

Anand, Shirov on course

NEW DELHI, Dec 15 Indian Grand Master Vishwanath Anand and Alexei Shirov of Spain warded off suit opposition on Thursday night to stay on course for a title clash in the FIDE World Chess Championships, reports AFP.

Anand survived an aggressive blitz from Michael Adams of England to force a draw in the third game of the semi-final and maintain a one-point lead. Shirov stunned in the second game by Russia's 17-year-old sensation Alexander Grischuk, fought back to win the third and take a 2-1 lead in the other semi-final.

Anand and Shirov need a draw in Friday night's fourth game to qualify for the six-game final starting in the Iranian capital of Tehran on December 20.

World women's champion Xie Jun was also a draw away from retaining her title after sharing points with compatriot Qin Yanyan in the third game of the final.

A desperate Adams kept Anand on his toes for six hours before the Englishman accepted a draw on the 73rd move.

"I am glad I came out of it alive," a relieved Anand said later. "But a draw cannot be taken for granted on Friday."

Shirov adopted the Ray Lopez game to down Grischuk in 49 moves, but said he had to work harder than the scoreline suggested.

"He is a very intelligent player," Shirov said of his young challenger. "You give him an opening and he will finish you."

Kallis' no to Glamorgan

JOHANNESBURG, Dec 15 (Internet report): South African all-rounder Jacques Kallis has ended weeks of speculation by turning down an offer to play for English county Glamorgan.

Kallis reportedly turned down a lucrative offer in order to be fully fit and rested for next season's home and away Test series against Australia.

United Cricket Board (UCB) managing director Ali Bacher was delighted at Kallis' decision.

Kallis is to be complimented on taking a most mature decision. Bacher told journalists on Thursday.

Coach Graham Ford could not confirm the report but said any deal with Glamorgan would have had to involve a lighter workload for Kallis.

"Jacques would be free to play for Glamorgan, provided they would be happy to contract him to bowl in limited-overs games only," Ford said.

'Hands off the band'

JOHANNESBURG, Dec 15 (Internet report): According to South Africa's most experienced member of the current one-day team, Johny Rhodes, the umpire they decided to silence the St George's Park band is crazy.

"I have never seen a band that has a great atmosphere and that the crowd is very supportive."

Speaking on the eve of South Africa's first one-day match in the Standard bank series against Sri Lanka, Rhodes said the young and strong attacking Sri Lankan side will be far more of a challenge to Shaun Pollock's team than New Zealand.

In the second Test between South Africa and New Zealand, the Kiwis complained about the band and asked the match umpire if they could tone it down.

The umpire carried out the request, emphasising afterwards that he was just the messenger.

Eastern Province Cricket Board Dave Emslie said that the popular band would be out in full glory at St George's on Friday.

St George's Park groundsman Andrew McLean said that a hard, dry pitch is expected for Friday's match which will favour the bowlers.

"I expect about 230 runs in 50 overs," McLean said.

Biman

Table with columns for batsmen (Misbahq, Inuran, Mustafic, Rezwan) and bowlers (Rajshahi, Farhat, Ziaur, Sharif, Jahangir, Mustafic, Farhat, Rezwan, Inuran, Aminul, Extras, Total) with statistics for Runs (R), Overs (O), M (Maiden), Runs (R), Wickets (W).



Members of the Bangladesh Army Red team, who became champions in the Shaheed Salimullah Cup Victory Day hockey tournament, pose with Air Force chief Air Vice Marshal Jamaluddin Ahmed (C) after the final at the Maulana Bhasani National Stadium yesterday.

Lar-a-wakening!

ADELAIDE, Dec 15 (Internet report): Just ask anyone who watched Lara's summer turn from fame to at least one trademark munging against Australia.

dling criticism of his form and his mental approach which nosedived during mummings of 0, 4, 0 and 17 in the first two Tests.

bothering me for five to six months but I've only missed one one-day international because of it," Lara said.

Army Red take V-Day hockey

Bangladesh Army Red clinched the Shaheed Salimullah Cup Victory Day hockey title beating Bangladesh Navy 4-2 after a tiebreaker yesterday, reports UNB.

Australian board skeptical of courts

ADELAIDE, Australia, Dec 15: The Australian Cricket Board (ACB) said Friday it doubted the ability of Australia's courts to criminally prosecute a cricketer involved in match-fixing, reports AP.

The judge, who led hearings where Cronje confessed to taking thousands of dollars from bookmakers, declined to prosecute.

Protecting Pakistanis

UNDATED, Dec 15 (Internet report): The Pakistan cricket team are under tight security as some people have shown sentiments to harm the players," said a journalist.

against India in Bangalore the reaction was similarly strong when players' houses were pelted with stones.

of the match against England. As the light faded fast and England still needing quick runs to push for victory, Moin was warned by the umpires to speed up the over rate.

MacLaurin 'appalled'

LONDON, Dec 15 (Internet report): Lord MacLaurin has said he is "appalled" by proposals to subject South African cricketers to lie detector tests and phone tapping.

ACB against tapping

ADELAIDE, Dec 15: Australian cricket officials rejected South African suggestions to use cellular phones to monitor and undercover agents employed in a bid to stamp out match-fixing, reports AFP.

were to happen. We would not consider that," Judge King's report said the United Cricket Board of South Africa should issue cellular phones to players and monitor all calls and e-mail messages.

MacLaurin added he "would resist to the nth degree" attempts to implement the controversial plan in England.

The judge investigating the Hansie Cronje match-fixing saga in South Africa, Edwin King, included the measures among a list of options in an interim report as part of his probe into corruption in cricket.

MacLaurin insisted that while much needed to be done to restore credibility within the game, there was still trust between players and administrators.

