

## Athletes off to Pakistan

Sports Reporter

A seven-member Bangladesh athletics team left the capital for Pakistan last night to take part in an international meet to be held in Karachi from May 20 to 22.

The team is expected to return home on May 24.

The following are the members of the team: Mahbub Alam, Fowzia Huda, Humayun Kabir, Abu Taleb, Biplobuddin Bhuiyan, Shafiqul Islam and Ilyasuddin.

Farhad Jesmin Liti and Nurdin Chowdhury Nayan will accompany as officials.

## Lord's jinx

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had a good bowl this morning, looked impressive, and he'll be playing on Thursday."

Flower said: "He has not been fully fit for a while, and I hope for his sake and for Zimbabwe's sake that he can restore his fitness completely."

Flower himself plays a triple role, as skipper, wicket-keeper and top order batsman in a side he acknowledges does not boast any stars but which he believes is an effective combination.

England's preparations were disrupted when Kent seamer Dean Headley, one of their 12 centrally-contracted players ruled himself out of contention by opting for back surgery that should keep him out for the rest of the season.

His absence has opened the door for lively Durham fast bowler Steve Harmison. The 21-year-old is called up into the Test squad for the first time.

Warwickshire paceman Ed Giddins, capped once, against New Zealand last summer is recalled after being omitted from the winter tour to South Africa because of suspect fitness.

He and Harmison are probably competing for one place alongside first-choice seamers Andy Caddick and Darren Gough, assuming 20-year-old Lancashire leg-spinner Chris Schofield is given his debut.

Batting has been the Achilles heel of many a recent England performance. A finger injury to Yorkshire's Michael Vaughan has seen the selectors recall Warwickshire left-hander Nick Knight.

Curiously Knight, normally an opening batsman, will bat at number six while Mark Ramprakash, whose Test appearances have come in the middle order, will open alongside Michael Atherton.

Ramprakash was also left out during the winter, the scapegoat for a series of poor team batting displays. He has long been regarded as having the temperament for opening but Knight could have done with batting in his usual spot.

England coach Duncan Fletcher, now finds himself up against the land of his birth as does Graeme Hick, the enigma of English cricket. More failures from Hick will surely signal the end of his roller-coaster Test career. But he has had so many comebacks that another one cannot be ruled out.

Logic says England should win but sport often makes logic looks useless. The last time these countries met in a Test, in 1996/97 the match was drawn with the score levels.

The then England coach David Lloyd said: "We flippin' murdered them." His words made him look foolish and Zimbabwe will relish the chance to inflict a similar fate on his successor.

## Fickle foes

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Pakistan will face a crisis at the top of the order, since those tried there have not given them the kind of base from which to build monumental totals.

Mohammed Wasim, one of them, warmed up with score of 111 and 47 against the Windies A team on the weekend, but others in contention like Wajahatullah Wasti, Imran Nazir and Shahid Afridi, all failed to make a lasting impression.

The middle-order too, has been suspect. Only vice-captain Inzamamul Haq showed any consistency with the bat and the time could be soon running out when he would be their saviour.

Younis Khan, Younus Youhana and Moin will all have to get meaningful runs, so that the calamity of 39 for five from which Pakistan fortunately recovered through Inzamam and Abdur will not occur again.

The two teams can expect to find a hard, true Kensington Oval pitch which produced the epic Test between West Indies and world champions Australia last year.

The batsmen should be able to comfortably play their strokes, and the bowlers should get enough to keep the team lively.

## SQUADS

**West Indies** (from): Jimmy Adams (captain), Sherwin Campbell (vice-captain), Adrian Griffith, Wavel Hinds, Shivnarine Chanderpaul, Chris Gayle, Ridley Jacobs, Nixon McLean, Curtly Ambrose, Courtney Walsh, Reon King, Ramaresh Sarwan, Mahendra Nagamootoo.

**Pakistan** (from): Moin Khan (captain), Inzamam-ul-Haq (vice-captain), Mohammed Wasim, Wajahatullah Wasti, Younis Khan, Younus Youhana, Abdur Razzaq, Wasim Akram, Saglam Mushtaq, Waqar Younis, Mushtaq Ahmed, Arshad Khan, Imran Nazir, Mohammed Akram, Shabbir Ahmed, Shahid Afridi, Shoaib Akhtar.

