

Pakistan says Shoaib will play

KARACHI, Dec 28: Pakistan cricket officials are confident fast bowler Shoaib Akhtar will play in a forthcoming limited-over series in Australia despite his action being questioned, reports Reuters.

"We are absolutely sure that Shoaib Akhtar will be in action," Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Tauqueer Zia told the news agency from Islamabad today.

Pakistan's squad was set to leave on Wednesday, a day before a nine-man international Cricket Council (ICC) advisory panel on illegal deliveries was to hold a telephone conference call to discuss Akhtar's bowling action.

His action was questioned by New Zealand match referee John Reid during Pakistan's recent three-Test series in Australia, which the touring side lost 3-0.

Zia said he did not expect an ICC decision on Akhtar's action until after the tri-nation series, which also features Australia and India, and is being played between January 9 and February 6.

Pakistan team manager Intikhab Alam said from Lahore that Akhtar had a perfect bowling action.

"He has been cleared by the PCB panel and I am confident that he will earn the ICC's nod as well," Intikhab said.

Reid has expressed concern about the straightening of Akhtar's arm immediately before a particularly fast delivery or a bounce.

Zia also said he did not feel increased political tension between India and Pakistan would affect his team.

"The players are professionals and this issue should not divert their attention from their assignment," he said.

Pakistan has denied Indian allegations that it is involved in the hijacking of an Indian Airlines plane which is now parked at Kandahar airport in southern Afghanistan with 155 hostages aboard.

Mukul Niketan lift Lila Devi soccer title

MYMENSINGH, Dec 28: Mukul Niketan School emerged champions in the traditional Lila Devi Shield football tournament here today, reports UNE.

They beat Hazi Osman Ali High School 5-4 in tie-breaker after the regulation 90 minutes ended goalless.

Imran of Osman Ali High was adjudged player-of-the-tournament.

Additional Deputy Commissioner of Mymensingh Abdul Halim was the chief guest in the closing function and distributed prizes.

Windies made

From page 13
by Stephen Fleming at first slip.

SCOREBOARD

The scoreboard at the end of the third day of the second Test between New Zealand and the West Indies at the Basin Reserve on Tuesday:

NEW ZEALAND: First innings 518-9 dec (Sinclair 214, Astle 93, Fleming 67; King 4/96).

WEST INDIES: First innings (overnight 5-1)

Griffith c Fleming b Nash 67
Campbell lbw Cairns 3
Cherry c Parori b Cairns 5
Lara b Vettori 67
Adams c Stead b Vettori 6
Jacobs not out 19
Rose c Parori b Cairns 0
King run out (Vettori) 0
Walsh b Cairns 0
Extras: (lb-2, b-4, w-2, nb-2) 10
Total: (All out in 91 overs) 179

Fall of wickets: 1-1; 2-5; 3-17; 4-129; 5-141; 6-174; 7-175; 8-176; 9-179.

Did not bat: D. Ganga

Bowler O M R W
Cairns 19 5 44 5
Nash 18 8 23 1
Vettori 31 10 69 2
O'Connor 19 8 25 0
Astle 4 1 12 0

SECOND INNINGS
Griffith not out 0
Campbell not out 2
Extras: (lb-2, b-4, w-2, nb-2) 10
Total: (For no wicket in 3 overs) 2

Bowler O M R W
O'Connor 2 1 1 0
Vettori 1 0 1 0

Brett strikes
From page 13

Langer lbw b Srinath 8
M Waugh c M Waugh b V Prasad 41
S Waugh c M Waugh b V Prasad 32
Ponting lbw b Srinath 67
Gilchrist c Ganguly b Agarkar 78
Warne c M Prasad b Agarkar 2
Fleming not out 31
Lee c and b Srinath 27
McGrath run out 1
Extras: (lb-9, b-1, nb-14, w-1) 25
Total: (All out) 405

Fall of wickets: 1-4; 2-28; 3-123; 4-192; 5-197; 6-341; 7-343; 8-345; 9-404.

