

Gibbs out of first Test

JOHANNESBURG, Oct 22 (Internet report): South African opening batsman Herschelle Gibbs has been ruled out of next weekend's first cricket Test against Zimbabwe in Bloemfontein.

Hope is that Gibbs, who has torn a tendon in his right big toe, will be fit in time for the second international in Harare on November 11.

"But even then it's going to be a race against time," said United Cricket Board managing director Ali Bacher. "According to the specialist who examined Gibbs in Cape Town on Wednesday, the injury will take up to six weeks to heal completely," he added.

The 25-year-old Capetonian sustained the injury during South Africa's successful LG Cup campaign in Nairobi at the beginning of the month, so he has already had about three weeks rest, but it is still going to be a close call.

The player himself this week admitted that his toe was still pretty sore, but that he was still hoping to participate in next week's batting camp in Bloemfontein.

"Definitely not," said Bacher. "The only cure is rest and I've told him that."

With Gibbs now unavailable and his regular opening partner Gary Kirsten yet to strike form, the national selectors are suddenly going to have some sorting out to do before announcing their side at the Wanderers on Saturday afternoon.

Fortunately, there is no shortage of replacements with batsmen throughout the country in prolific form in the opening SuperSport Series clashes.

The two most likely candidates, however, would appear to be former incumbent Adam Bacher and Bloemfontein's 22-year-old star-in-the-making Boeta Dippenaar.

Bacher, who lost both his place and form after suffering a shoulder injury at Lord's in June last year, was given a one-Test recall against the West Indies in January and could manage innings of only 1 and 6.

Successive SuperSport innings of 195, 33 and 65, however, have signalled a welcome return to form and could earn him another recall, a great 26th birthday present. Bacher's birthday coincides with the opening day of Bloemfontein's first-ever Test.

India gain

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Astle, who scored 39 runs, and Craig McMillan with 34, added a solid 62 runs for their fifth wicket partnership — the highest in the New Zealand innings for the day.

The partnership was set to flourish until McMillan was out edging off-spinner Joshi to Sadagopan Ramesh after making 34. Astle fell to Srinath soon afterwards.

Cairns and New Zealand wicketkeeper Adam Parore were then engaged in a 42-run consolidation before Kumble stepped in. The leg-spinner had Parore snappled up by David in close in position.

India replaced seamier Venkatesh Prasad with off-spinner Harbhajan Singh while New Zealand had spinner Paul Wiseman in place of left-arm seamier Shayne O'Connor.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at stumps on the opening day of the second Test between India and New Zealand on Friday:

NEW ZEALAND: First innings

Home c Prasad b Gangly	5
Bell lbw b Srinath	15
Spearman c Ramesh b Kumble	12
Fleming b Srinath	2
Astle lbw Srinath	39
McMillan c Ramesh b Joshi	34
Parore c David b Kumble	35
Cairns not out	42
Nash not out	19
Extras (0-4, nb-10)	14
Total (For seven wickets)	217
Fall of wickets: 1-7; 2-33; 3-40; 4-50; 5-112; 6-130; 7-172	

To bat: D Vettori, P Wiseman, Bowler: O M R W

Bowler: O M R W

'Fix' report

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preferred over Hasan Raza and Rashid Latif.

Hasib believed that Aamir Sohal, Hasan Raza and Shahid Afridi should have been in the side which would have given more stability to the batting which now looks unreliable, weak and inconsistent.

How can you compare Aamir Sohal with Ghulam Ali. Sohal's exclusion must have been purely on the recommendation of the captain, who along with few other players, don't enjoy the company of the left-hander," he said.

Hasib said there was no apparent criteria for selection. "If the selectors have picked Ijaz Ahmad and Mushtaq Ahmad on past performance, well, then Aamir Sohal and Waqar Younis also had a claim."

Former manager Haroon Rasheed believed that Shahid Afridi's inclusion would have given more options to Wasim. He said Afridi was a wrist spinner and also an opener.

"He could have replaced Mushtaq if the leggie was erratic while he could have made up for the two inexperienced openers," he said.

Javed Zaman Khan, a member of the committee, told the Dawn daily from Lahore that he had objected on the selection of a couple of players.

"I don't want to go into the details but I had asked the selectors to reconsider the decisions against some players," he said without going into the details.

