

Rotterdam to host Champions Trophy

AFP, New Delhi

The Dutch city of Rotterdam will host the elite Champions Trophy field hockey tournament from November 3 to 11, the International Hockey Federation (FIH) announced on Friday.

The six-nation tournament will be held at a brand new 8,000-seat stadium in Rotterdam which opened in August, the FIH said in a media release.

The tournament was originally scheduled to be held in the Pakistani city of Lahore on the same dates, but had to be moved following security concerns over expected US strikes on neighbouring Afghanistan.

The FIH said both Australia and the Netherlands had bid to host the tournament, but gave no reason why the Dutch city was preferred.

Hockey Australia's executive director Linden Adamson admitted on Wednesday the healthy financial situation of the Netherlands and the ease with which it could prepare a world-class tournament under tight deadlines made it the favourite to host the event.

Peter Cohen, FIH secretary-general said: "We're delighted that, despite the short notice given, we were afforded the luxury of choosing between two excellent bids.

"It is a pity that the event has to be moved from Pakistan, but this is obviously beyond the control of both the Pakistan Hockey Federation and the FIH.

"However we are extremely confident that the Dutch Hockey Association will deliver a superb festival of hockey, consistent with the hockey world's expectations of the Champions Trophy," Cohen said.

The Netherlands, the world and Olympic champions, will be joined by Australia, Pakistan, South Korea, Germany and England in the tournament.

Dalmiya v Muthiah

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The federal Central Bureau of Investigation's probe into corruption in cricket last year led to life bans for former Test captain Mohammad Azharuddin and ex-international Ajay Sharma, plus a five-year ban on current star Ajay Jadeja.

The government also repeatedly rejected moves to organise cricket matches against Pakistan, who it accuses of arming and training Islamic guerrillas in the disputed region of Kashmir.

If Dalmiya cannot muster the required numbers on Saturday, observers believe it could signal the end of one of the most colourful and influential careers in Indian cricket administration.

"It's a make or break election for Dalmiya," a BCCI member told AFP, refusing to divulge whose side he was on. "Saturday could see some dramatic developments."

China a step closer



AFP, Abu Dhabi

China moved closer to their maiden appearance at a World Cup finals here Thursday when they beat the United Arab Emirates 1-0 in their Group B Asian Zone 2002 World Cup qualifier.

A 43rd minute goal from Qi Hong was enough to push the Chinese further ahead of their rivals in the standings with 13 from their five matches to Qatar's eight from five - the Gulf State can pull to within two points if they beat Uzbekistan at home on Friday.

China's well-travelled coach Bora Milutinovic only worry will be that his charges do not live up to their predecessors tag as being chokers when qualification looked certain - though Milutinovic's well-honed skills with less established international sides should get them over that obstacle.

The Chinese merited their victory by taking the game to their goashly opponents despite the stifling heat and 85 percent humidity and when rarely asked the question in defence they stood up well to the hosts.

The UAE defence were not so solid and Qi broke their offside trap to head home.

Despite this reverse the hosts failed to raise their game and pour forward into attack leaving it to the Chinese to retain the initiative before UAE's Dutch coach Tini Ruijz decided to send on two fresher forwards in Sai dAl-Kaas and veteran Bekhit Saad.

The substitutions proved a welcome boost to the UAE and Saad almost brought the sides level in the



PHOTO: AFP

Chinese forward Qi Hong celebrates after scoring the first goal against the United Arab Emirates (UAE) during their World Cup qualifying match on Thursday.

61st minute as his fierce shot from crossbar. 40 metres out came back off the

German javelin thrower banned for doping

AFP, Berlin

German javelin thrower Carolin Soboll was banned for two years by the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) arbitration panel here Thursday for nandrolone use.

The German Athletics Federation (DLV) confirmed in a statement that the suspension will run until November 26, 2002, taking into account when the ban was initially imposed by the IAAF in November 2000.

