

U-19 Cricket Championship

Sports Reporter
The final round of the 20th National Youth Cricket Championship (under-19) will be held in Thakurgaon from January 25.

Group A: Rajshahi, Jessore and Habiganj.
Group B: Rajbari, Proszpur and Comilla.
Group C: Sylhet, Tangail and BKSP.
Group D: Chittagong, Nilphamari and Kushtia.

Junior hockey

Shantinagar Club and Cantonian SC won their respective matches in the Green Delta Metropolitan Junior Division Hockey League at the Maulana Bhasani National Stadium yesterday, reports UNB.

In the day's first match, Shantinagar beat Combined SC 2-0 with Shaheen and Likhan scoring in the 40' and 55' minute.

Cantonian earned a solitary goal victory over East End Club. Chanchal scored the winning goal in the 32' minute.

Aussie series

India to play without Anil

NEW DELHI, Jan 16: India's leading spinner Anil Kumble will miss the upcoming home series against Australia to undergo surgery on a painful right shoulder, it was announced on Tuesday, reports AFP.

Kumble, who has been out of international cricket since November, will be operated upon by noted South African orthopaedic surgeon Mark Ferguson in Johannesburg on Wednesday.

Jayawant Lale, secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), said Kumble would be out of action for four months.

"We will not be available for the Australian series and the Sharjah tournament after that," Lale said.

The absence of Kumble, India's most successful spinner with 276 wickets, would be a major blow for the hosts against the world's top Test-playing nation.

Australia are scheduled to play three Tests and a limited-overs series during the seven-week tour starting on February 14.

After the tour, India will meet Pakistan and Sri Lanka in the Sharjah tri-series from April 8-20.

Adams spurs

From page 13
player has his own standards when they arrive in the Test team.

"There should be standards we set for ourselves before we find out what the team standards are about."

"On a whole our cricket in the Caribbean is falling a little bit in that we accept standards, individual standards, that are too low."

Lara has threatened to post a century several times this summer, but only twice has he gone on with it - against Australia A in Hobart and Australia in the third Test at the Adelaide Oval.

In the Test, the 31-year-old left-hander made a superb 182, but he slipped back into a form slump for the remaining two Tests and has carried that lack of touch into the one-day series.

At the weekend, he showed flashes of his special ability as he got starts in both games.

WEST INDIES: Wavell Hinds, Sherwin Campbell, Brian Lara, Marlon Samuels, Jimmy Adams (captain), Ricardo Powell, Ridley Jacobs, Laurie Williams, Nixon McLean, Colin Stuart, Marlon Black, Sylvester Joseph (12th man)

Gibbs may miss

From page 13
Mfuneko Ngam is suffering a stress fracture to his right femur.

"I think it's a sign of the really hectic schedule the team have had, but they are near the end of it now and hopefully we can make it through to the end of the Test," said the official.

"The players will then have a mouth off, which I hope is sufficient time for them to recharge their batteries for the West Indies tour."

"It's funny because we've had a really good run in terms of injuries, everything flowing smoothly for three months. But it really is great to coach a team that is playing so well. You have to admire them," he said.

"But we mustn't go over the top about it. It can end abruptly. It's okay to enjoy it while it lasts, but we can't fall into the trap of believing it can go on forever," he said.

Suffering from injuries or not, Shaun Pollock and co still seem likely to post their 11th one-day win in a row to match the day far unparalleled performance by Viv Richards' legendary West Indians in the 1984/85 season.

The biggest obstacle for the home team, it would seem, is the 20 per cent chance of rain that is being forecast for Wednesday.



Major General Jiban Kanai Das, vice-president of Kurmitola Golf Club (KGC) and chairman of the ParTEX 16th Bangladesh Amateur Golf Championship organising committee, speaking to reporters during a press briefing at the club yesterday. Vice-chairman of sponsor ParTEX Group Aziz-al-Kaiser is on the left. The four-day event begins today at the KGC. —Star photo

Mark to face inquiry

SYDNEY, Jan 16: Star Australian batsman Mark Waugh will be interviewed by investigators next month over his alleged involvement in cricket's betting and match-fixing scandal, cricket officials said here Tuesday, reports AFP.

Australian Cricket Board (ACB) chief executive Malcolm Speed said anti-corruption investigators from the International Cricket Council (ICC) would arrive early next month to interview the veteran player, who is the twin brother of captain Steve Waugh.

Mark Waugh has allegedly been linked to Indian bookmaker MK Gupta, who has in turn been implicated in rampant betting and match-fixing among cricket's elite international players, particularly on the subcontinent.

