

Sachin may go to Australia for treatment

MUMBAI, Sept 1: Indian skipper Sachin Tendulkar is likely to go to Australia straight after the conclusion of the three-match limited-over series against the West Indies at Toronto on September 14. Mumbai cricket association sources revealed here yesterday, reports PTI.

"Shane Warne (the great Aussie leg-spinner) has suggested to Tendulkar to consult a specialist in Australia for his recurring back problem and he (Tendulkar) seems to be giving thought to the idea," the sources said.

The back problem has not been completely diagnosed yet but several clinical tests done by doctors including magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) has not revealed anything adverse, cricket board secretary, Jayant Lele, had informed reporters in Colombo on Monday.

Earlier reports that the back pain experienced by the master batsman was due to his using a heavy bat was purely speculative and nothing conclusive has yet been established, Lele had said.

The board secretary had also revealed that Tendulkar had experienced back stiffness during India's World Cup campaign in England which made it difficult to conclude that the problem arose due to excessive humidity in Colombo.

Gilchrist named Aussie A skipper

SYDNEY, Sept 1: Limited-over batsman-wicketkeeper international Adam Gilchrist was Wednesday named as captain of an Australian A cricket team for a five-game, one-day series against India A at Woodley Park in Los Angeles from September 15-21, reports AFP.

The team, coached by former Test captain Allan Border, contains three players — Gilchrist, Damien Martyn and Andre Symonds — from the Australian team which Tuesday completed the limited-overs series in Sri Lanka.

It will be the first time an official Australian team has played in the US since 1990.

Australia A: Adam Gilchrist (captain), Damien Martyn, Ryan Campbell, Brendan Creevey, Michael Di Venuto, Lea Hansen, Brad Hodge, Brett Lee, Shane Lee, Scott Muller, Corey Richards, Andrew Symonds, Brad Young.

Coach: Allan Border.

Div II hockey

Combined Sporting Club beat Tejgaon Agragami 3-1 in a super league match of the Green Delta Metropoli Second Division Hockey at the Moulaan Bhasan National Hockey Stadium yesterday, reports UNB.

Mohammed Shanto, Mamun Rashid and skipper Masud Haider scored one each for the winners, which dominated the first half by a lone goal while Asif Ahmed netted the consolation goal for the losers.

The day's other match between Mukta Bihanga Tarun Sangha and Uttara Hockey Club was abandoned after a play of eleven minutes at the same venue, as Uttara Hockey Club failed to field required players for continuing the match.

McGrath signs for Worcester

LONDON, Sept 1: Pace spearhead Glenn McGrath will replace Australian team-mate Tom Moody at Worcester in the English county league next season after signing a two-year deal, Worcester announced Wednesday, reports AFP.

McGrath opted for Worcester ahead of several offers from other countries while on World Cup duty in England.

In doing so he has bucked the trend of Australian batsmen but not bowlers turning out for English counties as the Australian Cricket Board has generally opposed moves by bowlers for fear they will suffer fatigue playing all year round.

McGrath argues that he will benefit by staying in peak condition throughout the year.

Lankans lift

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tralia tried to battle it out and only some lofted hits by tailenders Shane Warne and Jason Gillespie ensured they crossed the 200-mark.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard of the day-night final in the Aiwa Cup tri-nation tournament between Australia and Sri Lanka at the R Premadasa Stadium on Tuesday:

AUSTRALIA : 202 all out in 50 overs.

SRI LANKA :