Bowler O M R W
Srinath 33.1 7 130 4
Agarkar 28 7 76 3
Prasad 26 6 101 2
Ganguly 2 0 10 0
Kumble 29 3 78 0

INDIA: First Innings
Ramesh b Lee 4
Laxman c M Waugh b McGrath 5
David c Gilchrist b Lee 9
Tendulkar c Langer b Fleming 116
Ganguly c M Waugh b McGrath 31
Kanjikar lbw b Warne 11
Prasad b Lee 6
Agarkar lbw b Lee 0
Srinath c M Waugh b Lee 1
Kumble not out 26
V Prasad not out 10
Extras: (lb-8, nb-8) 16
Total: (For nine wickets) 235

Fall of wickets: 1-1; 2-11; 3-31; 4-108; 5-138; 6-167; 7-167; 8-169; 9-212.

Bowler O M R W
McGrath 18 3 39 2
Fleming 15 0 62 1
Lee 17 2 44 5
Warne 24 5 77 1
M Waugh 1 0 5 0



England players gather round paceman Andrew Caddick in Durban yesterday. Caddick took career-best 7/46. — AFP photo

Caddick forces SA to follow on

DURBAN, South Africa, Dec 28: Career-best figures by Andrew Caddick forced South Africa to follow on for the first time in more than 30 years on the third day of the third Test against South Africa at Kingsmead Tuesday, reports AFP.

Caddick took seven for 46 as South Africa crashed to 156 all out in reply to England's 366 for nine declared. South Africa were 27 for no wicket in the follow on innings when bad light ended play 13.5 overs early.

Caddick ripped into the South African top order, dis-

trailed on the first innings, while South Africa had led in 16 successive games, with first innings totals above 400 in their past seven matches.

Caddick gained high bounce from the Kingsmead pitch. Gibbs pushed involuntarily at a ball that climbed sharply.

Kallis was caught down the leg-side off his glove and Kirsten was forced onto his back foot and pushed at a lifting ball.

Darryl Cullinan and Cronje put on 33 for the fourth wicket before Cullinan was bowled off the inside edge of his bat by a ball from Darren Gough which kept slightly low.

With Jonty Rhodes having been dropped to make room for

tain Hansie Cronje, did not start because of a flat battery. Gibbs showed impressive timing in South Africa's second innings, making 24 not out off 16 balls with five fours.

SCOREBOARD

Scoreboard at close of play on the third day of the third Test between South Africa and England at Kingsmead Tuesday:

ENGLAND: First innings (overnight 366-9)

Butcher c Klusener b Adams 48
Atherton b Hayward 1
Hussain not out 146
Maddy c Adams b Donald 24
Stewart lbw b Hayward 95
Adams b Adams 19
Flintoff lbw b Cronje 5
Caddick lbw b Cronje 0
Gough c Klusener b Donald 9
Silverwood c Boucher b Pollock 0
Tufnell not out 0
Extras: (b-1; lb-14; w-3; nb-1) 19
Total: (For 9 wks in 166.4 overs dec) 366

Fall of wickets: 1-7; 2-82; 3-138; 4-294; 5-336; 6-345; 7-345; 8-363; 9-362.

Bowler O M R W
Donald 23.4 3 67 2
Pollock 33 14 55 1
Hayward 20 3 74 2
Kallis 23 9 38 0
Klusener 17 5 38 0
Adams 43 17 74 0
Cronje 7 5 5 2

