

Andy limbers up for Lord's

REUTERS, London

Somerset's Andy Caddick warmed up for next week's first Test against Pakistan with a five-wicket haul against Yorkshire at Headingley on Thursday.

Caddick finished with figures of five for 81, including the wicket of England teammate Michael Vaughan.

His 79 helped Yorkshire to 231, giving Somerset a first innings lead of 26. The visitors extended the advantage to 127 by the close.

Marcus Trescothick (31) was the man out as they reached 101 for one.

Surrey leg-spinner Ian Salisbury also staked a claim for inclusion in the Test side by returning with four for 130 as Northamptonshire amassed 476 at The Oval.

Overnight pair Graeme Swann and Tony Pemberthy both failed to make centuries, falling for 96 and 75 respectively, before the latter claimed two wickets in Surrey's 126 for two.

At the close Ian Ward remained unbeaten on 58.

Former England paceman Devon Malcolm was also among the wickets for Leicestershire at Grace Road, taking five for 78 against Lancashire.

Neil Fairbrother (45) top-scored as the visitors fell 41 runs short of Leicestershire's first innings total of 240. By the close Leicestershire had reached 72 for four, Murtiha Muralitharan claiming two of the wickets.

In the Second Division New Zealand skipper Stephen Fleming (52) kept Gloucestershire at bay with a half century for Middlesex at Bristol.

Replies to the hosts' 272 after Kim Barnett had been dismissed for 99, Middlesex crawled to 186 for seven.

Worcestershire's Graeme Hick reminded the England selectors he is far from finished by posting the 112th century of his career against Hampshire.

Hick, who has not been awarded a central contract by England, made 120 out of his side's 236.

Hampshire, dismissed for 309 in the first innings, reached 16-0 at the close.

Paul Collingwood's 153 put Durham in the driving seat against Warwickshire at Edgbaston.

The innings included a six and 20 fours, helping the visitors to 329. West Indian paceman Vasbert Drakes (four for 83) was the pick of the Warwickshire attack but his teammates failed him with the bat, falling for 205.

At Hove Dutchman Bas Zuidenert failed to add to his overnight 122, caught by Australian Greg Blewett off Greg Smith, before Sussex were dismissed for 404.

Smith (five for 64) was the pick of the Notts attack while Blewett posted 49 out of the visitors' 214 for four in reply.

Singh

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last few months. I knew I would do well."

Indian captain Saurav Ganguly was left stunned by the success.

"After losing in Bombay and after the first two days in Calcutta, I never thought we would be here," Ganguly said.

He conceded that his team had almost messed up their chase for the 155 runs needed for victory as they slumped from 101 for two to 135 for seven.

"We lost a couple of wickets, but fought it out well in the end," he added.

Arjuna

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However, ICC's anti-corruption chief, Sir Paul Condon, who visited here last week, announced that they were widening the scope of their inquiry beyond the allegations made in the Indian CBI report.

Ranatunga himself was not immediately available for comment, but in a letter published in a newspaper here Sunday he told local investigator Fernando that his main accuser, Gupta, was a "self-confessed rogue."

Ranatunga also blasted Sri Lanka's Board of Control for Cricket (BCCSL) for setting a bad precedent with the probe.

"If in the future, anybody whomsoever, however unsavoury a character he may be, makes scurrilous complaints against any cricketer of our country at any time, is that cricketer to be harassed and insulted by being asked for observations on such rubbish," Ranatunga said.

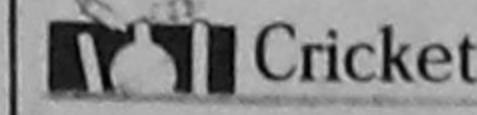
The report had testimony from Gupta who alleged he gave 15,000 dollars to de Silva but it was not clear if money had also been given to Ranatunga.

Ranatunga and de Silva are accused in the CBI report of taking bribes to engineer a Sri Lankan defeat in the 1994 Test against India at Lucknow.

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Ranatunga has flatly denied the charges of corruption while de Silva maintained that he never took bribes, although he was approached by bookmakers.

Shoaib unimpressive



AFP, London

Leading fast bowler Shoaib Akhtar could miss next week's opening Test against England after an unconvincing display in Pakistan's drawn warm-up match against Derbyshire on Thursday.

Shoaib was selected for this match less than 24 hours after his delayed arrival in England because of blood tests following stomach trouble.

And, apart from a brief spell on the opening day, has looked a shadow of the bowler once known as the "Rawalpindi Express".

He looked ill at ease Thursday, finished wicketless and looked uncomfortable with his newly remodelled action, which is designed to prevent any controversy about its legality.

But with only this weekend's match against Kent at Canterbury remaining before the tourists assemble at Lord's to face England next Thursday, Pakistan are running out of time to get their spearhead bowler fit for a Test match.

"He's not bowled for a long time and it's hard for a guy to fly straight in and run in and bowl in this cold weather," stressed captain Waqar Younis. "He needs more time to get back into his rhythm."

"It's very hard to say if he has enough time to do that before the Test and at the moment we are not really sure about him."

Pakistan are likely to make a decision about whether he plays at Canterbury after practice Friday, but it is looking increasingly unlikely he will feature at Lord's with his place likely to be taken by either Mohammad Sami, Abdur Razzaq or Azhar Mahmood.

Wasim Akram and teenage paceman Sami are set to return to the team, and all-rounders Abdur Razzaq and Azhar Mahmood may

be given further match practice.

