

### Kiwis warm up with easy win

LONDON, Aug 2 (AFP): New Zealand warmed up for the third cricket Test against England at Old Trafford with a nine-wicket victory over Leicestershire at Grace Road on Sunday.

They won inside three days as captain Stephen Fleming and Craig McMillan shared an unbroken second-wicket stand of 170 to take the Kiwis to the victory target of 199.

Fleming finished on 82 not out while McMillan scored his 85 off 125 deliveries.

Leicestershire failed to add to their overnight second-innings score of 333 for nine, left-arm seamer Shayne O'Connor bowling James Ormond with the second ball of his first over to give him figures of six for 65.

The four-Test series with England stands at 1-1, with New Zealand levelling at Lord's last month. The Old Trafford Test starts on Thursday.

### SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard on the third day of a four-day tour match between Leicestershire and New Zealand on Sunday:

**LEICESTERSHIRE:** First innings 125 all out (A Penn 6-51)

**NEW ZEALAND:** First innings 260 all out (D Vettori 112, A Penn 69 not out; J Ormond 5-63)

**LEICESTERSHIRE:** Second innings (Overnight 333-9)

D Stevens lbw b O'Connor 9

D Maddy lbw b O'Connor 38

I Sutcliffe b O'Connor 0

B Smith c Walker b O'Connor 37

A Habib c Croy b O'Connor 4

V Wells c Croy b Vettori 101

P Nixon lbw b Penn 99

J Dakin c Bell b Vettori 18

S Boswell b Penn 0

M Brimston not out 2

J Ormond b O'Connor 1

Extras (w-3, nb-10, lb-4, b-7) 23

Total (fall out) 333

Fall of wickets: 1-17; 2-21; 3-60; 4-70; 5-107; 6-270; 7-329; 8-329; 9-329.

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Allott	18	1	98	0
O'Connor	24.2	10	65	6
Penn	16	3	64	2
Astle	10	4	16	0
Vettori	24	10	54	2
Harris	7	1	25	0

**NEW ZEALAND:** Second innings

M Bell lbw b Brimston 14

S Fleming not out 82

C McMillan not out 85

Extras (w-1, nb-10, lb-8, b-2) 21

Total (For one wicket) 202

Fall of wicket: 1-32

Did not bat: N Astle; C Harris; D. Vettori; M Croy; B Walker; A Penn; S O'Connor; G. Allott

Bowler	O	M	R	W
Ormond	12	2	35	0
Boswell	10	2	48	1
Brimston	13	4	41	1
Dakin	9	0	43	0
Maddy	4	0	19	0
Stevens	1.1	0	6	0

Result: New Zealand won by nine wickets.

### Yugoslavs denied Dutch visas

EINDHOVEN, Netherlands, Aug 2: Players representing the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia have been refused visas for the 45th World Table Tennis Championships beginning here Monday, reports AFP.

The Dutch foreign ministry said that without valid visas the Yugoslav team could not enter the country.

### This razakarism must stop

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dressing room at lunch, but Aminul Islam must have said, 'We have a score to defend. Come on boys! And did they come on well!'

Despite laudatory cries from the commentary box that Inzamam was 'standing tall', and of Salim Malik's 'nice stroke', Azhar Mehmood's 'nice drive', Wasim's 'lovely' and 'beautifully-timed shot' as well as 'lovely positioning of the feet', Bangladesh reigned supreme on the day.

To observations by television commentators of 'what a great piece of fielding' and 'splendid example by captain', were added Mehrab's 'good catch' to dismiss Moin Khan. Rafiq had 'kept his nerve and was rewarded' against Waqar, who tried to find room, not to try and lose the match but to win it for Pakistan.

'A terrific effort' by Bangladesh culminated into a 'historical victory' that 'reputable commentators dubbed as a great moment for Bangladesh'.

It is an insult to our valiant players that some at home have been trying to fuel up this propaganda that Pakistan had been bribed. Laughable! Not the least! Derogatory and outrageous? Yes!