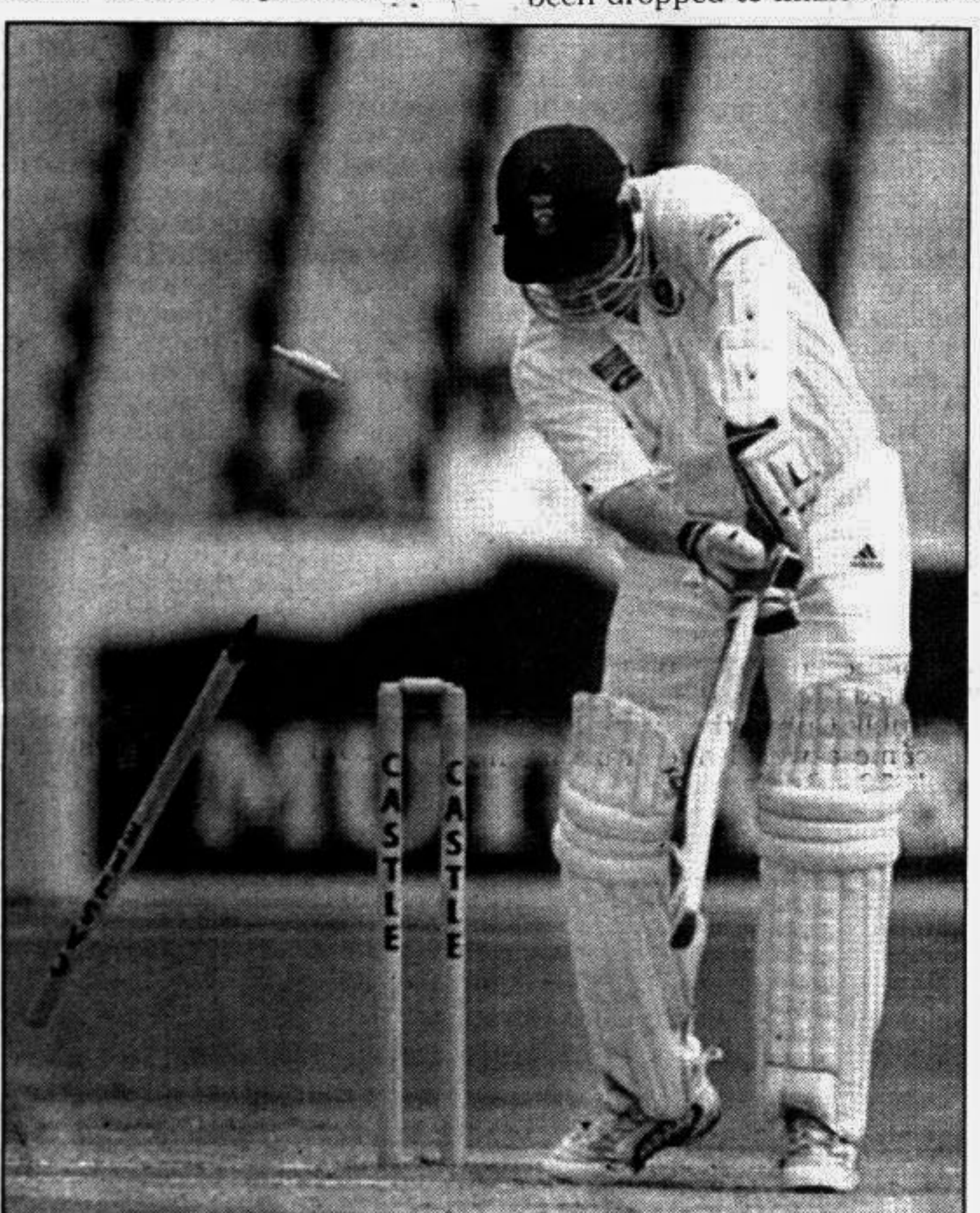
SOUTH AFRICA: First Innings
Kirsten c Stewart b Caddick 11
Gibbs c Stewart b Caddick 2
Kallis c Stewart b Caddick 0
Cullinan b Gough 20
Cronje c Stewart b Caddick 28
Klusener c Maddy b Tufnell 15
Pollock b Caddick 64
Boucher b Caddick 0
Donald c Atherton b Caddick 0
Adams c Atherton b Gough 0
Hayward not out 0
Extras: (b-4; lb-1; w-1; nb-1) 7
Total: (All out in 50.5 overs) 156

Fall of wickets: 1-11; 2-11; 3-24; 4-57; 5-74; 6-84; 7-84; 8-84; 9-154.

