

Bodi to fill in for Boje

REUTERS, Johannesburg

South Africa called up 22-year-old spinner Gulam Bodi to their squad on Wednesday for the one-day series against the West Indies.

Bhutanese booters arrive Apr 21

A 23-member Bhutan national football team will arrive in the capital on Saturday for a three-week training at the Bangladesh Kira Shikha Protishthan (BKSP) from April 22 as part of their preparation for the ninth South Asian Federation (SAF) Games and third South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) Championship which are scheduled to be held in Islamabad and Dhaka next October and November respectively.

WA cricketer tests positive

The Australian Cricket Board's (ACB) anti-doping committee will meet in Melbourne Thursday to consider the case of a Western Australian player who reportedly failed a drug test.

Odumbe

matches for Mohammedan in the first round and scored 676 runs with two centuries so far.

Both Tikolo and Odumbe has previous experience of playing for Mohammedan during the 1998-99 season.

Bulawayo

six and four, he was optimistic about hitting form in the right time. "I just want to bat as long as possible. I'm not thinking about records but to contribute a lot for my team," he said.

He is determined to make his charges physically and mentally tough like those of other international teams in the world cricket.

Waugh being realistic

Cricket

Australia's ageing cricket team requires young blood and its selectors will soon have to confront a transitional period, captain Steve Waugh admitted on Wednesday.

"You've got to have players on edge, wanting to perform and consistently performing at the top level."

Australia won a world record 16 consecutive Tests before losing the second and third matches in their three-Test series defeat to India last month.



STEVE WAUGH

Last week the Australian Cricket Board (ACB) announced a 16-man squad for the five-Test Ashes tour of England this summer.

West Indies team of the 1980's. They also dominated the game before the side suddenly began to age together and their fortunes have since gone in to a steep decline.

"It is an ageing side but I believe it's still a very good side."

Waugh also said the Australian players had been "put on notice" after several had disappointing tours of India last month.

Australia fly to England in late May for a triangular limited-overs series against Pakistan which starts on June 9 in Cardiff while the Ashes series begins with the first Test at Edgbaston on July 5.

Village Lashings allures Lara

INTERNET, undated

Village cricket side, Lashings Cricket Club in Kent, have signed Brian Lara to play for them this season.

The star left-hander will not be paid for his services, but, according to Lashings chairman David Folb, will be financed by a bat sponsorship deal.

Lara will be available only until 10 June, before international commitments take him out of the country, but he is expected to return on 19 August.

Croft against foreigners

Cricket

A day before Glamorgan's overseas player joins up with the squad in Cardiff, Robert Croft believes foreign players should be banned from playing county cricket.

Speaking on BBC Radio Wales on Wednesday, Croft said a number of overseas players use the county game as a "finishing school" and are hindering the development of young cricketers.

Rajshahi v ball

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi

Bright Star Club and Colony Club will their respective matches of the Rajshahi First Division volleyball league at the Rajshahi Stadium yesterday.

Bright Star defeated Morning Star 3-0 (25-18, 25-15, 25-8) in the first match.

"They come over here, they have far more knocks and far more chances to bowl."

"So I personally wouldn't have them," he said.

Glamorgan and a host of other counties have struggled to sign the world's best players for the forthcoming season as Test countries refuse to release their players for long periods.

Consequently, many players on the fringe of Test teams have been signed as overseas players - a situation Croft wants changed.

"If you have overseas players, you have the best," he said.

"And if you can't have them, I think the English and Wales Cricket Board (ECB) should steal a march and say we don't have overseas players."

"If you look at state cricket in Australia and India, they don't employ English players."



ROBERT CROFT

Rios sidelined

AFP, Monte Carlo

Chilean Marcelo Rios pulled out of the 2.95 million-dollar ATP Masters Series event here on Wednesday with a pulled right hamstring.



FIFA secretary-general Michel Zen-Ruffinen speaking to reporters after an emergency meeting of the football world governing body in Zurich on Wednesday.

Norman, Squillari exit

Tennis

The 2.95 million-dollar Monte Carlo Masters is fast turning into the tournament the big names don't want to win with many stars sitting out the event and seeds scattering in all directions.

Wednesday saw Swedish third seed Magnus Norman and Argentine 12th seed Franco Squillari make surprise second round exits, joining the likes of top-ranked Marat Safin and fourth-seeded Russian compatriot Yevgeny Kafelnikov in the headlong rush for the exit.

Their premature departure brought to eight the number of departed seeds while runaway ATP Champions Race leader Andre Agassi, as well as Pete Sampras and Aussie trio Lleyton Hewitt, Pat Rafter and Mark Philippoussis are sitting the event out with various fitness problems.

Norman was totally out of sorts, running into a Moroccan roadblock as Hicham Arazi, who had lost all four previous matches against the Scandinavian, dispatched him 6-2, 6-4 in 1hr 23 min.

6-1, 6-2 against a rival he had already beaten in Miami last month.

Coria, currently ranked 41 on the ATP entry system, has a top 30 place in his sights having won his first tournament on Chilean clay at Vina del Mar in February.

But the 22-year-old had to dig deep after dropping serve when serving for the second set against an opponent who had soundly

beaten him in their previous meeting at Vina del Mar.

Albert Costa of Spain didn't even need to step on court to reach the last 16 after his Chilean opponent Marcelo Rios, the 1997 champion here, pulled out of the tournament with a hamstring injury.



Alex Calatrava of France plays a backhand return against Spaniard Alex Calatrava during their Masters Series encounter in Monte Carlo on April 18.