The highest profile scalp claimed so far by the ongoing scandal is South African captain Hansie Cronje.

Cronje admitted he accepted money from bookmakers to rig match results, becoming the first high-profile player to end his career in ignominy after the scandal burst.

Other high profile players in South Africa and India have also since been implicated in corruption.

Waugh's future and his reputation as one of the greats of Australian cricket now rests with the verdict of the ICC investigators.

However, officials concede

that verdict may be a long time coming given the magnitude of their investigation.

Speed said lawyers retained by Waugh since the controversy erupted almost two years ago have been contacted with a request that their client cooperate with investigators.

The ICC investigators will be joined by an ACB representative, Greg Melick, when they interview Waugh, Speed said.

"It is my intention to interview

witnesses to corrupt practices that have shaken the game to its core."

Speed, flanking Melick at the briefing, said he had also informed Waugh previously that investigators would seek to speak to him at some stage.

However, the ACB chief executive was adamant there was a "presumption of innocence" until any concrete evidence was established against the player, whose brother Steve is the current captain of the Australian side.

"I have told Mark at different stages that there would be a request for him to be interviewed at some stage," Speed said. "It's very important that Mark has the opportunity to exonerate himself."

Waugh has already given a public commitment to defend his reputation if and when the investigators came to his door.

Former senior British policeman Sir Paul Condon will also be in Australia at the time the interview is conducted.

However, Melick said he thought it unlikely Condon would take part in the interrogation.

Melick declined to outline the specific allegations made against Waugh, although he confirmed he had recently returned from India, where he had conducted a number of interviews with key players in the saga.

However, aside from formal meetings with Indian cricket officials, he refused to identify anyone else he interviewed.

Windies go to Zimbabwe in June

ST. JOHN'S, Antigua, Jan 16: West Indies will play two Tests and a triangular one-day series in Zimbabwe in June and July, the Caribbean News Agency said on Monday, reports Reuters.

The one-day series from June 23 to July 7 also involves India.

The first Test will be played on July 19-23. The tour ends in Harare with the second Test on July 27-31.

Johnson to quit this year

LONDON, Jan 16: Michael Johnson formally embarked on the longest victory lap of his career on Monday with the ruthless business sense that has characterised his career, reports Reuters.

The only man to win both the 200 and 400 metres Olympic titles confirmed he would retire at the end of the season and said he had no plans to compete in the Edmonton World Championships.

Instead, the 33-year-old American told a news conference on the eve of Tuesday's World Sports Awards dinner here he would make a farewell tour of the athletics circuit before moving on to the next stage of his life.

Yet, as always, there was no misty-eyed romanticism as Johnson looked back on matchless achievements and forward to a lucrative future in television and on the lecture circuit.

King K knows

MELBOURNE, Jan 16: Yevgeny Kafelnikov says it will be difficult for Marat Safin to lord it over him as the premier Russian player after the youngster's trailblazing season last year, reports AFP.

Kafelnikov says 20-year-old Safin deserves to be ahead of him on the world rankings after his sensational 2000 season where he finished the year as world number two after winning the US Open.

Kafelnikov's love affair with the Australian Open continued here Tuesday when he breezed past Jens Knippschlag 6-1, 6-4, 6-2 to set up a challenging second round match with fellow German Nicolas Pietrangeli.

"Regarding the fact that Marat has overtaken me on the rankings, it doesn't bother me at all," said Kafelnikov, ranked five.

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Pakistan to host 9th SAF Games in Oct

ISLAMABAD, Jan 16: Pakistan will host Ninth South Asian Federation (SAF) Games in October, with India assuring full participation in all 15 sports, official said, reports AFP.

The SAF Games are held every two years under the seven-nation South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) which groups Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, The Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka.

SAF Games organising secretary Major Arif Hasnain said a two-day executive committee meeting agreed to hold the Games in Islamabad from October 6 to 15.

Hasnain said 400 million rupees (about 6.6 million dollars) will be spent on the event, 85 million rupees on equipment and 100 million rupees on the renovation of venues.

Athletics, badminton, boxing, kabaddi, karate, rowing, taekwondo, table tennis, squash, swimming, shooting, volleyball, weightlifting and football are the 15 disciplines included in the games.

Pakistan has included squash and rowing this year, according to rules allowing the host country to add two sports of its choice.

BOA election 74 councillors selected

The Election Commissioner of Bangladesh Olympic Association (BOA) Brig Gen M Ahsan Habib yesterday announced a 74-member final list of councillors for the forthcoming BOA election, reports UNB.

The councillors will exercise their voting rights in the first ever BOA election on February 1 to elect 32 office bearers of the National Olympic Committee.

