

White departs from UCB

JOHANNESBURG, Jan 23: Controversial South African cricket president Raymond White resigned Saturday after being accused of retarding the racial transformation of the game, reports AFP.

White announced his resignation at a United Cricket Board council meeting after receiving a letter from black selector Gerald Majola urging him to quit.

"It has become clear to me that my continued presence as UCB president has become divisive in terms of the administration of the game in this country," White said in a statement.

"In the interests of cricket in South Africa, which I love passionately, I have decided to step down."

Majola, who clashed with White over the selection of an all-white combined team for a match against England last November, also called for the appointment of a black chief executive.

It seemed Saturday night this was possible, too, with UCB managing director Ali Bacher set to step aside soon in order to concentrate on organising the 2003 World Cup.

It was announced last year that Bacher would remove himself from the day to day administration of South African cricket but in recent months he said he has been urged to remain in charge of both roles.

That was not good enough for Majola, a Port Elizabeth businessman and former batsman in black provincial cricket. Majola's letter called for a black chief executive.

"It is vitally important that during the World Cup and the period leading to it that blacks start playing a vital role in the running of the game," Majola said in his letter.

Bacher was believed to have accepted Saturday that he would not be able to do both jobs.

Liverpool drop

From page 13
"We looked very nervous. Last week we took an absolute pasting at Newcastle but you could see the confidence come back after our second goal."

Walter Smith came down the touch line at the end and I heard him complaining about two pucky goals. I don't care how we get the goals. I would have liked a penalty goal.

Newcastle's Bobby Robson claimed his side had been mugged in typical Wimbledon style as they left Selhurst Park without a point.

"I think Wimbledon have done to us what they have done to many teams - it's been a smash and grab job again."

"We had more possession of the ball and we had more entries in their box than they did against us."

Despite a new strike pairing of Lesman George Weah and 10 million pound (16 million dollar) Englishman Chris Sutton, Chelsea continued their mediocre league form with a goalless draw at Aston Villa while Derby and Coventry also failed to find the net in their clash.

Pakistan bow

From page 13
Both teams made one change from their previous matches. Australia brought back fast bowler Brett Lee in place of Glenn McGrath who was granted a match off to be with his wife and newly-born son.

Pakistan dropped veteran fast bowler Waqar Younis, who was given just two overs against India on Friday, and replaced him with all-rounder Mahmood.

SCOREBOARD
Scoreboard of the tri-series one-day international between Australia and Pakistan on Sunday:

AUSTRALIA			
M Waugh c Moin b Razaq	20		
Gilchrist c Youhana b Akram	13		
Ponting lbw b Afridi	53		
Bevan c Moin b Afridi	83		
Symonds c Moin b Shoab	35		
Wagh c Akram b Shoab	17		
St run out	12		
Martyn not out	12		
Fleming st Moin b Saqlain	10		
B Lee st Moin b Saqlain	1		
MacGill not out	0		
Extras: lb-3, nb-5, w-2	10		
Total: (All out in 50 overs) 260			
Fall of wickets: 1-29; 2-56; 3-122; 4-188; 5-203; 6-234; 7-235; 8-253; 9-255			
Bowler			
Akram	10	1	42
Shoab	9	1	49
Razaq	8	0	42
Mahmood	6	0	34
Saqlain	8	0	45
Afridi	9	0	45
PAKISTAN			
Anwar c Martyn b B Lee	11		
Afridi run out	45		
Ijaz b S Lee	85		
Inzamam c and b S Lee	5		
Youhana c S Lee b M Waugh	33		
Moin lbw b B Lee	12		
Razaq run out	12		
Mahmood b MacGill	5		
Akram c M Waugh b S Lee	14		
Saqlain b S Lee	2		
Akhtar not out	0		
Extras: b-6, lb-8, nb-1, w-6	21		
Total: (All out in 48.5 overs) 245			
Fall of wickets: 1-27; 2-88; 3-108; 4-140; 5-201; 6-215; 7-226; 8-238; 9-245			
Bowler			
Fleming	9	0	44
B Lee	10	0	48
MacGill	10	1	48
S Lee	8.5	0	37
Symonds	5	0	28
M Waugh	6	0	28

Result: Australia won by 15 runs.
Man-of-the-match: Michael Bevan
Next match: India v Pakistan at Adelaide on Tuesday (D/N).

