

England A's tour dates

Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) yesterday announced the itinerary of England A tour including the venues for the matches, reports BSS.

The team will arrive here on October 18.

Oct 22: 50-over practice match v Under-19 team (BKSP)

Oct 23: Second limited-over game v Board President's XI (Bangabandhu National Stadium)

Oct 25-27: Three-day match v Board President's XI (Chittagong)

Oct 29: Third limited-over game v Board President's XI (Bangabandhu National Stadium)

Nov 1-4: Four-day game v Bangladesh (Bangabandhu National Stadium).

Pybus takes over after Sharjah tourney?

ISLAMABAD, Oct 12: South African-based Richard Pybus has been appointed Pakistan cricket coach and will take over for a tour of Australia starting later this month, local media reported today, says Reuters.

The News said British-born Pybus would begin his job after a three-team limited overs tournament between Pakistan, Sri Lanka and West Indies in Sharjah starting on Wednesday.

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) announced earlier this month that current coach, former Test batsman Wasim Raja, would step down after the Sharjah tournament to continue his career as a teacher in Britain.

"Yes, I am being appointed initially for a period of one year, and if the board thinks I have done enough to satisfy them, they could increase my tenure as coach," Pybus was quoted as saying.

Pybus had a short-term contract as assistant to Mushtaq Mohammad for the World Cup in England last May and June when Pakistan reached the final.

Raja replaced Mushtaq after the World Cup.

Pybus spoke out strongly in support of captain Wasim Akram after Pakistan came under fire from media and supporters after losing the Lord's final to Australia by eight wickets, having been bowled out for 132.

Waugh's warm up with tons

BULAWAYO, Oct 12: Steve Waugh, Mark Waugh and centuries Monday as Australia warmed up for their one-off Test against Zimbabwe with a 244-run victory over a President's XI, reports Reuters.

The Test match begins at the Harare Sports Club on Thursday.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard on the final day of the three-day match between a Zimbabwean President's XI and Australia at the Queen's Club on Monday:

AUSTRALIA: First innings 335-7 decl

PRESIDENT'S XI: First innings 219

AUSTRALIA: Second innings (overrun 158-2)

Blewett c Marillier b Brandes 0

Slater lbw b Rennie 1

S Waugh c Brandes b Mbangwa 161

M Waugh c Vermeulen b Gripper 16

Healy c b Gripper 21

Warne not out 1

Extras (lb-3, w-1) 4

Total (for five wickets decl) 304

Fall of wickets: 1-1; 2-1; 3-257; 4-303; 5-304.

Did not bat: Justin Langer, Ricky Ponting, Damien Fleming, Matthew Nicholson, Glenn McGrath.

Bowler: O M R W

Rennie 15 2 50 1

Brandes 12 2 69 1

Mbangwa 16 2 60 1

Price 8 1 52 0

Gripper 9.1 1 42 2

Lamb 2 0 28 0

PRESIDENT'S XI: Second

innings

T Gripper c M Waugh 10

D Marillier lbw b Fleming 0

M Vermeulen lbw b Fleming 0

T Madondo c M Waugh b McGrath 12

G Lamb c Healy b McGrath 0

B Moore-Gordon b Warne 47

E Brandes c M Waugh b Warne 6

J Rennie c M Waugh b Slater 50

R Price lbw b Langer 3

M Mbangwa not out 16

Extras (lb-8, lb-7, w-6, nb-7) 27

Total (All out in 54.4 overs) 176

Fall of wickets: 1-2; 2-6; 3-20; 4-24; 5-25; 6-62; 7-70; 8-105; 9-135.

Bowler: O M R W

McGrath 14 4 37 2

Fleming 9 4 16 3

Nicholson 2 0 8 0

Warne 17 7 50 3

Ponting 4 2 5 0

Slater 2.5 0 11 1

Langer 3 1 20 1

Healy 3 1 14 0

Result: Australia won by 244 runs.

