

Star Sport

DHAKA SATURDAY, JANUARY 8, 2000 Email: dssports@bdonline.com

Column One SPORTS TALK



Brian Lara

(West Indies cricket captain) "People in the Caribbean have a right to be angry, but they are going to have to be patient because rebuilding West Indies cricket is going to take time."

After losing the one-day series to New Zealand.

Boost sports WHIZZ KID

COMPETITION FOR SCHOOL CHILDREN
Competition-125

✓ Tick the Correct Answers
Post to The Daily Star
Win attractive prizes

Competition closes at 8 pm
Jan 14 and draw
shortly afterwards

1 Who was the man-of-the-series in the Australia-Pakistan Tests?
Langer Potting Inzamam

2 Who was the highest "icket-taker in the Australia-Pakistan Test series?
Akram Fleming McGrath

3 How many Test hundreds has Mark Waugh scored to date?
15 16 17

4 Who became champ in the Keya Premier soccer?
Muktophda Mohammed Aramogh

5 Who lifted the Expatriates Open chess title?
Rezaul Zia Tanveer

Name
Class Roll No.
School Address

Phone: (if any)

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NOTICE

Due to some unavoidable reasons draw of the WHIZZ KID Competition-125 could not be held last night. It will now be held on January 14. -- Sports Editor

Umpires down under annoyed

BRISBANE, Jan 7: Australia's cricket umpires Friday reacted to persistent criticism of alleged bias and racism in their adjudications this summer, reports AFP.

At a meeting of Australian, Indian and Pakistan captains, coaches and managers, the umpires delivered a statement saying they were fed up with the constant criticism which had marred the international season here.

The umpires, led by Darrell Hair, addressed the usual pre-tournament meeting before the triangular one-day series begins at the Gabba on Sunday.

Tournament referee Cammie Smith Friday confirmed the statement was delivered but refused to divulge any details, insisting the meeting was confidential.

But according to sources reported by Australian Associated Press the umpires wanted team officials to clear the air after completing a Test season spiced with umpiring controversies and the banning of Pakistan pacer Manu Akhtar.

The young fast bowler was ruled out by the International Cricket Council for a suspect delivery action which was reported during the third Test against Australia in November.

Pakistan Cricket Board secretary Shaikat Rana inflamed the situation earlier this week when he suggested other players were escaping similar scrutiny.

Experienced Indian cricket journalists then accused Australia of "cultural elitism" in its dealings with Indian teams, saying the ICC banning had become a "black and white" issue.

Former Indian captain Dilip Vengsarkar joined in the criticism when he said there had been long-term problems with Australian umpires, although he did not believe it was racially motivated.

The umpires hit back Friday in the only forum available to them, with the ICC banning them from commenting to the media about the issue.

MCC arrive January 10

Sports Reporter



A 14-member Ma rylbone Cricket Club (MCC) team, led by Kent all-rounder Min Patel, will arrive here on January 10.

The tourists' three-week itinerary is made up of a three-day and four-day match as well as four limited-overs games.

Meanwhile, the International Cricket Council (ICC) in a letter to Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB), said it would grant first-class status to the longer versions provided the Bangladesh national team appeared.

The Englishmen open with a three-day match at the Rajshahi Stadium on January 14 and then return to the capital to play in a four-day encounter at the Bangabandhu National Stadium starting January 18.

They travel to Jessore and Chittagong for two limited-overs matches on January 23 and 25.

The BCB selected Jessore as host for the 50-over contest ahead of Sylhet.

The Bangabandhu National Stadium will stage two day-night games on January 28 and 29.

The world famous London club will return on January 31. With only six days to go before the three-day in Rajshahi, the BCB is yet to determine which team would be fielded.

According to acting BCB general secretary Mahmud Ul Haq Manu the board will notify its decision within the next few days.

"Initially we wanted an under-25 selection to play in Rajshahi. However, now we have to field the national team otherwise the ICC will not recognise it," said Manu.

"Tomorrow the matter will be decided and then the players will be called by January 10," he added.

On why Jessore was selected

as venue for the limited-overs game. The BCB official first said that facilities were inadequate at the Sylhet Stadium. Later he added that there was no fencing around the ground.