STANDINGS				
Team	M	W	L	Pts
Australia	6	5	1	10
Pakistan	6	3	3	6
India	4	0	4	0



Charles Akonnor (R) of Ghana locked in a tussle with Cameroon's Wome Pierre during their African Nations Cup opener at Accra on January 22. — AFP photo

Cameroon hold hosts

ACCRA, Jan 23: Cameroon dropped hints Saturday in a 1-1 draw with African Nations Cup co-hosts Ghana that they are ready to reclaim their position as kings of African football, reports AFP.

The opening match of the biennial, 16-team championship saw the Indomitable Lions from Central Africa create and waste a host of chances and would not have been flattered by a three-goal winning margin.

It was an otherwise impressive start to Group A for a country which won the event twice and were runners-up once in the 1980s before gradually slipping into mediocrity.

Dreadlocked Liverpool defender Rigobert Song ensured that goalkeeper Boukar Alloum

had a largely inactive afternoon and West Ham United midfielder Marc-Vivien Foe was superb during the first half.

Italy-based striker Patrick Mboma could spend the rest of the three-week tournament wondering how he failed to convert a simple second-half chance after goalkeeper Richard Kingston parried a cross to his feet.

Kingston led a charmed life in the opening half with Cameroon repeatedly waltzing through a fragile Black Stars defence only for Song, Joseph-Desire Job and Salomon Olembe to spur chances.

Ghana, who began impressively with slick, short-passing movements, fell behind after 19 minutes when Job crossed to the far post. Laurent Mayer rifled the ball against the crossbar and captain Foe headed home the rebound.

Even after Kwame Ayew levelled in the 56th minute through a rasping drive there was a chance for Cameroon to clinch the three points, but Samuel Eto'o saw his late header come back off the crossbar.

Ghana, four-time champions and second favourites behind co-hosts Nigeria to win the first continental championship of the new century, rarely recaptured their impressive build-up form under Italian coach Giuseppe Dossena.

The Black Stars return to action on Thursday against minnows Togo, who beat them at the 1998 tournament, and Cameroon tackle Cote d'Ivoire in a potential thriller the following day.

Custodian making history

ACCRA, Jan 23: Cote d'Ivoire goalkeeper Alain Gouamene will become the first player to feature in seven African Nations Cup tournaments if he faces Togo Monday in a Group A match, reports AFP.

The 33-year-old star from French second division club Toulouse shares the honour of playing in six editions with compatriot Abdoulaye Traore.

Rabah Madjer of Algeria, Emmanuel Kunde of Cameroon and Worku Mengistu of Ethiopia. He could also overtake Kunde, who has featured in a record 23 games at the biennial tournament, by also playing in the other first-round matches against Cameroon and co-hosts Ghana.

Gouamene, the penalty shootout hero when Cote d'Ivoire defeated Ghana in the 1992 final, refuses to dismiss

Togo, who are considered likely whipping boys of the mini-league.

"I am particularly concerned about Togo," Gouamene said at his team hotel in the Ghanaian capital. "They have been written off by everyone which means the pressure is on us and off them."

Victory will take the Ivorian Elephants to the top of the standings after Ghana survived a first-half onslaught from Cameroon Saturday to force a 1-1 draw they did not deserve.

Gouamene, defender Patrick Zere and midfielder Donald Olivier Sie are the experienced core of the team while much is expected from promising striker Bonaventure Kalou of Dutch club Feyenoord.

The tournament also offers disciplinary Martin Gbonke Tia a chance for personal glory as he assisted coach Martial Yeo with the 1992 cup-winning squad.

Serie A

Inept Lazio limping

MILAN, Jan 23: Disappointing Lazio took provisional top spot in the Italian championship on Saturday night following a 0-0 draw at Cagliari, reports AFP.

Lazio, equal on 36 points with Juventus who travel to Reggina on Sunday, were not nearly as authoritative as in the first half of the season.

Earlier, city rivals Roma thanked second-half goals from Eusebio Di Francesco and Francesco Totti for closing the gap on the leading two following a 2-1 home win over Piacenza.

The win leaves Roma in third spot with 35 points from 18 games.