Over 250 foreign cricket correspondents that this scribe came across in the UK after we beat Pakistan, no one even suggested that the match was 'fixed'. On the contrary, there was a report in the Times that the day was not far when Bangladesh would defeat England in a Test match at Lord's. The Mirror correspondent asked me at the Aussie-South Africa semi-final, 'How many of your players will be playing County cricket?' We had been inundated with 'you have done well' and 'what a great performance' on the street, at Lord's and match venues, in shopping malls and on trains and buses. Shall we have to believe that those people, some with thirty years of cricket correspondence behind them, do not understand when a match is fixed and some razakar in Dhaka does?

If anyone can provide any evidence of any nature and any manner that the Bangladesh-Pakistan match at Northampton was 'rigged', the matter may be considered for discussion. Otherwise, please keep your mouth shut. You don't even deserve to speak in Bangla.



FLYING HIGHER AND HIGHER: An ecstatic Ronaldinho celebrates one of his three goals against Saudi Arabia in their Confederations' Cup semifinal at Mexico City on August 1. — AFP photo

### Blanco takes Mexico to final

## Brazil clobber Saudis



GUADALAJARA, Mexico, Aug 2: Brazil waltzed by a game Saudi Arabia with an eight-goal onslaught, while Mexico needed a golden goal in extra time to defeat the United States in semifinal matches yesterday in soccer's Confederation Cup, reports Reuters.

With the results, Brazil will face host Mexico in Mexico City's Azteca Stadium on Wednesday in the final of the eight country FIFA tournament.

### BRAZIL SAUDI ARABIA

"It will be very difficult in Azteca Stadium," Brazil coach Wanderley Luxemburgo said after yesterday's match.

Reigning Cup champions Brazil secured a birth in the final with an 8-2 rout over the Saudis.

Brazil appeared to be coasting to victory with two goals in the opening 11 minutes, from defender Joao Carlos and 19-year-old Ronaldo Assis, his international stature growing with each match.

But Marzouk al Otaibi, the four-goal hero in the 5-1 victory over Egypt, led a spirited first-half fightback by Saudi Arabia with two goals in nine minutes.

Brazilian goalkeeper Dida had not conceded a goal for 530 minutes of international football prior to Sunday's semifinal but had little chance against al Otaibi's opportunistic goals clinically finished at the 22nd and 31st minutes.

However, Brazil, who beat Saudi Arabia 3-0 in the 1997 tournament, retained their composure with a quick reply through Ze Roberto two minutes later.

Three minutes later, in the 36th minute, Alex struck his third goal of the tournament, heading in a cross from Ze Roberto.

As Guadalajara's Jalisco Stadium was struck by a sec-

ond-half torrential downpour, the Brazilian goal floodgates stayed open.

Substitute Roni added a fifth goal, Ronaldinho as the new forward sensation is popularly known, sliding in for his second.

Alex then added his second before Ronaldinho fittingly completed his hat-trick with a solo effort to close the Brazilian scoring on the stroke of full-time.

### SQUADS

**Brazil:** 1-Dida, 2-Evanilson (5-Flavio Conceicao 16th min), 3-Odvan, 4-Joao Carlos, 6-Serginho, 7-Ronaldo Assis, 8-Emerson (17-Beto 72nd min), 9-Christian (19-Warley 46th min), 10-Alex, 11-Ze Roberto, 20-Vampeta

**Saudi Arabia:** 1-Mohammed al Deayea, 3-Mohammed al Khilawi, 4-Abdullah Zubromawi (8-Mohammed Hawsawi 64th min), 5-Saleh al Dawod, 6-

### Cure for a bruised ego

LONDON, Aug 2: The only female soccer agent accredited by the sports world governing body, FIFA, began a court battle on Monday against England's players' association because she was banned from its annual awards dinner, reports AP.

Rachel Anderson started legal action in a London Court to claim damages from the Professional Footballers' Association for breaches of the Sex Discrimination Act and "injury to feelings".

Anderson, Britain's only female agent, was invited to the 1998 dinner by her client, West Ham defender Julian Dicks, but was refused permission to attend when she attempted to confirm the invitation with the PFA.