PLAYERS
Min Patel (skipper), Will House (Kent), Barry Hyam (Essex), Richard Johnson (Middlesex), Neil Killeen (Durham), Anthony McGrath (Yorkshire), Paul Nixon (Kent), Ryan Sidebottom (Yorkshire), Ben Smith (Leicestershire), John Stephenson (Hampshire), Matthew Wood (Yorkshire) and Gary Yates (Lancashire), Bill Athey, Mark Boocock.

Officials: Lt Col John Stephenson (manager), John Hampshire (umpire) and Alec Bragg (physiotherapist).

| DATE | MATCH | VENUE |
|-----------|---------------------|------------|
| Jan 14-16 | Three-day | Rajshahi |
| Jan 18-21 | Four-day | Dhaka |
| Jan 23 | Limited-overs game | Jessore |
| Jan 25 | Limited-overs game | Chittagong |
| Jan 28 | Limited-overs (D/N) | Dhaka |
| Jan 29 | Limited-overs (D/N) | Dhaka |
| Jan 31 | Depart | |

Lee has come to stay



SYDNEY, Jan 7 (Reuters) - Brett Lee, lightly built and with school-boy looks, scarcely seems like Australia's most ferocious fast bowler since Jeff Thomson and Dennis Lillee terrorised the world's best batsmen in the mid-1970s.

Yet appearances are certainly deceptive in the case of Lee, who burst onto the international cricket stage with 13 wickets in his first two Tests during Australia's recently-completed home series against India.

"He will do quick bowling what Shane Warne did to leg spin bowling," Australia's captain Steve Waugh forecast as Lee had some of the country's best judges waxing lyrical about his performances.

If his figures alone are any guide, the 23-year-old Lee looks destined for a long and fruitful Test career.

He had a match haul of seven for 78 in his debut against India in Melbourne last week, then followed up with six for 106 in Sydney in his second Test earlier this week. His tally of 13 Indian wickets cost an average of 13.78.

The blond paceman, who bowls at speeds in excess of 15 kph (94mph), first caught Waugh's eye when they were

playing for New South Wales in an inter-state match against Western Australia.

Fielding at gully, Waugh watched in admiration as Lee struck fear into the opposition

cannon into him. Impressed by what he saw, Waugh pushed Australia's selectors to pick Lee for the second Test against India.

Given his international chance after just 14 Sheffield Shield appearances, Lee announced his arrival in the most dramatic fashion.

He became the first Australia bowler in 22 years to take a wicket in his first over at Test-level when he bowled Sadagopan Ramesh with his fourth delivery, sending the ball crashing into the stumps with the batsman still on his backlift.

He also dispatched Rahul Dravid in his first spell before returning to snare three wickets in six balls.

Lee repeated his heroics in Sydney, condemning India's Ajit Agarkar to a world record four successive golden ducks when he dismissed him first ball on his way to taking six wickets in the game.

Lee made his first-class debut in 1994-95 but did not secure a permanent place in the New South Wales team until this season, partly because of a stress fracture in 1997 but also because of a youthful inability to translate pace into wickets.

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Iranian footballers practise at the Oakland Network Associates Coliseum in California on January 6. Iran will play in an exhibition match against Mexico on Sunday. —AFP photo

Iranians focus on football

OAKLAND, California, Jan 7: The Iranian football team practised Thursday in preparation for their historic three-game tour that includes the first match between Iran and the United States on US soil, reports AFP.

"The goal is football. We're happy to be here to play against three strong teams," Iranian head coach Mansour Pour-Heidari said. "Of course, it's true that sports brings people together and I'm happy if we can help narrow the gap between people."

Relations between the two countries were ruptured two decades ago by the rise to power of an Islamic fundamentalist regime in Iran, and the taking of US hostages in Tehran.

Although Washington and Tehran are negotiating the tricky path toward normalizing relations, the United States maintains an economic embargo against Iran, and accuses the nation of abetting international terrorism.

Iran plays Mexico on Sunday in Oakland, before travelling to Southern California for a match against Ecuador the following Wednesday at the Los Angeles Coliseum.

They play the United States on Sunday, January 16, in the Rose Bowl, site of the 1990 World Cup final.

