

Sport

South Africa soup up side

JOHANNESBURG, Apr 7: The South African cricket selectors made extensive changes to their one-day international squad Thursday ahead of a three-match series against World Cup champions Australia, reports AFP.

Six players who were part of the squad that lost a one-day series in India and were beaten by Pakistan in the final of a tournament in Sharjah were left out. Only one, fast bowler Henry Williams, was left out because of injury.

Dropped were batsman Dale Benkenstein, all-rounder the three matches against Australia in Durban Wednesday, Cape Town on April 14 and Johannesburg on April 16.

The matches were arranged as a challenge series after the two sides tied in a dramatic 1999 World Cup semifinal in Birmingham, England.

There will be three further matches in an indoor stadium in Melbourne, Australia, in August.

Recalled were batsman Jonny Rhodes, who was unavailable for the tour of India and Sharjah because his wife was having their first child, new ball bowler Roger Telemachus and all-rounder Andrew Hall.

Hall, who played in one international against West Indies in 1998/99, was a prolific scorer as an opening batsman for Gauteng province during the recent domestic season and could stand in for regular opener Gary Kirsten, who is having treatment for a torn disc in his lower spine which forced him to miss the Sharjah final last Friday.

ODI SQUAD

Hansie Cronje (captain), Shaun Pollock (vice-captain), Gary Kirsten, Herschelle Gibbs, Jacques Kallis, Neil McKenzie, Jonty Rhodes, Lance Klusener, Mark Boucher, Mornantau Hayward, Roger Telemachus, Makhaya Ntini and Andrew Hall.

Blatter won't give up

SHANGHAI, Apr 7: FIFA president Sepp Blatter reiterated Thursday that he would fight what he called "the disruptive impact" of the "Bosman ruling" on the free movement of footballers, reports AFP.

"Rich and poor clubs are clearly categorised and the gap between them is widened by the Bosman ruling," Blatter told the Chinese state news agency Xinhua on a two-day visit to Shanghai, which ends Friday.

"This is not in conformance with soccer logic which should be based on the spirit of unification and democracy."

"The disruptive impact of the ruling must be stamped out. I hope our efforts will yield some results by the end of the year."

Ribbeck raps Jeremies on the fingers

BERLIN, Apr 7: German coach Erich Ribbeck has slapped a one match ban on Bayern Munich midfielder Jens Jeremies Thursday for saying that the national side was in a "pitiful" state, reports AFP.

Ribbeck told the SID sports agency that the 26-year-old Jeremies would not be named in the squad to face Switzerland in a friendly at Kaiserslautern on April 26.

But he said this did not mean that the outspoken Jeremies would not figure in the squad for the Euro 2000 finals in Belgium and the Netherlands in June.

Dalmiya sings

From page 13 spoke on the occasion. In his welcome speech, Saber thanked ICC for giving Bangladesh the rare honour of holding the historic match. He said that it was an opportunity to raise the profile of Bangladesh.

"It has also given us the chance to develop new partnerships. We are very proud also that the UN have come in for the first time," Saber said.

Finally, Saber thanked the ICC and UN for partnering BCB for the great match.

They love

From page 13 Under-10: Rumki Sutradhar alias Jhumur (First) Sunandi Das alias Suchi (Second) Maisha Naoshin alias Apan (Third)

Under-14: Suman Wahid (First) Tapash Sarker (Second) Mithun Karmaker (Third)

Cricket crackers

From page 13 rasekara and were seen moving in the city together. The players also had the company of former Sri Lankan captain Duleep Mendis, who is the manager of the Asian XI.

THE MOOD IS FESTIVE!

There is a definite lack of atmosphere in the way the world stars are arriving at their hotel from the Zia International Airport. For example, there is no security motorcade leading the players' vehicles to the Sheraton. While some players are coming in specially arranged buses, others are arriving by cars.

The cricketers were also moving freely clad in relaxed attire.



President of the International Cricket Council Jagmohan Dalmiya asks a kid about her painting during a competition held at the NSC gymnasium yesterday. — Star photo

3-dayer vs WI Invitation XI

Zimbabwe need a win



ST. GEORGE'S, Apr 7 (AFP/Reuters): Down and out, Zimbabwe will hope to rebound against a West Indies Invitation XI at Queen's Park Stadium in a three-day, first-class cricket match, starting on Saturday here.

