

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 Cape Towner 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, appear to be former incumbents 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 make innings of only 1 and 6.

Successful 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.

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his 151st victim. 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 snapped up by Dravid in close 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'Conner.

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

NEW ZEALAND: First innings
Horne c Prasad b Ganguly 5
Bell lbw Srinath 15
Spearmen c Ramesh b Kumble 12
Fleming b Srinath 2
Astle lbw Srinath 39
McMillan c Ramesh b Joshi 34
Parore c Dravid b Kumble 35
Cairns not out 19
Nash not out 19
Extras (b-4, nb-10) 14
Total: (For seven wickets in 90 overs) 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
Srinath 18 7 44 3
Ganguly 4 0 14 1
Kumble 30 10 66 2
Joshi 16 5 30 0
Srinath 20 7 46 1
Bharadwaj 2 0 12 0

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preferred over Hasan Raza and Rashid Latif.

Hasib believed that Aamir Sohail, 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 Sohail with Ghulam Ali. Sohail'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, Sohail, and Waqar Yousaf 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.

Milan have the league's top scorer in six-goal Ukrainian Andriy Shevchenko plus German marksman Oliver Bierhoff, while Inter will rely on 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 last weekend.

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

Milan 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.

The omens are good for Rayo, given that their opponents have yet to scrape a single away point.

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.

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

Barcelona will be without Dutch striker Patrick Kluivert, who will be suspended for four matches after insulting the referee in the draw with Real earlier this month.

Third-placed Deportivo La Coruna, four points adrift of Rayo Valleciano, travel to Valencia to the season and who are 18th in the table.

Primera Liga fixtures:
Saturday: Seville v Real Madrid, Barcelona v Athletic Bilbao, Valencia v Deportivo La Coruna

Sunday: Rayo Valleciano v Real Betis, Real Zaragoza v Racing Santander, Atletico Madrid v Real Valladolid, Real Sociedad v Alaves, Oviedo v Numancia, Real Mallorca v Malaga, Celta Vigo v Espanyol

Bundesliga preview
Bayern looking to start afresh

Norway's Bodo Glimt in the UEFA Cup and 7-2 against Wolfsburg - Bremen haven't won a league match.

Dortmund will do without Christian Wornas and Heiko Herrlich, who are both down with heavy colds, while Bremen expect to name Austrian star Andreas Herzog in the starting line up after many weeks getting fit after serious muscle problems.

Christoph Daum is worried that his Champions League ambitions have run aground after losing to Dynamo Kiev, a defeat ushered in by Stefan Beinlich's missed penalty.

"Normally he can shoot a cola bottle off the crossbar," manager Rainer Calmund lamented. Those worries must be shelved as Leverkusen travel to Freiburg Saturday who have proved themselves to be surprisingly resilient this season.

Only once before, in 1997, have Leverkusen celebrated a win in Freiburg's small but resonant Black Forest stadium.

Coach Werner Lohant has no explanation for 1860 Munich's sudden form swings. A week ago they lost to third division Eintracht Trier in the German Cup and then a few days later blew away Arminia Bielefeld 5-0 for their most resounding victory of the season.

In-form Hamburg are a different kettle of fish though. Nippy striker Roy Prager is suspended but, in a significant mood change, Frank Pagelsdorf's crew believe for the first time in years they can really push the top sides this season.

2006 World Cup
Morocco presents bid dossier to CAF

RABAT, Oct 22: Morocco presented their 2006 World Cup bid dossier to African football's governing body CAF in Burkina Faso on Thursday, a Moroccan bid committee member announced here, reports AFP.

Morocco, along with South Africa, Germany, England and Brazil, are challenging for the July 2006 decision to organize football's showcase event.

A Moroccan delegation, led by bid chief Driss Benhima, was in Burkina Faso capital Ouagadougou on Wednesday and is due to have talks with CAF president Issa Hayatou of Cameroon.

Coach Alberto Zaccheroni watched his team's blunder in Berlin and said: "We'll be in big trouble if we play like this in the derby. I have to do something about it."

The team's behaviour against Cagliari and in Berlin has not been positive. Our limits have been exposed. We should have shown more character.

"From the dugout, you got the clear impression that we are not determined enough," he said.

The good news for Saturday will be the return of Liberian ace George Weah, who has yet to work off a six-match suspension in Europe.

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."

"If 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 ourselves feel beaten down just because we lost one match, then we really are finished."

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 hiding 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

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)

UEFA CUP RESULTS AT A GLANCE

Collated 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 (Guly 40)

At Bratislava
Inter Bratislava (Svk) 0 Nantes (Fra) 3 (Sibierski 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 60)

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

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

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

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

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

At Leeds, England
Leeds United (Eng) 4 (Bowyer 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 (Sbaraja 84) Amica Wronki (Pol) 0

At Brussels
Anderlecht (Bel) 2 (Kollner 20, 40) Bologna (Ita) 1 (Signor 90)

At Haifa, Israel
Hapoel Haifa (Isr) 0 Ajax Amsterdam (Ned) 3 (Makhlas 3, Knooper 12, B. Laudrup 55)

Ronaldo becoming ambassador for UN
APPIANO GENTILE, Italy, Oct 22: Brazilian football star Ronaldo revealed Thursday that he will shortly be appointed an ambassador for the United Nations Organisation, reports AFP.