US officials said 35,000 tickets have already been sold for the US-Iran match, which will be televised by the ESPN cable sports channel and Iranian television.

The Iranian team had to stop in Frankfurt, Germany, to pick up US visas Wednesday because the two countries do not have diplomatic relations.

Iran agreed to the trip only after assurances from the State Department and the US Soccer Federation that the delegation would not have to be fingerprinted to get visas. US immigration officials often fingerprint Iranians entering the United States.

Security is tight, with the US and Iranian soccer federations working with police in Oakland, Los Angeles and Pasadena for months to plan the trip. Bodyguards closed off the 12th floor of the hotel in downtown Oakland where the team was staying.

The only other top-level sporting exchanges involving visits between the two countries since 1979 have been wrestling competitions. A US wrestling team has competed in Iran and

an Iranian team has visited America.

The two countries also met in the 1998 World Cup in France, when Iran beat the United States 2-1.

Emilio Pozzi, managing director of events for the US Soccer Federation, said sports officials had been working since the World Cup to get approval from both governments and make security arrangements and other plans for the trip.

More than a dozen members of the Iranian national team play for clubs outside of Iran. Several of them were not able to make this trip because of their professional commitments.

Pour-Heidari said the main benefit of friendly matches like those in California is the chance to see the team playing together.

The team on the US trip is preparing for the Asian Nations Cup. Pour-Heidari said, adding that Iran has a separate national program at home including many younger players who are being evaluated for the 2002 World Cup.

After all the questions about the political significance of the trip, Zarrineh was asked if he would play for an American professional team.

Youth C'ships on despite curfews

COLOMBO, Jan 7 (AFP/AP): Sri Lanka's cricket board Friday said the under-19 World Cup tournament due to open here Sunday will go ahead despite curfews in the capital amid reports of suicide bombers infiltrating the capital Colombo.

Out of the 16 countries due to compete in the tournament, 12 have already arrived in the country, the Board of Control for Cricket in Sri Lanka (BCCSL) here said in a statement.

"The BCCSL is pleased to confirm that the World Youth Cricket Championship will go ahead as planned," the statement said.

However, it said that several practice matches had been cancelled in view of the curfew that was imposed from midnight Thursday till Friday afternoon in the capital.

The curfew was imposed to allow police and soldiers to conduct a house-to-house search for suspected Tamil Tiger guerrillas following Wednesday's suicide bombing outside Prime Minister's office here.

The suicide bomber and 12 others were killed in that attack.

Meanwhile, the International Cricket Council said Friday that the championship would be held as scheduled despite increased attacks by Tamil Tiger separatists.

"Most definitely the tournament is on," Ross Turner, a cricket development manager with the ICC told reporters. "I can say that the tournament will be well organised and there are no problems," Turner, a cricket development manager with the world's cricket body said.

ICC reviewing Shoib ban?

KARACHI, Jan 7: The International Cricket Council (ICC) has asked its advisory panel to review its decision to suspend Pakistani fast bowler Shoib Akhtar.

Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Tauqir Zia told Reuters by telephone from Islamabad that the decision was conveyed to him by ICC president Jagmohan Dalmiya on Friday.

"I had a telephone conversation with Dalmiya and he has told me ... the ICC advisory panel will review its decision and may suspend the ban on (Akhtar in) one-day matches in Australia," he said.

The suspension, imposed on December 30, has forced the world's fastest bowler out of the tri-nation one-day series involving Pakistan, India and Australia and starting on Sunday in Brisbane.

Zia said Dalmiya had indicated that the matter should be decided in the next 48 hours.

Zia argued: "If his action is doubtful while bowling a bouncer, he shouldn't be suspended from one-dayers because in that form of the game, bouncers are adjudged no-balls."

"We don't mind if the advisory panel takes its time to decide whether Akhtar should be allowed to play in tests."

John wants to be Bradman

SYDNEY, Jan 7: The son of Australia's greatest cricketer Donald Bradman has reclaimed his famous family name after almost three decades of living under an alias, a newspaper reported on Friday, according to AFP.

Determined to escape public and media scrutiny Bradman's only son John changed his surname to Bradsen in 1972.