Though Zimbabwe played competitive cricket in their two warm-up matches at the start of their first Caribbean tour, they are yet to complete a win on their tour of the Caribbean having drawn their opening first-class contests, lost the two Tests against West Indies, and three limited-overs internationals, two to West Indies, one to Pakistan, in the 2000 Trophy Series.

They will be without captain Andy Flower for the encounter however.

Zimbabwe's principal batsman is one of the many late changes to the Rest of the World squad for the limited-overs match in Dhaka on Saturday which forms part of the International Cricket Council's week of activities there.

Fast-medium bowler Heath Streak, the vice-captain, may lead the side, but the responsibility could fall to another senior player if Zimbabwe decide to let their strike bowler give his troublesome back a rest from the toil in a meaningless match.

Zimbabwe might have preferred a couple of limited-overs matches to prepare them for their last match in the triangular 2000 Trophy Series against Pakistan at this ground next Saturday.

A win in their final match and two wins for West Indies over Pakistan could offer Zimbabwe an outside chance to make the best-of-three finals of the series in Bridgetown (April 19) and Port-of-Spain (April 22 and 23).

The Africans however, will have to settle for a boost to their first-class averages instead.

They face a side in which batsman Darren Ganga, leg-spin bowler Dinanath Ramnarine and left-arm fast bowler Pedro Collins share 10 Tests between them for West Indies.

Guyana batsman Keith Semple is the most experienced

player in the side though, with 43 first-class matches and seven limited-overs internationals behind him.

Much is expected of the teenage quartet of Ryan Hinds, Marlon Samuels, Narsingh Deonarine and Camillus Alexander though.

They were all part of the Young West Indies side to this year's Youth World Cup in Sri Lanka and have shown the kind of promise which prompts great expectations for the future.

SQUADS

WEST INDIES INVITATION XI: Keith Semple (captain), Narsingh Deonarine, Colin Stuart, Marlon Samuels, Wayne Phillip, Ryan Hinds, Pedro Collins, Zaheer Ali, Darren Ganga, Marlon Black, Dinanath Ramnarine, Camillus Alexander, Kerry Jeremy.

ZIMBABWE (from): Heath Streak (captain), Alistair Campbell, Murray Goodwin, Dirk Viljoen, Henry Olonga, Neil Johnson, Grant Flower, Stuart Carlisle, Muteki Nkai, Brian Murphy, Andy Blignaut, Craig Wishart, Guy Whittall, Gary Brent, Tatenda Taibu.

Mixed bag over Gibbs' place



CAPE TOWN, Apr 7 (Internet report): Craig Matthews on Thursday made a startling suggestion that Herschelle Gibbs would make the ideal fourth batsman for South Africa's one-day squad.

Pat Symcox, on the other hand, is not so sure. "Keep Gibbs as the opening batsman in the South African cricket team's revenge series against Australia," he said.

Cricket will become a farce if any Tom, Dick or Harry can successfully bat against fast bowlers with the family tree and CV of Brett Lee, Glenn McGrath and Damien Fleming, said former South African bowler Symcox.

Matthews, former South African vice-captain and Symcox were asked for their views about the South African team for the one-day series against Australia to be announced on Thursday.

The two giants of world cricket will clash in Durban next Wednesday, Newsdays next week Friday and on the Wanderers next Sunday.

Matthews said Kirsten's choice is of decisive importance to South Africa. He does play the selectors should strongly consider Hall, Gauteng batsman par excellence, as his opening partner.

"The home team needs a

solid number four batsman against bowlers such as McGrath and Lee to give the South African innings solidity. It's almost more of a setback not to have a solid number four batsman than getting along without an opening batsman of quality."

Gibbs can play the part of number four batsman with his eyes closed," he said.

Over and above the number four question mark, the South African team will also miss the services of Allan Donald, who can take wickets in the middle shift of the opponents' innings.

This is where wrist-bowler Paul Adams comes into the picture, seeing that he can make wickets tumble and has a high hitting rate, said Matthews.

Symcox feels Gibbs and Kirsten should open the innings because "you can't allow a new, untested batsman in the international arena to open the innings under almost superhuman pressure against world class bowlers such as McGrath, Lee and Damien Fleming".

Symcox added it was a media-made notion that Hansie Cronje's team won't beat the Aussies.

"The selectors just have to get a firm grasp on the team. When last have Australia beaten us? Once in the World Cup."

"We have the courage, the discipline and the material to make mincemeat of them." He added if he were a selector, he

would beg Daryll Cullinan to make himself available for the team. "Failing which, I would use Mark Boucher in the top order."

