."

"It's going to be a gradual task to get better, but I will sit down with the selectors and go through each individual and see if by bringing someone else in we will make the side stronger."

Hussain also wants a say in his successor, if one is needed, as captain at Old Trafford, stressing, "I don't believe someone who hasn't played Test cricket or very little Test cricket should come in and be captain."

"The bottom line with any captain is that they must score runs or take wickets or whatever they do because that is what leads. That is why Graham Gooch was a good captain and when Michael Atherton got 185 at Johannesburg that was him leading by example."

"The person who comes in and does it must be someone the players look up to and respect and that's why I left Graham Thorpe in charge when I went off — I'd like us to pick 11 players and then see who is going to captain from that."

He added, "I know it sounds strange, but I don't think a loss at this stage of my captaincy will do any harm at all — all it shows is that there is a lot of work to do."

"When you keep winning you think everything's rosy, but there are still areas we must improve on and we'll be looking at that and discussing it as selectors and getting our minds right as to how to improve those areas."

— AFP photo

Kaiser, Blatter's choice



BERLIN, July 26: FIFA president Joseph Blatter, although a long way off retirement, made public the man he wants to see take over the top job in football — Kaiser Franz Beckenbauer, reports AFP.

"He can move mountains," was Blatter's appraisal of Bayern Munich president Beckenbauer's capabilities.

Franz loves football. He takes as much enjoyment out of a minor game as a big match. I don't think there are many people in this world with his aura, his charisma," added the Swiss soccer supremo.

Blatter, in an interview with German daily Die Welt, made clear that despite his backing for Beckenbauer he has no intention of vacating the post he took over last year.

"I've always considered that the FIFA president should serve a maximum of two terms. That goes for me too. So my presidency will last a maximum of another seven years when I'll be 70."

Blatter reiterated his backing for Africa as hosts for the 2006 World Cup.

"I've nothing against a World Cup in Germany. But I think that in the case of building solidarity between peoples the Cup should now go to Africa for the first time."

Countries lined up against South Africa and Germany to stage the 2006 Cup are England, Morocco and Brazil, with a decision due by FIFA in March next year.

Blatter has had something of a baptism of fire in his first year as FIFA boss since his controversial election last summer, having to deal with a protest at this month's FIFA congress in Los Angeles by the Asian delegation, the 2002 World Cup hosts upset at the number of places they have been given.

A furious Blatter, caught unaware, is mulling over what action to take after the Asian football federation members staged an embarrassing walk out.

"It's a disgrace," he said

Asian protest. "FIFA as an institution cannot give in to this kind of pressure. If we do that, we will die as an institution. It is an unhappy event. More than that, shameful," he added.

DC Gold Cup soccer

MANIKGANJ, July 26: The Dhaka Divisional Commissioner's Gold Cup football tournament began yesterday at Shaheed Miraj-Tapan Stadium, reports BSS.

The Deputy Commissioner, Manikganj inaugurated the tournament.

A total of six teams from six districts — Dhaka, Narayanganj, Gazipur, Narsingdi, Munshiganj and Manikganj — are taking part in the tournament.

Dhaka District Eleven defeated Munshiganj District Eleven 1-0 goal in the inaugural match.