

Richard
the critic

LONDON, June 27 (AFP): For former Wimbledon winner Richard Krajicek, serve-and-volley tennis is a dying art.

The 11th-seeded Dutchman showed that he's still an eager practitioner of the grass-court style with his first-round victory Monday over Michael Kohlmann of Germany, 3-6, 6-1, 6-4, 7-6 (7-4).

But Krajicek, who handed six-time Wimbledon champion Pete Sampras his only loss here in the past seven years in the quarterfinals of 1996, said that even the big-hitting American does not use the style in every match.

"He is a great serve-and-volley player on grass, but he doesn't stick to it on hardcourt," said Krajicek, just back recently from another round of the knee surgery which seems to punctuate his career.

Man

From page 13

But only a few minutes with the Melbourne real estate executive conveys the impression that he is more sleeves-up than sound bite.

"Now's not the time for visitors and gestures," he said.

"It's the time for hard work and trying to make sure we can start to win back the confidence of the sporting public."

"There's no doubt we've lost credibility and it's not going to be an easy job or a quick fix to restore that."

His plainspeak even extends to the comment that taking over as the nominal head of state for a sport so badly haemorrhaging is "not necessarily" the biggest challenge he has faced in 40 years of adult life, which has included important posts in real estate, insurance, the Australian Cricket Board (ACB) and as deputy chairman of the Bank of Melbourne.

"Unfortunately I'm not 25 and so I've had a few years but yeah, there have been other challenges," said Gray, ACB chairman from 1986-89.

"I just see this as a job to be done. It's a time of hard work by all of us involved, to deal with the problems and establish the size and the depth and breadth of them, and make sure we use every resolve to do something about it."

"I genuinely think we've come a long way. Not that we've solved the problem or got rid of it but we've identified the problem, got it out in the open, and I think we have put in good processes to do something about it."

Gray, who will continue to be based in Melbourne, will at least have more processes in place underneath him to deal with corruption than Dalmiya, who is locked in litigation over allegations concerning his involvement in the awarding of cricket TV rights on the sub-continent.

The eruption of the corruption issue has forced the ICC into action by appointing its anti-corruption commission, headed by former London chief of police Sir Paul Condon.

And a new 550 million US dollars TV rights deal for the next two World Cups also gives Gray's organisation considerably more money to spend on that fight.

Gray said a strategy based on education and openness was the best way to tackle the corruption scandal.

"You do it in two ways," he said.

"One is education - that you make sure the players are educated in that there is such a thing going on out there and that they will be tempted in their cricket careers."

"You also need to have the procedures in place with the management of the individuals so it can be identified and brought to the surface very quickly."

Success

From page 13

match and then shared a 2-2 draw with Pakistan, finished the four-team qualifying round with seven points, a point more than the home side.

This is for the fourth time that Bangladesh have qualified for the Asian under-16 final round. Earlier, Bangladesh youth team played in the final round in 1986 (Qatar), 1992 (Saudi Arabia) and 1998 (Qatar).

The victorious booters will return home on June 30.

Bangladesh Team: Munna, Siraj, Pôlo (Kaisar), Kachi, Sohan, Ruku, Aminul (Tariq), Al-Amin, Pappu, Uzzal (Masud) and Sohel.

Fireworks

From page 13

French coach Roger Lemerre has all his experienced squad at his disposal and the tense finale to the Spain game will have tested their match nerves under the highest pressure.

Of course they have the famous back four of Lilian Thuram, Laurent Blanc, Marcel Desailly and Bixente Lizarazu for Portugal to deal with.

It's beginning to look familiar. From the start of the tournament, the French first choice back four in front of Manchester United-bound goalkeeper Fabien Barthez have conceded just two goals - both from the penalty spot.

Two years ago in France the same five completed the World Cup finals with just two goals against, one from the penalty spot.

The French now turn to a semi-final tie against Portugal and now just two matches away from being the first side to win the World Cup and then go on to win the European title.

Sri Lanka praying for rain

Last Test starts today



KANDY, Sri Lanka, June 27: Sri Lanka go into the third and final Test against Pakistan on Wednesday with rain looking like their best bet of avoiding a 3-0 whitewash, reports AFP.

The home side were outclassed in the first two Tests and even their captain Sanath Jayasuriya admits they are likely to struggle at the Asgiriya International Stadium here in Sri Lanka's central hills.

"The Pakistanis are too good for us at the moment," he said. "Whatever we do, nothing is going our way, sometimes we are lucky."

Sri Lanka's much vaunted batting line-up faltered repeatedly in the first two Tests.