Regarding the bowling attack, Symcox suggested Mornantau Hayward, Jacques Kallis, Shaun Pollock and Lance Klusener together with the left-handed spinner, Nicky Boje. "You have to choose between Boje and Adams. I would prefer Boje. He grew in stature in India. As left-handed batsman he can also be a factor against leg-break bowler Shane Warne."

"Warne does for Australian cricket what Allan Donald does for South Africa. If he takes two or more wickets - and they're usually decisive wickets - the Aussies will win. If he ends up with a distribution of 0 for 25, the Aussies are in tomato street. The guys who do duty as fourth, fifth or sixth bowlers are usually so-so. If you make punching-bags out of them, the Aussies can groan."

"We should not try and attack Warne, but obstruct his harvesting of wickets. If he does not attack and take some wickets Australia will be in trouble," Symcox said.

In his squad of fourteen, Symcox said he would include Hall for all games, David Terbrugge as seam bowler for the Wanderers and Steve Elworthy as seam bowler for Newsdays.

nicely for Capone, who fired the ball home from six meters.

ARSENAL LENS

Arsenal had Dutchman Dennis Bergkamp to thank for their slender win over French First Division outfit Lens, missing influential midfielder Olivier Dacourt through injury.

The Gunners, without their French international striker Thierry Henry, suspended for one game after his sending-off against German side Werder Bremen in the quarter-finals, got off to a perfect start.

Just two minutes had passed when Frenchman Emmanuel Petit played a searching through ball for Bergkamp to chase. And as Lens keeper Guillaume Warmuz came rushing out of his area, the Dutch international took one touch round the advancing keeper before burying the ball into the back of the net with a powerful shot.

The goal visibly rattled the visitors who struggled to come to terms with the Gunners movement and pace with Dutchman Marc Overmars causing havoc down the left wing.

S A arrive in Lanka July 1

JOHANNESBURG, Apr 7: South Africa will play three Tests and a triangular series on their tour of Sri Lanka beginning in July, cricket chief Ali Bacher said on Thursday, reports Reuters.

The first Test starts on July 20, six days after the final of the one-day series which also includes Pakistan.

Following the third Test, the South African squad fly to Melbourne on August 11 for a three-match, one-day international series against Australia.

They then go to Singapore for another triangular series involving India and New Zealand.

Itineraries for Sri Lanka and Singapore: (venues to be finalised)

South Africa in Sri Lanka: July 5: Sri Lanka v Pakistan July 6: Sri Lanka v South Africa

July 8: Pakistan v South Africa July 9: Pakistan v Sri Lanka July 11: South Africa v Sri Lanka

July 12: South Africa v Pakistan

July 14: Final July 20-24: First Test July 30-August 3: Second Test

August 6-10: Third Test Singapore triangular series: August 20: India v New Zealand

August 23: South Africa v India

August 25: South Africa v New Zealand August 27: Final.

Rajshahi cricket

From Our Correspondent

RAJSHAHI, Apr 7: Al Amin Club and Agragud Club won their respective matches in the second Siraj Memorial Under-14 Kishore Cricket tournament played at Rajshahi Medical College main hostel playground today.

In the first match the winners defeated Shilpa Sporting Club by four runs. Agragud Club defeated Muktiyoddha Babu Smriti Sangha by four wickets.

NATIONAL SCHOOL CRICKET

Rajshahi University School and Masjid Mission Academy won their respective matches of the Rajshahi regional leg of ANZ Grindlays Bank National School Cricket tournament played at Rajshahi District Stadium yesterday.

In the first match, Rajshahi University School defeated Shah Makhdom School by 16 runs. In the second match, Masjid Mission Academy defeated Shiroil Govt School by a large margin of nine wickets.

IMAM-PINTU CRICKET

The fourth Hasnat Imam-Alim Pintu Memorial cricket tournament will begin from April 9 at Rajshahi Govt College playground.

A total of 10 teams in four groups are participating in the tournament.

Aussies assert themselves

ADELAIDE, Apr 7: Wayne Arthurs overcame German No 1 David Prinosil in five sets and Lleyton Hewitt blitzed rookie Michael Kohlmann in three as Australia took a 2-0 lead Friday in the Davis Cup quarterfinal, reports AP.

Hewitt outgunned Kohlmann 6-1, 6-2 in 86 minutes to give the defending champions a 1-0 lead, while Arthurs and Prinosil duelled for 4 hours 13 minutes before the Australian No 2 triumphed 7-6, 3-6, 7-6, 6-7, 11-9.