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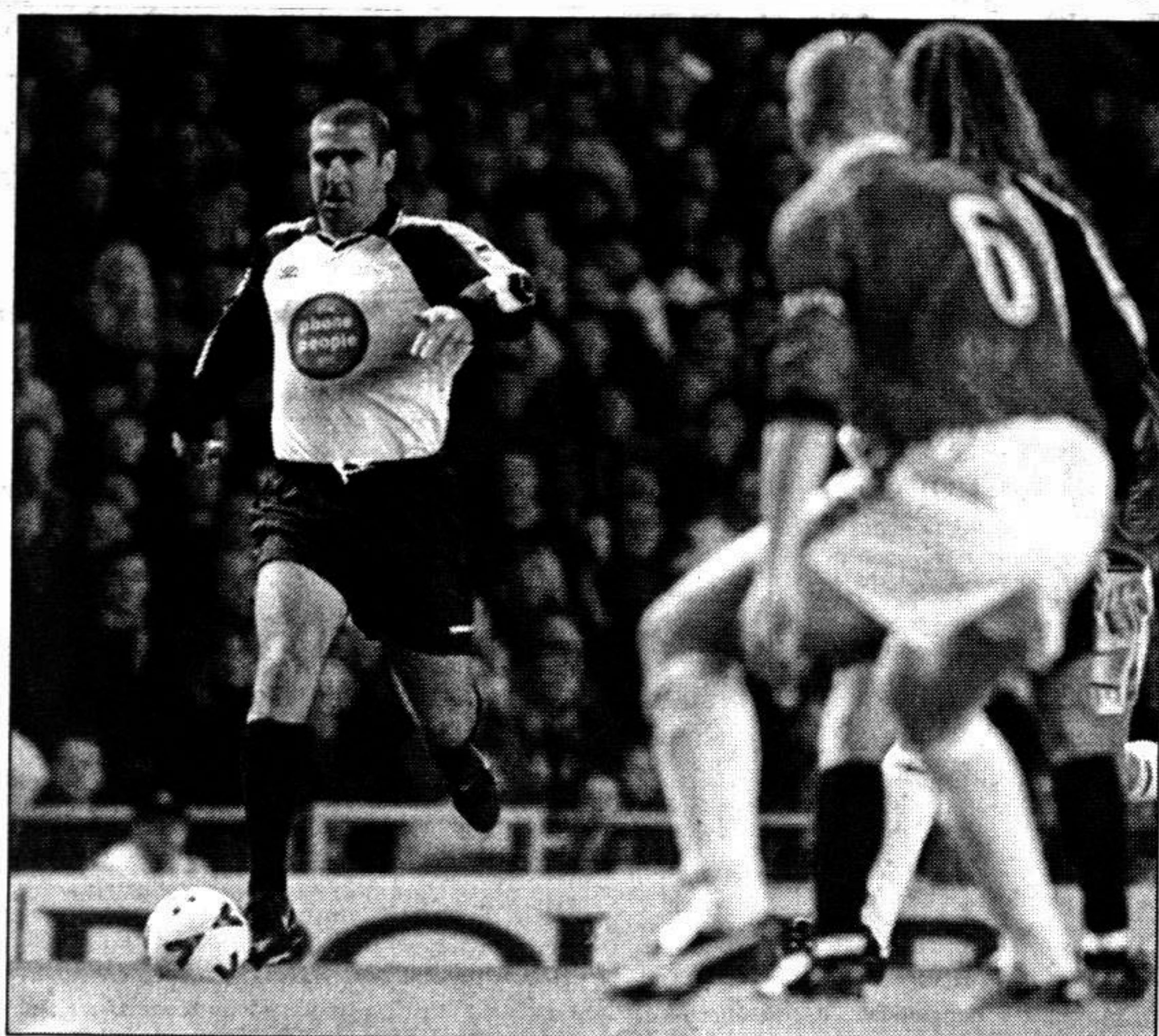
of determination," he said.

The former Indian opener however felt that it would be wrong to judge anyone on the basis of his performance on the wickets of the sub continent.

"Let's wait till Australia. Here the ball rarely comes above your knees and in Australia it will be near your ribcage. The real test of an opener will on pitches outside the sub continent."

Gandhi was however quick to admit that he was terribly nervous when he went out to bat in the second innings. "There was tremendous pressure. Another failure would have raised question marks against me. I was a bit circumspect at the beginning. The first few runs eased the butterflies in my stomach."

He also blamed himself for failing to get a hundred, even though there were doubts regarding his dismissal.



Former Manchester United superstar and French international Eric Cantona (L) in action for the World selection during Sir Alex Ferguson's testimonial match against the present United team at Old Trafford on October 11.

