

Ban foreign players, says Wessels

JOHANNESBURG, Mar 31 (Internet report): The inclusion of a foreigner in provincial teams is a luxury South African cricket can no longer afford...

Lee, McGrath

From Page 13 Australia's premier pace bowler Glenn McGrath grabbed 4-58 off 21.5 overs to take his career Test wicket haul to 286...

Glenn McGrath was tremendous again but I thought, all round, it was probably our best day on tour in the field...

Once again New Zealand's top order led down the side, after being sent into bat, with the Kiwis teetering at 53 for four after the opening 90 minutes...

McMillan looked in aggressive touch with 14 fours off 145 balls before he fell to Lee playing needlessly to a delivery purposefully wide of his off-stump...

Lee gained his revenge on Cairns 30 minutes later when the prodigious-hitting all-rounder holed out to a diving Danicu Martyn at third man for 37 off 92 balls with six fours...

It was all downhill after that for New Zealand with Paul Wiseman gloving a sweep shot onto his stumps off Warne for one and newcomer Daryl Tuffey and Shayne O'Connor falling to McGrath...

Lee chipped in with the wickets of Sinclair for 19 and Astle, out second ball leg before wicket...

The Australians had to negotiate five overs in fading light after the day's play went into overtime because of a tardy Australian bowling rate...

Left-arm swing bowler O'Connor beat Hayden, playing his first Test in three years, several times with late movement off the pitch before he coaxed the big Queenslander to snick to Parore...

Australia have already clinched the series 2-0 and are chasing their 10th consecutive Test victory here...

SCOREBOARD Table with columns for batsmen (Horne, Gilchrist, McGrath, Spearman, Warner, Lee, Sinclair, Fleming, Astle, McMillan, Cairns, Martyn, Parore, Wiseman, Tuffey, O'Connor, Extras) and bowlers (McGrath, Lee, Warner, Miller, Martyn, Hayden, Slater, Warne, Extras) with runs, overs, and wickets.

Serie A preview

It's now or never for Lazio



MILAN, Mar 31: Lazio face their moment of truth this weekend in a do-or-die battle with Juventus...

Both teams are six points clear of Lazio after their defeat here to AC Milan last weekend - but a full 10 points in front of third-placed AC Milan...

Unbeaten at home all season, after winning 12 of their 14 games there, the odds are clearly on Juventus' side...

However, a second consecutive defeat after their upset at San Siro really would throw the championship wide open...

Team morale would be badly hit and they already have a much tougher fixture list ahead...

Veron is on a roll after scoring the winner in last weekend's derby against AS Roma and bagging two more in Argentina's 4-1 win over Chile...

Now he wants to use that form in Turin on Saturday night, when Lazio try to halve Juventus' lead to three points...

Juventus, who are coming off a 2-0 defeat here to AC Milan, will be in big trouble if they lose a second time in eight days...

But Waugh undaunted kept Lee in the bowling attack and he shared McMillan in his next over when the No.6 edged to Gilchrist...

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Bundesliga preview

Top two look for edge

MUNICH, Mar 31: Bayern Munich and Bayer Leverkusen go into this weekend's Bundesliga action neck and neck but Bayern could well have got their nose in front by Saturday night, reports AFP...

The reigning champions visit seventh-placed VfL Wolfsburg comfortably in the knowledge that they have never even dropped a point against the UEFA Cup hopefuls...

After Bayern Munich's disappointing result last week when they had to twice come from behind to salvage a draw at home against Kaiserslautern, Ottmar Hitzfeld will be hoping to fine tune his side before the midweek Champions League quarter-final first leg clash with Porto in Portugal...

Bayern have had a relatively smooth ride through the group phases of the European tournament but Porto throw up a formidable task as the knockout stages kick in...

Bayer Leverkusen face an awkward trip to Munich 1860, who are hanging on to the last Champions League spot for next season on goal difference over Kaiserslautern...

Both teams are coming off poor results last week, Leverkusen being held 1-1 at home by relegation candidates SC Freiburg and Munich who were comfortably beaten 2-0 by Hamburg SV...

Friday: SC Freiburg v SpVgg Unterhaching, SSV Ulm v MSV Duisburg

Saturday: Borussia Dortmund v Hamburg SV, Eintracht Frankfurt v Arminia Bielefeld, Hertha Berlin v Schalke 04, VfL Wolfsburg v Bayern Munich, 1860 Munich v Bayer Leverkusen

Sunday: Hansa Rostock v Werder Bremen, Kaiserslautern v VfB Stuttgart

Scottish Premiership Ragers already celebrating

GLASGOW, Mar 31: Rangers virtually assured their 49th Scottish Premier League title when they crushed Celtic 4-0 last Saturday to extend their lead over their Glasgow rivals to 15 points, reports AFP...

And faced with basement club Aberdeen on Saturday, Dick Advocaat's men can move even closer to retaining their crown with just ten games to go...

The reigning champions top the table with 65 points, 15 clear of Celtic, with Edinburgh club Hearts in third on 40...