The councillors include 38 from Olympic discipline federations, 3 from non-Olympic federations, 12 from divisional sports associations and the recent past president and secretary general of BOA.

The election will be held for the posts of one secretary general, five vice presidents, three deputy secretaries general, one treasurer and 22 executive committee members.

Distribution of nomination papers will start from tomorrow (Wednesday) at 10 am and will continue till Jan 19 (daily 10 am to 4 pm).

Intending candidates will have to submit their nomination papers on January 21 while scrutiny of nomination will be held on January 22 and withdrawal of nomination on January 25, all from 10 am to 4 pm.

Final list of candidates with their ballot numbers will be announced on January 27.

AUSTRALIAN OPEN NOTEBOOK

MELBOURNE, Jan 16 (AFP): Serena Williams is not just a pretty face. Venus's little sister is also an avid student of tennis history. "If you don't know your history you're like a leaf floating in the wind and you never know where you can end up," she told the press on Tuesday. Big sis is equally erudite. Russian history and Chinese culture are among the new interests listed by Venus in her profile in the latest women's tour guidebook.

MORE ANNA PLEASE

Anna Kournikova is perhaps the most photographed non-winner in the history of sport and a Melbourne radio station wants to see more.

The 3AW breakfast program has launched a competition to find the media outlet or person that can run the most gratuitous pictures of the Russian starlet during the Australian Open.

While her image is splashed over newspapers, billboards and websites around the world, the Melbourne Herald Sun, which ran six snaps of her on Tuesday, said the only shot they couldn't find was one of Anna the businesswoman.

So there's the challenge for the hundreds of photographers in town - Anna in a suit carrying a briefcase.

DEAD END FOR DOKIC STREET

Jelena Dokic's decision to ditch Australia in favour of her native Yugoslavia has prompted a hasty rethink in the Sydney district of Fairfield. The local council had been planning to name a street after the erstwhile national heroine, whose family have lived in the area since emigrating to Australia in 1994. But councillor Chris Bowen admitted a new name for the street in question would now probably have to be found.

ELBOW GREASE

An elbow injury that forced him to pull out of last week's Kooyong Classic warm-up event did little to restrict Marat Safin's ferocious hitting power once the action got underway at Melbourne Park. The US Open champion took an early lead in the race to fire down the fastest serve of the tournament. A 209 kmh (129.9 mph) effort in his first round match put him fractionally ahead of Mariano Zabaleta of Argentina (208 kmh, 129.3 mph). Among the other players to break the 200 kmh barrier were Cedric Pioline of France and Pete Sampras.

CHANG SIGNS OFF FOR JESUS

Even when Michael Chang loses, he still seems to spend more time signing autographs than the average player - and it is not just because the Chinese American star shows more patience than most. While fellow players are content to scribble an approximation of the born-again Christian while writes out, "Jesus Loves You, Michael Chang."



TENNIS BALL HAIR! A fan enjoying the proceedings of an Australian Open match in Melbourne yesterday. —AFP photo

In the name of the father

MELBOURNE, Jan 16: Jelena Dokic had become a refugee for the second time in her short 17-year life, her controversial father, her father said Tuesday, as he accused Australians of being racist, reports AFP.

After deciding to switch alliances from Australia to Yugoslavia on the tennis court, Marat Safin said his daughter had endured the trauma of being an outcast.

Talking on Perth radio, he spoke of the difficulty his family went through when they arrived in Sydney from war-torn Yugoslavia in 1994, living off welfare benefits and struggling with the language.

He then compared the experience with what his daughter and family was now experiencing.

"When we came to Australia, nobody knew English, we lived from a money (off) social security. It's a very hard life," said Marat who is banned from Women's Tennis Association tournaments until March for his irrational behaviour.

"For the second time in 17 years she (Jelena) is a refugee."

Jelena was greeted with a mixed reception when she walked onto centre court Monday to face world No. 2 Lindsay Davenport in the Australian Open first round, with some people booing and others cheering.

Davit though claimed everyone was against his daughter, who lost 4-6 6-4 6-3.

"She doesn't have one friend in the stadium last night, she doesn't have one person," he said and again alleged the draw was rigged.

"To leave Australia and play for Yugoslavia, it (was) a decision we made all night until five o'clock in the morning. All the family spoke about (was) the draw," he said.

"Jelena said 'Daddy, this draw is set up for me, I don't want to play for Australia.'"

"She's under Australian pressure. We think this tournament is set up 100 per cent."

"Australia people is big racist. This is discrimination."