Her lawyer said PFA chairman Gordon Taylor wrote back to the 41-year-old agent saying the dinner was for men only and it would be unacceptable to change the policy.

"I hope you will not take offense at this but the same position applies to all females whether they are connected to football or related to players," Taylor reportedly wrote in reply to Anderson's request.

**Mexico:** 1-Jorge Campos, 2-Claudio Suarez, 4-Rafael Marquez, 5-Gerardo Torrado (19-Miguel Zepeda 58th min), 6-German Villa, 7-Romon Ramirez (16-Jesus Arellano 72nd min), 9-Jose Manuel Abundis, 10-Cuauhtemoc Blanco, 13-Pavel Pardo, 14-Isaac Terrazas (17-Francisco Palencia 46th min), 18-Salvador Carmona

**United States:** 18-Kasey Keller, 2-Frankie Hejduk, 3-Gregg Berhalter, 4-Robin Fraser, 6-John Harkes, 8-Ernie Stewart, 10-Jovan Kirovski, 12-Jeff Agoos, 13-Cobi Jones, 15-Richie Williams, 20-Brian McBride

Attendance: 70,000



Mexico's prolific striker Cuauhtemoc Blanco is elated after scoring the 'golden goal' in the Confederations' Cup semifinal against the USA at Mexico City on August 1. — AFP photo

### FA to probe into Fergie's claim

LONDON, Aug 2: The Football Association are to investigate Sir Alex Ferguson's claims that he was offered a 40,000 pounds bribe, reports AFP.

The Manchester United boss reveals in his autobiography, *Managing My Life*, that he was handed the money in a parcel by Grigory Essaulenko, who was the Russian agent of Andrei Kanchelskis, in 1994.

Sir Alex notified United straight away and the money lay in the club safe for nearly a year before he handed it back to Essaulenko.

The FA are not questioning Sir Alex's conduct in the affair, but they would like to hear the full story from him.

Lancaster Gate's compliance officer, Graham Bean, will speak to Sir Alex and pass the details on to FIFA, who have the authority to act because Essaulenko would have been licensed by them.

FA spokesman Adrian Bevington said: "This is a matter for FIFA. However, our compliance officer, Graham Bean, will be contacting Sir Alex Ferguson to request the full facts surrounding this issue."

"Once the facts have been established, we will pass on all the information to FIFA. They will probably wish to carry out an investigation into this agent."

FIFA are waiting for the FA's report into the affair before making any official comment.

A spokesman said: "At the moment everything is happening in the media, and we do not wish to make any official statement until we receive further information from the FA."

The matter is complicated by the fact that FIFA only began to license agents a year after Essaulenko offered the money to Ferguson.

Although agents were active before then, in FIFA's eyes they did not officially exist.

FIFA licensed agents in 1995 in an attempt to limit and regulate their activities.

The FIFA spokesman also confirmed that Essaulenko is not on the current list of FIFA-licensed agents.

## Sir Alex bares his soul



LONDON, Aug 2 (AFP/AP): Sir Alex Ferguson spoke today of the night he opened up a parcel-wrapped gift from a Russian agent to discover it contained 40,000 pounds in cash.

The shocked Manchester United boss immediately returned the 'bung' — over the transfer of Andrei Kanchelskis to Everton — only to find he had inadvertently jeopardised the safety of his chairman Martin Edwards who then suffered alleged death threats from Russia.

Everton and Kanchelskis had no knowledge of the inducement, which Ferguson says came from the player's agent Grigory Essaulenko.

"It was after we had been playing at Nottingham Forest, and I got home at 12 am."

"Grigory had said to me: 'I have a gift for you and I am flying out in the morning,' Ferguson remembered.

"He gave me a big parcel and said this is for you and your wife."

"I thought it was a samovar (tea urn) or something. But when I got home and my wife opened it, it was 40,000 pounds. I just thought why on earth is he giving me this."

Ferguson, speaking to the Radio 4 Today programme on the day the serialisation of his autobiography *Managing My Life* began in *The Sun* and *The Times*, also spoke of the subsequent death threats against Edwards allegedly emanating from Essaulenko.