Lazio controlled the match for most of the first half but their forwards were just not able to breach the Sardinian side's defence.

In the second period, Cagliari were less defensive-minded and Uruguay's Fabian O'Neill proved dangerous for the Lazio keeper.

Lazio however, might complain for the second week running that they should have had a penalty. But the point won in Sardinia on Saturday night joins a growing body of statistics that suggest big trouble at the club.

Lazio haven't scored once in their last three away matches - losing 2-0 to Venezia in their first match of the New Year and following up with goalless draws against Reggina and now Cagliari.

Averaged out, the meagre five points earned in four games since the Christmas break is worthy of a team in the bottom half of the Serie A - much less the stuff of Italy's future champions.

Coach Sven Goran Eriksson was determined to put a brave face on the latest setback, though he regretted both the lack of a penalty and the continued absence of injured Chilean striker Marcelo 'El Matador' Salas.

"I just don't know what you have to do get a penalty, because that penalty was an obvious one. But the referee didn't see it."

Defending his team, he said: "It was our best performance of 2000. We had the right attitude. We showed grit and determination. And we created a lot of scoring chances. But we just didn't score."

"And there's no doubt about it, that's been our problem recently. There's no doubt either that Marcelo's absence has made itself felt."

"We knocked a lot of balls into the penalty area and someone with his ability can score with every part of his body."

Summing up, the Swede said: "I'm still confident, after a performance like this one. If we continue like this, we are on the right road."

A doubting Gazzetta dello Sport added: "Yes, but where to?"

Roma made a desperately ponderous start as they laboured to break down a tight visiting defence and then found themselves behind at the interval after Giampietro Piovani drove home a freekick seconds before the break.

Second-bottom Piacenza were aiming to hold on for the three points which would have boosted their struggle to avoid relegation.

But after a talking-to from coach Fabio Capello at half-time, Roma shot out of the blocks and Di Francesco equalised within 60 seconds of the restart with a long-range plevier.

Despite having French defender Vincent Candela dismissed for two yellow cards the hosts secured the win when star striker Totti plundered a goal from close-range in the 75th minute, following a cross from Brazilian Cafu, although the Piacenza defence claimed handball against the forward.

Roma's Japanese star Hidetoshi Nakat sending a through pass during the Serie A encounter against Piacenza at Rome on January 22. — AFP photo

Diego the Politician!

HAVANA, Jan 23: Argentinian football legend Diego Maradona called Sunday for six-year-old Elian Gonzalez to be returned home to Cuba from the United States, reports AFP.

Maradona, 39 and an admirer of Cuban President Fidel Castro, said: "I am not a politician but a father of two daughters, here we are dealing with a little boy who has lost his mother and who wants to be with his father but is under pressure."

Maradona's remarks are perhaps not surprising given that he is in Cuba as a guest of Castro and is being treated for his heart and cocaine addiction problems on the Caribbean island following his admission to a Uruguayan clinic earlier this month after a cocaine overdose.

Elian was rescued off the Florida coast on November 25, after he was found clinging to an inner tube, one of three survivors of a shipwreck that killed his mother. The group was illegally trying to reach US shores.

Elian's father, Juan Miguel Gonzalez, who was divorced from the mother and remains in Cuba, has repeatedly demanded the boy's return.

The United States Government has indicated the boy will be returned but anti-Castro Cuban groups in the United States want the boy to remain there.

Maradona was visited by Castro in the clinic Saturday.

Luxemburgo uneasy with refereeing

LONDRINA, Brazil, Jan 23: Brazil coach Wanderley Luxemburgo on Saturday voiced concerns at the standard of refereeing at the South American Olympic qualifying tournament, reports AFP.

"We knew the referees officiating at this tournament were not part of the cream of the South American Football Confederation's refereeing committee," said Luxemburgo asked about Peruvian official Jorge Torres, who awarded Group A rivals Chile two controversial penalties in a 2-1 win Friday over Ecuador.

"I don't know if they were penalties or not but I have the feeling that Chile are benefiting from the referees," said Luxemburgo.

Brazil face Ecuador on Sunday needing a win to turn the heat on Colombia and Chile, who both have four points from two matches to date.