The 23-year-old Inter Milan striker said that the ceremony would take place shortly in either Geneva or New York.

"I still don't know my role, but I think that Africa and Brazil will certainly feature there," said the 1998 world footballer of the year. "I want to play an active role in this organisation and I want above all to give my time and the best of my ability to this work."

The announcement follows the controversy surrounding the appointment of former Spice Girl Geri Halliwell as UN Population Fund goodwill ambassador earlier this year.

Ronaldo and his new girlfriend, fellow Brazilian Milene Domingues, are expecting a baby in April.

Larsson breaks his leg
LYON, Oct 22: Celtic's Swedish international striker Henrik Larsson broke his leg in a UEFA Cup second round first leg match against Olympique Lyon Thursday, reports Reuters.

Larsson was brought down by Lyon defender Serge Blanc in what seemed to be a fair tackle in the 15th minute. He was carried from the pitch on a stretcher and Lyon officials later said he had a double fracture to the leg.



Leeds United's Alan Smith scores a spectacular goal against Lokomotiv Moscow. — AFP photo

UEFA Cup second round first leg

Leeds' show of class

PARIS, Oct 22: English Premier League leaders Leeds United set a new club record of 10 successive victories as they crushed Lokomotiv Moscow 4-1 in the first leg of their UEFA Cup second round tie at Elland Road on Thursday, reports AFP.

Two goals by Lee Bowyer and further efforts by Alan Smith and Harry Kewell virtually assured David O'Leary's young side of a place in the third round despite a superb free-kick reply by Dimitri Loskov for the Russians.

Bowyer's first came close to the half-hour when Jonathon Woodgate headed a free-kick into his path and the gutsy midfielder's deflected effort flew into the net.

Martyn was almost caught cold in the 37th minute when Lokomotiv's Alexei Arifullin unleashed a wicked shot from 35 metres which shaved the crossbar.

But Leeds struck again just before the interval when Bowyer grabbed his fourth goal of the competition.

Michael Bridges twisted and played in the cross and Bowyer dived to glance home a fine header.

Leeds then made it 3-0 after 56 minutes.

Lokomotiv goalkeeper Ruslan Nigmatullin was unable to deal with the ball as it bounced inside the area and Smith beat him with an acrobatic overhead effort, though he appeared to foul a Lokomotiv defender as he did so.

Leeds relaxed temporarily and the two-footed Loskov made them pay with a deft free-kick over the defensive wall with nine minutes left.

That merely prompted Leeds to step up a gear again and Australian Kewell crashed in the fourth two minutes later.

Newcastle shrugged off their abysmal league form as goals from the unsettled Silvio Maric and Alan Shearer brought a 2-1 win at Swiss outfit FC Zurich to make it a good night for England's representatives.

United coach Bobby Rob-

son's half-time talk paid dividends within six minutes of the restart when Maric tried a back-heel which rebounded from defender Saidou Kebe back into the Croatian's path.

Maric collected the ball on his chest and then blasted a left-foot shot past Pascolo into the far corner for his first goal for United.

Dabizas made a more positive contribution when he headed Solano's cross into the middle on the hour allowing Hughes to send in a meaty drive.

Keeper Pascolo managed to push the ball on to the woodwork but Shearer was lurking to make it 2-0 with the 50th cup goal of his career.

United then allowed the Swiss back into the match on 68 minutes when Pascal Castillo fired home from close range.

Robson was furious with his side's nervous display.

"We can't play like we did in the last 20 minutes," said the former England coach afterwards.

"If you are going to go to Italy or you are going to go to Holland and we're going to collapse like a pack of cards like we did in the last 20 minutes, we won't win a match," he snapped.

Yugoslavia's Darko Kovacevic scored his second goal for 10-man Juventus in the dying seconds to complete a 3-1 win over Levski Sofia.

Juventus, who appeared in three consecutive European Cup finals from 1996 to 1998, had a major problem after just a quarter of an hour when Jonathon Bachini was sent off.

The Old Lady of Turin, as Juventus are known, recovered remarkably however.

Nigeria's Sunday Oliseh scored in the 23rd minute with a long range effort, then Kovacevic added two more in the 52nd and 89th minutes. Serge Joffou had scored for Sofia 10 minutes after the break.

A goal midway through the second half from Serge Blanc handed Lyon a precious 1-0 advantage over Celtic - but the game was marred by an horrific leg break suffered by Celtic striker Henrik Larsson.

The Swede's first half injury to his left leg totally overshadowed a goalless first period. A severe break of Larsson's left leg has dealt a hammer blow to the Celts which will have repercussions for the rest of the season.