"Grigory came over to talk about Andrei moving from Manchester United."

"I do not think Andrei knew what was going on at all. But Grigory made it quite clear to me that Andrei had to go — or the chairman would suffer the consequences."

Before long, tempers were lost as Grigory demanded that Andrei be transferred.

The angry exchanges came to a climax when Grigory screamed at the chairman "if

you don't transfer him now, you will not be around much longer."

There was no doubting the seriousness of the threat. The meeting ended shortly afterwards, much to our relief."

Kanchelskis's transfers are far from the only controversies Ferguson has been speaking about.

He said he was also told by an Italian agent interested in taking Ryan Giggs into the *Serie A* that he and his three sons would "Never have to work" if he could arrange Giggs's transfer.

The English FA on Monday said it would investigate the claims of impropriety by agents.

Ferguson, who was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II last month for his service to soccer, said that he was victimised by

officials at Glasgow Rangers when he went there as a player because he married a Roman Catholic.

Secularism has always polarised soccer supporters in Glasgow, where Protestants

traditionally support Rangers and Roman Catholics support Old Firm rival Celtic.

The 57-year-old Scot launched a scathing attack on former Rangers official Willie Allison, who he described as a "dangerous and despicable" sectarian.

"What I sensed coming from Willie Allison, who was in charge of Rangers' PR and who had an alarming influence on the club's elderly chairman John Lawrence, was nothing less than poisonous hostility," Ferguson said.

Allison was a religious bigot of the deepest eye.

"I had a Protestant upbringing, but my wife Cathy is Catholic and so were my mother's family."

Ferguson also writes about his star midfielder David Beckham.

Beckham was villanised when he was sent off against Argentina in the 1998 World Cup. But his recent marriage to Victoria Adams of the pop group the Spice Girls, and Manchester United's success last season has converted him into a hero in the British press.

The Treble-winning manager insisted he will not be signing a new contract at United after his current three-year deal runs out.

He had much to say too about the FA Cup wrangle United have found themselves in, after pulling out of the oldest knockout competition in the world in order to play in next January's inaugural World Club Championship — reportedly at the behest of the British Government, anxious to keep the bid to host the 2006 World Cup on track.

Messages from on high have been quite different since Kate Hoey replaced Tony Banks as Sports Minister, and Ferguson said: "the decision on who is having the World Cup will be next July. Then we will see the importance of our decision."

"If we do not get it we will feel that it was a waste of time doing what we did for the sake of England's World Cup bid."

### Grasshoppers get Hodgson

ZURICH, Aug 2 (Reuters): Englishman Roy Hodgson is expected to be named as coach of Grasshoppers after the Swiss club sacked Roger Hegi today, Swiss radio reported.

Grasshoppers called a press conference for 1500 GMT today where, according to the radio reports, they will announce Hodgson's recruitment.

It will mark the third tour of duty in Switzerland for Hodgson, who is still regarded as a hero in the alpine nation for taking the country to the 1994 World Cup finals in the United States and the 1996 European championship finals in England. He also coached Neuchatel Xamax from 1990-1992.

Hodgson, who turns 52 next Monday, has been unemployed since being sacked by English Premier league side Blackburn Rovers last November and a brief four game stint with Inter Milan.

He has been linked with several coaching vacancies and was Soccer Australia's leading candidate to take over from Terry Venables.

The multi-lingual Englishman built his reputation in Sweden where he led Malmo to five consecutive league titles before heading to Switzerland.

His success with Swiss national side persuaded Inter Milan to offer him one of the biggest club jobs in world soccer.

He coached the *Serie A* outfit from 1995-1997 and took them to the UEFA Cup final in 1997.

### Mubarak upset

CAIRO, Aug 2: President Hosni Mubarak on Monday ordered an urgent report into the defeat of Egypt's national soccer team in Mexico, saying those found responsible would be punished, reports AFP.