Pierce needs proper lenses

MELBOURNE, Jan 16 (AFP): Mary Pierce has another Australian Open crown in her sights - but she'll need to put her contact lenses in to achieve it.

The French number seven seed has been suffering eye problems this year and admitted Tuesday she should have worn her lenses in Tuesday's game against Austria's Sylvia Plischke 6-1, 6-3.

"Today would have been a good day to have my contacts in," said the French Open champion.

"It wasn't very bright outside. I didn't put them in because it's daytime and I thought I don't really need them."

"But it was a little bit windy. If it's real windy my eyes get dry so I didn't want to put them in."

She was sent packing at the semifinal stage of a warm up tournament in Canberra last week after blurry vision hampered her game.

Despite her less than perfect eyesight, the 1995 Australian Open champion coped well enough against Plischke to set up a second round clash with Adriana Gerst of the Czech Republic or Mariana Diaz-Oliva of Argentina.

"I feel like I'm getting better and better every day," she said. "With every match I'm starting to feel, you know, just concentration, movement, just thinking on the court and on my feet."

country."

As Davit went to air, Jelena's fellow Australian women players were rallying behind her.

Nicole Pratt, Australia's top player in Dokic's absence, said she would try to talk her around.

"It's a huge loss to Australian tennis to lose a player of Jelena's calibre," Pratt said.

"I'm quietly hoping they might change their mind and make a comeback and play for Australia and if they do that, from the players' point of view, my point of view, she'd be welcomed with open arms."

"I don't think Jelena is making all her own decisions but she's very close to her family and advisors."

"All we can do is talk to Jelena personally and let her know regardless of what happens we're always going to be friends."

Chang never gives up

MELBOURNE, Jan 16: Michael Chang's bid to rebuild a career that is apparently in terminal decline suffered yet another setback on Tuesday when he crashed out of the Australian Open in the first round, reports AFP.

The born-again Christian was beaten 7-5, 4-6, 6-3, 6-4 by France's Fabrice Santoro. Chang, a French Open champion in 1989 at the age of 17, has now failed to get beyond the third round at any Grand Slam tournament since 1997.

But he insisted that his faith would help him to keep plugging away on the tour.

"I felt like I was playing pretty good tennis today," he told AFP. "It just was not good enough to win but there is at least something positive I can take away from this."

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer
ACROSS 34 Whodunit 53 Sawbucks 10 Anger
1 South-factor 54 Place 11 Pinnacle
15 E-mos 36 Jigsaw 55 Census 20 Malfunctioning
U.S. city puzzle statistics
5 New York paris 56 Add 22 Painkiller
Shake- pos. 38 Opp. of lemon 24 Ruby's
spare producer 38 Imp rind 24 Ruby's
39 Nurse 39 Nurse 25 Predicament
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Fashion wars on court

MELBOURNE, Jan 16: With all the on-court action proceeding strictly in line with the form book, there was only one thing anyone wanted to talk about at the Australian Open on Tuesday - Venus Williams' outfit, reports AFP.

A day after Anna Kournikova wowed the centre court with a tight-fitting yellow and black ensemble, Venus struck back in the fashion wars with perhaps the most revealing outfit ever to grace a major tennis tournament.

It might have seemed a good idea at the time, but the US Open and Wimbledon champion seemed more concerned with what might burst out of her low-cut two-piece blue and black top than with where her balls were going.

Afterwards the part-time fashion student denied she had been distracted. But she pointedly denied having a hand in the design of the outfit, supplied by her sponsors Reebok.

Asked if she was happy about it, she replied: "Oh, definitely." Sarcastic? As ever with Williams it was hard to tell.

Arch-rival Martina Hingis, who prefers a more classic style on court, was more forthcoming.

"She's got this deal with Reebok so they had to come up with something new," Hingis said, before adding: "I don't know if I would be able to wear something like that."

turers and ensuring they are not a distraction from the primary task - winning the match in hand.

"It has happened to me a few times that I was not comfortable with what I was wearing," admitted Hingis. "You can be out there for two-and-a-half hours so you have to feel comfortable."

Mary Pierce, another leading star of the tennis catwalk, denied that the focus on what the top players were wearing had gotten out of hand.

"I really think it's great to see everybody getting into what they're wearing and getting involved too with design, fashion and colour," she said.

"Everybody has a different personality, it's just an expression of your personality when you're on the court."

Venus also got unqualified backing from her younger sister Serena, even though she had not seen the outfit in question.

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The world number one highlighted the dilemma modern female players face between wearing outfits that ensure lots of publicity for their manufac-

The Cryptquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals O, it will equal O throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.