Bowler O M R W
Gough 15.5 6 36 2
Caddick 16 5 46 7
Silverwood 6 1 38 0
Tufnell 10 1 24 1
Flintoff 3 0 7 0

SOUTH AFRICA: Second Innings
Kirsten not out 3
Gibbs not out 24
Extras: 0
Total: (For no loss in 6.1 overs) 27

Bowler O M R W
Caddick 3.1 1 10 0
Silverwood 3 0 17 0



UPENDED: South African Darryl Cullinan's leg stump is sent flying by Darren Gough yesterday. — AFP photo

missing Herschelle Gibbs. Jacques Kallis and Gary Kirsten within the space of 11 balls, all with the help of catches by wicketkeeper Alec Stewart.

He took a further three wickets in five balls in a second spell which started when he had South African captain Hansie Cronje caught by Stewart for 28.

Then he ended a ninth wicket stand of 70 in 75 minutes between Shaun Pollock and Paul Adams which took South Africa to within 13 runs of avoiding the follow on.

Pollock made a fluent 64 off 89 balls before being bowled by Caddick shortly after tea before Darren Gough polished off South Africa by removing Adams.

The wicket of Kallis was the 100th in Tests for the 31-year-old New Zealand-born Caddick, whose best figures in 26 previous Tests were six for 65 against the West Indies in Port of Spain in 1993-94.

The tall fast bowler ran into trouble with umpire Dave Orchard, however, for running on the pitch between wicket and wicket. After an official warning he switched ends.

South Africa had not been forced to follow on in their most recent 74 Tests, going back to a match against Australia in Cape Town in 1966-67 before the country was isolated from international sport because of apartheid.

England ended a sequence of 16 matches in which they

an extra bowler, Lance Klusener was promoted to number six and had his home town fans cheering when he hit 15 off the first seven balls he faced, included three fours in an over from Chris Silverwood.

England captain Nasser Hussain responded by bringing on leftarm spinner Phil Tufnell, who had the hard-hitting left-hander caught at short leg by Darren Maddy with an instinctive left-handed catch off his third ball.

Caddick came back and had Cronje caught behind with his first ball, bowled Mark Boucher with his third delivery and had Allan Donald caught at first slip two balls later.

He took some punishment from Pollock before bowling the allrounder when Pollock stepped away to force the ball to the offside and the ball crashed into his stumps off an inside edge.

Gough then wrapped up the innings by accounting for Adams, enabling Hussain to invite Cronje to bat again.

The start of the day's play was delayed because of a wet outfield following rain, prompting Hussain to declare at his team's overnight total. Hussain was 146 not out after batting for ten and a half hours and facing 463 balls.

It was announced that play would start an hour late but there was a further delay of 20 minutes when the heavy roller, requested by South African cap-

tain Nasser Hussain, was brought in to level the pitch.

England captain Nasser Hussain responded by bringing on leftarm spinner Phil Tufnell, who had the hard-hitting left-hander caught at short leg by Darren Maddy with an instinctive left-handed catch off his third ball.

Caddick came back and had Cronje caught behind with his first ball, bowled Mark Boucher with his third delivery and had Allan Donald caught at first slip two balls later.

He took some punishment from Pollock before bowling the allrounder when Pollock stepped away to force the ball to the offside and the ball crashed into his stumps off an inside edge.

Gough then wrapped up the innings by accounting for Adams, enabling Hussain to invite Cronje to bat again.

The start of the day's play was delayed because of a wet outfield following rain, prompting Hussain to declare at his team's overnight total. Hussain was 146 not out after batting for ten and a half hours and facing 463 balls.

