

French cricketers want to pay off century old scores

PARIS, Aug. 12: France's cricket team plays an English XI in Hastings next weekend, finally seeking revenge for defeat in the 1900 Olympic final 100 years ago to the day, reports AFP.

France had to settle for silver when they lost to England on August 20, 1990 in Vincennes on the eastern fringes of Paris in the only time the sport has appeared on the Olympic programme.

France, the 1993, 1996 and 1997 European amateur champions, are expected to play with a "conquering spirit", according to a tongue-in-cheek statement Saturday from the French baseball, softball and cricket association.

Of course, Hastings was the scene of France's most famous victory over the England, in the battle of the same name in 1066 won by the Normans to begin a couple of centuries of French rule over the English.

France, which only has 1,200 licensed players as against 600,000 in Great Britain including several hundred professionals, are tuning up for their World Cup qualifying matches in Canada in June next year.

France, who play in blue like their world champion football team instead of the traditional white, have several players hoping to make an impact on the international scene.

Sulanga Richmond, 16, has just obtained a grant from the International Cricket Council (ICC) to play in Australia. David Holt, has dual British and French nationality and has already played for England at schoolboy level, and Mathieu Royant, who at 13 is the youngest senior international cricketer.

Hingis exacts revenge

LOS ANGELES, Aug. 12: World number one Martina Hingis avenged an upset loss in the WTA quarterfinals last week, trouncing American Amy Frazier 6-2, 6-1 here Friday to reach the semifinals of the WTA Los Angeles Open, reports AFP.

Hingis booked a date Saturday with reigning US Open champion Serena Williams, the fifth seed who beat Spain's Conchita Martinez on Thursday in the first quarterfinal of the 535,000-dollar Flushing Meadow hardcourt warm-up.

Frazier ousted Hingis from last week's WTA event at San Diego. But Hingis responded with one of her most dominating performances.

The Swiss teen has won four titles this season and has reached the finals at three other hardcourt events, including the Australian Open.

Hattrick start

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and 38th minutes.

Farasganj will now take on either Dharmodi Club or Pranitik Kirra Chakra in the Group B final on August 16.

Earlier, Food Minister Amir Hossain Anu kicked off the tournament as chief guest. Bangladesh Football Federation president and Mayor of the Dhaka City Corporation Mohammad Haque was also present on the occasion.

TODAY'S MATCHES

BRTC v Victoria SC (4 pm)
Dharmodi Club v Pranitik KC (6 pm)
Venue: Bangabandhu National Stadium

Brothers Union v PWD (4 pm)
Mirpur Chalantika v Agrani Bank (6 pm)
Venue: Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium, Mirpur

Ganguly rates

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his international career and fully come to terms with the demands of Test cricket like he has at domestic level which he demonstrated in spectacular style with an unbeaten 135 off just 110 balls in the quarterfinal victory over Surrey at the Oval.

He's a rare talent and one international hundred is going to change everything, stressed Ganguly. The important thing is self belief and if you score a hundred you think I can do it at this level.

That hundred against Surrey was one of the best one-day innings I've ever seen and showed what he can do. I was down the other end, but he just kept on hitting fours and it made my job easier.

I could concentrate on making the other end secure and even if I played out a couple of maiden overs it didn't matter because Flintoff was snatching boundaries from the other end.

Pollock & co down under

'Winning will do a world of good'



BRISBANE, Aug. 12 (AP/AF): Skipper Shaun Pollock says winning the upcoming limited-overs series against Australia will help South Africa regain public confidence in the wake of the cricket corruption scandal.

The South African cricket team touched down Saturday in Brisbane determined not to let a domestic match-fixing inquiry overshadow the upcoming series at Melbourne's Colonial Stadium from August 16-20.

The Proteas skipper said the morale of the team was high, adding that the findings of an interim report into South Africa's worst sports scandal would not adversely affect the tour.

"There's been a cloud hanging over our head for the last few months ever since the story broke," Pollock told Australian Broadcasting Corporation radio. "I don't think (the report) is going to reveal anything new, so the chaps aren't worried about it at all."

Retired judge Edwin King, who headed the inquiry, handed his report to the South African government Friday but

said it did not contain any final recommendations.

The inquiry centred on admissions by Hansie Cronje a former national team captain.

being offered money by Cronje to play below their best in matches against India this year.

Sports Minister Nconde Bal-four said King's report, which did not contain any recommendations, would be made public once South African President Thabo Mbeki had read it — which was likely to happen within two weeks.

The United Cricket Board of South Africa has scheduled a disciplinary hearing August 19 on the three players in Johannesburg.

"If we can win this it will go a long way to help people who have been feeling miserable about what has happened," Pollock told a press conference in Brisbane.

"I think it's only a matter of time before they can rally behind us 100 per cent again — maybe once the report is out it can be totally forgotten about."

Pollock admitted that cricket's reputation had been tarnished since the scandal broke several months ago but said his team was intent on beating the world champion Australians and erasing any further suspicion.

that he accepted more than US 100,000 dollars in bribes from bookmakers since 1996.

Two other players, Herschelle Gibbs and Henry Williams, have also admitted to

Commission has not yet been finalised."

The Minister went on to say that the rest of South African cricket could not be tarred with the match-fixing brush.

I want to emphasise that any suggestions that cricket is corrupt and untrustworthy, is absolutely without basis. The revelations by one person must never be construed as a general position within cricket.

I know that the South African public's confidence in and loyalty to cricket has taken a major blow. My appeal to everyone is to once more put our support behind the national cricket team led by Shaun Pollock."

He appealed to South African to stand behind their team, and expressed the hope that the finding of the Commission would act as a catalyst for world cricket to institute similar inquiries wherever there are allegations of irregularities in the international game.