But at a recent dinner in Melbourne to celebrate the naming of Sir Donald as the Hall of Fame's athlete of the century, he was introduced as John Bradman, the Sydney Morning Herald said.

In a 1972 newspaper article, John Bradman explained he had changed his name so he could step out of his father's shadow.

"I'm tired of people discovering who I am," wrote John. "I'm me. And I am no longer prepared to accept being seriously introduced as simply someone's son."

"I'm an individual, not a social souvenir."

John's move was respected by his father, who said at the time: "Only those who have had to live with the incessant strain of publicity can have any idea of its impact."

Don Bradman, 91, lives alone in Adelaide after the death of his wife three years ago and rarely meets visitors.

But John, 62, a constitutional and environmental lawyer, visits his father almost every evening after work.

Schuttler lifts off again

DOHA, Jan 7: Rainer Schuttler, who caused a major surprise by winning the first ATP Tour title of his career as a qualifier here last year, upset the seedings again Thursday, reports AFP.

Schuttler brought down the seventh-seeded Daniel Vacek 6-3, 6-2 and started to relive his desert dream by reaching the quarterfinals of the 1,000,000 dollar Mobil Millennium Tournament.

Tri-series starts tomorrow

Asian axis versus Aussies



BRISBANE, Jan 7: Bitter rivals India and Pakistan have united in a common goal to defeat world champions Australia when the limited-overs tri-series opens here on Sunday, reports AFP.

They believe the one-day contests will be more competitive than the recent Test series in which Steve Waugh's men swamped them both by identical 3-0 margins.

"One-day cricket is a new ball game, because everything depends on how you play that day," Indian captain Sachin

Australia's World Cup winning squad. Pakistan still nurse hopes that Shoaib will be available for the series. A decision on Pakistan's request to reconsider the ban is expected to be announced on Friday night by International Cricket Council president Jagmohan Dalmiya.

Dalmiya told reporters from his home in Calcutta that he was keen to arrive at a quick settlement of the raging controversy after consulting West Indian Clyde Walcott, the head of ICC's cricket committee.

"This thing has affected us all," Akram said. "I don't know

won a limited-overs tournament away from Asia after the World Championship of Cricket in Australia in 1985.

They begin the series under a cloud over the continued omission of former captain Mohammad Azharuddin, the world's most experienced one-day player, reportedly at the behest of Tendulkar and coach Kapil Dev.

The duo refused to discuss the issue, saying it was a "confidential" matter between them and the selectors.

But reports in the Indian media suggest that Azharuddin may well join the side if the bat-



SACHIN TENDULKAR

Tendulkar said. His Pakistani counterpart Wasim Akram added: "Australia may be the world champions, but no team can take anything for granted."

Odds, however, favour Australia, who defeated India in the super-six league and Pakistan in the final on their way to winning the limited-overs World Cup in England in June.

Pakistan's build-up for the gruelling 12-match preliminary league has been ruined by the ban on speedster Shoaib Akhtar for a suspect action and three successive defeats in warm-up matches.

India, who ended the Test series on Tuesday, have had to quickly get into the one-day mode without a warm-up match for their five one-day specialists who flew in earlier this week.

The series opens with a double-header here with Pakistan playing Australia on Sunday, before taking on India on Monday.

After four matches each across Australia, the top two teams will contest the best-of-three finals from February 2.

While new pace sensation Brett Lee joins 12 members of



WASIM AKRAM

what is happening, but hope the ICC will act quickly.

While Australia selected 13 players for the series and Pakistan 14, India has 16 players to choose from after opener Venkat Laxman's last-minute inclusion following his brilliant 167 in the third Test.

India, who have not won a Test match outside the sub-continent since 1986, have also not



STEVE WAUGH

ting falters in the first few matches.

A similar move is reportedly being made in Pakistan to draft out-of-favour opener Aamer Sohail after Akram's men lost two practice games to Australia A and one to Queensland.

The Pakistan Cricket Board has decided to wait till the first two games before taking any decision on the temperamental, but experienced Sohail.