It was announced that play would start an hour late but there was a further delay of 20 minutes when the heavy roller, requested by South African cap-

Indian team prays for hostages in plane hijack

MELBOURNE, Australia, Dec 28 (AFP): Touring Indian cricketers on Tuesday in Australia offered prayers for the 160 people held hostage on an Indian commercial jet in Afghanistan.

The Indians, currently playing the second Test against Australia here, said they were very worried about how the five-day crisis might end.

"Our thoughts are with the innocent lives on board that plane," coach Kapil Dev said on behalf of the team.

"We would always be worried by such a thing. But it is more now because we are away from home."

"We all pray that it ends without anyone being hurt."

Kapil's remarks came as Indian negotiators held new talks on Tuesday with the Muslim militants holding the plane at Kandahar airport in southern Afghanistan.

The five armed hijackers seized the Indian Airlines flight as it left Kathmandu on Christmas Eve and have demanded the release of Maulana Masood Azhar, a Pakistani Islamic cleric arrested in Indian-administered Kashmir in 1994.

The hijackers forced the plane on a round trip across the Asian subcontinent and the Gulf — from Amritsar in northern India to Lahore in Pakistan and then Dubai before eventually landing in Kandahar.

Twenty-seven passengers, mostly women and children, were freed in Dubai.

The remaining passengers were mainly Indian but among them were thought to be eight Nepalese, four Spaniards, four Swiss, two French nationals, an Italian, a Canadian, a Belgian and an American, an Australian and one Japanese man.

The five Muslim militant hijackers warned Monday they would start killing their hostages if India did not begin talks, but backed down when Delhi said it would send negotiators and Afghanistan's hardline Taliban militia threatened to storm the plane.

One passenger has already died. He was stabbed to death on Friday.

Paes to pair with Lareau

CALCUTTA, Dec 28: World No 1 tennis doubles player Leander Paes and No 4 Sebastian Lareau of Canada will play together in next year's Australian Open, the Indian player said Monday, reports AP.

Paes and fellow countryman Mahesh Bhupathi had won the Australian Open and French Open and played together at Wimbledon last season. Paes had to change his partner as Bhupathi is nursing a shoulder injury that will keep him off tennis for a while.

Paes said he hopes to "do very well in the circuit" with Lareau. "We have played together earlier and know each other's style quite well. I'm sure we will have success," he told reporters in Calcutta, while on vacation.

Paes and Lareau reached the semifinals of the US Open in 1993. But in the Gold Flame Open, Paes will play with Byron Black as his partner.

Paes, 26, is ranked No 1 in the doubles and 142 in the singles in the world tennis rankings. Lareau, 26, is ranked 102 in singles.

Faridpur cricket

FARIDPUR, Dec 28: Laxmipur Juba Sangha defeated JS Eleven by six wickets in the District cricket league at the local stadium today, reports UNE.

Batting first, JS scored 148 runs before being all out in stipulated 30 overs with Rony making highest 38.

In reply, Laxmipur reached the winning target of 149 losing only four wickets in 19 overs.

Schools cricket in Pirojpur

PIROJPUR, Dec 28: Pirojpur Vocational Training Institute clinched the districts cricket title beating Pirojpur Govt High by five wickets in the final at the local stadium today, reports UNE.

Batting first, Govt High were all out for 107 in 21.2 overs.

In reply, Vocational Training Institute reached their target of 108 runs losing five wickets in 23.2 overs.

M'singh soccer

MYMENSINGH, Dec 28: Mohammedan Sporting Club suffered a 0-4 defeat against Al-Helal Green in the Mymensingh First Division football league at the local stadium today, reports UNE.

Sohel scored a hat-trick while Tutul netted the other. Baikal Sangha will play College Road Boys Club tomorrow.

Kostadinov calls it quits

BERLIN, Dec 28 (Reuters): A serious calf injury has forced former Bulgarian World Cup striker Emil Kostadinov to end his playing career. German second division FSV Mainz officials said on Tuesday.