The Swede was hurt after just 12 minutes as he came off worst in a challenge with Serge Blanc, who ironically netted the only goal of the match with a stunning left-footer after 63 minutes after Vikash Dhorasoo played the midfielder in with a neat pass.

Celtic coach John Barnes said he was disappointed about the result but even more perturbed at the prospect of losing Larsson for as much as five months.

"We have to establish the full extent of his injury but all we are concerned with now is Henrik's well being," Barnes said.

"The games is still winnable but even at Celtic Park Lyon will be a dangerous side," Barnes forecast.

French side Nantes, struggling domestically, romped to a 3-0 away success at Slovakia's Inter Bratislava.

Antoine Sibierski bagged the first from the spot on 26 minutes and Da Rocha scored the second 10 minutes before the break. Eric Carriere completed the scoring in the 86th minute.

Werder Bremen did not live up to their expectations as favourites against Norwegian minnows Viking Stavanger Thursday and were held to a 0-0 draw at home.

Marco Bode squandered the German's biggest chance in the final minutes of this second round, first leg match when his header was cleared on the line.

Monaco, who were without French international keeper Fabien Barthez for their trip to Poland's Widzew Lodz, gained a useful 1-1 draw.

Ludovic Giuly scored the French side's equaliser with a rising drive from the edge of the box after Arthur Wichniarek had put the hosts ahead with a fifth-minute spot kick awarded for a foul on the international striker by Philippe Christian.

Premiership preview

Chelsea-Arsenal, clash of the day

LONDON, Oct 22: Chelsea and Arsenal will be cursing the fixture computer this weekend as they interrupt their Champions League double-headers for a London derby at Stamford Bridge that both sides could do without, reports AFP.

The game of the day in Saturday's Premiership programme will be watched by FIFA's Inspection Team chief Alan Rothenberg, who is assessing England's 2006 World Cup bid facilities.

Rothenberg is likely to see two vastly different teams from the full-strength sides Gianluca Vialli and Arsene Wenger fielded in their midweek Champions League matches.

Chelsea, beaten at Liverpool last week, will be in better heart after their stunning 5-0 win at Galatasaray in Turkey on Wednesday than Arsenal, who lost 4-2 at home to Barcelona the night before.

Chelsea visit crack Italian side AC Milan next week, while Arsenal host Fiorentina in a winner-takes-all clash.

Three points on Saturday would, of course, do very nicely and Chelsea's need is the greater.

They have slipped to sixth in the table on 19 points, albeit with two games in hand over their rivals including leaders Leeds (25).

Wenger's side, currently fourth on 22 points, were exposed defensively by Barca and will be aware that Chelsea's last home Premiership match saw them club five goals past Manchester United.

Chelsea's Italian Gianfranco Zola and Tore Andre Flo ended scoring droughts in Turkey.

The Norwegian, who had not scored since the 4-0 opening day defeat of Sunderland, said: "When you're a striker who is not scoring, it's a bit tough."

"I'd been waiting for this moment for a very long time. Sometimes a goal is what you need to relax again and get your confidence back. When I got the first one, I really felt like I could score everything."

Chelsea may have turned their trip to Hell into a heavenly experience but Arsenal's English defender Tony Adams, in particular, will be keen to bring them back down to earth after suffering a torrid time at Wembley against Barcelona.

they visit Everton on Sunday looking to set a new club record of 10 successive wins.

Manager David O'Leary has been playing down his team's chances all season and claims his side is as tired as anybody else.

"I've got a bunch of people here who aren't afraid to be on top," he said.

"They are not scared to go out on the big stage but a few of them are a bit tired. That's because we're playing every game like a cup final."

They have not been going well for second-placed Manchester United (24 points).

They lost 1-0 at Marseille in the Champions League on Tuesday, their third defeat in four matches.

Next week they face a tricky visit to Croatia's Zagreb, and although Ryan Giggs and Roy Keane are back fit again, manager Sir Alex Ferguson may once again turn to several of his youngsters for the visit to Tottenham on Saturday.

The Premiership's top scorer, Kevin Phillips, will have West Ham's net in his sights on Sunday when third-placed Sunderland (23) aim to continue their superb start of the season at Upton Park.

The big game at the other end of the table sees second-bottom Newcastle, thumped 4-1 by Coventry last week, host Derby County, two points and two places above them, on Monday.

The sod's law of statistics surely means Sunday's Vicarage Road clash between Watford and Middlesbrough, the only two teams in the Premiership not to have drawn a match this season, will end in stalemate.

Fixtures (kick-offs 1400 GMT unless stated):
Saturday: Aston Villa v Wimbledon, Bradford v Leicester, Chelsea v Arsenal, Sheffield Wed v Coventry, Southampton v Liverpool, Tottenham v Man Utd

Sunday: Everton v Leeds, Watford v Middlesbrough (1500 GMT), West Ham v Sunderland

Monday: Newcastle v Derby (1900 GMT)



Celtic's Henrik Larsson being stretchered off after breaking his leg during a UEFA Cup match against Olympique Lyon. — AFP photo