Serie A preview

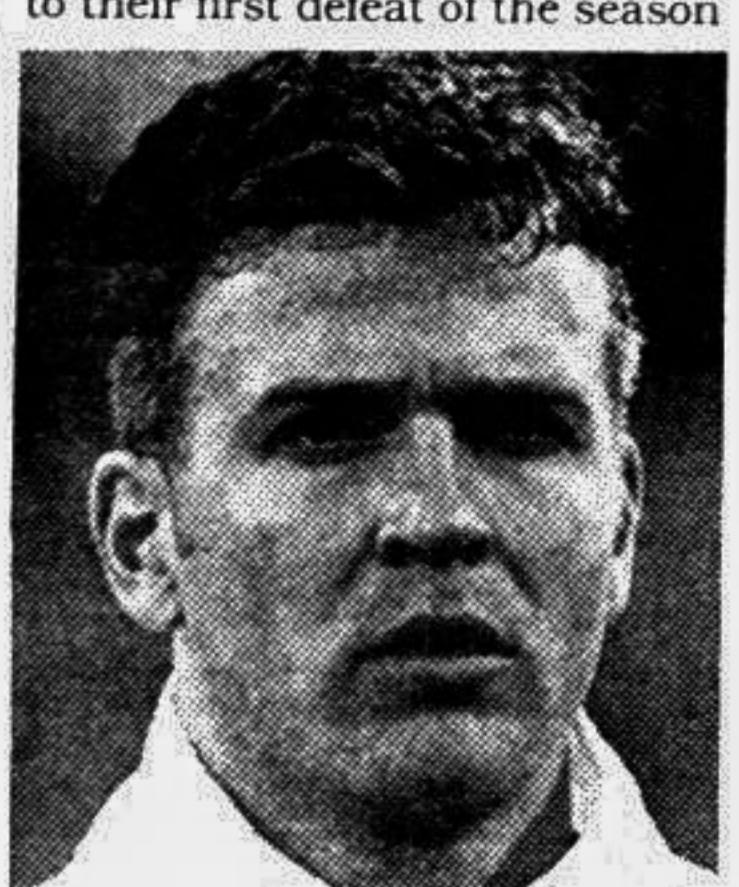
San Siro bracing for dream derby



MILAN, Oct 22: Italy's footballing capital is hoping for a goal bonanza this weekend when champions AC Milan take on Inter in what should be an electrifying derby at San Siro, reports AFP.

Inter have the league's top scorer in six-goal Ukrainian Andriy Shevchenko plus German marksman Oliver Bierhoff, while Inter will reply with their Dream Team attack of Christian Vieri and Ronaldo.

To add further spice, Milan have the Serie A's second worst defence but an enviable home record, while Inter are joint second in the table but crashed to their first defeat of the season



BIERHOFF

last weekend.

The derby is always passionate, pacy and frequently a scoring draw. This time, though, the balance probably is weighted towards Inter.

Inter were lucky to snatch a 2-2 draw here with lowly Cagliari last Sunday but deserved to lose 1-0 in midweek to Hertha in the European Champions League.

Once the battle of San Siro is over, Lazio will take over the centrestage on Sunday as they defend their one-point lead at

the top against newly-promoted Lecce.

Buoyed up by yet another resounding victory, Tuesday's 4-0 handing handed out to Maribor in the Champions League, Lazio should rip their opponents to pieces before a baying Roman crowd.

Skipper Alessandro Nesta is out for two weeks after twisting his knee in Slovenia but fellow defender Sinisa Mihajlovic is in superb form after scoring his 30th goal from a free-kick since arriving in Italy in 1992.

The other top four teams all have away fixtures -- with Juventus playing in Bari, Fiorentina at Piacenza, Parma down in Reggio Calabria against Reggina and AS Roma

against Lazio.

However, the Italian champions still have to recover physically and mentally from their trip to Germany, while Inter will have had all week to prepare for Saturday's showdown.

Inter have made no secret of wanting to repeat AC Milan's feat last season of using their absence from Europe to make a successful, single-minded assault on the league title.

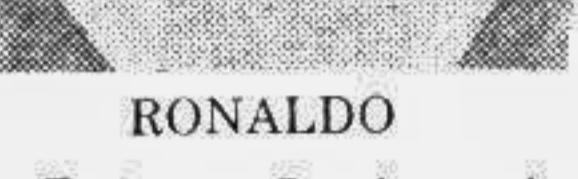
Key to that will be Vieri, who has been plagued by a foot injury for the past three weeks but has now begun training with the rest of the team.

"I train, therefore I play," he said philosophically. "I was able to do everything the rest of the squad were doing."

"I can't train properly then I can't be at 100 percent. But I always want to play, even when I'm not fit. I know I shouldn't, but that's just the way I am."

Dismissing the defeat to Venezia, he said: "If we let our selves feel beaten down just because we lost one match, then we really are finished."

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RONALDO

facing Torino on Sunday night.

Serie A fixtures:

Saturday: Perugia v Venezia, Inter Milan v AC Milan (evening kick-off);

Sunday: Bari v Juventus, Bologna v Verona, Cagliari v Udinese, Lazio v Lecce, Piacenza v Fiorentina, Reggina v Parma, Torino v AS Roma (evening kick-off)

Primera Liga preview

Real Madrid's work cut out



MADRID, Oct 22: Real Madrid coach John Toshack — and several hundred madrileños — will be expecting the Spanish giants to snap their winless streak at Seville on Saturday after their midweek Champions League loss at Porto, reports AFP.

Although the seven-times European champions should still reach the next phase by taking at least second place in the pool behind the Portuguese, their league form has seen them fail to win in half a dozen outings and left the club eighth in the table.

The recent off-colour showings come at a time when little neighbours Rayo Vallecano from the capital's suburbs have confounded the pundits by going top, where they will stay if they can beat the other Seville-based side Real Betis on Sunday.