The singles results put Australia in a prime position to win the best-of-five encounter.

A revved-up Hewitt was far too powerful for Kohlmann, a player almost 150 places below him on world rankings and who was making his Davis Cup debut on the grass courts at Memorial Drive.

The 19-year-old Aussie improved his Davis Cup win-loss record to 7-2 with a ruthless performance on his home court.

"I played unbelievable out there," said the World No 11. "I couldn't have played any better. I was just seeing the ball well... apart from when he ached me on the first point everything went to plan and went very smoothly."

Kohlmann, who was promoted from practice hitter to No 2 after Tommy Haas withdrew with a hip injury and Rainer Schuttler was diagnosed unfit to start, admitted he was overwhelmed.

"If you don't take your chances against a guy like Lleyton, you get damaged like I did," he said. "It was something very new and I couldn't play my best tennis and that was pretty sad for me."

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Go tough on foreign guns



LONDON, Apr 7 (Reuters): Former England captain Alec Stewart has called for English cricket authorities to impose stricter controls on overseas players in the county game.

Stewart said on Wednesday he wanted teams to select only international players of the highest class.

He fears native talent will be restricted from coming through to Test level otherwise.

"I don't want to go back to the days of more than one overseas player at a county but it's important to keep overseas players of the right quality," said Stewart.

"Perhaps a rule could be drafted that overseas players must have played Test cricket before they could join a county."

England's increasingly poor Test performances were in part blamed on the growing numbers of overseas players in the English game since 1968 when immediate registration made

signing foreign cricketers easier for the counties. Players had previously been required to serve a residency period in the county of their choice.

Although the system was not intended to encourage a huge influx of foreign players some counties exploited loopholes. In the early 1970s Warwickshire had four members of the West Indies team in their side.

With increasing pressure on counties to be successful many teams then signed 'ready-made' imports from overseas who were not always established Test players.

Stewart insisted that had created a damaging situation.

"In the past some counties may have got raw talents who learned more about English cricket and then used that knowledge against England rather than helping the young players around them," he said.

"I don't think that's right."

Stewart, 37 on Saturday, is raring to have a crack at Zim-

babwe and West Indies when visit England in the summer.

"I don't take too much notice of this Windies tale that has us low down the list of first nations," said Stewart. "I expect us to beat Zimbabwe. It's their first Test tour here and I'll be very disappointed if we don't."

Back-to-back one-dayers for Pakistan

ST. JOHN'S, Apr 7 (AFP/Reuters): Pakistan will further acclimatise to Caribbean conditions when they face a strong West Indies Select XI, led by Test opening batsman Adrian Griffith, in two limited-overs matches at the Antigua Recreation Ground on Saturday and Sunday.

Pakistan completed a comfortable five-wicket triumph over Zimbabwe in their opening match of the triangular 2000 Trophy limited-overs series on Wednesday here, after arriving in the Caribbean on Sunday.

There is a one-week break from the 2000 Trophy Series itinerary to accommodate the International Cricket Council's week of activities in Dhaka which includes a limited-overs match between an Asian XI and Rest of the World XI.

A three-day or four-day first-class match would have been organised for the Pakistanis under the circumstances. It was decided however, since they were in the middle of the 2000 Trophy Series, the two limited-overs matches would have been a better choice.

Four of the players against whom Pakistan will play when they face West Indies for the first time in the competition at Kingstown next Wednesday have been named in the Select XI.

Internationals, Nehemiah Perry, Mervyn Dillon and Ricardo Powell, along with batsman Sylvester Joseph will form the core of the Select XI.

Apart from Griffith and this foursome, the Pakistanis will also have to contend with the likes of Shivnarine Chanderpaul, Junior Murray, Cameron Cuffy and Nixon McLean.

Pakistan will be without long-standing fast bowler Wasim Akram and all-rounder Abdul Razzaq because of the limited-overs match in Dhaka.

Shoaib Akhtar, who is not likely to play any of the limited-overs matches because he is resting a groin injury he picked up in the preceding series in Sharjah, is also not available.

"It will provide a chance for Pakistan's junior bowlers to make a case for their retention over the short-term and long-term future."

Serie A preview

Juventus search for points



MILAN, Apr 7: Italian league leaders Juventus travel to Bologna this weekend in desperate need of three points after suffering two bruising defeats that reopened the Serie A title race, reports AP.

