

Marsh wants a clean India

PERTH, Australia, Oct 5: Geoff Marsh will seek reassurances on match-fixing issues when he meets Indian cricket authorities, this month to discuss coaching their national team, reports AFP.

The former Australian team coach will go to India in a fortnight to be interviewed as one of four candidates short-listed to replace Kapil Dev who resigned last month amid vows to clear his name of match-fixing allegations.

Marsh said Wednesday he was approached by Indian cricket officials two months ago.

"It caught me by shock at the time and I said I'd sit down and have a chat to the (Australian Cricket) Board and see what it requires," Marsh told ABC radio.

"I got a phone call back last week to say they want to have a chat so in two weeks I'll go over ... and see what comes from it (but) there's a lot of things we've got to sort out before I agree to go over there and do the job."

The problem of match-fixing has become a major issue in international cricket in the wake of the Hansie Cronje affair and allegations involving the Indian and Pakistan teams -- all stemming from the influence of illegal Indian bookmakers.

Marsh, who coached the Australia team for four years, said he would raise the issues of match-fixing and bookmakers' access to the players' dressing room with the Indian officials.

"That's something I'll be talking to them about ... because that is a problem."

It would be a great challenge to coach a country such as India, Marsh said.

"It's a different country and they run their cricket a lot differently over there," he said.

"Whilst their country is fanatical about the game of cricket, there's 700 million people (who) all listen and watch cricket over there, and there's a lot of talent over there, and there's a long way to go."

If appointed, Marsh said he would have to consider his loyalties when India and Australia met in international matches.

The first Australia tour India (is) in February and March but I guess it'd be a bit like Western Australia playing against the rest," he said.

If he got the job, Marsh said he would return to Australia in any lengthy spells between series.

Marsh is weighing up the Indian position despite stepping aside as Australian coach last year because he wanted to spend more time with his family.

"I think my family know that cricket's been my life and when these opportunities come up you've got to grab them at my age."

"In 10 years' time there'll be another group of coaches come through."

Carlsson to play in Malaysia

KUALA LUMPUR, Oct 5: Sweden's Anna Carlsson will return to Malaysia next month to defend her title in the 170,000 dollars Wismilak International Women's Tennis Championship, news reports said Thursday, reports AP.

Carlsson faces stiff competition in the Nov. 4-12 tournament from last year's losing finalist, American Erika de Lone, and Italy's Silvia Farinella, who reached the last 16 at the Sydney Olympics.

China's Yi Jing-Qian, who won the title in Surabaya, Indonesia, three years ago, will also compete at Kuala Lumpur's National Tennis Court, The Star and New Straits Times newspapers reported.

Student punished to send death threats to Jones

FREDONIA, New York, Oct 5: The FBI is investigating a college student who allegedly emailed death threats to Olympic athlete Marin Jones during the Sydney Games, reports AP.

An 18-year-old man, whose name is being withheld, has been suspended from Fredonia State University because of messages sent to Jones, her husband, short put world champion CJ Hunter, and at least one other family member.

A decision on whether to file criminal charges could be made within a few weeks, said First Assistant US Attorney Kathleen Mihellette.

Jones became the first woman to win five athletics medals at one Olympics. The threats were sent after reports surfaced that her husband had used steroids, authorities said.

Fredonia State university and federal law enforcement officials told the Buffalo News they take the threats seriously, even though they don't believe the student intended to harm Jones.

Mihellette said the student could face felony charges of sending threatening messages over interstate wire connections.

The student told the FBI he had no real intent to harm anyone and apologized for what he had done, police said.

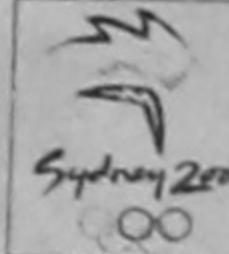
A spokeswoman at the US Olympic Committee's public affairs office in Colorado Springs, Colorado, said she could not comment on the case.

Jones is scheduled to compete in the IAAF Grand Prix Final on Thursday in Doha, Qatar.



Winners of the National Housing Finance Cricket Quiz contest are seen with the Managing Director MH Samad (sitting third from left) & the staff members of the company at the prize-giving ceremony recently at the corporate office of National Housing Finance at Chamber Building, Motijheel.