Soboll, 19, who came second in the European junior championships, submitted a urine sample during competition on June 23, 2000 which showed traces of the banned anabolic steroid.

The 1999 German junior champion blamed the positive test on the nutritional supplement Creatine, which she had obtained from the United States - although the packaging of the product made no mention of nandrolone content.

Creatine, taken in powdered form as a nutritional supplement to build muscle, is not on the list of banned substances.

The DLV accepted the athlete's explication and did not impose a ban and in their statement questioned the arbitration panel's competence.

Takahashi bids for world best in Berlin

AFP, Berlin

Olympic champion Naoko Takahashi will be bidding for a marathon world best in her first race since taking gold in the Sydney Games here Sunday.

Japan's first female Olympic marathon champion may become a celebrity in her native country, but she has not let that interfere with her intensive training.

And in preparation to break Kenyan Tegla Loroupe's world best time of 2:20.43 set on this course two years ago she has spent several months at altitude in Colorado, as she did before Sydney.

"The other marathons I've run have either been in hot conditions or on difficult courses," said Takahashi.

France prey

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Contreras penalised the Burkinabe defender Amadou Coulibaly for handball and Opabunmi made no mistake from the spot.

The Eagles were much the dominant side and could have been 3-0 up after just 12 minutes but Opabunmi and Suleiman Mohammed missed golden opportunities to wrap the match up.

Though the Nigerians continued to miss chances the Burkina Faso attack were rarely threatening and had their 'keeper Abdul Kontougomde to thank for a stunning save from Sambo Soga in the 65th minute.

Like Argentina Burkina Faso were also reduced to 10-men in the dying minutes as leftback Lassana Kanoute was sent-off for a second bookable offence.

U-17 WC RESULTS

Results from World Under-17 football championships on Thursday:

Semifinals

Nigeria 1 (Opabunmi 3-pen) Burkina Faso 0

France 2 (Le Tallec 55, Berthod 57) Argentina 1 (Tevez 48)

(Final and third-place play-off in Port of Spain on Sunday)

Thorpe prefers low profile



REUTERS, Harare

Graham Thorpe, a late addition to the England squad for their short tour of Zimbabwe, has warned against high expectations of his personal contribution to the visitors' performance.

Thorpe was called up this week to replace injured Yorkshire all-rounder Craig White in the squad to play five one-day internationals against Zimbabwe, starting in Harare next Wednesday.

Thorpe's belated selection represents his comeback to the international arena following three months on the sidelines with calf and hand injuries.



GRAHAM THORPE

"I've got a lot of catching up to do physically," the Surrey left-hander told reporters after England's first tour practice in Harare.

Wimbledon goes under the hammer



REUTERS, London

The Centre Court at Wimbledon is up for auction - for a one-off tennis match against Tim Henman.

For the first time in its history, The All England Lawn Tennis Club (AELTC) will allow a member of the public to play on their hallowed lawns.

Chief operating officer of men's tennis body the ATP Larry Scott said: "This is something that has never happened before and may never be repeated again.

"No members -- let alone anyone outside the club -- have been allowed to play on Centre Court before.

"It is because of Tim (Henman) that the club has allowed this. It is out of respect for Tim and for what he has done for British tennis and for youngsters in Britain."

The chance to play Henman on Centre Court will be auctioned at the second annual Tim Henman's Tee Party, a celebrity golf tournament and dinner on October 2 at Stoke Park Club in Buckinghamshire.

But unlike other items up for

auction, including Elton John's stage coat, bids for the chance to follow in the footsteps of Wimbledon champions will be accepted from all around the world.

"There is already so much interest in this," Scott said.

The proceeds of the auction will go towards Henman's charity drive, Kids at Heart.

And the player is also digging into his own pockets, donating 500 pounds for every match he wins in 2001.

This year's event is being attended by celebrities, sportsmen and sportswomen from across the sporting sphere.

Actor Richard E. Grant, prima ballerina Darcey Bussell and rugby players Jeremy Guscott and Michael Lynagh will attend the Tee Party.