**Umpires:** Eddie Nicholls, Rudi Koerten (Third Umpire); Halley Moore.

**Match referee:** Peter Burge.

## Brian's return bucks up Adams

**BRIDGETOWN,** Barbados, May 17 (AP) — New West Indies captain Jimmy Adams gave Brian Lara's return to the West Indies cricket team an enthusiastic seal of approval.

"I'm very, very pleased to know that Brian is touring England," said the man who took over the captaincy when Lara resigned in February. "It's just fantastic to know he's now part of the squad."

After informing the West Indies Cricket Board that he was unavailable for the England tour, Lara changed his mind last week, after the team of 16 was already picked but not announced. Chairman of selectors Michael Findlay hurriedly raised his colleagues who agreed to Lara's late inclusion. Lara said he had initially declined to play because his mother is ill.

Adams and his team are in Barbados preparing for the second Test against Pakistan starting Thursday at Kensington Oval.

He dismissed speculation that temperamental master batsman Lara would be a dis-

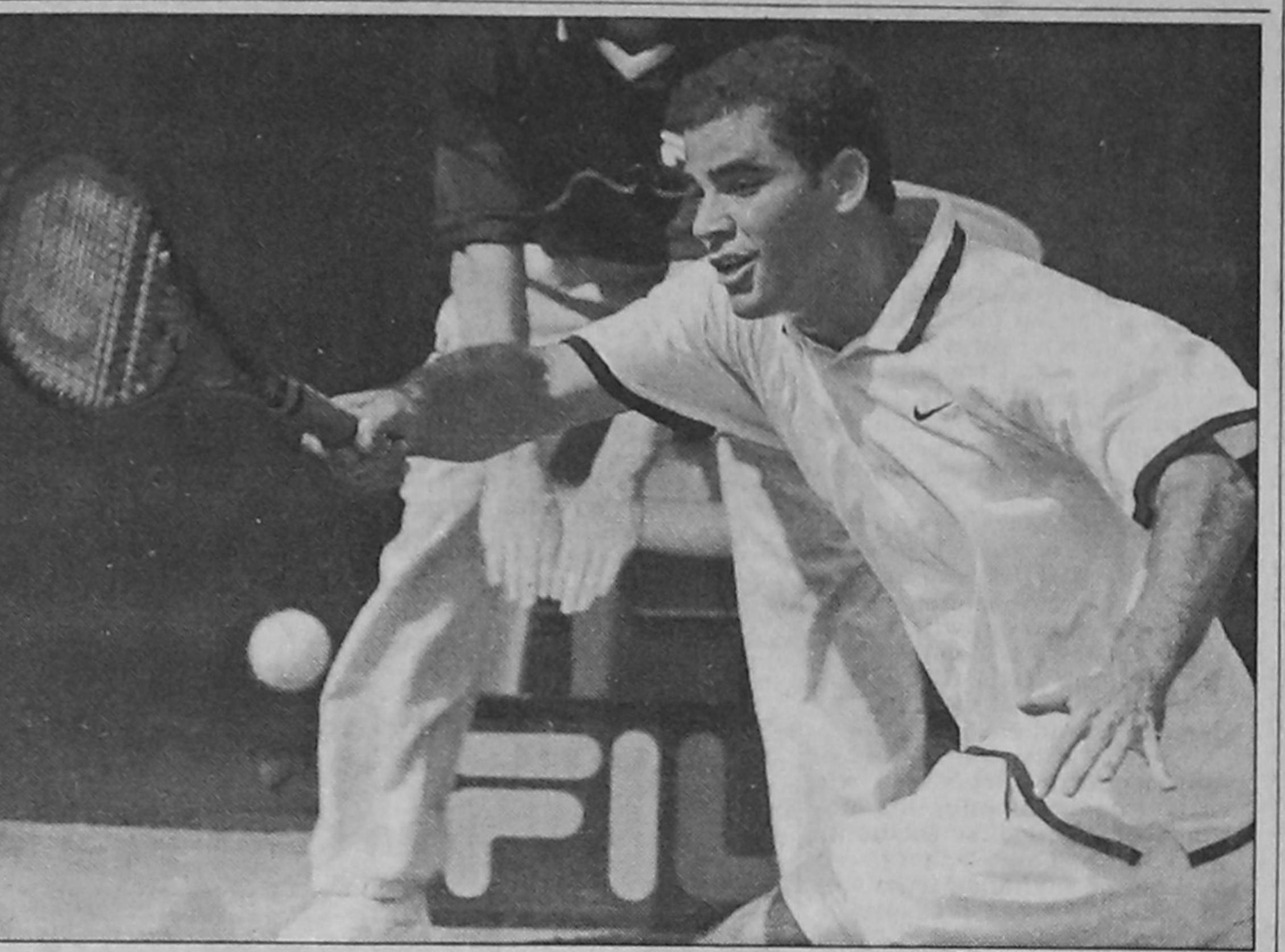
ructive influence on a team that has found a new spirit under his own leadership. He said he and his players were confident of the positive contribution we know he will have on the team and the tour as a whole."