MacLaurin added he "would resist to the nth degree" attempts to implement the controversial plan in England.

King suggests 'lie tests'

CAPE TOWN, Dec 15: The judge probing the Hansie Cronje corruption saga recommended random lie detector tests Thursday for South Africa's cricketers, room searches and the monitoring of telephone calls to eliminate attempts at match-fixing, reports AFP.

sweet questions from the media on whether this recommendation could be an unconstitutional invasion of privacy.



The judge, who led hearings where Cronje confessed to taking thousands of dollars from bookmakers, declined to prosecute.

King, a retired judge with a passion for cricket, said he wanted to restore to cricket the culture of fair play.

Judge Edwin King included the proposals in an interim report on his probe into corruption in cricket, established after former South African skipper Cronje was sacked in April after admitting to accepting money from gamblers.

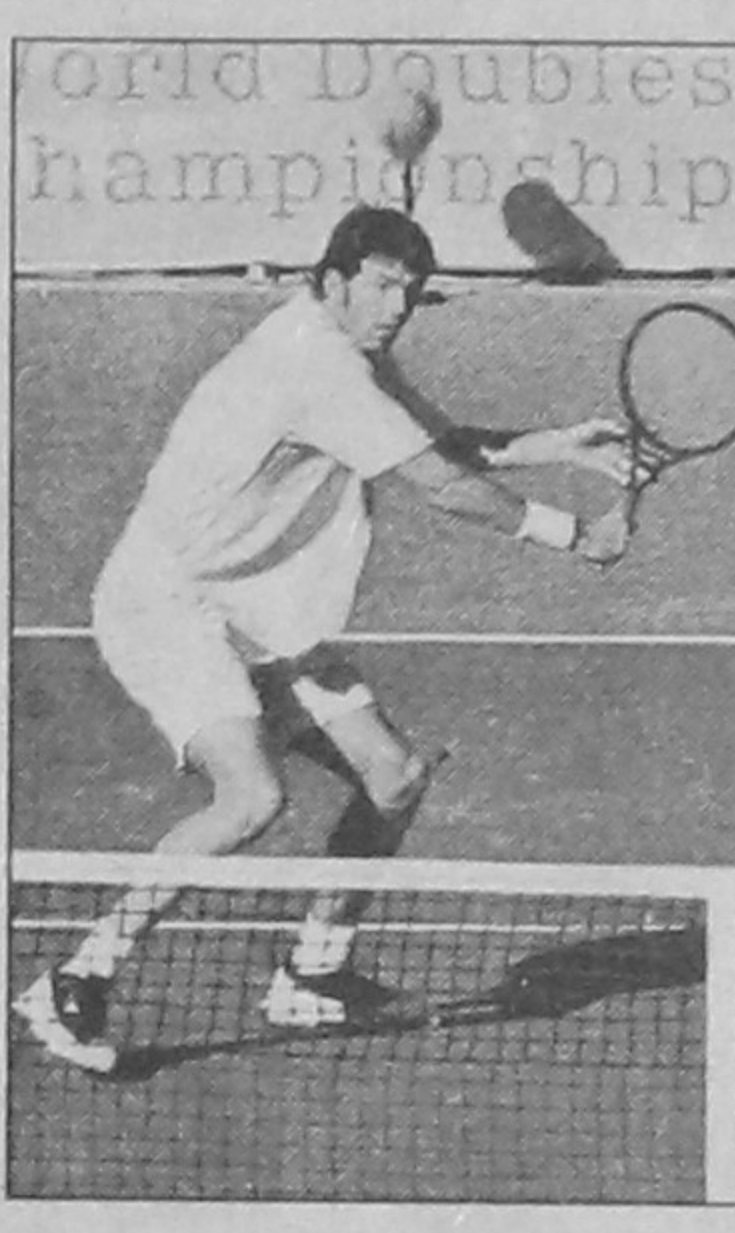
King also said players should be obliged to report any improper suggestions or misconduct to a permanent watchdog body.

"It must be part of a player's training that (whistle-blowing) this is not disreputable... it is the decent and honourable thing to do," King said.

The intrusive measures proposed by the judge were tempered by concern for players. King lamented that they earned less than professional players in other sports and were playing "too much cricket."

He suggested that tours be a maximum of three Tests to prevent burn-out and called for the use of the latest technology to prevent incorrect calls by umpires.

King said he hoped other countries would adopt some of the suggestions as "we all have the same objective, we want to kill this monster."



Sandon Stolle of Australia (L) makes a backhand return against American Alex O'Brien as his Dutch partner Paul Haarhuis looks on during their first round match of the ATP World Doubles Championships in Bangalore on December 14.

World Doubles Championship Favourites fumble again

BANGALORE, Dec 15: Top seeds Ellis Ferreira and Rick Leach tumbled out of the 750,000-dollar ATP World Doubles Championships here on Thursday after suffering their second defeat in two days, reports AFP.

The Swedes, ranked 16th in the world, were last-minute replacements for David Adams and John-Laffnie de Jager who pulled out because of a wrist injury to Jager.

MacLaurin insisted that while much needed to be done to restore credibility within the game, there was still trust between players and administrators.

MacLaurin insisted that while much needed to be done to restore credibility within the game, there was still trust between players and administrators.

Asked if he played the second match better, Haarhuis said: "It was not hard to play better than yesterday. I was horrible yesterday."

MacLaurin insisted that while much needed to be done to restore credibility within the game, there was still trust between players and administrators.

Stolle, teaming up for the first time with Haarhuis in the world championships, attributed the win to better tactical planning.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer. Includes a crossword grid and a list of clues for Across and Down words.