The top two teams in the group qualify for a round-robin phase including the top two sides in Group B, currently headed by Argentina, which will determine the two countries who tickets for Sydney.

Luxemburgo also said he considered Brazil's disappointing opening 1-1 draw against Chile as water under the bridge.

Brazilian midfielder Mozart is meanwhile not headed for Europe, as had appeared likely amid reports of interest in the 20-year-old from Spanish Primera Liga outfit Valencia.

Mozart, full name Mozart Santos Batista who plays for Brazilian first division side Curitiba, instead has agreed a 4.5 million-dollar deal with Rio-based Flamengo.

"I am delighted that the soap opera of my move has come to a happy conclusion," said Mozart, who has five Brazilian caps.

Primera Liga Welcome win for Deportivo

MADRID, Jan 23: Spanish league leaders Deportivo La Coruna won their first league match of the new millennium on Saturday, beating Real Betis 2-0 to consolidate their position, reports AFP.

With 40 points, Deportivo, who have just ended a series of four games without a win, are now five points ahead of second-placed Real Zaragoza, who play at Real Oviedo on Sunday.

It was the Galician club's first win since December 19 against Celta Vigo.

Barcelona, in third spot six points behind, entertain Racing Santander.

Deportivo owed their win to their foreign legion of Portugal's Pedro Pauleta, Holland's Roy Makaay and Argentina's Jose Oscar Turu Flores.

Pauleta opened the scoring in the 42nd minute with superb technical ability in keeping with compatriot Luis Figo, who plays for Barcelona.

From a header across goal by Makaay, the former Salamanca player pretended to volley, then outwitted the defender for an easy shot into the net.

In time added on at the end of the match, Makaay scored his 10th goal of the season after good work by Turu Flores.

Betis, who have been disappointing this season and lie only in 13th place, rarely threatened the goal of Deportivo's Cameroon keeper Jacques Songo'o.

Former Barcelona player Angel Manuel Cuellar did however have a shot which flew over the crossbar in the second half.

M'singh cricket

MYMENSINGH, Jan 23: Shaheed Rafiq Sangsard earned a massive 9-wicket victory over Al-Helal SC in the Beg Rim Premier Division Cricket League at the local Circuit House ground today, reports UNB.

M'singh soccer

MYMENSINGH, Jan 23: Nabanur Shishu Kishore played to a 2-2 draw with Friends Eleven in the Beg-Tyre First Division football league at local stadium today, reports UNB.



HAPPY IN HAVANA: A visibly relaxed Diego Maradona waves at photographers while taking a stroll with wife Claudia Villafane in the garden of Hotel Las Praderas at Havana on January 22. — AFP photo

Latin American Olympic qualifying

Laborious wins for Chile, Peru

LONDRINA, Brazil, Jan 23(AFP): Chile underlined their claim for an Olympic berth on Friday night by overcoming tough resistance from Ecuador in Group A of the Latin American qualifying tournament, a 2-1 win taking them joint top of the table.

Meanwhile, at Cascavel, Ten-man Peru got their show back on the road Saturday when they beat Paraguay 4-3 in Group B.

CHILE-ECUADOR
The Chileans almost paid the price, however, for assuming Ecuador would prove a much easier obstacle than Brazil, again whom they managed a 1-1 draw in their opening match.

Ecuador had the temerity to take the lead through Reasco in the 19th minute and Chile were fortunate that fortune smiled on them twice thereafter as Tapia netted twice from the penalty spot - the second in the final minute - to take the three points.

Colombia head the group on

goal difference from Chile after a hugely disappointing 1-1 draw against unfancied Venezuela.

Castillo shot Colombia in front after 27 minutes but Venezuela, expected to be group whipping boys, refused to buckle and Veïma bagged them an unexpected point eight minutes from time.

By all accounts Chile were fortunate not to suffer an embarrassing defeat as the two penalties awarded to Nelson Acosta's side were highly contentious.

It was more than their unimaginative football had deserved but with a game against Venezuela to come Chile will feel confident of finishing in the top two in the group and making the round-robin phase which will determine the two qualifiers for Sydney.

PERU-PARAGUAY
Both sides shrugged off a pitiful crowd of only a few hundred to serve up an entertaining game at Cascavel's Estadio Olimpico despite the stifling mid-afternoon heat.