Sir Alex honoured

MANCHESTER, England, Oct 12: Over 54,000 fans turned out to watch a glittering line-up of players

at Sir Alex Ferguson's testimonial here on Monday in which a Rest of the World XI team beat Manchester United 4-2, reports AFP.

Sir Alex caught everyone by surprise when substituting the World XI team en masse midway through the second half by a team of former Manchester United favourites in the surprise of the night.

The fans were thrilled to see the likes of Mark Hughes, Bryan Robson, Steve Bruce, Gary Pallister, Peter Schmeichel and, of course, Eric Cantona wearing United shirts once again.

It was a great way of paying back the supporters who have helped make the game the most lucrative benefit match in British football.

By the time the gate receipts from the 54,842 crowd and television rights are added up, Ferguson could be as much as one million pounds (1.6 million dollars) richer, although part of the proceeds will go to charity.

Ferguson was delighted by the turnout of the fans and so many former players.

After the final whistle he walked out on to the pitch hold-

ing the European Cup and said: "I just want to say thank you to all the fans."

"I hope you've enjoyed the night and it's been a marvellous occasion for me and the players."

"I would also like to thank all the players who have travelled from all over Europe to play tonight."

"I would also like to thank Manchester United for putting this on tonight and also my family and my wife in particular, who's sitting up there - I love her."

"It tells you how much pleasure I've had at Manchester United in the 13 years when you see the collection of great players I've had the privilege to manage."

"I'm a very lucky manager to be able to see such a collection here tonight."

"They are truly great players and legends of this club for ever more."

The night was a total United love-in as the club and the fans reflected on Ferguson's reign of 13 glorious years in which he has won 12 major trophies, including last season's historic Treble.

The VIP box was packed with the game's luminaries and Walter Smith, Graeme Souness, Joe Royle, Danny Wilson, Brian Little and Joe Kinnear rubbed shoulders with showbusiness stars such as Simply Red lead

singer Mick Hucknall.

The noise level went up several decibels when the man himself walked out onto the pitch.

Predictably the atmosphere drained away once the match began, although the immaculate Weah did his best to liven up proceedings.

On 11 minutes he played Cafu in on the right and the Brazilian crossed for Chelsea boss Gianluca Vialli to open the scoring to boos from the home fans.

Then on 33 minutes came the belated arrival of Cantona to a huge roar from the Old Trafford faithful, although he went off at half-time with Schmeichel to prepare for the big surprise.

By then United were level after Teddy Sheringham scored just before the interval.

Careca restored the Rest of the World's lead before coach Ottmar Hitzfeld made his big switch, bringing on the old boys who included David Beckham among their ranks.

Now we had a game and Hughes netted in the 74th minute with a trademark volley.

Hughes scored again on 84 minutes, before Paul Scholes pulled one back three minutes later - but by then nobody cared about the scoreline.

Moeller longing for a recall

COLOGNE, Germany, Oct 12: Borussia Dortmund playmaker Andreas Moeller, a veteran with 85 caps, remains hopeful he might win a recall to play for his country but is sceptical it will happen while Erich Ribbeck is coach, reports AFP.

Moeller was dumped by Berti Vogts after last year's World Cup and made a scapegoat for Germany's poor showing. Although he was briefly recalled by Ribbeck in February it now looks as though the national team coach has definitively dispensed with his services after saying he now has the squad he needs for next year's Euro 2000 finals.

"I sense that I won't play for Germany again while Ribbeck is in charge," Moeller told the weekly magazine "Kicker". "I've not had any contact with him of late, but that I'm angry in any way about that."

Moeller, who at 32 is staring more at retirement than a fresh start, says he is not so worried any more about his banishment from national duties and has a much more "casual approach" to the situation.

But that's not to say he wouldn't snap up an invitation to play again for the national side if Ribbeck were to relent.

"I've always liked playing for Germany, that hasn't changed. As a footballer I believe in striving for the highest there is and that means playing for your country."

Moeller won a brief respite in February when he took part in the German Football Federation's barren trip to the US which saw a brutal defeat at the hands of the host nation and a sub standard performance against Colombia.

No one came back from that mid-Bundesliga tour looking squeaky clean but Moeller paid for it especially hard. The Colombia game was his last for Germany.

The defending European champions topped their group on Saturday without him after an unconvincing 0-0 draw with



ANDREAS MOELLER

Turkey but that, Moeller says, is no need to snatch up the ball in pique and go home.