Juventus' nine-point lead is just a memory after they lost to AC Milan and Lazio in little more than a week. Just three points now separate Lazio from Carlo Ancelotti's men with six matches still to play.

"It's not a lead that can give you any certainties, but it's enough for us not to get agitated," Ancelotti claimed in the wake of the defeat to Lazio.

Now his team must put that theory into practice against Bologna, ideally by demonstrating a renewed harmony among the two strikers - Alessandro Del Piero and Filippo Inzaghi.

The two men told a news conference this week that their rapport on the pitch, which was clearly under strain, was still intact and they denied reports that they had sworn and slapped at each other.

"Bologna's a tough stadium

to play in, and the team are coming-off two defeats which cut our lead," said Inzaghi.

"But it will be an ideal occasion to prove that we two are not playing against each other and that we're concentrating our attention on Juventus."

Lazio have some bouncing-back to do of their own against Perugia after getting hammered 5-2 by Valencia on Wednesday night.

Their dreams of a treble - Seven Goran Eriksson's side are also through to the Italian Cup final with Lazio - have lasted less than a week.

Lazio were badly let down by their defence in Spain, but also by their much-vaunted midfield - with the exception of Argentinian Juan Sebastian Veron - which failed to block the Spaniards' route to goal.

Eriksson will be looking to put that right on Sunday, if only because he knows that Juventus will almost certainly win their match.

Behind the top two sides, a separate battle is being fought for two places in the preliminary rounds of the next Champions League. Three teams are locked on 49 pts (Inter, AC Milan and Parma) and one on 46

pts (AS Roma).

Inter have a difficult away game with Udinese on Saturday night and will again be without injured centre-forward Christian Vieri - the strike pair being veteran Ivan Zamorano and new hope Alvaro Recoba.

After three draws and one defeat in their last four games, Inter need to start winning if they are not to be overtaken.

Milan, the reigning champions, are at home to Fiorentina on Sunday night.

With Spanish striker Jose Mari injured, Milan coach Alberto Zaccheroni is turning to Germany's Oliver Bierhoff to partner Ukrainian Andriy Shevchenko, the Serie A's top scorer with 21 goals.

Parma, who are away to relegation candidates Torino, are the on-form team among the four Champions League hopefuls.

Serie A fixtures (1300 GMT unless stated)

Saturday: Torino v Parma, Udinese v Inter Milan (1830 GMT).

Sunday: Bologna v Juventus, Cagliari v Verona, Lazio v Perugia, Lecce v AS Roma, Piacenza v Bari, Reggina v Venezia, AC Milan v Fiorentina (1830 GMT).

Liverpool aim to cash in



LONDON, Apr 7: Liverpool have an opportunity to leapfrog into second place in the English Premiership on Sunday with a potentially easy home tie against out-of-form Tottenham.

Victory for the Merseysiders will put them in a strong position to secure a Champions League place for next season with just seven games to go and with Leeds' challenge faltering with two consecutive defeats, a runners-up spot should not be ruled out.

Third-placed Liverpool - unbeaten at home in 13 league games - have 59 points, one less than Leeds who are 10 behind leaders Manchester United, away to Middlesbrough in the Monday night game.

Liverpool have won their last three Premiership matches while Tottenham have taken just one point out of the last nine, so understandably the bookmakers have installed the hosts as 1-2 favourites to take all three points.

Skipper Jamie Redknapp and Swiss international Stephane Henchoz are expected to return to the side in a welcome boost for Houllier. Redknapp missed last Saturday's 3-0 win away at Coventry while Henchoz has recovered from a kick on his Achilles.

Tottenham's morale was severely dented on Monday night after going down 3-2 at home to Middlesbrough and manager George Graham will do well to lift his players out of their mid-table malaise.

Leeds travel to a resurgent Aston Villa on the back of their four consecutive defeat Thursday night in the UEFA Cup semi-final first leg against Galatasaray, after losses to Slavia Prague, Chelsea and Leicester, the worst run for manager David O'Leary since he took over 18 months ago.

English Premiership matches on Saturday (kick-off 1500 GMT unless stated)

Bradford v Southampton, Leicester v Everton, Sunderland v Wimbledon, Watford v Derby, West Ham v Newcastle.

Sunday: Aston Villa v Leeds, Liverpool v Tottenham.

Monday: Middlesbrough v Manchester United.

NOTICE

Due to space constraint Crossword could not be accommodated today. Any inconvenience is regretted. — Sports Editor