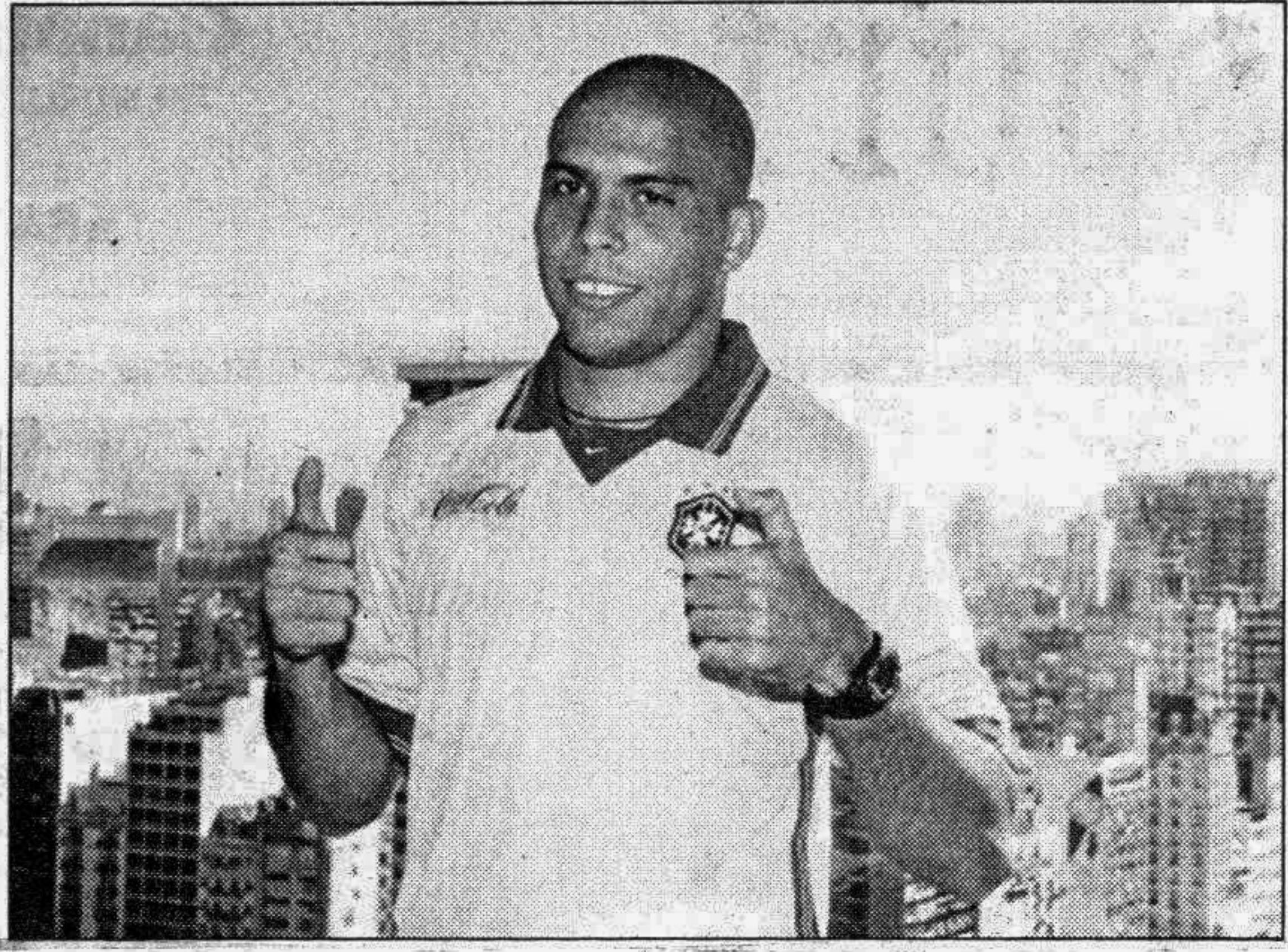
Atapattu c Gilchrist b Fleming 24
Kaluwatharana not out 95
Arnold b Gillespie 47
Jayasuriya not out 26
Extras : (b-5, w-5, nb-6) 16
Total : (For 2 wickets in 39.3 overs) 208

Fall of wickets : 1-64; 2-174.

Did not bat : M Jayaswadene, C Silva, I de Saran, U Chandana, P Wickremasinghe, M Muralitharan, N Zoysa.

Bowler O M R W
McGrath 7 0 47 0
Gillespie 9 0 37 1
Fleming 7 1 28 1
Wa me 8 0 46 0
Symonds 2 0 14 0
Swaigh 3 0 16 0
Lehma nn 1.3 0 13 0
Pontin' 1 0 2 0
Result : Sri Lanka won by 8 wickets.

Man-of-the-match : Roshesh Kaluwa tharana
Man-of-the-series : Adam Gilchrist.



Superstar Ronaldinho gives thumbs up upon arriving at a press conference in Buenos Aires on August 31. — Internet photo

Brazil out to prove a point

BUENOS AIRES, Sept 1: Brazil's players began arriving Tuesday for Saturday's friendly here against Argentina looking to underline their regional supremacy following their recent Copa America triumph, reports AFP.