"Why should I retire (from the national side)," Moeller responded Monday defiantly.

Dortmund are two points clear at the top of the Bundesliga and have made a promising start to the season after a major season injection of new talent.

"Imagine this: Ribbeck's team loses twice at the European championships in the first round and is eliminated."

"A couple of days later Otto Rehhagel is coach and says, 'Andy I need you. I don't want to have to tell him, sorry I retired in October 1999. Things change quickly in football. I know that. I'll just keep on trying to perform well at Dortmund and everything else will just fall into place.'"

At the moment, Moeller is considering his options once his contract expires on June 30th next year knowing that he hasn't many years left as a player. His immediate goal however is winning a third league title with Dortmund, adding to the successes of 1995 and 1996.

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Euro 2000

Play-off draw today

AACHEN, Germany, Oct 12: The four play-off ties for Euro 2000 in Belgium and Holland next year will be known following an unseeded draw at midday (1000 GMT) here on Wednesday, it was revealed on Tuesday, reports AFP.

The eight teams involved in the draw are 1992 European champions Denmark, Slovenia, Turkey, Ukraine, England, Republic of Ireland, Scotland and Israel, who all finished second in their qualifying groups.

UEFA had been expected to make a decision on whether the draw would be seeded on Wednesday morning, but a reliable source at UEFA told AFP the decision for an unseeded draw has already been taken.

The first legs will be on November 13 or 14 with the return fixture on November 17.

The four winners will go directly into the Euro 2000 finals and the draw for that event will be in Brussels on December 12.

England manager Kevin Keegan, whose side just scraped through into the play-offs, said: "The important thing is to play the second leg at home. The opponent doesn't matter so much though my preference would probably be Israel."

Ukrainian coach Josef Szabo said much the same. "We are disappointed we could not have qualified directly. Now we mustn't mess up our last chance and for that reason I want the return match in Kiev."

Israel is generally seen as the weakest nation, with Republic of Ireland not close behind.

Presumably a tie against Turkey with a return fixture in Istanbul would not be most coach's preference because of the often intimidating atmosphere.

World Cup winning coach Aime Jacquet after France 98, spent the rest of the weekend hinting very strongly - and sometimes surreally - that he was preparing either to stand down or embark on a major rethink of team policy.

At the post-match press conference a sombre Lemerre said his mission was accomplished and he heightened speculation that he was about to stand down when he was asked Sunday if he would be in charge for France's next match, a home friendly with Croatia in November.

Lemerre replied: "God only knows."

But his position has been strengthened by the fact that

All is not well in world champs' dressing room



PARIS, Oct 12 (AFP): Roger Lemerre's future as coach to world champions France is still in the balance this week but if he decides to stay at the helm the spotlight will be switched to the career prospects of some of the senior players.

If Lemerre decides to look to the long term there would inevitably be questions about the future of the older players such as Laurent Blanc, Didier Deschamps and Marcel Desailly.

Veteran defender Blanc, a stalwart of the World Cup winning side although he missed the final through suspension, admitted as much Monday when he told L'Equipe: "From now until Euro 2000 there are six months anything could happen. If it is decided that the (2002) World Cup is the objective there could be some spring-cleaning."

"They should let us (the senior players) know if we carry on or if we stop."

In an apparent warning that the senior players would not go quietly should Lemerre decide to rebuild he said: "No-one has managed to push us out yet."

Blanc's seniority in the team is such that he is known as "the President" in the France dressing room.

Before the Iceland match Lemerre had indicated that senior players were exercising a lot of influence in the dressing room.

Speaking at a press conference at Clairefontaine Lemerre had said: "If it (my job) is difficult it is because the others (the senior players) are very strong. Sometimes the players push us towards what they want and sometimes one is obliged to give in and follow."

As well as coping with strong personalities in the dressing room Lemerre is also coexisting with strong personalities in the French Football Federation (FFF), notably FFF president Claude Simonet and the technical director Aime Jacquet, who has an overseeing role in French football.

Lemerre, right hand man to Jacquet during the World Cup, said: "We will meet with the technical director (Jacquet) and president (Simonet). We must prepare the future of the team. We must not focus on the Europeans or the fact we are already qualified (as holders) for the World Cup. We must have a four-