Paraguay took the lead on 39 minutes through Roque Santa Cruz after Peruvian keeper

Marco Flores flapped at a high ball and three minutes later Peru had Luis Cordero dismissed for a foul on Ever Gimenez which might have merited only a yellow card.

Ecuadorian match official Byron Moreno decided otherwise.

However, Claudio Pizarro, who plays his club football for German side Werder Bremen, wrested the tie around for the Peruvians after the break with quickfire goals in the 54th and 59th minutes.

Santa Cruz put the Paraguayans back in the hunt at 2-2 with his second on 62 minutes and almost straight after the restart it was 3-2 for the Paraguayans courtesy of Carlos Perez.

Peru rallied strongly, however, and Mario Gomez Urbina levelled after 67 minutes before Pizarro, on this occasion aptly nicknamed the Conquistador, completed his hat-trick with 13 minutes remaining.

The three points moved Peru level with Argentina at the top of the group, though having played an extra game.

Algeria's test of character

KUMASI, Ghana, Jan 23: Algeria coach Nasser Sandjak faces a baptism of fire when his team meet the Democratic Republic of Congo Monday in an African Nations Cup Group B match, reports AFP.

French-born Sandjak, 39, was in charge of a Parisian third division club just two months ago when he became the seventh coach to handle the Desert Warriors within two years.

The comedy of changes reached farcical proportions as former African Footballer of the Year Rabah Madjer quit after arguing with the sports minister during a live television show.

"It is a great honour and responsibility for me to be put in charge of the Algerian national team and the potential of the players at my disposal is considerable," the latest coach says.

Sandjak, whose brother Laziz is a former Algerian international, took the North Africans to Brazil for a warm-up match against Vasco da Gama this month which they lost 7-0 to further erode brittle morale.

After finishing among the top four at five of six African tournaments from 1980, Algeria have slumped dramatically and lost their three first-round matches at the previous finals in Burkina Faso.

The team will be built around Tunisia-based defender Rezkil Amrouche, senior midfielders Moussa Saib, Mahieddine Meïtah and Bilal Dziri and striker Hamid Merakchi.

It is not a line-up designed to instil fear into rivals, especially when the opposition is the physically-intimidating Congolese, who surprised even themselves by finishing third behind Egypt and South Africa

two years ago.

Financial restrictions due to civil war forced coach Basilia Lusadusu to rely more on local players than his predecessors and he chose 10, including five from champions Daring Club Motema Pembe.

Goalkeeper Nkome Tokala is one of six survivors from the 1998 squad, Kabwe Kasongo and Ezele Bakasu are the defensive pillars, Emeke Esanga the midfield dynamo and Jean-Banza Kasongo a quick, skilful striker.

Algeria and Congo share the problem of long-running civil war, which cuts funding and rules out visits from top-class opponents, resulting in them being the poorest prepared nations among the 16 contenders.

South Africa are favoured to top Group B and with Gabon lacking experience at the highest level, Algeria and Congo could well be fighting for second spot and a place in the quarter-finals.

Capriati feels more mature

MELBOURNE, Jan 23 (Reuters): The last time Jennifer Capriati was a quarter-finalist at the Australian Open was a long time ago - almost a different lifetime.

It was 1993 and she was 16-years-old, proud owner of an Olympic gold medal and famous for being the youngest prize money millionaire in tennis.

And although Capriati lost 7-5, 6-2 to Germany's Steffi Graf, few expected her to have to wait long for a Grand Slam title.

Then, later that year, came her sudden fall from grace, humiliating arrests for shoplifting and marijuana possession, and a long, painful climb back up the rankings.

This time around, Capriati is older, wiser and fitter.

Today, the 23-year-old beat Switzerland's Patty Schnyder

6-3, 4-6, 6-1 to confirm her return to the top ranks of women's tennis.

"First of all I'm older and I am just a lot stronger physically, in better shape," Capriati said. "I think also I just have more variety now."

"I'm very excited. Finally I got past the fourth round mark there," she added. "Now I'm in the quarters, and I feel confident."

"I think I'm just a lot stronger mentally, and I just really focus," Capriati said of her new attitude.

At 14, the New Yorker was the youngest woman to reach the semifinals at the French Open. Now she is an old-timer.