Real, who will welcome back Roberto Carlos and Fernando Hierro from suspension, have won their last four matches at Seville, though they lost the three before that.

Barcelona, in stark contrast to Real, enjoyed their midweek Champions League excursion immensely, outplaying Arsenal at Wembley in a 4-2 win.

Last week's dropped points following a 3-3 draw at Numancia left the Catalan club

chasing Vallecano and on Saturday Barca take on the dangerous Athletic Bilbao with two points to make up on the leaders.

Real were cheered Thursday by news that there could be an early return for England winger Steve McManaman, who is making good progress following a thigh muscle injury.

McManaman, who has made a confident start to his career with two goals to date in the Primera Liga, was badly missed in the match at Porto.

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Bundesliga preview

Bayern looking to start afresh



Cologne, Oct 22: Controversial winger Mario Basler has been shunted to one side and now Bayern Munich want to get down to the real business of playing football — this time against Kaiserslautern, the club Basler claims he would like to end his career with, reports AFP.

Not even Bayern's 1-1 draw on FC Valencia's boggy turf Wednesday evening could draw the limelight away from the banned player because officials from Spanish outfit Atletico Madrid were at the Champions League clash for hush-hush talks about Basler — if the price is right.

The Basler controversy — he has been suspended permanently for his role in a late-night pizzeria scuffle — has added a further problem to the list of coach Ottmar Hitzfeld, who has struggled to compensate for injuries to key players and get the rest of the team up to speed.

Bayern last took full points at Kaiserslautern in 1995 when Markus Babbel's 87th minute goal gave them a 2-3 win. While Bayern had the long trip to Spain midweek, Kaiserslautern were able to rest because their UEFA Cup match against London club Tottenham Hotspur was put off until next week.

On the issue of Mario Basler, club officials say Otto Rehhagel — an old Basler friend from their Werder Bremen days together — has the final say and so far, at least publicly, he has said nothing.

The same goes for Kaiserslautern's alleged interest in Christian Karembeu, who is having trouble getting a regular game at Real Madrid.

Borussia Dortmund's wings were brutally clipped 0-3 by Norwegian champions Rosenborg Trondheim in one of their worst defensive displays for years and now they must rehabilitate themselves Sunday against Werder Bremen.

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Sport

UEFA CUP RESULTS AT A GLANCE

Collected UEFA Cup second round, first leg results on Thursday:

At Prague Slavia Prague (Cze) 3 (Ulrich 20, 50, Kuchar 39) Grasshopper Zurich (Swi) 1 (Yakin 23)

At Lodz, Poland Widzew Lodz (Pol) 1 (Wichniarek 5-pen) AS Monaco 1 (Giuly 40)

At Bratislava Inter Bratislava (Svk) 0 Nantes (Fra) 3 (Siberski 26-pen, Da Rocha 35, Carriere 86)

At Sofia Levski Sofia (Bul) 1 (Joffou 55) Juventus (Ita) 3 (Oliseh 23, Kovacevic 52, 89)

At Bremen, Germany Werder Bremen (Ger) 0 Viking FK Stavanger (Nor) 0

At Gothenburg, Sweden IFK Gothenburg (Swe) 0 AS Roma (Ita) 2 (Montella 37, 52)

At Teplice, Czech Republic Teplice (Cze) 1 (Verbir 67) Real Mallorca (Spa) 2 (Tristan 28, 32)

At Bucharest Steaua Bucharest (Rom) 2 (Rosu 41, S. Ilie 58) West Ham (Eng) 0

At Zurich FC Zurich (Swi) 1 (Castillo 68) Newcastle United (Eng) 2 (Maric 51, Shearer 90)

At Salonika, Greece PAOK Salonika (Gre) 1 (Frantzeskos 89) Benfica (Por) 2 (Gomes 68, Ronald 90)

At Graz, Austria AK Graz (Aus) 2 (Lipa 57, Panic 80) Panathinaikos (Gre) 1 (Sypniewski 64)

At Kerkrade, Netherlands Roda JC Kerkrade (Ned) 0 VfL Wolfsburg (Ger) 0

At Lyon, France Lyon (Fra) 1 (Blanc 64) Celtic (Sco) 0

At Budapest MTK Budapest (Hun) 2 (Egressy 20, Eros 34) AEK Athens (Gre) 1 (Ciric 63)

At Leeds, England Leeds United (Eng) 4 (Bowler 27, 45, Smith 56, Kewell 83) Lokomotiv Moscow (Rus) 1 (Loskov 81)

At Parma, Italy Parma (Ita) 1 (Cannavaro 44) Helsingborgs (Swe) 0

At Madrid Atletico Madrid (Spa) 1 (Baraja 84) Amica Wronki (Pol) 0

At Brussels Anderlecht (Bel) 2 (Koller 20, 40) Bologna (Ita) 1 (Signori 90)

At Haifa, Israel Haipoel Haifa (Isr) 0 Ajax Amsterdam (Ned) 3 (Makhlis 3, Knoper 12, B. Laudrup 55)</