"He's the best batsman we have available in the Caribbean," he said Tuesday. "Not only as a batsman but as a senior player and as a person we all look forward to him coming on the tour. Not only on behalf of the team but, personally, it's nice to have him back as well."

The two have been close since Adams first played in the first youth World Cup in Australia in 1988 with Lara as his captain. Earlier this season, Adams described Lara as "like a brother, on and off the field."

Adams played all his 39 Tests with Lara before Lara took his break, keeping him out of the recent home series against Zimbabwe and Pakistan "to seek the assistance of appropriate professionals to rebuild all facets of my game".

Lara has not played any cricket since Trinidad and Tobago's last match in the Busta Cup 2000 series on 8 February and has only three weeks to get himself in shape before the tour starts with a three-day match against Worcestershire. It is less than a month before the first Test starting June 15 at Edgbaston.



Pete Sampras in action against compatriot Chris Woodruff during their Hamburg Masters fixture on May 16.

— AFP photo

## Lara still tops Test ratings



LONDON, May 17 (Reuters):

Brian Lara is still top of the world batting ratings for Test cricket despite taking a break from the game since the beginning of March.

Former West Indies captain Lara, who is to emerge from his self-imposed exile for the forthcoming tour of England, leads Sachin Tendulkar by 10 points in the latest ratings issued by sponsors PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) on Tuesday.

Lara, who missed a two-Test encounter against Zimbabwe in the Caribbean recently and is not playing in the current home three-Test rubber against Pakistan, is still number one in the ratings because they are based on performances during the past two years.

In the last 18 months Lara has scored 1,023 Test runs at an average of more than 50.

By contrast, he is only 18th in the PwC batting ratings for one-day internationals.

That is because in his last 30 one-day innings Lara has passed 50 only twice, and on 10 occasions has failed to get into double figures.

### LEST'S TOP TEN

1. Brian Lara	873 (points)
2. Sachin Tendulkar	863
3. Steve Waugh	841
4. Ricky Ponting	804
5. Saeed Anwar	794
6. Inzamamul Haq	786
7. Aravinda de Silva	775
8. Justin Langer	767
9. Andy Flower	763
10. Nasser Hussain	750

### ONE-DAY'S TOP TEN

1. Michael Bevan	795
2. Saurav Ganguly	775
3. Nathan Astle	740
4. Jacques Kallis	723
5. Lance Klusener	723
6. Ricky Ponting	721
7. Neil Johnson	700
8. Adam Gilchrist	684
9. Inzamamul Haq	681
10. Hansie Cronje	677

## WI keep faith in selectors

BRIDGETOWN, May 17 (Reuters):

The West Indies Cricket Board (WICB) has given its backing to its senior selectors, saying they will remain unchanged for the next two years.

He went on to open up a 5-2 lead and served for the match. But his serve was broken and his game began to break.

Making many unforced errors, he allowed Woodruff to win the next three games and force a tie break. Sampras wasted two match points before Woodruff hit a forehand wide on the third to lose the tie break 7-5.