Rangers, however, refused to rest on their laurels and are already looking to strengthen their squad for next season...

Advocaat is hoping to capture Fernando Ricksen from AZ Alkmaar for a fee believed to be around 3.75 million pounds (6 million dollars)...

The 24-year-old was at Ibrox on Thursday to finalise the deal and become the eighth Dutchman at the club...

Right-back Ricksen will join forces again with Advocaat, his former youth coach, and was captain of the Dutch Under-23 side...

Ricksen will see out the rest of the season with the Dutch club before returning to Glasgow in July...

Both Celtic and Hearts, meanwhile, will qualify for the UEFA Cup should they stay in the top three when the season ends - with Rangers almost assured a place in the Champions League provided they win a two-legged play-off...

Celtic, still reeling after last Sunday's humiliation, were dealt another blow in midweek when Co Adriaanse - one of the leading candidates for the manager's post at Parkhead - joined Dutch giants...

FIXTURES (kick-off 15:00GMT unless stated): Saturday: Aberdeen v Rangers, Dundee v Hearts, Hibernian v Dundee Utd, Motherwell v St Johnstone

Sunday: Celtic v Kilmarnock (k/o 18:05)

Keegan won't treat Shearer differently

LONDON, Mar 31: England coach Kevin Keegan said on Friday that he would not hesitate and drop captain Alan Shearer during Euro 2000 in what will be his swansong tournament, reports AFP...

Keegan, who brought Shearer back to his native Newcastle from Blackburn Rovers during his tenure as coach, denied that he would be affected by the memory of the hail of abuse one of his predecessors Graham Taylor received when he substituted the scoring legend Gary Lineker at Euro 92...

"People underestimate Alan and me if they think anything is guaranteed. If I think I need to change Alan Shearer I will change him," he told the Daily Mail...

"What happened over Gary Lineker wouldn't prevent me taking him off, Alan knows that - I don't need to say it," he added...

As for who might partner Shearer up front Keegan was optimistic that injury-plagued Liverpool duo Michael Owen and Robbie Fowler would be fit for selection when he finalises the squad in two months time...

Lee Bowyer, 23, and Jonathan Woodgate, 20, appeared before Leeds magistrates on March 17, accused of causing grievous bodily harm with intent and affray...

Primera Liga preview

History not in leaders' favour

MADRID, Mar 31: Deportivo La Coruna, without a single Spanish league championship in their 94-year history, take on bottom club Sevilla on Sunday in an attempt to widen their two-point lead at the top, reports AFP...

A couple of times last decade Deportivo collapsed when it seemed it would have been easier to win the league and, with just eight matches left, they will be hoping self-doubt does not creep in again...

Sixteen-time champions Barcelona, who have cantered back to second spot after a slow start to the season, host depleted Valencia and their perennial rivals Real Madrid visit Real Sociedad in Saturday evening's match...

Valencia, who recently qualified for the Champions League quarter-finals, have a long injured list while Barcelona's international stars might be tired after midweek internationals and a month of league and Champions League action...

Madrid, Spain's third Champions League quarter-finalist, at least appear to have won their battle with French striker Nicolas Anelka after he apologized to his teammates for refusing to train for three days, are just six points off top spot...

Anelka, who has a history of temperamental outbursts, was suspended for 45 days without pay on March 13 and was subsequently ostracized and forced to train alone following his stand...

Madrid midfielder Guti, who himself has had disciplinary problems this season being sent-off in the inaugural World clubs championship and in Real's final second phase Champions League match with Rosenborg, believes the Sociedad game is vital to their title ambitions...

"If we don't win on Saturday against Sociedad, our hunt for the title will be over," he said. Guti added it would be a tough game as the Basque side have it all to play for, hovering just two points above a relegation position in 16th spot...

Real's star striker Fernando Morientes and captain Fernando Hierro are still out injured making it an even more difficult task...

Athletic Bilbao, on a run of seven matches without a win, are only five points above a relegation spot and will hope to end that sequence at home to Atletico Madrid...

FIXTURES: Real Sociedad v Real Madrid

Sunday Rayo Vallecano v Numancia, Celta Vigo v Real Valladolid, Mallorca v Espanyol, Racing Santander v Alaves, Sevilla v Deportivo La Coruna, Real Oviedo v Malaga, Real Zaragoza v Real Betis, Barcelona v Valencia, Athletic Bilbao v Atletico Madrid

Hierro believes the Anelka affair is over

MADRID, Mar 31: Real Madrid captain Fernando Hierro on Thursday said after training that the affair surrounding suspended French striker Nicolas Anelka was now closed, reports AFP...

Anelka, who has a history of temperamental outbursts, refused to train for three days earlier this month. He was suspended for 45 days without pay on March 13 and was subsequently ostracized and forced to train alone...

"There is nothing to say - the debate is over. It's the club's decision and we will respect that," Hierro said on Anelka's rejoining of the team early Wednesday...

"We spoke about the affair in the locker rooms and we think it's better to concentrate on the football side of things," Hierro added, the other players would be refusing to comment further on the matter...