The sides will play a second match in Brazil at Porto Alegre on September 7, giving Argentina two chances to avenge their 2-1 quarter-final loss at the Copa in Paraguay.

Brazil's Real Madrid wing-back Roberto Carlos was in confident mood as he arrived.

"Brazil are the best team in the world with Argentina on a lower level," said Roberto Carlos, who added his side would use the friendly to assess the state of the squad ahead of next year's World Cup qualifiers to see the team through to the 2002 finals.

"At the moment we are going through a preparatory stage with the team staff thinking about the World Cup qualifiers and they will want to make sure

we are able to get off on the right foot. We have to use every training session and every friendly to improve," insisted the Real star.

"We keep on bringing through young players who

are Argentina looking to underline their regional supremacy following their recent Copa America triumph.

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ROBERTO CARLOS

France look to Zidane

CLAREFONTAINE, France, Sept 1: French World Cup winning playmaker Zinedine Zidane returns to national team action

Saturday knowing the world champions are looking to him to revive their flagging European Championship qualification campaign, reports AFP.

France go to Kiev on Saturday to face Group Four leaders Ukraine in the knowledge that defeat could see them slip to fourth in the group if Russia and Iceland win their home games with also-rans Armenia and Andorra respectively.

It is no coincidence that France's alarming slump has coincided with the absence through injury of Juventus star Zidane, who last donned the blue shirt for France's historic Wembley friendly victory over

England in February.

The Marseille-born man from Algerian ancestry - a national hero since his two first-half headers put France on the way to their 3-0 World Cup final victory over Brazil - has been sorely missed since his injury France have had negotiating stormy waters in the group.

First they shared a 0-0 draw with Ukraine at the Stade de France - a match that should have been won by the visitors with only uncharacteristically foolish finishing by Ukraine striker Andriy Shevchenko and



ZINEDINE ZIDANE

superb goalkeeping from Fabien Barthez saving the French in a game where France hardly mustered.

Then came a 2-0 home win over Armenia but in June France slumped to their first defeat as world champions and their first at the Stade de France when visitors Russia won a thrilling match 3-2.

Four days later France were desperately lucky to return from Barcelona with the points when an 86th-minute penalty from Frank Leboeuf salvaged a

1-0 win against Andorra, officially rated the worst team in Europe.

Marseille's Robert Pires and Christophe Dugarry and Lyon's Vikash Dhorasoo all failed to fill Zidane's creative midfield role.

Qualification for the finals in Holland and Belgium is a four-horse race with Ukraine top of the group and Iceland and Russia well in contention and after Ukraine the French have a tricky away trip to Armenia and a home tie with Iceland to negotiate.

The return of former Cannes and Bordeaux player Zidane is manna from heaven for a country still lost in admiration for their World Cup winners but anxious that the feeling of pride in that team should not be diminished by a failure to qualify.

World player of the year Zidane said: "My fitness is coming back bit by bit. It's six months since I wore the shirt with the cockerel on it. I am missing it. I am returning with a great hunger." But I am not indispensable. There exists a team with Zidane and also one without him."

He admits France may have suffered in his absence, saying: "I can bring a little bit more. A lot has always been expected of me."

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Montenegro joins Marseille

MARSEILLE, France, Sept 1: Argentina's Daniel Montenegro has signed for Marseille for six seasons, the sporting director of the French first division club Marcel Dib said on Tuesday, reports AFP.

Montenegro broke his leg last season and has failed to reproduce the form for Atletico, that made him an idol during his two years at Middlesbrough.

He was sold by Robson to the Spanish club for 12 million pounds (20 million dollars).

Dib did not however reveal the transfer fee for the midfielder from Argentina's second division side Huracan.

Juninho back at Middlesbrough

MADRID, Sept 1: Brazilian star Juninho has left Atletico Madrid Tuesday to return to English Premiership side Middlesbrough, reports AFP.

The midfielder is joining Bryan Robson's outfit on loan for a season with an option of a permanent transfer at the end of that period.

The deal was confirmed here by Juninho's father and agent, Osvaldo Girola.

"An agreement has been found with Middlesbrough and Atletico. I think it's the best solution for everyone, even if Juninho's preferred option was to stay with Atletico," Osvaldo said.

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