The Pakistani fast bowlers are bowling superbly with the new ball as well as the old. We cannot afford to relax for a moment. Our batsmen are going through very hard time," said Jayasuriya.

Sri Lanka have recalled Kumar Dharmasena, the right-arner who bowls fast off-breaks to boost a bowling line-up which was hit for 600 runs in the Galle Test, which finished last Saturday.

Goodwin to bid
Zimbabwe bye

SYDNEY, June 27: Batsman Murray Goodwin has announced he is to cut his ties with the Zimbabwean cricket team from July and return to play for Western Australia next southern summer, reports AFP.

The 27-year-old, who has played 19 Tests for Zimbabwe at an average of 42.84, will not renew his contract with the troubled African country after the one-day series against England and the West Indies next month.

Goodwin is touring in England with the national team but will return with his wife to Perth in August citing personal reasons for the move.

The Harare-born Goodwin's last season for WA in 1996-97 resulted in 428 runs at a healthy average of 61.14 in five Sheffield Shield matches.

Sony Max will provide live coverage of the match starting at 10:20 am BST.

Akram has nine wickets and Waqar 11. They are supported by Abdur Razzaq and Azhar Mahmood with four wickets apiece, and off-spinner Arshad Khan with nine.

With his bowlers on form, Pakistan captain Moin Khan has not had too much to worry about.

"I think it is always easy for any captain when he has Wasim Akram in the side and young players like Azhar Mahmood and Abdur Razzaq," said Moin Khan under whose leadership Pakistan has won their first Test series.

Moin took over the captaincy at a time when Pakistan cricket was going through a lean period, partly due to inter-

national politics. But within three months he has turned the team into world beaters.

They narrowly lost the Test series in the Caribbean 1-0 and have won three one-day tournaments in a row at Sharjah, in the Caribbean and at Dhaka.

Moin said that they were going for a clean sweep of the series to erase the memory of the 2-1 defeat they suffered at the hands of Sri Lanka at home in March.

SQUADS

PAKISTAN (from): Saeed Anwar, Mohammad Wasim, Younis Khan, Izumzaman Haq, Younis Youhana, Moin Khan (captain), Azhar Mahmood, Abdur Razzaq, Wasim Akram, Waqar Younis, Arshad Khan, Mushtaq Ahmed, Imran Nazir, Shabbir Ahmed.

SRI LANKA (from): Sanath Jayasuriya (captain), Marvan Atapattu, Russell Arnold, Aravinda de Silva, Mahela Jayawardene, Arjuna Ranatunga, Romesh Kaluwitharana, Prasanna Jayawardene, Chaminda Vaas, Nuwan Zoysa, Muttiah Muralitharan, Kumara Dharmasena, Upul Chandana, Dilhari Fernando, Kumar Sangakkara, Avishka Gunawardena.

The venue itself does not give the home country any encouragement. It was here that six years ago, Sri Lanka were shot out for their lowest-ever Test score - 71.

To make matters worse, the two bowlers responsible for the catastrophe were Wasim Akram and Waqar Younis, still the spearheads of the Pakistan bowling attack.

The lethal pair have made life almost as difficult for the Sri Lankan batsmen in the present series.

Surjo Tarun Cricket Club registered a four-wicket win over Provati Cricket Club in a Shashid Rangia Mia Cup cricket tournament clash at the local Shahjadapur Junior High School play ground here today.

Chasing Provati's 120 in 35 overs, Surjo Tarun scored 123 sixes in 30 overs with Reaz scoring highest 60.

Reaz was later adjudged as the man-of-the-match.

Earlier, electing to bat, Provati were all out for 120 in 30 overs.

Meanwhile, Brothers Union Cricket Club defeated Three Star Cricket Club by 40 runs in Dana Mia Smriti Cricket Cup at the local Eidgah Maidan today.

Batting first, Brothers Union scored 160 in 8 for the stipulated 40 overs.

In reply, Three Star were bundled out for 120.

Osman of Brothers Union was adjudged man-of-the-match.

Shoaib could be back in 3 weeks

LONDON, June 27: Pakistan paceman Shoaib Akhtar, who was released from his Nottinghamshire contract after a persistent rib injury, wants to return to the county in the future, reports AFP.

The Rawalpindi Express' expects to be back playing in three weeks and he told Sky Sports Monday: "If an offer came again then I will definitely play for Notts."

He revealed that his season had at first been blighted by a groin injury which was then superseded by a rib problem, meaning that the world's fastest bowler has not bowled a single ball in English first-class cricket this season.

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