"The generous support of the AELTC, our partners, participating corporations and celebrities, and so many of my friends for the Kids at Heart fundraising event is overwhelming," Henman said.

"We hope we can make a difference by continuing to provide resources to worthwhile children's charities."

"I'm not expecting any miracles from myself, but it's good to be back around the boys and I'm preparing to be in the one-day side again.

"I know that once I get my body 100 per cent right the cricket will fall back into place. It's a frightening thing when you pick up injuries and you have three months out. At times it does set the alarm bells ringing. I know I'm not 21 any more, but you realise have to work harder on your body.

"This is a very good trip for me -- a good opportunity to get myself back into cricket and shake out the cobwebs that have been there for quite some time now."

Thorpe, 32, and the veteran with 68 one-day caps in a squad of 16 which shares just 260 caps, could nonetheless prove a vital player in a side attempting to end a slump of 11 consecutive one-day defeats since defeating Pakistan in Karachi a year ago.

"We've got a lot of hard work to do on our one-day game," Thorpe said. "I don't think any of us are under any illusions what the last year has been like in our one-day cricket and how tough we've found it.

Thorpe thinks England have a lot of hard work in front of them if they are to mount a serious challenge at the 2003 World Cup.

"We've got to work hard to catch up with the big boys. Australia, South Africa, Pakistan, India -- there's lots of very good one-day sides, and if we're going to mount a realistic challenge on the (2003) World Cup we've got to get our preparation right and really work hard towards that because otherwise we'll struggle to feature."

Thorpe believes it is up to their replacements to rise to the occasion in absence of several experienced heads including Darren Gough, Alec Stewart and Craig White.

England have never won the World Cup despite reaching the final on three occasions.

The home side, Thorpe felt, would provide England with worthy opposition.

"Zimbabwe are a competent one-day side and whenever I've played against them, especially out here, they've probably had the better of us," Thorpe said.

But they came out on top the last time they faced Zimbabwe -- in the final of the 2000 NatWest Series at Lord's.

England played their opening match against Zimbabwe's A team on Monday in Harare.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS 36 Balls of yarn 1 Thimbleful 4 Adversaries 8 Grub 12 Boise's county 13 Incessantly 14 Discourteous 15 Long, slender cigar 17 Oklahoma city 18 Clone 19 Becomes encrusted 20 Regretted the workout 22 Lather 24 Pediatricist's concern 25 Eagle's "reach" 29 "What can -- for you?" 30 Crowd quorum 31 Mound stat. 32 Grand view 34 On 35 Minnesota --

DOWN 1 Potential syrup 2 Wash. neighbor 3 Realm of heroes 4 Noisome 5 Microwave 6 Sushi-bar item 7 Mme., across the Pyrenees 8 Defeats decisively 9 Example of beefcake 10 Garfield's pal 11 Becomes one 16 Overwhelms 19 "Raising Arizona" star

Solution time: 23 mins.

OMAR SAM BAITT
DICE EGO ABLE
OLEG TON YULE
RADIOS SPOT
SIBBY LOISERIA
HEMS PUN GNAR
ANA HOT POTTS
HOCUSPOCUS
INTO UPSIDE
GOAD VIP IDOL
ANTIE ELLI PECK
PIER RED SAIS

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49					50			51		

5-18 CRYPTOQUIP

O V F I T L S F N O C
E P S Y F M I W T V V K G W I
X T Q K R G P Y V O M F M E O F A A I

R P K W O H H F N K F L F H X
Yesterday's Cryptquip: AT THE CIRCUS, THE BRAVE LION TAMER'S SHOW COULD BE VIEWED AS "THE MANE EVENT."

Today's Cryptquip Clue: V equals F

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.



PHOTO: AFP

Russian Anna Kournikova reacts after losing a point during her second round match against compatriot Anastasia Myskina at the Leipzig Open on Thursday.