The team arrived home early Monday amid tight security after its 5-1 defeat by Saudi Arabia in the FIFA Confederations Cup in Mexico City on Thursday, which outraged Egyptians and left two dead from a "surge in blood pressure."

Mubarak asked Prime Minister Kamal al-Ganzuri for an "urgent report" with "all the details and reasons for the mediocre performance," as he planned "to punish those responsible," the government newspaper Al-Ahram reported.

The president had greeted the team from the plane after it won the African Nations Cup in 1998, but only riot police and security forces were at Cairo airport overnight Sunday to protect them from the public.

But an angry crowd never materialized.

With their eyes to the ground, the players and coaches walked through customs where officials searched their bags carefully.

The team's trainer Fathi Mabruk accused the referee of bias toward the Saudis.

"If three of the Saudis had been sent off, as was the case for Egypt, the score would have been 10 to 0 for Egypt," he told reporters.

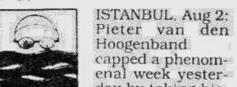
The defeat stunned the millions of Egyptians who followed the match on television in their homes or at open-air cafes, hotels and outside storefronts.

A retired man and a worker died in the Mediterranean city of Alexandria following "a sudden surge in blood pressure due to their anger over the team's defeat," the government daily Al-Ahram reported.



END OF THE ROAD: Disappointed USA players trying to come to terms with their 'golden goal' defeat in the Confederations' Cup semifinal. — AFP photo

## Dutchman equals Euro best



ISTANBUL, Aug 2: Pieter van den Hoogenband capped a phenomenal week yesterday by taking his tally of European swimming titles to a record-equaling six, reports Reuters.

The Dutchman added two more to his collection on the last day of the 11-day championships. He anchored his team to a rousing 4x100 medley relay victory after inflicting a second big defeat on Russia's Olympic champion Alexander Popov.

He was denied an unprecedented seven European crowns in one championships only because a teammate got the Dutch 4x200 metres freestyle team disqualified on Saturday. Van den Hoogenband had led them home five seconds faster than their nearest rival.

He joined Germans Michael Gross and Franziska van Almsick in a six-gold European haul. Gross achieved the feat in Sofia in 1985 and Van Almsick in Sheffield, England, in 1993.

Germany ended top of the medals table with 12 titles to Russia's 11. Sandra Voelker hoisted them to first place with a world record 50 metres backstroke victory.

Having handed Popov his first major championship 100 metres freestyle defeat last Wednesday, Van den Hoogenband took charge from the start in Sunday's 50 freestyle final and ripped home in a championship record 22.06 seconds.

Popov, who lost his world 50 freestyle title to American Bill Pilczuk in 1998, could manage Martin Zaidweg had moved on the block before the start.

In Sunday's medley relay, Van den Hoogenband took over on the final freestyle leg with the Dutch in fourth place, 1.53 second behind Germany.

Van den Hoogenband had swept into second place at the turn, having cut the gap to 0.60, and hurled past Christian Troeger on the final length. Once again he swam the fastest relay split in history, clocking an astonishing 47.20 to surpass the 47.31 he was in Monday's freestyle relay.

The Dutch won in three minutes 39.52 seconds, with Germany second in 3:40.15 and Russia, anchored by Popov who swam 48.68, and Sweden equal third in 3:41.18.

Van den Hoogenband's astounding feats inevitably overshadowed all else in a hectic last session of eight swimming finals.

Voelker broke her own 50 backstroke world mark to win her second individual gold medal in three days. She clocked 28.71 seconds to better the 28.78 she posted in Monaco in June.

"I don't know myself where I got the power from for this world record. It's the seventh day of the championships and all the races seemed to have drained me," said Voelker.

Inge de Bruijn of the Netherlands and 17-year-old Camelia Potec of Romania also completed Istanbul doubles.

De Bruijn sped to victory in the women's 50 freestyle but was disappointed not to break the European record she set in Saturday's semifinals.

Pieter van den Hoogenband of the Netherlands is jubilant after winning the gold in the 50 metres freestyle of the European Swimming Championships at Istanbul yesterday.

— AFP photo