Greene spurns fast bucks



DOHA, Oct 5 (AP): Maurice Greene, the new Olympic 100m champion, has spurned the chance of a quick half-a-million dollars for 10 seconds on the track.

When the possible bonuses are added to the 350,000 USD prize money the available at this meeting -- the richest single day's athletics event -- Greene effectively turned down a potential 500,000 USD when he flew straight home from Sydney to the United States.

Greene claimed he was too tired after the Olympics to be able to race the 100m on Thursday but immediately came under fire from world athletics officials.

"I cannot understand an athlete who says I do not want to win 350,000 USD, an athlete who does not come but pretends to rest," Lamine Diack, the Senegalese president of the International Amateur Athletics Federation, said.

In his world record-breaking season of 1999, Greene earned an estimated three million dollars. The world's fastest man routinely commands 100,000 USD in appearance fees.

But Diack ruled out any that Greene would have been paid an appearance fee for racing here.

"We will not give extra money to an athlete just to come," Diack said. "We prefer to make the prize money of the highest level."

With a total prize fund of 3.4 million USD, Thursday's event has attracted 12 individual Olympic gold medalists.

By not competing in Doha, Greene has also forfeited an

additional 100,000 USD, his share of the Golden League jackpot he secured before the Olympics began.

Greene's decision to miss the meeting brought disbelief from other athletes' managers.

"You don't walk away from thousands of dollars like that. You can never get that money back," said Charlie Wells, the manager of Marion Jones, the triple gold medallist in Sydney, who will be competing in Doha.

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"I had a good start in the match, although I lost my concentration at times. I managed to raise my game again and played well to win the match," the 23-year-old Greene said.

"We know each other's game inside out," said Diack of his match-up against Apolo. "I'm sure he knows my game and I know his. It's going to be an interesting game."

Apolo has definitely racing in the 100m, but there remains some uncertainty over whether he will compete in the long jump, which promises a rematch against Olympic champion Heike Drechsler of Germany and Sydney silver medalist Fiona May of Italy.

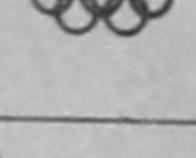
Wells refused to join some of the critics among the 200-strong party of athletes, officials and managers flown from Sydney, many of whom arrived at 2 a.m. on Wednesday morning -- three hours late after a 21-hour flight.

"If it requires us to travel 24 hours to put on a show, then that's what they pay us for," he said. "It's part of our job. Our job is to entertain. It's a shame for the ones who miss it."

The season-long Grand Prix series has become a vital money-earner for the world's elite athletes, even the biggest stars of the Olympics.

As well as Jones, other Sydney champions competing in Doha include British triple

IOC seeks EU support



STRASBOURG, France, Oct 5: The International Olympic Committee on Thursday lobbied

European Parliament for legal recognition of sports in the European Union Treaty, saying it would provide a powerful tool in the fight against sports doping, reports AP.

International Olympic Committee president Antonio Samaranch and IOC vice president Jacques Rogge were to meet with parliament president Nicole Fontaine seeking "a legal inscription of sports in the European Union Treaty."

We have experienced in world of sports growing problems between the practices and regulations of the sports world and European legislation," Rogge, a Belgian orthopaedic surgeon, told a press conference.

In previous years we have tried to persuade the member states, the European Council and parliament of the need for an inscription of sports," he said.

"Our ultimate goal is to provide the European Union with the legal basis to take positive action on sports, while respecting the national subsidiarity," said Rogge.

Today, there are many aspects in which the EU and/or the European Commission would want to act -- one is doping, and international fight against doping -- but they have

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legation said it would settle for an amendment to treaty article 151 pertaining to culture, wherein similar language would be added.

Samaranch said the IOC delegation had visited all the EU capitals and said: "I think we have to support of nearly all 15."

"Britain and Denmark have some reservations," he said, without elaboration.

"We are reaching a stage in which the fight against doping is indeed proving very effective," he said, noting that 3600 tests were performed in the Sydney games -- twice the number as in the previous games in Atlanta -- with only 11 positive results.

"Doping is kind of trick, an unfair practice that cannot be allowed in the world of sport."

The IOC's wish list consisted of first and second priorities.

Ideally, it is seeking a specific treaty article on sports that would commit the community to contribute to the development and promotion of sport, recognizing that it has an important education, social, integration and cultural role in European society."

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