Anelka's salary remains suspended, according to club spokesman Jaime Ussia...

Olympics won't halt Spanish league

BARCELONA, Spain, Mar 30: The Spanish Football Federation announced here Thursday that the Spanish league championship will not postpone any games during the Sydney Olympic tournament that kicks off in September, reports AFP...

Bulgarian soccer star Krassimir Balakov (C) gives his footprint on cement which will be placed on the Wall of Glory in a sports complex in capital Sofia on March 30, Balakov last week announced that he would join the Bulgarian national team again. He quit the national side during the World Cup finals in France in 1998. -AFP photo

Premiership preview

Who can stop Man. United?

LONDON, Mar 31: Title celebrations have virtually begun at Old Trafford although the fat lady has yet to break into song with eight games to go and 24 points still to play for in the race for the English Premiership crown, reports AFP...

With a seven point lead over their closest challengers Leeds, and a goal difference worth another point, Manchester United are firmly on course to retain their title...

United are undefeated at the Theatre of Dreams all season and the visit of West Ham on Saturday should pose few problems for Sir Alex Ferguson's Treble winners...

The Reds are expected to be at full strength, Ryan Giggs, Ole Gunnar Solskjaer, Henning Berg, Jaap Stam and Mark Bosnich were on international duty this week - but all have returned free from injury...

United are red hot 2-7 favourites with British bookmakers and history tells us not to back against the title-toppers...

The reigning champions have an impressive record against the Hammers, winning all of their last nine games against the east London club on home soil...

The visitors do not travel well and with just three victories on the road all season, it is hard to envisage anything other than a comfortable home win...

MLS to submit application for ladies' pro league

NEW YORK, Mar 31: Major League Soccer, the struggling men's pro league, announced Thursday that it will become the second group to submit an application for a professional women's football league in the United States, reports AFP...

On February 15, John Hendricks of Discovery Communications announced that a petition was sent to the US Soccer Federation for the formation of the Women's United Soccer Association, to begin Spring 2001...

On Thursday, MLS officials said they were sending a letter to US Soccer, notifying the sport's governing body of its interest in forming a women's league...

According to US Soccer, after all qualified and interested groups have been identified, a completed application and all related documentation must be submitted to the federation by May 1...

After a review process and full report, US Soccer's National Council will vote on sanctioning for one women's pro league at its annual general meeting on August 16-20...

Both interested entities will be looking to build on the popularity of the US Women's Soccer Team, which captured the World Cup eight months ago...

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Schuster not a Ribbeck fan

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"After Euro 2000, that must be the end for Ribbeck," said Schuster, who was speaking after Germany's 1-1 draw in a friendly international against Croatia in Zagreb...

"He must not stay as the national coach. I do not want to be harsh but he is not capable of carrying out the inevitable reconstruction that is necessary," said Schuster, who was a member of the German side that won the European Championship in 1990...

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Veron plots Juve's downfall

MILAN, Mar 31: Lazio's midfielder star Juan Sebastian Veron warned Juventus on Friday that he was ready to beat them single-handed in this weekend's crucial championship match, reports AFP...

Veron is on a roll after scoring the winner in last weekend's derby against AS Roma and bagging two more in Argentina's 4-1 win over Chile in a 2002 World Cup qualifier in midweek...

Now he wants to use that form in Turin on Saturday night, when Lazio try to halve Juventus' lead to three points and throw the Serie A championship wide open again...

Juventus, who are coming off a 2-0 defeat here to AC Milan, will be in big trouble if they lose a second time in eight days...

"I say that we can win it, and that if we do, they'll go to pieces," Veron told the Gazzetta dello Sport from Buenos Aires...

"They'll start to tremble and they'll lose control of the situation..."

"To know that they've seen six points go up in smoke in two matches is enough to put the frighteners on anyone... I think they'd still be afraid if it finished up as a draw," he said...

"But if we won, they really would be in trouble..."

"The team with something to lose is Juventus. We can only do well. We'll have to be careful and study what is happening - and then strike. Without mercy..."

As for who could deliver that blow, Veron said: "I scored the winner in the derby and scored... in the World Cup qualifiers. Perhaps I can keep this run going and score again in Turin - another winner..."

"Lazio have a lot of players who can get goals. But if, to win, we need someone to pull off something extraordinary, then I'm ready..."

Veron was playing with two of his club teammates against Chile - midfielders Diego Simeone and Nestor Sensi - and he dismissed any notion of Lazio suffering on Saturday from jet-lag after their victory in Buenos Aires...

"Matches like this one are good for your morale," he said. "Simeone, Sensi and I looked each other in the eye and we knew that winning had done us good. Victory gives you heart and beats fatigue..."

"On the plane back, we'll already be preparing for the match against Juventus," he said. "This is another Lazio. And if jet lag gives us adrenalin - let's use it to beat Juventus..."

But Waugh undaunted kept Lee in the bowling attack and he shared McMillan in his next over when the No.6 edged to Gilchrist...

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