WORLD SERIES FIXTURES

Schedule of the limited-overs tri-series between Australia, India and Pakistan which starts here on Sunday:

- Jan 9: Australia v Pakistan, Brisbane (day-night).
- Jan 10: India v Pakistan, Brisbane (day-night).
- Jan 12: Australia v India, Melbourne (day-night).
- Jan 14: Australia v India, Sydney (day-night).
- Jan 16: Australia v Pakistan, Melbourne.
- Jan 19: Australia v Pakistan, Sydney (day-night).
- Jan 21: India v Pakistan, Hobart.
- Jan 23: Australia v Pakistan, Melbourne (day-night).
- Jan 25: India v Pakistan, Adelaide (day-night).
- Jan 26: Australia v India, Adelaide (day-night).
- Jan 28: India v Pakistan, Perth (day-night).
- Jan 30: Australia v India, Perth.
- Feb 2: First final, Melbourne (day-night).
- Feb 4: Second final, Sydney (day-night).
- Feb 6: Third final (if required), Sydney (day-night).

A reserve day has been kept aside for the three finals in case of rain.

Serie A preview

Juve face the Parma test



MILAN, Jan 7: Juventus may have waited more than a year to go top of the Serie A, but they risk losing their place after just three days when they travel to Parma on Sunday, reports AFP.

Juventus are setting the pace in Italy for the first time since November 1998 after defeating Verona 1-0 at home on Thursday.

But Parma away is a very different proposition for coach Carlo Ancelotti, who has progressively hauled the club out of a crisis since taking over last February in the wake of Marcello Lippi's resignation.

"A lot of people didn't expect to see us top of the table at the start of 2000, and that's something the players should be proud of," he said. "It's a fair reward for all the work they've done."

"And I think that being top will give us something extra, another source of motivation," he said. "Obviously, it's a big responsibility but I'd always rather be a pacesetter than a pursuer."

With the top six clubs separated by just six points, Ancelotti was aware of the stakes against his old club: "This season, the matches against direct rivals for the title will be very important."

Parma's resurrection after an expected poor start has been one of the highlights of the season so far.

Beaten by Scottish champions Rangers in the Champions League qualifying round and down in the relegation zone at the start of October, they are now third in the table, just one

point behind Lazio and two behind their Turin rivals, after winning nine and drawing one of their last 11 games.

And now, in a match starting at 1200 GMT, they want Juventus for lunch.

"We've been preparing for playing at one o'clock in the afternoon, which is something totally new," said coach Alberto Malesani. "But I'm not worried about the time. My team are ready."

"We are a balanced side and we know how to soak up punishment. Rather than fortunate, I'd say that we are ruthless, and that we've been like that for at least the last 11 games in the league."

Sunday's match is set to be a battle of wills with the Serie A's top scorer, Argentinian Hernan Crespo of Parma, coming up against Ciro Ferrara's defence, the best in Italy with just seven goals conceded in 15 games.

A draw would certainly suit Lazio down to the ground.

A 2-0 upset to Venezia may have been the worst way to start the new year, but with just one point to make up on Juventus and a home game against Bologna, Lazio fans have every reason to be optimistic.

Juve-Parma is not the only clash though between title rivals this weekend, with fourth-placed AS Roma away to fifth-placed AC Milan.

Roma looked convincing in their 3-1 win over Bari, while Milan struggled after having midfielder Demetrio Albertini sent off as they edged relegation candidates Piacenza 1-0 on Thursday.

But home advantage at San Siro - Milan are unbeaten here this season - will improve the odds on the champions.

"Now we've got to try and win two matches on the trot - that's something we haven't managed to do yet, and which will be difficult to do now," said Milan coach Alberto Zaccheroni.

"I saw a team which behaved like the Milan who won the league last season, one that played for 90 minutes without any fear of losing."

Serie A fixtures on Sunday (1400 GMT unless stated):
Parma v Juventus (1200 GMT), Bari v Venezia, Cagliari v Piacenza, Lazio v Bologna, Perugia v Udinese, Torino v Lecce, Verona v Reggina, Fiorentina v Inter Milan (1930 GMT), AC Milan v AS Roma (1930 GMT). —AFP photo



Real Madrid's Brazilian superstar Roberto Carlos is all smiles during a press conference in Sao Paulo on January 6, a day after their World Club Championship game against Al Nassr. —AFP photo