The Proteas take on Australia next week in the Challenge Series, when the first one-day international ever to be played under a roof will take place at the Colonial Stadium in Melbourne.

HANSIE CRONJE

MU get Beckham scare



MANCHESTER, England, Aug. 12: Manchester United midfielder David Beckham could miss Sunday's Charity Shield against Chelsea after breaking down in training at Old Trafford on Friday, reports AFP.

Beckham started hobbling and lay face down on the grass an hour into the session, according to United's official website.

After a massage from United physio Rob Squire, Beckham attempted to rejoin the training session but pulled up, and spent the rest of the morning standing on the sidelines with his hands on his back.

Meanwhile Dutch international Jaap Stam faces a race against the clock to be match-fit for the start of the Premier League season.

The defender only began pre-season training nine days ago after he was given an extra long break by Sir Alex Ferguson to recover from Euro 2000.

The United boss was concerned that Stam, who played more league games than any of his United team-mates last season, has had little time off since joining the Reds two years ago.

However, Ferguson's move has left Stam well short of match fitness and he made his first appearance in a pre-season friendly as a second-half substitute against Maltese champions Birkirkara on Wednesday.

Ferguson admitted he was unsure if he would be ready, saying: "We don't know what we're going to do with that."

I don't think he will play on Sunday, although he may get a bit of the game. That's something we have to assess.

He's only had nine days'

training so it's not the ideal preparation going into a game at Wembley.

He's still to reach full throttle and it's difficult to say if he will be ready for Newcastle.

I will know that when he comes back from the trip."



Manchester United's David Beckham stretches during a training session at Old Trafford on August 11. The star midfielder pulled out of training after an hour and missed the rest of the session.

—AFP photo

(Programme For Local Traveling)

8:00 News At 8 (Bangla) 8:20 Nodi

Nirobodi (Bangla Songs) 8:50

Package Serial: Pratya Neel

Badona #3/6 (*Azizul Haq,

Tania, Tazin Ahmed, Eeshita,

Chitrolakha Guho) 09:30 Comedy

Series- Molla Nasiruddin (Bangla

Dubs) 10:00 News At 10 (English)

10:20 Aanandoloka 11:30 Bangla

News 11:35 English News 11:40 A)

Programme Outline For Monday

B) National Song 11:45 Closing

CHANNEL-i

6:15 Drama Everyday Flash Light

7:00 Music next generation 7:40

7:11 Sabdo Saynik 8:05 Sabro Bartta 1:15

Openi Baiscope 2:00 Drama: Jo

Vulea Jai 2:50 I Focus 3:00 Bangla

Cinema: Abhola (Alomgir / Rozina)

6:00PM Reciting from Holy Quran

6:10 Frames of Changes 6:40 Artho

Oh Niti 7:15 Drama Everyday Flash

Light 8:00 Sazay Sazne Ghar 8:40

Alkote Nari 9:05 Sabro Bartta 9:15

Job Line 10:00 Amar Chobi 10:05 I

Focus 11:00 Tele Film: Sadharon

loker Kahini

DD 7 (BANGLA)

7:15 Sambad 8:40 Khas Khabar 9:15

Binodan (Magazine show) 7:30

Bangla Sambad 8:00 Rang Bahari

8:30 Juktakko 9:00 Special Prog-

9:30 Serial: Sidhanta 10:10 Khas

Khabar 10:20 Mokho Mukhi 10:50

Samsad 11:00 Rangon

ALPHA BANGLA TV

6:00 Alaap 7:00 Grihosal 7:30

Bharat Bhraman 8:00 Serial: Hiyar

Majhe 8:30 Serial: Jhara Samayer

Upakatha 9:00 Serial: Samayer

9:30 Bahari Aahar 10:00 Grihosal

10:30 Sa Re Ga Ma 11:30 Aponader

Janmaya 12:00 Serial: Beauty Parlor

12:30 Serial: Bhalo Basa Mondo

1:00 Serial: Amanay Bhobon

1:30 Cine News 2:00 Serial: Guest

House / Lemon Bolben 2:30

Sophthik Doopron 2:00 Target 2:30

Bangla Movie- 5:00 Serial: Amra

Probost #24 5:30 Alaap 6:00 Serial:

Majah Khela Kobitae 6:30 Moon

7:00 Sports India 5:00 Live- Race-

Sport

Good news for Ronaldo

SAO PAULO, Aug. 12: The French surgeon who operated on Brazilian football star Ronaldo confirmed Friday that the striker would be able to return to the pitch in January 2001, reports AFP.

Gerard Saillant, who twice operated on the 23-year-old forward for his injured right knee, told a conference on sport rehabilitation here that the recovery of the Inter Milan striker was going according to plan.

Saillant first operated on the Brazilian's knee in the French capital on November 30 and early this year gave him the all-clear to resume his career.

But Ronaldo collapsed in agony during his first appearance as a second half substitute during his club's 2-1 Italian Cup final first-leg defeat over Lazio in April when his knee gave way as he attempted a body

feint.

Ronaldo is continuing his recovery in Brazil, but Saillant said that he would not be examining the player during his brief visit here since the striker will be undergoing a complete examination in Europe in two weeks.

In a seminary at the University of Sao Paulo, Saillant blamed excessive training for the joint problems suffered by many athletes.

CHELSEA, VALENCIA WANT ZIEGE TOO

LONDON: Liverpool face competition from Chelsea and Spanish club Valencia for the signature of Middlesbrough's German international Christian Ziege, it was reported Saturday.

But Saillant dismissed over-exercise as the reason for Ronaldo's injuries, saying that diet, positioning and psychological factors could also contribute.

Saillant blamed the early training of young athletes as the reason many were burnt out when they reached maturity.