ACU talks with Kiwis in Sharjah

INTERNET, Sharjah

International Cricket Council (ICC) Anti-Corruption Unit (ACU) officials have met with New Zealand cricketers in Sharjah.

Two investigators with the ICC unit spoke with the team's management and six unnamed players as part of the ongoing inquiry into match-fixing in the game.

But Ross Dykes, New Zealand tour manager and national selector, told the New Zealand Press Association there was nothing sinister in the discussion.

FIFA slams SA organisers

AFP, Zurich

World governing body FIFA has hit out at the organisers of last week's fatal football match in South Africa saying they were wrong to have let the match get underway.

Forty-three people lost their lives at Johannesburg's Ellis Park when thousands of fans forced their way into the stadium despite it already being full.

"A first analysis of the Ellis Park incident indicates that several of FIFA's basic recommendations were not observed," he said.

The match was apparently allowed to start even though the situation inside and outside the stadium was not under control.

FIFA will decide at its executive committee meeting in Buenos Aires in July whether in future sanctions will be taken against organisers who fail to meet basic security needs.



British world heavyweight champion Lennox Lewis (R) and his American challenger Hasim Rahman pose for photographers in Johannesburg on Tuesday ahead of their bout scheduled April 22.

Heart Rahman's secret weapon

Boxing

AP, South Africa

Based on size, reputation and record, Hasim Rahman doesn't have much going for him when he attempts to pull off one of the biggest upsets in boxing history.

Yet the American fighter, who tries to take the WBC and IBF world heavyweight titles from Lennox Lewis, counts two big things in his favour - attitude and altitude.

While Lewis was hanging out with movie stars Julia Roberts, George Clooney and Brad Pitt at the filming of Ocean's Eleven in Las Vegas two weeks ago, Rahman shut himself off from his wife and three young children to fly out early to South Africa to get used to the 5,200-foot (1,600-metre) altitude.

Lewis flew out two weeks later and is basically playing catchup for a fight that takes place at 5 am local time (0300 GMT) Sunday to accommodate American TV.

When the two fighters met head-to-head at a news conference four days before the fight at Carnival City Casino, it was clear that the defending champion had big advantages in terms of height and weight.

Three inches (7.62 centimetres) taller at 6-foot-5 (1.90 metres) and 22 pounds (9.98 kilos) heavier at 269 pounds (122.02 kilos), Lewis appeared to tower over the challenger. Rahman said that didn't worry him.

"Guys like Michael Grant and Andrew Golota (who both lost to Lewis) they just froze," he said.

"They might be bigger than me but that's just size. But you can't see my heart. Really it's this big," he said stretching his arms out wide.

"Lewis will have to freeze me for me to stop fighting. There's no fear here, baby. I'm going to do it my way at my pace. I won't let him dictate to me. I will stand my ground and dictate my own pace."

Whether he will be able to do that against a fighter who will be in his 15th world title fight, has twice fought Evander Holyfield and has a record of 38-1-1 remains to be seen.

But Rahman, who has a record of 34 wins and two defeats, faces an opponent who has been distracted during the buildup, has arrived here much later than is recommended for a fight at altitude and hasn't made himself

overly popular with the locals. Although Lewis attended the remembrance service for the 43 soccer fans who died at Ellis Park last week and went to Soweto on Sunday, he has remained largely out of sight since then while trying to make up for lost time in training.

"Look, Lewis himself is a nice enough guy, but Team Lewis, as the whole entourage is called, displays pure arrogance," said Rodney Berman, the local promoter of the fight.

"They are simply not approachable, and in the production of this magnitude that is not acceptable. Quite frankly it's the only thing that's marring this truly world event for me as the promoter."

The negative publicity Lewis has received is a blot on what he says he came here to achieve.

Referring to Muhammad Ali's stunning "Rumble in the Jungle" victory over George Foreman in Zaire in October 1974, Lewis said that fighting in Africa was "something I always wanted to do."

"My hero, Muhammad Ali, did the same thing and I wanted to follow in his footsteps," Lewis said. "I want to leave this country having spread a little magic myself."

CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 1 Music to a comic's ears 5 Periodical, for short 8 Blue material 12 Brewery creations 13 Not up to snuff 14 Exorbitant 15 Fervor 16 - Paulo 17 Capri, e.g. 18 Ace 20 Entered 22 Cornfield component 23 Afternoon gathering 24 Checkers capture 27 Like some police cars 32 - was saying... 33 3 + 3 34 Uncle Tom's Cabin girl 35 Floral designs

Crossword grid with numbers 1-35 indicating starting positions for words.

38 Recognized 39 Greek cross 40 Baby's feeding time 42 Record label 45 Telephone feature 49 Georgia 50 Guitar's cousin 52 Peruvian's ancestor 53 First victim 54 Insultingly 55 Status 56 Hotel furnishings

57 Check cashier's needs 58 Larry of Broadway note 25 GI's entertainment 26 Inopportune 28 Born 29 Old-fashioned title 30 53-Across' mom 31 Margery of nursery rhyme 36 Supporters of the arts 37 Historic boy king 38 Bear type 41 You and I 42 Speedy steed 43 Judicial raiment 44 German car 46 "Bus Stop" playwright 47 Maple genus 48 Trailing the pack 51 Tease

CRYPTOQUIP

H U R U I Y P K X S U X C Q K M P Y Y D I O R J T O O K H C X Y K J T O Q T W S C H Q C X J O U X C D T X M C D W ? Yesterday's Cryptoquip: PINOCCHIO PROBABLY ALWAYS WON HIS RACES BY A NOSE. Today's Cryptoquip Clue: U equals O