

Lindsay in last four

AFP, Munich
American second seed Lindsay Davenport retains a slim chance of depriving Jennifer Capriati of the year end women's number one ranking after she made it six wins in six attempts against Jelena Dokic to reach the semifinals at the WTA Tour Championships on Thursday.

Rajshahi soccer

OUR CORRESPONDENT, Rajshahi
Rajshahi Krira Sangskritik Sangha defeated Alif Lam Mim Sangha 2-0 in the First Division Football League at the local stadium yesterday.

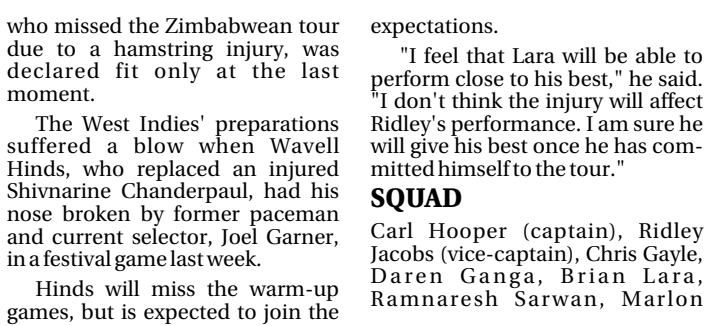
India's

FROM PAGE 13
The South Africans have the advantage of playing in familiar circumstances, and with their strength in fast bowling and would have preferred to tackle the Indians on a more lively pitch than is the norm in Bloemfontein.

Hooper talks cricket

AFP, Colombo
West Indies captain Carl Hooper on Thursday allayed security fears ahead of a rare Test series against Sri Lanka, saying his team was focussed on playing good cricket.

The tourists will play two three-day games against a Sri Lanka-A squad at Colombo (November 3-5) and Matara (November 8-10) before the first Test, starting at Galle from November 13.



West Indies superstar Brian Lara (R) and wicketkeeper Ridley Jacob practise catching at Colombo's NCC ground yesterday.

who missed the Zimbabwean tour due to a hamstring injury, was declared fit only at the last moment. The West Indies' preparations suffered a blow when Wavell Hinds, who replaced an injured Shivnarine Chanderpaul, had his nose broken by former paceman and current selector, Joel Garner, in a festival game last week.

team before the first Test. Wicketkeeper Ridley Jacob has just recovered from a finger injury and is short of match practice. Coach Roger Harper, however, was hopeful that both Lara and Jacob would be able to live up to

Waugh's chance to weigh himself

AFP, Sydney
Australian cricket skipper Steve Waugh makes his return here Saturday in an unfamiliar role with his long-time Sydney club team Bankstown.

Waugh, whose start to the domestic cricket season was delayed by a bout of deep vein thrombosis, will play for his local club in a two-day match. The game represents Waugh's only opportunity for match practice prior to next Thursday's first Test against New Zealand in Brisbane.

"I've done a lot of work this week and I feel confident," said Waugh. "I've got a club game to play this weekend and I'm ready for the Test match."

Schalken shocks Kuerten

AFP, Paris
World number one Gustavo Kuerten suffered his sixth defeat in his last seven matches when he was knocked out of the Paris Masters by unheralded Dutchman Sjeng Schalken here on Thursday.

The 25-year-old triple French Open champion then demanded that a shorter season be introduced so that the autumn tournaments do not become non-events where the world's leading players, exhausted after a long year on the circuit, are either defeated early or don't play at all, citing injury.

Lleyton Hewitt, the number two seed here, was beaten on Tuesday in his first match. The fifth seed, Marat Safin of Russia, the defending champion, joined the casualty list Thursday, losing 6-4, 6-4 to Sweden's Andreas Vinciguerra who now meets Schalken for a place in the semifinals.

Zimbabwe come

FROM PAGE 13
However, analysts here are hopeful of a keenly-contested series this time since the visitors are appreciably weakened by the absence of experienced players like Alistair Campbell and Guy Whittall. Both have been dropped because of a row with the Board on selection process.

Akram helps

FROM PAGE 13
Olonga run out (Akram) 0
Extras: (b-1, lb-9, w-14, nb-5) 29
Total: (All out in 46.2 overs) 232

Table with columns: Bowler, O, M, R, W. Lists bowling figures for various players like Bichel, Johnson, Nofke, etc.

All eyes on Shahbaz

Champions Trophy starts today

Hockey

AFP, Rotterdam

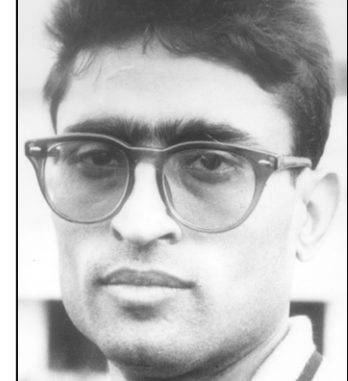
Nothing will engender more interest at the 23rd Champions Trophy event which starts here on Saturday than the return to international hockey of the Pakistani Shahbaz Ahmad, the outstanding player of the last decade.

Out of the international game for three years, the former Pakistan captain, now 33, claims to be fit but admits that he might take advantage of the substitution rule which would allow him the odd break during games.

The change of venue became necessary when several countries accepted the advice of their governments not to travel to Pakistan.

champions Netherlands, silver medalists South Korea, Australia, Pakistan, Germany and England (who take over from Great Britain), have all agreed to the change of venue.