Kostadinov, 32, had asked to be released from his contract running until June 2000 and planned to work in the management of his former CSKA Sofia team.

The striker, who needs calf surgery and would not have been able to any take further part in the season, was a key member of the Bulgarian squad who reached the semifinals of the 1994 World Cup in the United States.



Dutch midfielder Clarence Seedorf smiles during a press briefing at Madrid restaurant on December 27. Seedorf confirmed his move from Real Madrid to Inter Milan. — AFP photo

Real's forgetful year

MADRID, Dec 28 (Reuters): Clarence Seedorf's Christmas Eve transfer from Real Madrid to Inter Milan will bring the struggling Spanish club a welcome 24-million dollars payday as a difficult and expensive year of rebuilding draws to a close.

Seedorf's departure from a club whose debts are estimated by some to be close to 200 million dollars makes him the 10th player from Real's 1998 European Cup winning squad to be offloaded.

Real are facing a punishing

status as one of the elite clubs of European football.

The current first-team squad at the Bernabeu certainly looks to be weaker than the one that travelled to Amsterdam to make soccer history in May 1998.

Of the 10 players to leave, only Seedorf, Christain Panucci, Predrag Mijatovic and Davor Suker were established first-team players but all 10 of them have been missed as the side has lost form and confidence.

Reserve goalkeeper Santiago Canizares, now with Valencia, has been the most damaging departure for the club as Bodo Illgner has struggled for form and fitness.

Since leaving, Canizares has emerged as the Spanish number one and will be Jose Antonio Camacho's first choice when the squad for Euro 2000 is announced.

Also going on to greater things has been reserve striker Dani Garcia, who left in 1998 for Real Mallorca, scored 12 goals in his first season and then transferred for 15.5 million dollars to Barcelona.

Another young forward Victor Sanchez also scored 12 goals for his new club Racing Santander, while winger Jose Amavisca — also picked up by Racing — continues to improve and is now a first-team regular.

Mijatovic and Suker departed the Real forward line in 1999 after falling out with former coach John Toshack.

WEAK DEFENCE

With current centre forward Fernando Morientes a long way from his best and Anelka so far contributing little more than the odd sensational headline, Raul Gonzalez has been leading the Real attack almost single-handed.

In defence, Real have missed the uncomplicated talents of Italian Panucci following his move to Inter Milan.

His replacement Michel Salgado, more a wing-back than a full-back, has occasionally looked dangerous with his forays up the wing but defensively Real have suffered, conceding 29 league goals in 17 games so far.

The other little-known players to have left have done just as well as their new clubs as their expensive replacements have at Real Madrid.

Central defender Fernando Sanz, the much-criticised son of the president, has started to rebuild his career at Malaga, while promising young midfielder Jaime Sanchez has found his feet at league leaders Deportivo Coruna.

In their stead came Brazilian defender Julio Cesar, who has since been relegated to the bench, and Toshack favourite Geremi Njitap, who has failed to convince new coach Vicente del Bosque.

Real can claim to have been unlucky with new signings Steve McManaman and Elvir Balic, both of whom have seen their progress held up by injury.

STABILITY NEEDED

But the suspicion remains that, more by poor judgement

than bad luck, the quality of players in the current squad has significantly dipped in the last couple of years.

Where Real have really failed, however, has been in formulating a long-term plan for the future — hardly surprising considering the turnover in coaches since 1998.

Jupp Heynckes was sacked just eight days after the European Cup win, while neither Guus Hiddink nor Toshack were given time to make a mark at the club.

Del Bosque is expected to make way for a more high-profile figure at the end of the season and the Real players now admit the club is crying out for some stability.

Argentine midfielder Fernando Redondo revealed the thinking in the dressing-room this week.

"The players have been talking about this among ourselves and we all agree we need a long-term project," Redondo said.

"What we're looking for is to follow the same line. That's beneficial for everyone — the players and the club."