Shoaib is not the only concern for Pakistan ahead of Saturday's fixture against Kent with few of their batsmen showing any signs of form while their attack looked



SHOAIB AKHTAR

albeit he failed to field today, he is not rated doubtful for this weekend's match.

"We still have a lot to do before we get to Lord's," conceded Waqar.

"We didn't get enough batting in this match and we need more time in the middle for players like Youhana and Inzamam, but hopefully that will happen on Canterbury."

"The all-rounders also haven't bowled any long spells yet, but that is difficult in three day matches and we will be looking to do that in the next game."

Having dismissed Derbyshire for a lowly 116 on the opening day with Saqlain Mushtaq claiming six for 46, Pakistan's hopes were high of repeating the feat today and earning a timely victory.

But on a slow pitch which seemed to have flattened out during the course of the match, Derbyshire found an attack featuring Waqar, Shoaib, Saqlain, Razzaq and Mahmood — all of whom could feature at Lord's — relatively easy to overcome.

Waqar claimed two wickets while part-time bowler Farhat trapped Dominic Cork leg before as he attempted to sweep, but other than those minor successes, the day was dominated by Dowman on his 27th birthday.

Resuming on 15 overnight, he raced to his half-century in only 89 deliveries and although he slowed up in progressing to three figures, he was eager to punish any loose bowling and 15 boundaries in his century.

He added two sixes and five other boundaries when Pakistan's "joke" bowling was introduced, but still showed enough composure to remain unbeaten at the declaration and give a glimpse of the lost talent which once scored 267 for England under-19s against West Indies eight years ago.

Pakistan finished the day on 63 for one with Younus Youhana, promoted to opener to get time at the crease, falling cheaply for four once again to leave him without a significant innings yet on the tour.

Inzamamul Haq, another player short of time in the middle, increased the tourists' concerns by suffering a foot injury after slipping in the shower last night and

His debut match, which South Africa lost, could hardly have been more intimidating. The tourists were struggling and Ontong was brought on to bowl to a fluent-looking Brian Lara.

"I just thought to myself 'stick to the basics, Justin, don't try anything fancy' here...you're bowling to one of the best players in the world'. Luckily it worked for me. I think the fact that I was still so new and he hadn't seen much of me counted in my favour. I just hope I can do it again and continue from that experience."

"There were moments when I thought it was all a bit of a dream, when I suddenly find myself playing for my country and bowling to Brian Lara. The pressure might have got to me but that's where you have to learn to control yourself and your emotions."

Ontong admits that his rise to fame came far sooner than he dared to hope.

"In South Africa there are so many good players and I realise that I am one of the lucky ones. It must be the dream of every young cricketer to play for his country and I was no exception."

"Cricket has been my first love for as long as I can remember and I will always be my first love. I can honestly say that I really did dream of playing for South Africa so it really is a dream come true. I love being in the squad, I love the camaraderie...I'm just so happy."

Ontong has had to make significant changes to his bowling at international level, particularly given his natural tendency to attack and look for wickets whenever possible.

"It's very competitive. Jonty's...always playing games with us in the field, racing us to the ball and then teasing us when we win; that kind of thing goes on all the time."

Ontong has had to make significant changes to his bowling at international level, particularly given his natural tendency to attack and look for wickets whenever possible.

"You have to adapt your game in several areas and I'm still at that stage. It's only the beginning of my career," Ontong said before the fifth match in the series at the Kensington Oval on Wednesday.

"I didn't start too badly, I don't think, but there is only one direction to go and that is from strength to strength."

The young all-rounder makes no pretence about his state of mind when he made his debut in front of a raucous crowd at Sabina Park in Jamaica two weeks ago.

"Very, very nervous. Who's not nervous when they play for their country for the first time? The crowds are bigger than I've ever seen, the pressure is much greater...it was quite a shock."

"After I'd bowled my first ball I felt a huge weight of pressure lift off my shoulders. When the first ball landed where it was supposed to then I started breathing again."

Having started his career as a specialist batsman Ontong turned to bowling offspin some three years ago and only after that realised that he could bowl, and control, leg spinners as well.

"It's strange batting at number nine (for South Africa) because at Boland I bat at number four or five but that is where I have to be because when you have Jacques Kallis, Jonty Rhodes and all those other players ahead of you there is no point in thinking about moving up the order."

"If I get a chance I want to be ready to take it, though. You never know — maybe I'll get a chance...maybe I'll get a promotion for one match."

His other obvious attribute is a level of speed and fielding skill that stands out even in the South African team.

"It's marvellous, it really is. Jonty is such a competitive crick-

Seeds saunter

AFP, Rome

Top seed Gustavo Kuerten of Brazil outclassed Argentina's 15th-ranked Franco Squillari 6-1, 6-2 Friday to book a place in the quarterfinals of the 2.45-million-dollar Tennis Masters Series.

Kuerten, a victor here in 1999 and the reigning French Open champion, produced another assertive performance to down his fellow Latin American and set up a last eight meeting with Spain's 10th seed Alex Corretja.

Corretja, also a former champion in Rome, booked his place in the next round after Kuerten by beating seventh-seeded Australian Lleyton Hewitt 7-6 (7/2), 6-4 in a match that had been halted by rain on Thursday.

Kuerten, meanwhile, did not even manage to get on court Thursday but wasted no time on Friday, blitzing Squillari and proving that the injury that had ruled him out of the recent ATP event in Barcelona was behind him.

After struggling in his first-round clash with Croatian qualifier Ivan Ljubicic Kuerten, dubbed "Guga", has got his act together, thrashing Michael Chang of the United States 6-1, 6-1 in round two and Squillari too posed few problems on the Brazilian's preferred clay surface.

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