They will play on an amazing



SHAHBAZ AHMAD

new complex which has no less than seven artificial pitches. The event provides a great opportunity for the sides to test their progress just four months before next year's World Cup in Kuala Lumpur, most having rebuilt their teams following the Sydney

Olympics. There was a time when countries were cagey about winning the trophy because for a long time no winning team managed to triumph in the next major event (Olympics or World Cup) but that jinx has been lifted.

The Netherlands ought to be favourites. The hosts hold all the major titles, Olympics, World Cup and Champions Trophy, the last two won in their own country.

But they have lost the core of their Sydney Olympic team, Veen, Jansen, Brinkman, van Pelt, Buma and corner specialist Bram Lomans, while a late blow has been the withdrawal of experienced defender Eric Jazet with injury.

This year the Dutch have suffered defeats by Germany and Pakistan though more recently they have been averaging over four goals a game. They have a new corner expert in Taeke Taekama.

Australia, the Olympic bronze medalists, have been the most successful country in the Trophy over the years with 18 medals in 22 attempts, one more than Germany. Like Germany, they have won the event seven times.

Two new faces in England

Cricket

AFP, London

England selected two uncapped players on Friday to make up the 16-man party for the tour to India following the decisions of Andrew

Ball was picked ahead of county teammate Jeremy Snape and the more experienced Phil Tufnell, while Johnson was called up despite competition from Yorkshire's Chris Silverwood.

Their selections mean England will travel to India for their first tour in eight years with one of their most inexperienced attacks ever -- the

captain Nasser Hussain and Graham Thorpe -- have more than 50 appearances to their name.

England's chairman of selectors, David Graveney, said: "It was a close call as to who was going to replace Andrew Caddick. We considered Chris Silverwood and Martin Bicknell as well as Richard Johnson.

"But we opted for Richard because he has the ability to swing the ball at pace, hits the deck hard and can bowl long spells. He has also taken wickets on one of the best batting pitches in the country at Taunton and is likely to face similar conditions in India.

"Having talked to Dean Conway (England's physiotherapist) and taken advice from medical specialists, we believe that Ashley Giles (like Tufnell, a left-arm spinner) recovery from his Achilles injury is very much on track.

"While he still has to regain his cricket fitness, we are confident from a medical point of view that he will pass a fitness test next week and be available for selection in India.

Johnson, formerly of Middlesex, has been close to England selection in the past and was called up into the squad during this season's home Test campaign.

He admitted that this might be his last chance to shine at international level.



MARTYN BALL



RICHARD JOHNSON

Caddick and Robert Croft not to make the trip because of security concerns.

Gloucestershire off-spinner Martyn Ball and Somerset seamer Richard Johnson were the men chosen after three days of discussion among the selectors.

three-strong spin attack have just eight Test appearances between them while the three seamers have featured just three times between them.

Only five members of the 16-man squad have played more than 20 Tests and just two players --

End of 'White Lightning'?

Cricket

INTERNET, Johannesburg

Hope springs eternal, but South African cricket is living between hope and fear for the future of their most respected bowler, Allan Donald, is hanging in the balance.

It is precisely seven years ago that 'White Lightning', who missed half of South Africa's last 14 Tests, first had to withdraw from a Test due to injury. His foot injury at the time had the opposing captain, Ken Rutherford of New Zealand, talking of a 'pleasant relief'.

When the first Test commences in Bloemfontein on Saturday, it will mark the only 18th time in 87 Tests since readmission that Donald would not be playing for South Africa. He played in the first 17 Tests after the isolation ended.

The big question is whether it is still worthwhile for Donald to once again climb the rocky road to the top of his formidable form, because an injury-free tour has

become the exception rather than the rule for him. The pain of injury is nothing compared to the pain he feels each time he has to disappoint his team when he has to withdraw.



ALLAN DONALD

Donald is a team man. Former UCC chairperson Ray White summed it up when he said only Donald would know whether he can still play Test cricket. White is worried that South Africa has seen the last of great fast bowler.

Astle's double ton

Cricket

REUTERS, Brisbane

Nathan Astle scored a fine 223 for New Zealand against Queensland on Friday but suffered a groin strain in the final warm-up match before next

week's first Test against Australia. New Zealand manager Jeff Crowe said Astle had been taken to hospital for ultrasound treatment but believed the injury was not serious.

Astle was finally out as New Zealand declared on 444 for nine on the second day of the four-day tour match. The hosts were 140 for one in reply

Scoreboard table showing runs, wickets, and extras for New Zealand and Queensland.

at the close, with Australia opening batsman Matthew Hayden unbeaten on 56.

Table with columns: Bowler, O, M, R, W. Lists bowling figures for various players like Bichel, Johnson, Nofke, etc.

CROSSWORD By Eugene Sheffer

Crossword puzzle grid with clues for Across and Down words.

Cryptoquip puzzle grid with numbers 1-53.

CRYPTOQUIP
I P R A V I L A V K K L G A V K H
L K V O K V A A J V L H R U J
O U V L H V C . A P V J D U L C U J
D M I R A P A P V G U M I .
Yesterday's Cryptoquip: IF A HANDFUL OF YOUR RELATIVES ARE TRAIN CONDUCTORS, DO YOU HAVE RAILROAD TIES?
Today's Cryptoquip Clue: I equals W
The Cryptoquip is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that X equals Q, 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.