Leyton Hewitt, seeded 10th, beat Mark Philippoussis 6-4, 7-6 in an exciting all-Australian battle and said he should be included among the favorites to win the French Open, starting on May 29.

"I'm beginning to love clay," said Hewitt, who has won three tournaments this year. "It could become my favorite surface if I win the French Open."

Ukrainian Andre Medvedev, unseeded despite winning in Hamburg in 1994, 1995 and 1997 ousted 14th seed Dominik Hrbatý of Slovakia 6-4, 7-6.

Defending champion Marcelo Rios of Chile also advanced to the 4th round in a 6-4, 6-1 demolition of France's Nicolas Escudé.

Gustavo Kuerten, seeded fifth and beaten in the Rome Masters Series final by Norman, also went through, defeating Moroccan Karim Alami 5-7, 6-2, 6-3.

Rafter's comeback from injury suffered another setback when the 11th-seeded Australian went out 6-4, 7-5 to Schalken.

The Russian, French Open champion in 1996, has been beaten in the second round in Rome, Barcelona and Monte Carlo, and in the first round in Estoril in recent weeks.

Moya, who won at Roland-Garros two years after Kafelnikov, also went out, falling 3-6, 6-2, 7-6 to fellow Spanish baseliner Juan Carlos Ferrero, seeded 15th.

Top seed Sampras, playing his first tournament since hurting his quad muscle in the US Davis Cup defeat of the Czech Republic in early April, showed glimpses of his top form in the first set but then appeared to tire.

"I had fun for a set and a half but then I started to feel a bit rusty and I also lost patience a little bit."

## Sampras coasts through

**HAMBURG, May 17:** Pete Sampras made a successful return from injury by beating fellow American Chris Woodruff 6-4, 7-6 in the first round at the Hamburg Masters Series on Tuesday.

But it was a bad day for other former world number ones as Yevgeny Kafelnikov, Carlos Moya and Patrick Rafter made early exits from the 2.95 million dollars claycourt event on a hot day.

Magus Norman, who took over from Andre Agassi at the top of the Champions Race rankings last week, underlined his brilliant form with a 6-2, 6-4 win over fellow Swede Thomas Johansson.

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**Davenport, Seles sail**

**ROME, May 17:** World number one Lindsay Davenport marked her return from a six-week injury lay-off with a non-sense 6-3, 6-2 second round win over Russian teenager Elena Dementieva in the Italian Open on Tuesday, reports Schalken.

The two teams can expect to find a hard, true Kensington Oval pitch which produced the epic Test between West Indies and world champions Australia last year.

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**Pakistan** (from): Moin Khan (captain), Inzamam-ul-Haq (vice-captain), Mohammed Wasim, Wajahatullah Wasti, Younis Khan, Younus Youhana, Abdur Razzaq, Wasim Akram, Saglam Mushtaq, Waqar Younis, Mushtaq Ahmed, Arshad Khan, Imran Nazir, Mohammed Akram, Shabbir Ahmed, Shahid Afridi, Shoaib Akhtar.

**Umpires:** Eddie Nicholls, Rudi Koerten (Third Umpire); Halley Moore.

**Match referee:** Peter Burge.



Bangladesh Tennis Federation president Alamgir Farooq Chowdhury (c) inaugurating the second leg of National Tennis Circuit at the Ramna Tennis Complex yesterday.

— Star photo

## Parents repairing pairing



NEW DELHI, May 17:

Parents of troubled Indian tennis pair of Leander Paes and Mahesh Bhupathi

today expressed optimism that the world beating pair will come together again by early next year.

"Dr Vece Paes and I are confident that the year 2001 will again be like 1998 and we do not want anyone to say or do anything to spoil the wonderful partnership between the two lads," Mahesh's father C G K

Bhupathi told PTI over phone from Bangalore.

Paes and Bhupathi have broken up their partnership at least for the current season on the ATP tour after a fruitful, if troublesome, 1999 in which they reached a record four Grand Slam finals in a calendar year winning back-to-back titles at French Open and Wimbledon.

The final blow to the pairing

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