Marseille start furnishing

Dugarry kept waiting

MARSEILLE, France, Dec 28: Marseille's mid-winter break clearout gathered pace Tuesday when their striker Kaba Diawara moved to arch-rivals Paris St Germain with PSG's attacking midfielder Jerome Leroy moving the opposite way, the south coast club revealed, reports AFP.

Other targets for the under-achieving French First Division side are two players in the English Premiership — Newcastle's French defender Franck Dumas and Coventry City's Moroccan star Mustapha Hadji, the 1998 African Player of the Year.

Sources at Marseille say the Dumas deal could be tied up within 24 hours although Newcastle boss Bobby Robson had previously insisted the defender was not for sale.

However, the Hadji move is a more difficult matter with Coventry's asking price of 4 million pounds (6.2 million dollars) believed to be too high.

Hadji's agent approached Marseille with the idea for the move. The club still hope to persuade Coventry by offering defender Eduardo Berizzo and South African international centre back Pierre Issa in part exchange.

Leroy will join his teammates on Wednesday. Marseille have already purchased defender Jean-Pierre Cyprien from Italian Serie A outfit Lecce over the festive period.

However, French World Cup winner Christophe Dugarry's return to his former club Bordeaux is still in the balance with Marseille insisting that the French champions raise

their offer from 30 million francs (4.6 million dollars) to 42 million francs.

The news came as Marseille returned to training after the Christmas break for the second half of the season with coach Bernard Casoni admitting his only aim is to avoid relegation.

Marseille had pledged sweeping changes in the playing staff over the holiday period but the only new face at training Monday was defender Cyprien, who has signed a six-month contract with a view to a longer deal.

Six players missed training with the most prominent absentee Dugarry, who is trying to leave the club after being particularly targeted by angry supporters.

Bordeaux, Dugarry's hometown club and the reigning French champions, are offering

Zebras gesture for millennium babies

DUISBURG, Germany, Dec 28: Any baby born on January 1, 2000 in a Duisburg hospital or anywhere within the city limits will be given life membership of German First Division club Duisburg, the Bundesliga outfit announced Tuesday, AFP.

The proud parents will also be presented with a romper suit in the club's "zebra stripes" colours for the lucky child and the family will be invited as VIPs to the first home match after the Bundesliga season resumes after the winter break in February 2000.

Parents have four weeks after the birth to claim their prize from the club, which is currently in the relegation zone of the First Division.

30 million francs (4.6 million dollars) while Marseille's sporting director Marcel Dib is asking for 42 million francs.

Dib said Monday: "If Bordeaux want a World Champion they must pay the price."

Dugarry is suffering from flu and has stayed in Bordeaux to recuperate but it is possible that Marseille will lower the asking price if Bordeaux skipper Michel Pavon will move to the Stade Velodrome.

Twenty-seven-year-old Dugarry is a much-maligned figure in France. He had two unsuccessful spells with AC Milan and Barcelona after making his name with the Bordeaux team that featured France 98 teammates Zinedine Zidane and Bixente Lizarazu. Zidane remains his close friend and business partner.

Dugarry returned to France with Marseille in 1998 but has not really made an impact with the Cote d'Azur club.

He was handed a five-match suspension by UEFA for his part in a brawl following the UEFA Cup semi-final with Bologna last season and then tested positive for Nandrolone over the summer.

However, Dugarry, who came on as a substitute during the World Cup Final win over Brazil, successfully persuaded anti-doping officials of his innocence.

Dugarry, the most vilified footballer in France, is desperate to leave Marseille after being particularly targeted by fans, who have made a habit of damaging cars and jostling players in recent weeks after a slump in form by the team that was edged to the First Division title by Bordeaux on the last day of last season.



International Master Ziaur Rahman (L), who emerged champion in the recently held Prime Bank International Rating chess tournament, receiving his prize from the State Minister for Youth and Sports Obaidul Quader yesterday.